

PRESIDENT'S KUDOS REPORT

JANUARY 2021



Two new [Canada Research Chairs](#) (CRCs) have been appointed at the University, and three existing CRCs have been renewed. The CRC Program invests in and supports research excellence in engineering, natural sciences, health sciences, humanities, and social sciences. York's latest appointments and renewals are:

- Jennifer Pybus, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies - Tier 2 CRC in Data, Democracy and AI;
- Pirathayini Srikantha, Lassonde School of Engineering - Tier 2 CRC in Reliable and Secure Power Grid Systems;
- Deborah McGregor, Osgoode Hall Law School and the Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change - Renewal of CRC in Indigenous Environmental Justice;
- Douglas Van Nort, School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design - Renewal of CRC in Digital Performance;
- Graham Wakefield, School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design - Renewal of CRC in Computational Worldmaking.



York University appeared in six of the nine Top 20 lists [Maclean's magazine](#) compiled to rank university programs in Canada. The 2021 rankings list York as a top-rated university in these categories: Business (No. 8), Education (No. 5), Environmental Science (No. 14), Mathematics (No. 14), Nursing (No. 19), and Psychology (No. 6).



The [School of Continuing Studies](#) will launch Canada's first university-level Certificate in DevOps in May 2021 to help fill the labour shortage in this rapidly growing technical field. DevOps is a methodology that combines software development (Dev) and information-technology operations (Ops) to shorten the systems development life cycle while focusing on quality and continuous delivery.



Hariri Pontarini Architects won the bid to design [Art Gallery of York University's](#) new stand-alone gallery. The bold new winning design will help the art gallery magnify its reach into the local community and the world beyond, enhancing its visibility and prominence, as well as increasing its accessibility.

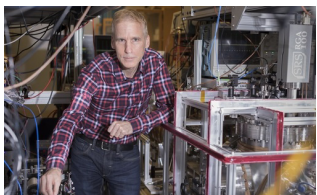


Twelve alumnae were named to the WXN Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Awards for 2020 for building positive change and empowering others through their roles as executive leaders:

- Rusul Alrubail, executive director at Parkdale Centre for Innovation;
- Stachen Frederick, executive director at Weston Frontlines Centre;
- Lorraine Gray, superintendent at Stations Services, Hydro One;
- Reetu Gupta, president and CEO of Easton's Group Hotel;
- Lucia Iacovelli, Canadian managing partner, Tax & Legal, KPMG in Canada;
- Jane A. Langford, senior vice-president, Legal at TD Bank;
- Cynthia Loyst, co-host, creator and CEO of *The Social*;
- Fatema Pirone, senior director of Enterprise Innovation at CIBC;
- Caroline Cole Power, founder and chief executive officer at Canadian HR Solutions, Inc.;
- Effie Simanikas, vice-president, Operations, Finance and Information Technology, IAMGOLD;
- Susan Uthayakumar, country president at Schneider Electric Canada;
- Catherine Yuile, executive vice-president, Data Intelligence, Canada and Latin America, Edelman.



Krislynn Agullion, a first-year environmental studies student, has helped launch Love Supply Drive, a charity that will supply new winter clothing and essential goods to the city's homeless communities.



Distinguished Research Professor Eric Hessels received the 2020 Canadian Association of Physicists (CAP) Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Physics.



The Regent Park Film Festival (RPFF) Home Made Visible (HMV) project, in partnership with [York University Libraries](#) and Charles Street Video, was shortlisted for the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Community Programming, which recognizes initiatives that encourage public engagement in Canadian history. Home Made Visible commissioned seven films by BIPOC artists, organized a nationwide tour of 51 exhibitions, workshops, screenings and installations across Canada, and facilitated the donation of 36 families' home movies to the Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections for access and preservation purposes.



[Five individuals](#) with an affiliation to York University have been appointed to the Order of Canada for their service, innovations, and compassion for Canadian society:

- John Borrows, alumnus, honorary alumnus and donor - Officer of the Order of Canada;
- Lynn Smith, Q.C., donor - Officer of the Order of Canada;
- Mary S. Aitken, donor - Member of the Order of Canada;
- Rita Davies, alumna and donor - Member of the Order of Canada; and
- Sally Horsfall Eaton, C.D., donor - Member of the Order of Canada.



The [York Centre for Asian Research](#) (YCAR) announced the three newest recipients of YCAR publication support funding, which will cover expenses that will enable or enhance the publication of research on Asia or Asian diasporas:

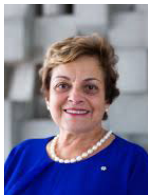
- Patrick Alcedo, Dance;
- Tania Das Gupta, Equity Studies; and
- A. Nedra Rodrigo, Humanities.



[Team Schulich](#) finished in first place overall at the 33rd annual MBA Games. The largest MBA competition in Canada, this two-day competition features over 600 students from MBA programs across the country competing in academic, athletic, and spirit challenges.



The United Nations (UN) launched a Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery, a report led by Professor [Steven J. Hoffman](#) in his role as scientific director of the Institute of Population & Public Health at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). Building on the work of the UN COVID-19 economic and social recovery plan, the UN Research Roadmap is intended to ensure national and international strategies are informed by rigorous evidence.



[Twelve individuals](#) with affiliations to York were invested with the Order of Ontario for 2020 and 2019. The province's highest honour, the Order of Ontario honours individuals whose achievements have left a lasting legacy in the province, in Canada, and beyond.

The 2019 appointees are:

- Allan Carswell, honorary alumnus, professor emeritus and donor;
- Nancy Coldham, donor;
- Barbara Croall, graduate student;
- Audrey Loeb, alumna and donor; and
- Linda Silver Dranoff, alumna and donor.

The 2020 appointees are:

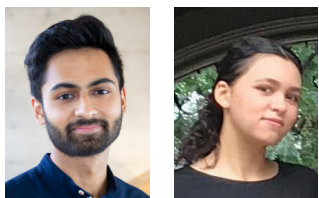
- Ernest Eves, alumnus and donor;
- Hershell Ezrin, donor;
- Karen Goldenberg, donor;
- Ellis Jacob, alumnus and donor;
- Dale Lastman, alumnus and adjunct faculty;
- Arden McGregor, alumna; and
- Karen Weiler, alumna and honorary alumna.



Led by Mathematics & Statistics Assistant Professor [Jude Kong](#), a project joining researchers from York with organizations across Africa to predict the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and provide modelling that will help national policymakers from across Africa will receive more than \$1.2 million in funding from the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC).



[Aleksander \(Alex\) Czekanski](#), associate professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and the founding director of York's Centre for Automotive Research, has been selected as the executive vice-president and upcoming president of the Canadian Society for Mechanical Engineering (CSME).



Two Disaster & Emergency Management (DEM) undergraduate students were recently recognized for their academic achievements in the 2019-20 academic year with awards from the Ontario Association of Emergency Managers (OAEM):

- Mahmood Khan received the Brian Hook Memorial Award for making significant contributions to the field of emergency management while maintaining a high level of academic excellence; and
- Tiana Putric received the A. Normand Academic Award for her essay, "Business Discontinuity: Why Business Continuity Plans Fall Short in the Face of Pandemics."



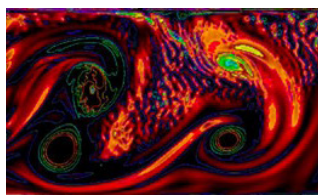
Earth and Space Science and Engineering Professor [Jinjun Shan](#) has been elected a 2021 Fellow of the Engineering Institute of Canada in recognition of his excellence in engineering and his service to the profession and to society.



[Roopa Desai Trilokekar](#), associate professor in the Faculty of Education, has been awarded the Canadian Bureau of International Education's Catalyst Award for the book *International Education as Public Policy in Canada*. The award is given to an individual or group for bringing cutting-edge knowledge to the field of international education.



[YSpace Digital](#), York's new virtual talent and start-up development hub, launched its new YSpace Technology Accelerator program to help entrepreneurs grow and scale their start-ups with customized support, \$30,000 in awards, and exclusive perks.



The [Lassonde School of Engineering](#) announced the winners of its first-ever research photo competition. The submitted images capture the stories behind the research happening at Lassonde - from randomized algorithms to predicting microplastics evolution in the aquatic environment. The winners are:

- First place: Arefeh Shamskhany, second-year PhD student, civil engineering;
- Second place: Preet Patel, second-year master's student, civil engineering;
- Third place: Zainab Fatmi, second-year master's student, electrical & computer engineering; and
- People's Choice: Arefeh Shamskhany, second-year PhD student, civil engineering.



PhD student [Monique Attrux](#) of the Department of English was named the inaugural recipient of the Vivienne Poy Hakka Graduate Research Award from the York Centre for Asian Research (YCAR). Attrux's research focuses on the relationship between language and identity in Chinese-Canadian literature.



Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies Assistant Professor [Matthew Leisinger](#) has earned the 2020 Sanders Prize in Early Modern Philosophy for his essay "Cudworthian Consciousness."



Eighteen members of the [York University Retirees' Association](#) (YURA) and one University staff member participated in the Scotiabank Charity Challenge, and raised more than \$24,000 in funds to help endow the three Graduate Student Awards that YURA funds annually.



[York Lions student-athletes](#) raised a record-breaking donation of \$6,500 for nine families in the local community through the Adopt-a-Family program. The initiative returned for its sixth year of operation with modified goals in order to safely carry out the program in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

APPOINTMENTS



Professor [Marco Fiola](#) was appointed for a 5.5-year term as Principal of Glendon Campus.



[Parissa Safai](#), an associate professor in the School of Kinesiology and Health Sciences, was appointed Special Advisor to the President for Academic Continuity Planning and COVID-19 Response.



Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change Professor [Jennifer Hyndman](#) was appointed Associate Vice-President Research. In this role, Professor Hyndman will help facilitate the promotion of strategic research development at York and lead the development of research policy that bridges the needs of researchers and the institution.



Faculty of Education Professor [Kate Tilleczeck](#) has been appointed Research Advisory Council Chair at Pathways to Education Canada, a charitable organization that helps youth in low-income communities graduate from high school and build the foundation for a successful future.