

SPECIAL EDITION KUDOS REPORT

APRIL 2020



This Special Edition of the Kudos Report features stories about how the York University community is coming together to support one another, flatten the curve and fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Faculties are donating personal protective equipment, nursing alumni are on the frontlines, and researchers are providing insight and solutions for the complex problems we face.

These are just a few of the stories, so I invite you to visit www.yorku.ca/bettertogether to learn about the latest community updates, and to join the conversation on social media by using the hashtag #YUBetterTogether.

While we do not know what the weeks and months ahead will hold, based on what I have seen thus far, I am confident that together we will come through this challenging time stronger than before. Thank you for everything you have done, and will continue to do, as we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am so proud to be part of the York community. Take care of your selves and each other.

Sincerely,

Rhonda L. Lenton
President & Vice-Chancellor



Design instructor [Rahim Bhimani](#) has been using his laser cutter to make face shields for frontline healthcare workers. Bhimani has enough supplies to make 600 shields and plans to deliver his first batch to a Greater Toronto Area hospital in the coming days. So far, he estimates he and a friend have spent nearly \$2,500 buying supplies from Amazon, fabric and hardware stores, and wholesalers.



[Over 100 York nursing students](#) created a video expressing their gratitude for front line nurses and their dedication to world health in the fight against COVID-19.



The Networked Disease: Emerging Infections in the Global City, a book edited by [Faculty of Environmental Studies Professor Roger Keil](#) and [LA&PS Professor Harris Ali](#), has been recognized as one of the top 10 books written on global pandemics by *The Globe and Mail*.



York launched the [Emergency COVID-19 Student Relief Fund](#) to ensure that no student is without a place to go, food to eat or is forced to make a decision that could undermine their future.



York's [Faculty of Health](#) delivered more than 3,000 N95 masks to Mackenzie Health Hospital in Vaughan, 49,000 pairs of medical gloves to Humber River Hospital, and 1,000 pairs to the Bethany Lodge senior care facility in Markham. Two weeks earlier, Dean Paul MacDonald delivered 3,200 masks, 6,200 pairs of medical gloves, and a ventilator to Mackenzie Health.



A [team of scientists and data analysts at the Schulich School of Business](#) has developed an analytics dashboard that can provide daily insights into the spread of COVID-19. Schulich's COVID-19 Dynamics Dashboard can predict the number of new cases over the next five days in each country around the world, with the added ability to view projected rate increases by region and province or state, where possible. Murat Kristal, director of Schulich's Master of Management in Artificial Intelligence and Master of Business Analytics programs, worked on the dashboard together with colleagues at Schulich's Centre of Excellence - Big Data and Analytics Leadership, including Ikjyot Singh Kohli, senior data scientist and mathematical physicist, and David Elsner, a visual analytics and modelling instructor.



York's [Schulich School of Business](#) is launching a new webinar series, "Shaping the Post-Pandemic World," designed to draw lessons from the new realities engendered by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thought leaders from various disciplines within Schulich's faculty will offer reflections during the Zoom format webinars hosted by Preet Aulakh, Associate Dean, Research.



York University has established [two bursaries to help students](#) who require immediate short-term financial relief because of unexpected expenses in March and April 2020:

- the York University Emergency Bursary is open to all domestic and international undergraduate students to help cover short term immediate needs such as rent, food and lost wages due to workplace closures; and
- the York University Emergency Travel Disruption Bursary is open to undergraduate and graduate students who are/were on international study programs at a partner university or institution in the Fall/Winter 2019-2020 academic session.

Those wishing to support these bursaries can do so by donating to [York's Emergency COVID-19 Student Relief Fund](#).



To bring students together virtually, [York International](#) has now moved its regular Coffee Breaks for international students online. Although usually held only twice a week in-person, Virtual Coffee Breaks are now online every weekday, and students can join no matter where they are. International students who have gone home, York students on placements or exchange abroad, students in residence on campus, or any York student can connect with their York community at each Coffee Break.



The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) announced that [three York University professors](#) would receive \$703,217 in funding for COVID-19 related research:

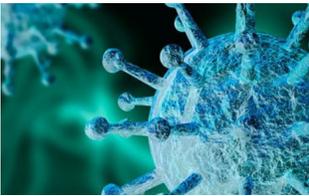
- Professor Harris Ali of the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies (LA&PS) and the Advanced Disaster, Emergency and Rapid Response Simulation (ADERSIM) facility and Associate Professor Fuyuki Kurasawa of the Department of Sociology, will receive \$308,183 to study how social media misinformation shapes public health responses;
- Computational epidemiology Professor Seyed Moghadas of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics will receive \$264,434 to develop new and adapt existing mathematical models to predict the scope of disease transmission, potential outbreaks, and clinical attack rates; and
- Associate Professor (Decision Sciences) Fuminori Toyasaki of the School of Administrative Studies and ADERSIM will receive \$130,600 to study countermeasures to the supply chain disruptions in medical and pharmaceutical industries.



This is in addition to the [three other York researchers](#) who have already received rapid research funding from CIHR.



[Brandon Vickerd](#), a professor in the visual arts and art history departments, spearheaded an effort to donate more than 600 masks, as well as gloves and face shields, to Hamilton Health Services for distribution across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. The equipment is normally used in various foundry, sculpture, and printmaking studios.



The University has committed \$250,000 for time-sensitive [research proposals with a COVID-19](#) focus as a demonstration of our ongoing commitment to research and innovation at this challenging time. Applicants from across the University are encouraged to apply with a focus on any aspect of the COVID-19 pandemic.



[Professor Ali Asgary](#) from the Disaster & Emergency Management program and ADERSIM has developed an agent-based simulation to help people understand how the virus spreads within a family unit and how they can work to flatten the curve at home and within their communities.



[The Dahdaleh Institute of Global Health Research](#) at York has launched a health portal that will provide regular updates on the state of the pandemic. Updates and suggestions on useable sources of information will be prepared by Dr. James Orbinski, a medical doctor, professor and the inaugural director of the Dahdaleh Institute of Global Health Research, and Dahdaleh Fellow Aria Ilyad Ahmad.



[The York IT department](#) ordered 1,500 laptops and created a loan program to enable studying, working and teaching remotely for our students, staff and faculty, who previously did not have access to a device.



Professor [Jianhong Wu](#) of the Faculty of Science and director of ADERSIM is leading a national COVID-19 math modelling team. The Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Sciences has received \$666,667 to mobilize this national network of infectious disease modellers to develop mathematical technologies to assess transmission risk of COVID-19 and project outbreak trajectories. Co-applicants include Associate Professor Ali Asgary, deputy director of ADERSIM, and the School of Administrative Studies in LA&PS, Professor Jane Heffernan, and Professor Huaiping Zhu of the Faculty of Science and director of the Centre for Disease Modelling, and Professor Adriano Solis of the School of Administrative Studies.



Osgoode Professional Development (OsgoodePD) has launched [a series of complimentary webinars](#) to help professionals and organizations navigate the uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The first five webinars deal with virtual communication, ongoing risk and crisis management, lawyering and social distancing, oral advocacy in a virtual world, and conducting remote hearings and mediations.



Alumnus [Daniel Warner](#) (MBA 2012) founded a health tech company, MediSeen, that is helping patients visit doctors online, reducing the need for in-clinic visits during the COVID-19 pandemic. The software allows health and wellness practitioners to schedule and manage virtual and in-home care, and is currently free for all physicians and other health and wellness practitioners across Canada for the duration of the pandemic.
