

PRESIDENT'S KUDOS REPORT

JANUARY 2023



Header photo: Amy Brathwaite / @amybrathwaite



York alumnus, the [Honourable Michael H. Tulloch](#) (BA '89, LLB '89), was appointed as the new Chief Justice of Ontario and President of the Court of Appeal for Ontario. In 2012, Tulloch became the first Black Canadian to sit on a provincial appellate court in Canada. Chief Justices and Associate Chief Justices in Canada are responsible for the leadership and administration of their courts. They also serve as members of the Canadian Judicial Council, which works to improve the quality of judicial services in the superior courts of Canada.



Photo: Amy Brathwaite



Photo: Supreme Court of Canada

York alumna [Birgit Uwaila Umaigba](#) (Med '18, BScN '16) received The Doris Anderson Award for being a voice for Canadian nurses who are on the front lines of pandemic care. A second York Alumna, Michelle O'Bonsawin (LLM '14), the first Indigenous justice named to the Supreme Court of Canada in August 2022, was given an honorable mention for being a champion of Indigenous oppression. In 2021, Chatelaine magazine renamed their annual Women of the Year honours to celebrate Doris Anderson, who began as the magazine's senior editor in 1957. Over the course of her 20-year tenure as editor of the magazine, Anderson became well-known for her tenacity, grit and determination. Anderson published features on abortion, birth control and reproductive rights, equal pay, universal childcare and more, long before many of these topics were covered by other forms of media. Anderson died in 2007, the awards commemorate her enduring legacy.



[Collette Murray](#), a graduate program assistant in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Critical Disability Studies in the Faculty of Health, was named among six recipients of the 2022 Women Who Rock Awards and one of six changemakers for racial equity as the recipient of the 2022 Award for Racial Justice in Creative Arts presented by Urban Alliance on Race Relations. Murray was recognized for her efforts in cultural education, and amplifying Black arts and diasporic styles of African dance vernacular. Murray is an artist-scholar, dance educator and cultural arts programmer with a performance background range in Caribbean Folk, traditional West African, and other diasporic dance styles with past Toronto-based companies.



[David Hazell](#), of the York University English Language Institute (YUELI), is the recipient of the Sparks of Excellence Award from the Teachers of English as a Second Language Association of Ontario (TESL). The award recognizes the “excellence and commitment of TESL Ontario members who provide outstanding educational experiences to their students or who demonstrate exceptional leadership/mentoring expertise towards their colleagues and student teachers in a manner that goes above and beyond the day to day duties of their job.” Hazell joined York in 2021 and is the program manager of English for academic purposes at YUELI, where he manages the academic program assisting international students in their pathway to degree programs at York University.



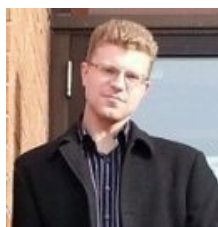
Faculty of Science Associate Professor in the Department of Biology, [Sapna Sharma](#), received the 2022 Supervisor of the Year award from the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS). FGS bestows the award annually upon an individual who has demonstrated outstanding support for postdoctoral scholars at York University, exceeding general supervisory expectations. Sharma consistently went above and beyond her expected supervisor role, supporting the members of her lab, Sharma Lakes, by advocating for their personal, as well as professional, career development. This dedication was especially crucial within the context of the global pandemic and its impact on mental, financial and overall well-being.



After only one year at York, [Marissa Largo](#), assistant professor of creative technologies in the School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design, took home two awards this November at the 2022 Galleries Ontario/Ontario Galleries Awards gala. Largo won the Exhibition Design and Installation (Budget over \$20,000) award for her curatorial project at the Varley Art Gallery of Markham, *Elusive Desires: Ness Lee + Florence Yee*. Largo also took home the award for Curatorial Writing, Text Between 2,000 and 5,000 Words, for her essay about the show, “Elusive Desires: Queer Feminist Asian Diaspora and Suburban Possibilities.” She was also a finalist for Best Exhibition, Budget over \$20,000 (Thematic).

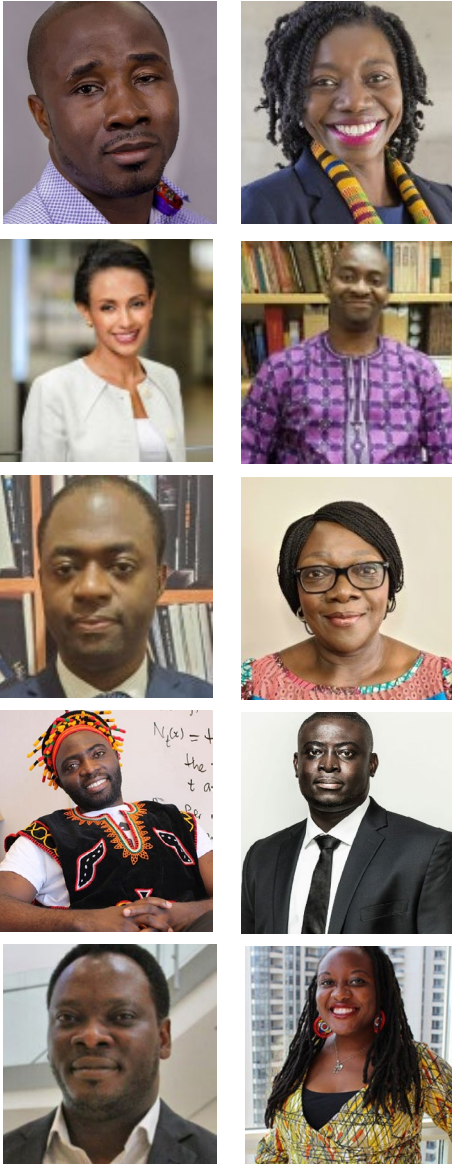


University Professor [Dawn Bazely](#) in the Faculty of Science joins the ranks of illustrious Canadians like Nobel Laureate John Charles Polanyi and astronaut Chris Hadfield as the recipient of the 2022 Sandford Fleming Medal for excellence in science communication from the Royal Canadian Institute for Science. The selection committee was unanimous in its decision, noting Bazely’s impressive, diverse range of activities as a science communicator and activist for more than 30 years.



[New research by a team of chemists](#) at York University comprised of Banting Fellow Vasily Panferov and postdoctoral Fellow Nikita Ivanov and led by Distinguished Research Professor Sergey Krylov in the Department of Chemistry, has now addressed the limitations of current rapid antigen tests, reducing the potential for false-negative results. The research team invented an enhancement step for lateral flow immunoassay technology, whereby the sensitivity is increased by 25 to near 100 per cent. This step could be performed by an untrained person, in a matter of two minutes.





A group of professors affiliated in various ways with York University's African Studies Program join forces to create a unique, interdisciplinary research cluster focusing on adaptive knowledge, response, recovery and resilience in transnational Black communities. [The Overcoming Epidemics: Transnational Black Communities' Response, Recovery and Resilience cluster](#) was born in response to a call from the vice-president, research and innovation to accelerate interdisciplinary research with a focus on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals around key institutional strategic initiatives. The group is currently working in partnership with the Black Creek Community Health Centre in Toronto and leveraging ongoing collaborations to consolidate/establish research partnerships around Africa. Members include:

- Mohamed Sesay, LA&PS Professor
- Sylvia Bawa, LA&PS Professor
- Mary Goitom, LA&PS Professor
- Uwafiokun Idemudia, LA&PS Professor
- Nathanael Ojong, LA&PS Professor
- Gertrude Mianda, Glendon Professor
- Jude Kong, Faculty of Science Professor
- Solomon Boakye-Yiadom, Lassonde Professor
- Professor Oghenowede Eyawo, Faculty of Health
- Oyemolade Osibodu, Faculty of Education Professor



York Research & Innovation launched the inaugural issue of [ASCEND Magazine - Ideas for Positive Change](#). ASCEND Capstone Magazine is a bi-annual magazine designed to showcase cutting-edge research and innovation activities in which York's students, faculty, alumni, and staff are engaged. York is an international leader in research output, the recipient of countless research awards and accolades, and the creator of thriving innovation units. The magazine will reflect York's commitment to ensuring that our research efforts drive positive change through the sharing and application of our work.

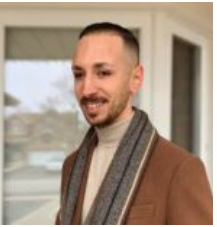


[Jennifer Neilson](#), head coach of York University Lions women's volleyball program since 2018, was named the new head coach of Team Ontario's indoor volleyball program for the 2025 Canada Summer Games in St. John's, Newfoundland. Neilson has coached at all levels of the Canadian high-performance pathway. Prior to joining the Lions, Neilson had a heavy involvement with the Ontario Volleyball Association.



The annual [School of Public Policy and Administration Student, Alumni and Community Recognition Awards](#) ceremony was held at the end of November, focusing on the importance of leadership and resilience in public service while dealing with the ever-present effects of the pandemic. Award recipients included:

- Orelie Di Mavindi (MPPAL '19), Foster Greene Award
- Marc Rondeau, Practicum Honouree Award
- Rushell Dissanayake (BPA student), Practicum Excellence Award
- Rean Pelayo (BPA student), Practicum Excellence Award
- Udoka Achilike, Lorne Foster Award in Public Policy
- Roberto DiGiovanni, Undergraduate Student Award
- Kiersten Allore-Engel (MPPAL '20), Emerging Leader Award.
- Paula Tablon Modica, Graduate Student Award
- Jennifer Holmes Weier, The Best Major Research Paper Award
- Asare Kester-Akrofi (MPPAL '20), The Alumni Recognition Award



The Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA) elected Professor and York Research Chair in Pluralism and Public Law at Osgoode Hall Law School, [Benjamin Berger](#), as vice-president for the period 2023-2024. JSCA is an intergovernmental body of the Inter-American System with technical and operational autonomy, created by the OAS General Assembly in 1999, whose mission is to support the processes of reform and modernization of justice systems in the Americas.



TIARA owner and ELLA participant [Zuly Matallana](#) was selected as the one of the Top Female Entrepreneurs To Look Out In 2023 by *The NYC Journal*. Matallana has been recognized internationally for her drive to transform the way women care for their hair, while reducing single-use plastics, which led to the creation of TIARA shower caps. She was a participant of York University's ELLA program, Ontario's first accelerator focused on supporting women-led product and service-based businesses.



Two YSpace startup companies, [Mero Technologies Inc. and Able Innovations Inc.](#), were selected as two of eight companies to receive \$14 million in funding from the Minister of Federal Development. As a result of this investment, these companies will be able to grow digital and manufacturing solutions, move towards green operations, enhance data in healthcare settings and improve monitoring and tracking software, while also creating over 230 jobs across the greater Toronto area.



[Linda Peake](#), professor in the Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change and director of the City Institute, was awarded the American Association of Geographers' Lifetime Achievement Honors for her scholarly contributions to feminist and urban geographies, and for a career dedicated to extending equity, diversity and inclusion at her institution and across the discipline of geography. Peake's four decades of scholarship have spanned feminist, social and urban geography, studies of race and racism, and mental health.



Marketing News Canada named associate professor of marketing at Schulich School of Business, [Ela Veresiu](#), as one of 2022's Top 10 PR, Marketing and Communications Professors & Instructors in Canada. Marketing News Canada began a search for the top professors and instructors across the country to acknowledge the importance and growth of women in educational positions across Canada.



The winners of the Lassonde School of Engineering's second annual [Research Photo Contest](#) have been announced. Hosted by the Research Office, with the support of the Planning, Academic Resources & Research (PARR) Committee, this contest aims to promote Lassonde research projects and successes both within and beyond the School. The winners are:

- First Place & People's Choice Award: Preparation For Observation Night by Randa Qashoa and Michael Stewart, Master's students, Nanosatellite Research Lab, Earth and Space Science and Engineering.
- Second Place: Dendrite Structures in Organic Electrochemical Transistors, by Mohammad Nazari, Master's student, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.
- Third Place (tied): Before Take Off!, by Sogand Talebi, Master's student, Earth and Space Science and Engineering; and Smiling printed electrode "don't worry, be happy", by Milad Ghalamboran, PhD candidate, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.



Nigerian lawyer and Assistant Professor at Canada's Osgoode Law School, [Rabiya Akande](#), has announced that she will be launching an African International Legal History Initiative at the African Institute of International Law with the support of a fellowship and generous grant award from the Gerda Henkel Foundation and the African Union.



Lassonde School of Engineering announced the recipients of the [Fall 2022 BEST Entrance Award](#). This award recognizes students for their entrepreneurial initiatives, including leadership pursuits and/or involvement in enterprising activities at their high school, and is awarded to incoming students at the Lassonde School of Engineering. The Fall 2022 Best Entrance Award recipients are:

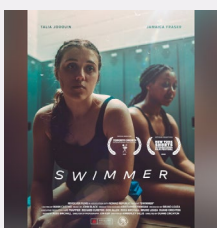
- Hannah Alli, Engineering
- Sagar Saha, Computer Science
- Jayant Punia, Software Engineering
- Amely Su, Engineering
- Toby Carter, Computer Science
- Carlos Santiago, Engineering
- Shiza Shaikh, Computer Science
- Behrouz Homam, Mechanical Engineering
- MD Faiaz, Software Engineering
- Dylan Gauvin, Computer Science
- Aayn Mohammed, Computer Science
- Joshua Mullin, Space Engineering
- Rishit Shah, Computer Science
- Umer Shaikh, Engineering



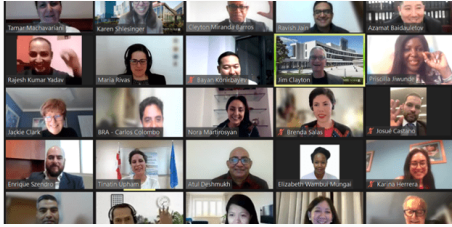
Four graduate students at York University's Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research, [Eric Asempah](#), [Hillary Birch](#), [Yuliya Chorna](#) and [Nilanjana Ganguli](#), presented their global health research, share more about their research journeys and discuss their progress during the third annual Global Health Graduate Scholars Symposium. The Dahdaleh Institute supports graduate research and scholarly and creative activities in line with the three themes of the Institute – planetary health, global health and humanitarianism, and global health foresighting – at York University. The Dahdaleh Global Health Graduate Scholarship was created to attract exceptional incoming and continuing domestic and international graduate research students to the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research. The scholarship is granted annually to graduate students who demonstrate outstanding academic achievement in global health research.



[Felicia Mings](#), curator at the Art Gallery of York University, has received a prestigious Curatorial Research Fellowship from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Over the next year, Mings will embark on a new research project focusing on the work of influential Guyanese artist, anthropologist and novelist Denis Williams (1923-98). The project will examine the international significance of Williams' practice through an analysis of the artist's illustrative works and their relationships to African and Caribbean literature. The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts mission is the advancement of the visual arts. The foundation manages an innovative and flexible grants program while also preserving Warhol's legacy through creative and responsible licensing policies and extensive scholarly research for ongoing catalogue raisonné projects.



[Talia Jodouin](#), a first-year film and media studies student at York University from Timmins already has her first starring film role. Jodouin plays Kai in "The Swimmer", which was recently at the Toronto Short Film Festival and is heading out on the short festival circuit, including the New York Shorts festival in early 2023.



The graduation of the 2022 cohort of the [Sustainable Infrastructure Fellowship Program](#) (SIFP) was celebrated on December 15th, 2022. The Fellows are Emerging Market senior government and agency officials, representing 18 countries globally. Notably, the 2022 cohort included a Fellow representing the Indigenous Communities of Canada, Government of Nunavut, in recognition of the Indigenous Infrastructure Gap. The graduates are awarded the prestigious Masters Certificate in Sustainable Infrastructure Development and Finance from the Schulich School of Business, York University, for completing the intensive Sustainable Infrastructure Fellowship Program.



Tracey Taylor-O'Reilly, assistant vice-president, Continuing Studies, is leaving York university to take on the role of president & chief executive officer at [Pathways to Education Canada](#), a national organization that works to create positive social change by breaking the cycle of poverty through education. She will be wrapping up her responsibilities at York the week of February 17, 2023. Recognized for her leadership, the success of the School of Continuing Studies and her response during the pandemic, in 2021 Ms. Taylor-O'Reilly was honoured with the WXN Top 100 Most Powerful Women in Canada award and with a Stevie award as the global Female Executive of the Year in the large government and non-profit category. We wish her well as she moves on to her new leadership role.



Associate Professor [Sarah Barrett](#) is the recipient of the 2022 Faculty of Education Dean's Research Impact Award (Established stream). The Dean's Research Impact Award is awarded annually to a tenure stream member of the Faculty of Education in the Emerging and Established scholar streams, whose sustained programs of research displayed significant impact, broadly defined and relative to their career stage. Barrett's nominator's highlighted that they were particularly moved by her recent report, *Emergency Distance Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic*, highlighting that it is one of the first of its kind to offer a comprehensive analysis of teachers' experiences at one of the most difficult times in the profession.



[Lauren Castelino](#), Masters of Environmental Studies candidate at York University with a specialization in Business Sustainability & Social Change was named a Top 25 Under 25 Environmentalist by *The Starfish*. This award is given to remarkable environmentalists across the country. Castelino was recognized for her work as the Co-Executive Director of Regenesys, one of Canada's largest student-led environmental organizations and the founder of one of its recently acquired initiatives, the Green Career Centre. Over more than four years, Lauren has reached thousands of youth through developing environmental entrepreneurship programs and sharing green career development resources.



[Team Schulich](#) finished in First Place in Academics at 2023 MBA Games. Graduate students competed at the 35th annual MBA Games, hosted in-person by the Schulich School of Business. Considered the largest MBA competition in Canada, this year's three-day competition featured 14 teams representing leading business schools from across the country competing in Academic, Athletic and Spirit challenges for the coveted Queen's Cup. Under the strong leadership of Meenakshi Kukreja (MBA '23), Team Schulich performed consistently across all categories. Team Schulich finished in third place overall, ending up first in Academics and third in Spirit.