

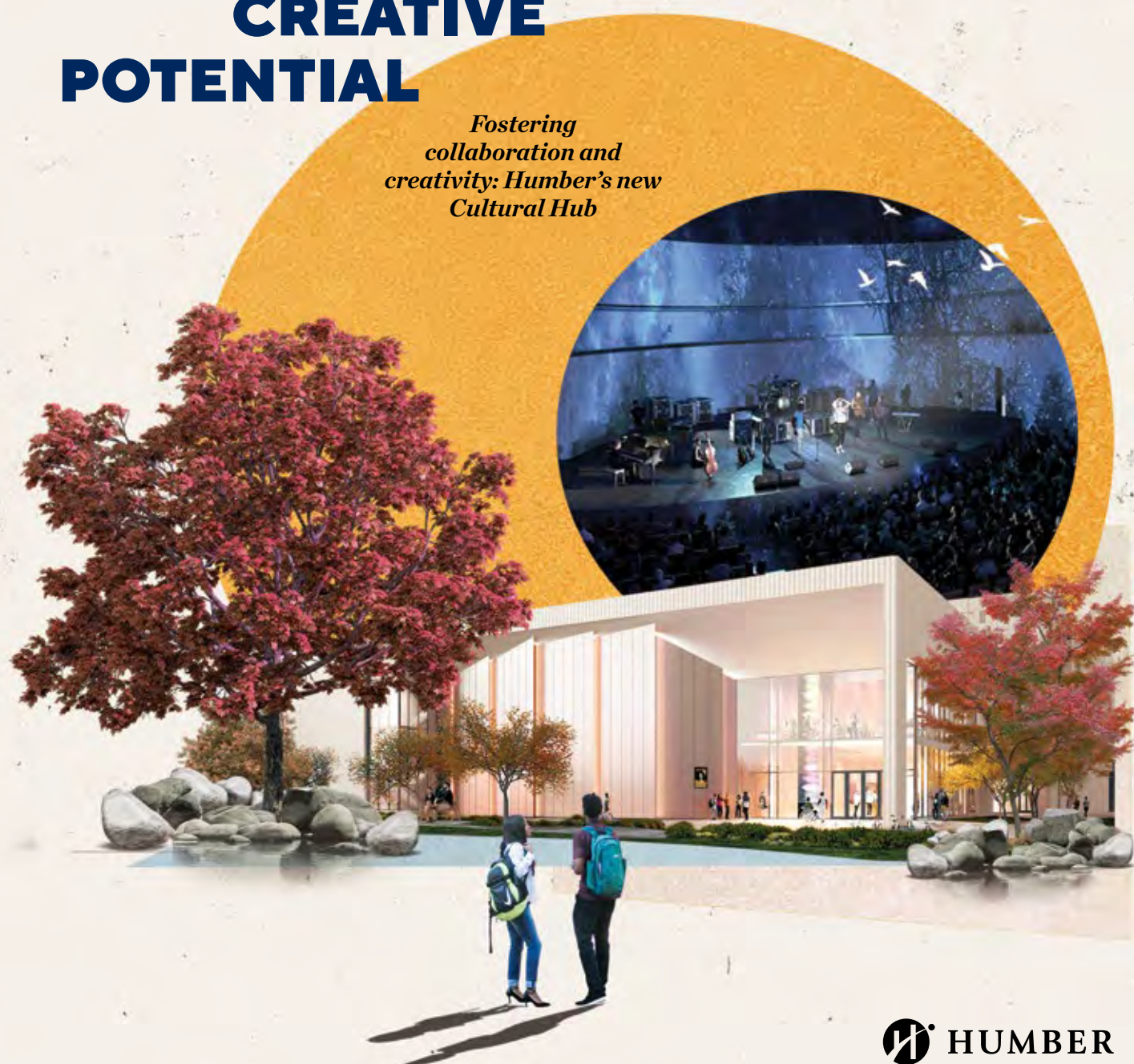
HUMBER MAGAZINE

A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY P. 8 | HUMBER'S HISTORY OF HARMONY P. 14 | ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT P. 24

FALL/WINTER 2023

UNLEASHING CREATIVE POTENTIAL

*Fostering
collaboration and
creativity: Humber's new
Cultural Hub*



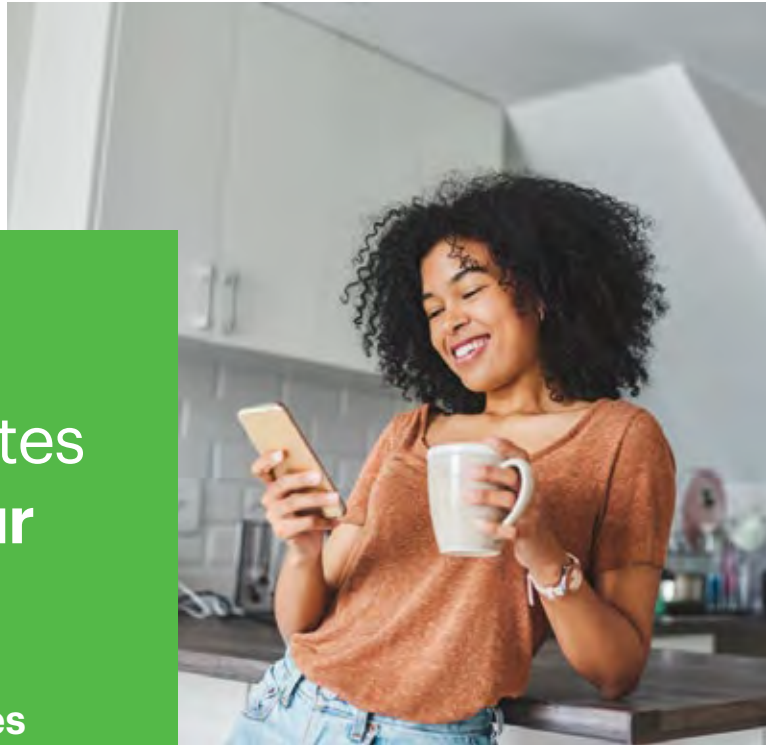


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HUMBER MAGAZINE

A Publication for Humber
College Alumni and Friends
Fall/Winter 2023

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Humber Magazine is published
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to opt in to receiving
the magazine electronically.

Publications Mail Agreement
Number: 40063415
Charitable Registration Number:
10749 7273 RR0001.

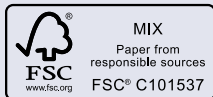


Photo: (top right) Jill Rosenberg. Rendering (bottom right) Diamond Schmitt Architects.



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of donors creates
Unlimited
possibilities for
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

IT'S AN EXCITING TIME FOR

Humber as we enter an era of transformation and revitalization. For decades, Lakeshore Campus has been central to arts and culture at Humber with a strong history of talented musicians and artists who have walked through its hallways.

To keep up with ever-changing times and to help students reach their full potential, Humber is embarking on a new type of change

to advance the arts even further—the building of the Cultural Hub.

The Cultural Hub will bring together students, faculty and the community through state-of-the-art equipment, new technologies and new ways for collaboration and creativity that will provide access to arts and culture in Toronto's west end (see page 8).

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of music education at

Humber. Over the years, Humber's music program has reached new heights through jazz ensembles, big bands, and music festival performances, as well as visits from legendary artists such as Duke Ellington (see pages 14, 34). Today, music education at Humber continues to grow and includes a community music school that makes music accessible to children and youth in the GTA (see page 23).

Our success and progress to date have been supported by Humber's Campaign leadership and Board of Governors. I would like to share some wonderful news that Ana Fernandes, regional Vice-President, North York Market, BMO Financial Group will be the new Unlimited Campaign Co-Chair. Anthony Longo, Humber alumnus and president and CEO of Longo's, will be moving on to the role of Honorary Co-Chair. I thank Anthony for his dedication and support and look forward to continuing his partnership with Humber (see page 17).

And I could not be prouder of our Humber alumni. From attending the first Alumni Beyond meet and greet in Montreal to watching Divine Lightbody, a Humber Music alumna, sing the anthem at a Blue Jays' game (see page 30), it's true that Humber graduates get noticed. This year, we also nominated seven outstanding alumni for the Premier's Awards (see page 24).

Humber has successfully raised \$89.2 million towards the original \$50 million Unlimited Campaign goal. This is an impressive feat and illustrates that the Humber community stands united when it comes to giving back, helping our students find inspiration, and shining a light on our talented alumni.

I hope you enjoy the latest issue of *Humber Magazine*. ●

Dr. Ann Marie Vaughan
President and CEO
Humber College



Humber News.

MAKING HISTORY

JUNE 8, 2023, SAW THE official installation ceremony of Dr. Ann Marie Vaughan as Humber College president and CEO and the first woman to hold the position in Humber's history. The ceremony included the bestowing of an honorary degree to Dr. Jean Augustine, who made history as the first Black woman to be elected to the House of Commons as MP for the Etobicoke-Lakeshore riding. Augustine famously introduced the motion to designate February as Black History Month in Canada, among several other notable achievements.

Humber also announced the establishment of a new convocation award in her name. The Dr. Jean Augustine Leadership Award will be presented annually to a graduating student from a program at the Lakeshore Campus who demonstrates a commitment to academic excellence and inclusive leadership at the College or in the community. ●



Dr. Jean
Augustine



Humber's new Cultural Hub at Lakeshore Campus is currently in phase one of the capital development project.

Change is in the Air

A NEW DEVELOPMENT IS currently underway at Lakeshore Campus. Construction of Humber's Cultural Hub, slated for phase one completion in spring 2024 and phase two completion in 2026 (see page 8), will include a new home for the creative arts programs at Humber.

Currently in phase one of the capital development project, Scott Valens, Director, Capital Development, is excited to report that the interior academic wing of the Cultural Hub is near completion with energy-efficient windows installed and exterior cladding well underway. Drywalling continues in the 300-bed Student

Residence portion of the building.

Phase one of the construction will see the completion of the Recital Hall. "Students and faculty are excited about the new space and the acoustic properties that it brings to the campus," says Valens. The 140-seat Hall will include a recording studio with a large stage to accommodate student year-end performances.

"The Recital Hall will provide dedicated space reserved for music faculty and students and have a big impact on their development as performing and recording artists," says Valens.

For more information, see "A Culture of Creativity." ●



HUMBER MENTOR WINS LITERARY AWARD

KIM FU, A MENTOR WITH HUMBER College's Creative Writing graduate certificate program has been named winner of the 26th annual Danuta Gleed Literary Award. Fu's book, *Lesser Known Monsters of the 21st Century*, took home the \$10,000 prize, along with the award, which recognizes the best first collection of short fiction by a Canadian author.

The award was created as a celebration of the life of Danuta Gleed, a writer whose short fiction won several awards before her passing in 1996. Past winners include Scotiabank Giller Prize-winning author Ian Williams and Humber instructor David Bezmozgis.

Bezmozgis is creative director with the Humber School for Writers. After reading Fu's novel *The Lost Girls of Camp Forevermore*, which he loved, he invited the author to be a mentor at Humber.

"Kim is a remarkable and versatile writer who is a terrific poet and wonderful novelist," said Bezmozgis. "I'm really pleased to see Kim receiving this recognition."

Humber's mentors work one-to-one with students via a two-semester online intensive mentorship. Students in the program improve their writing skills by working through a book-length project with feedback and guidance from their mentor. ●

To learn more about the Humber School for Writers, visit mediaarts.humber.ca/future-students/explore/school-for-writers.

Revolutionizing affordable housing for students

HUMBER COLLEGE AND SPACESHARED HAVE joined forces to connect students who need affordable places to live with older adults who have available space.

SpacesShared is a secure and user-friendly technology platform that helps older adults who are interested in home sharing connect with verified student guests. SpacesShared and the team handle the entire process—from profile viewing and messaging to virtual meetings, home-sharing agreements, rental payments, and monthly check-ins. Older adults can supplement their income by offering a spare bedroom to students at an affordable rate. Reduced rent options are available when students contribute to household chores.

"Tackling the issue of affordable housing for students is critical in this important time in their lives," says Jason Hunter, vice-president of Students and Institutional Planning at Humber College. "The partnership and platform offer an innovative solution that addresses student housing needs in a safe way, while also benefiting our valued seniors living in the community."

Affordable housing is a significant challenge and the SpacesShared platform helps domestic and international students find a new place to call home and encourages intergenerational relationships that can help alleviate the social isolation that both hosts and students can sometimes feel. ●

For more information, visit humber.ca/advancementandalumni/alumni/news-and-events/news/humber-college-and-spaceshared-partner-to-offer-homesharing-platform-that-connects-students-with-older-adults.



Photo: Kim Fu courtesy of L. D'Alessandro.



This year, Humber student fellows conceived of an immersive, interactive installation that spoke to the curatorial theme of 'Breaking Ground', which explored peace, joy, wonder, and the similarities between all of us.

MAKING THE CAMPUS THEIR CANVAS



“TO GET A PROJECT INTO

Nuit Blanche is kind of like [winning] the gold medal of the ‘arts Olympics’.” That’s how Jennifer Gordon, Director of Humber’s Centre for Creative Business Innovation (CCBI), describes the impact of getting an art project in Nuit Blanche and the influence it has on a student’s life.

Humber’s Nuit Blanche Fellowship, which runs for 14 weeks over the summer, offers Humber students the opportunity to co-create an installation to be considered for inclusion in Nuit Blanche, the City of Toronto’s all-night contemporary art event. On September 23, 2023, for the second year in a row, Humber’s Lakeshore Campus was a major venue for Nuit Blanche. For both years that the fellowships were offered, Humber student exhibits were selected and put on display for the whole city to see.

The Fellowship is one of six offered by the Humber CCBI and Humber Galleries, providing students the

opportunity to work with a diverse group of peers to develop solutions for a client or project. “They’re engineered to be purposefully diverse because creativity comes from difference,” Gordon says.

Another fellowship includes the Intercultural and Creative Music Fellowship, offered in partnership with the Aga Khan Museum, to build greater understanding of Muslim heritage through music. Guest musicians are flown in from around the world to teach students different ways of composing and playing music.

Students don’t have to be musicians to participate. “One of the fellows wrote poetry that got picked up as lyrics,” says Gordon. This year’s final project was displayed at the Aga Khan Museum on September 17.

From murals to sculptures and performance art, the CCBI believes in bringing all creative projects into spaces outside the classroom, particularly public

spaces. The tagline they’ve created is “Campus as a Canvas”.

The Cultural Hub, currently being built at Humber, will include a new CCBI presentation room with glass retractable panels for arts organizations, business and the community to come together and work with students and faculty on arts and cultural projects. With the revitalization of Lakeshore Campus, students will have the tools necessary to bring their canvas to life. ●

Photos: Chris Clay, Jill Rosenberg.



A Culture of Creativity

By Ania Szado

A future of collaboration and innovation awaits with the building of Humber's new Cultural Hub

The Cultural Hub's multi-purpose Performance Hall with immersion technology.



An ambitious project is underway to set the stage for decades of exciting advances in creativity on campus and beyond—the Cultural Hub at Humber.

As Humber's largest capital investment to date, the Cultural Hub will promote synergies between students, industry professionals, and the communities of Etobicoke and the Greater Toronto Area, bringing together music, creative and performing arts, TV and film, and content-creation programs within a single state-of-the-art location at Lakeshore Campus.

The 365,000-square-foot Cultural Hub will be unveiled in two distinct phases. Phase one, slated for completion in spring 2024, includes an eight-storey building with a Student Residence, Recital Hall, recording studio, gym, cafeteria, and teaching and office spaces. Phase two will feature a multi-purpose Performance Hall, teaching and office spaces, three film studios, a Screening Room for student and industry use, the Comedy Cabaret, mixing and

editing suites and practice rooms, as well as the Centre for Creative Business Innovation (CCBI), and is scheduled to be completed in summer 2026.

Students from Humber's Music, Film & Television, and Media Production programs will gain a state-of-the-art setting in which to hone their skills using the latest technology and equipment. In addition, professional artists and creative industries will be able to collaborate, mentor and share their knowledge with students.

With a 300-bed Student Residence, amenities, such as a gym, and social areas designed to encourage interaction, the Hub brings together every element needed to ignite collaboration and facilitate creativity.

BEYOND THE BUILDING

"Humber's new Cultural Hub will be a facility geared to bring together our communities and industry partners. More importantly, it creates possibilities for future generations," says Gina Antonacci, senior vice-president, Academic.

The multi-purpose Performance Hall

Seating Gallery: These seats are fully accessible and offer an intimate view of the stage with movable seating. The gallery can also be used as additional performance space.

Retractable Film Screen: Screen lowers into the room for large screening or for use in simulcast events.



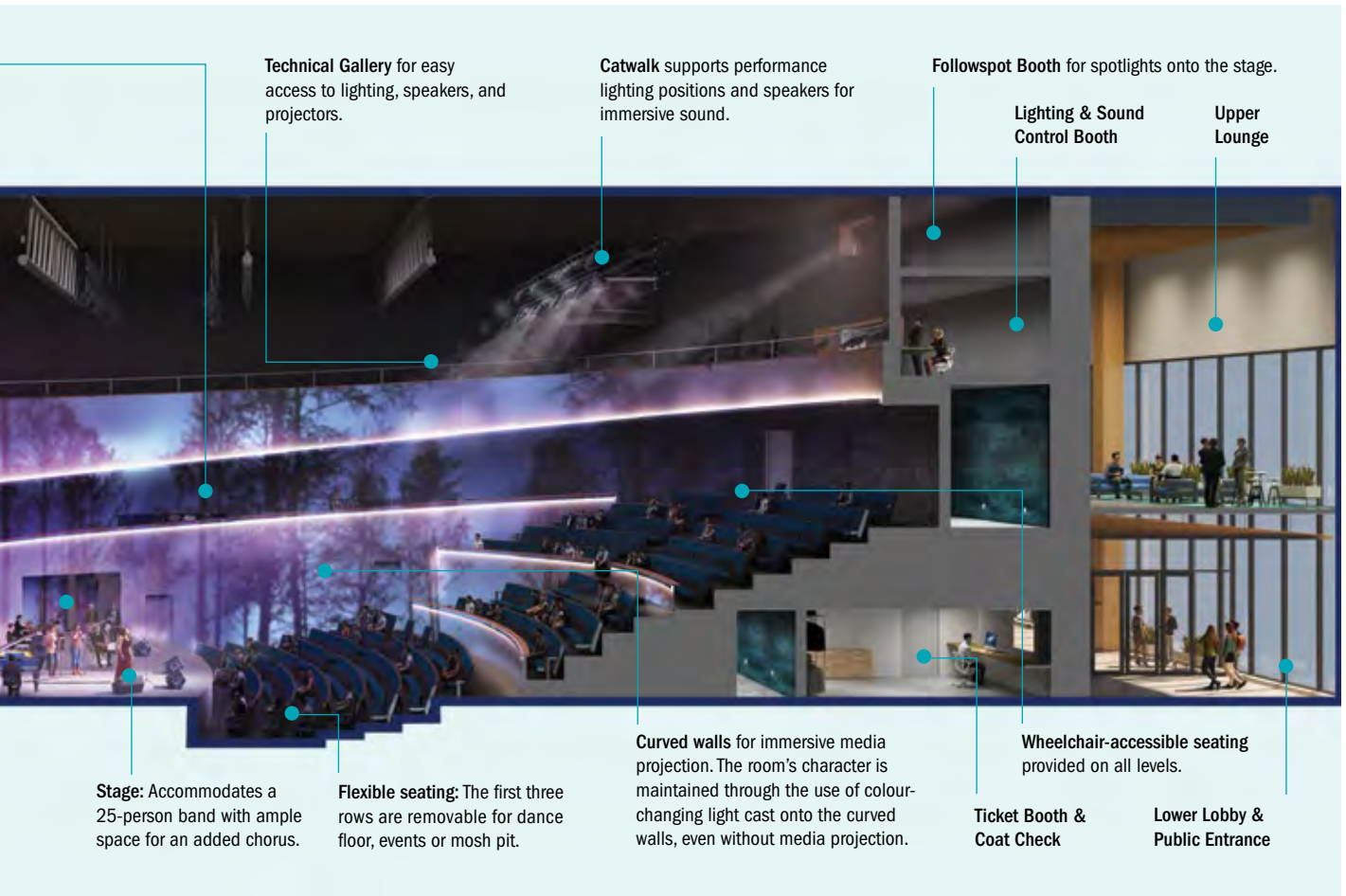
Film Studios functions independently or provides warm-up space in the backstage zone.

Backstage Corridor wraps around the stage, providing easy access to all stage entries.

Access to backstage dressing rooms and film studio.

View of the Cultural Hub West Entrance and 500-seat multi-purpose Performance Hall.





All renderings by Diamond Schmitt Architects

With the expansion of Lakeshore Campus, Dale McDowell of Diamond Schmitt Architects, the lead architect on the project, believes the Cultural Hub will be much more than just a new building on campus. “It’s going to be a game changer,” she says.

Nowhere will this be more obvious than the multi-purpose Performance Hall. Seating 500, the Performance Hall will draw diverse audiences and performers from afar while also connecting Lakeshore Campus with the community. Etobicoke and GTA residents’ day-to-day lives will be enhanced by opportunities to enjoy immersive experiences of music, creative and performing arts, TV, film, and multimedia programs, at the single state-of-the-art location.

Infused with the storytelling power of immersive audio, light,

music, and film, the multi-purpose Performance Hall will provide an all-encompassing experience for the audience with projection mapping technology that will allow visuals to be projected on the hall’s curved walls.

Humber’s Faculty of Media and Creative Arts (FMCA) offers more than 50 programs. Students and instructors will find their needs understood and supported exceptionally well in the Hub’s built-for-purpose spaces, including computer and music labs, studios, and shared spaces for music, film, TV, comedy, theatre, and visual arts students. There will also be three film studios equipped for CGI, motion-capture, talk and live-audience shows. “The facility will enhance our teaching and learning environment while creating opportunities for

The 30-seat Screening Room will be used for members of Humber's Film & Television and Media Production programs. The space is key to enhancing current and new opportunities to collaborate with industry and community organizations.



greater collaboration,” says Guillermo Acosta, senior dean, FMCA.

Phase one also includes a 140-seat Recital Hall with a mixing/mastering suite. The Hall is designed to the highest acoustic levels and equipped to record live performances from jazz ensembles to big bands.

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS

Even the smallest elements of the Cultural Hub are well thought-out and reflective of Humber's values. A three-storey Exchange space is the spine of the building along with the Cultural Hub's special program spaces—the Recital Hall, the Indigenous classroom, the CCBI, and the multi-purpose Performance Hall. Colourful river rocks and recycled glass will be scattered and embedded into the concrete floor of the Exchange to subtly mark the entrance into these special spaces. The Exchange recalls the 'carrying place trail', a historic portage route beside the Humber River. The sparkling rock and glass inlays will also highlight the entrance to an Indigenous classroom whose layout is set up for learning by a traditional medicine wheel.

In addition to spaces that expand artistic expression and experience, the Cultural Hub will include a Student Residence that boasts sustainable, low-carbon building materials.

AWARD-WINNING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

The Cultural Hub has already been lauded for its excellence in sustainability-focused construction practices, winning a silver at the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics Awards of Excellence.

The project's sustainability aspects are being overseen by Rachel Lieberman, vice-president, Project Services at Introba. As a Humber alumna (Sustainable Energy and Building Technology '12) who has been involved with past sustainability initiatives at Humber, Lieberman is pleased to again partner with the College.

The Cultural Hub upholds Humber's sustainability commitment as a net zero carbon building—a critical component in the building's LEED v4 Platinum certification target and Canada Green Building Council's Zero Carbon Building Design Standard.





The 35-seat Comedy Cabaret, complete with a low stage and cabaret-style seating, will serve as a realistic training ground for the next generation of stand-up comedians and improvisational performers.



Stage view of the 140-seat Recital Hall. The Hall is designed to the highest acoustic levels and equipped to record live performances from jazz ensembles to big bands.

Among the most significant and sustainable material choices is the student residence mass timber structure. Mass timber emits significantly less carbon into the atmosphere than other materials like concrete or steel and is also the lightest structural system of the three which means smaller, lighter concrete foundations are required.

The building is run on electric power. A large geothermal field underneath the building will greatly reduce the power and equipment demands and will pull or push heat and cold from the earth.

In addition, solar panels on the roof will produce six to nine per cent of the total energy consumption of the building. High performance exterior walls, windows and roof create a well-insulated building that will have significantly less heat loss or gain. High efficiency lighting with occupancy sensors will reduce the power usage of the building, while low-flow water fixtures will further cut waste and uphold the ambitious sustainability standards.

Clearly, the Cultural Hub at Humber will be much more than just a building. It will be the foundation of an innovative and collaborative creative future—with Humber graduates leading the way. ●

A HISTORY OF HARMONY

By Dr. Andrew Scott, Program Coordinator, Bachelor of Music

1970s

Although the idea to launch a music program began with Gordon Wragg, Humber College's first president and a former saxophonist, it was Earl Simard who brought in Tony Mergel, the pianist and composer, who became the first coordinator of a Humber Music program. Mergel developed a three-year diploma program in music performance and, in September 1972, Humber opened its doors to 46 first-year music diploma students.

The program attracted both local and American student applicants. By decade's close, Humber Music had been shaped by determined faculty, administration and program coordinators, with a successful foray into the recording world and a summer 1977 European tour that included an appearance at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland.

1980s

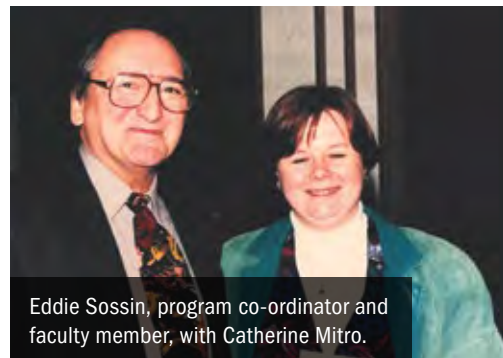
The 1980s saw pianist, saxophonist, arranger, and conductor Paul Read join the College as the diploma program's coordinator and, later, director. This was the heyday when Humber Music enjoyed a steady stream of inbound students due to its "top shelf" reputation for producing excellence.

Catherine Mitro, a former Humber accordion student turned faculty member, helped expand Humber Music's offerings by creating the College's now nationally renowned Community Music Program, providing a meaningful pathway to advance music study for children three to 18 years old. Community Music still runs vibrantly to this day receiving over 200 gold awards at MusicFest Nationals and saw Mitro earning Humber's Innovation of the Year award, a Premier's Award nomination, and an induction in the MusicFest Hall of Fame.

The decade also saw faculty member Ron Collier assemble a 19-person strong big band that performed over the summer at Vancouver's Expo '86. The experience culminated with an album produced by famed Canadian recording engineer Phil Sheridan at Vancouver's Little Mountain Sound Studios.



Jazz legend Duke Ellington with Ron Collier, Tony Mergel and Humber Music students.



Eddie Sossin, program co-ordinator and faculty member, with Catherine Mitro.



A Humber Music student with professor Brian Harris.



Humber Music students perform.

This year marks 50 years of music education at Humber College. What began as a single three-year diploma program has grown to an ecosystem of five credential and non-credential offerings. Today, Humber's music graduates have received international recognition, have been nominated for or won Grammys, Junos, and other awards, and Bachelor of Music graduates have been accepted into master's programs at Juilliard, McGill University and other institutions. Here's a tour of Humber Music through the decades.

1990s

College president, Dr. Robert "Squee" Gordon continued in the tradition of outstanding music and education by enticing acclaimed American jazz trumpeter, Charles Tolliver, to Toronto for a one-year teaching position—long before it was standard practice to bring in visiting professors. Humber Music moved south to the Lakeshore Campus, where it remains to this day.

Humber launched an uncredentialed "Master Studies" program featuring opportunities with Order of Canada member, Don Thompson, as well as visits from outside clinicians. Modelled after the renowned summer jazz programs at the Banff Centre, this short-lived program demonstrated that Humber Music was set up for good things leading up to the turn of the century.

2000s

In September 2000, trumpeter, Denny Christianson, joined as program coordinator, bringing an expansive background in education, adjudication, recording, and performance. Music was now a valued part of arts programming housed in the newly created School of Creative and Performing Arts (SCAPA), which also included comedy, theatre, and creative writing. Humber flourished in band competitions and MusicFest and concert tours to both British Columbia and the United Kingdom. Artist-in-Residence visits routinely brought in Grammy Award-winning musicians.

Humber's Bachelor of Applied Music (Contemporary Music) became one of the first degree programs offered in the college sector and opened its doors to 65 students in September 2005.

By September 2007, the establishment of the state-of-the-art Gordon Wragg Recording Studio provided a place for students to complete their capstone project, which also became a valuable calling card for a successful transition into the industry.



Marco Lappano, technical coordinator, preparing for a student performance.



The Gordon Wragg Recording Studio.



Ron Collier taught composition and arranging at Humber College from 1974 to 1994.

A HISTORY OF HARMONY

2010s

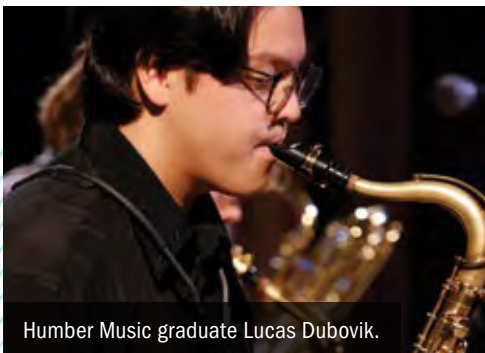
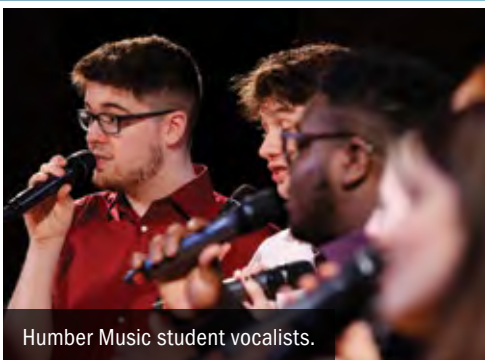
As Humber Music entered its third decade, the renowned Artist-in-Residence series was expanded to include Producer-in-Residence events. Humber Music expanded through outreach activities such as the Jazz in the Schools program and Next Generation Jazz Festival and its growing new full-time faculty were routinely recognized with teaching prizes, artistic grants, and Juno Awards.

Led by Andrew Scott and former SCAPA Dean Steve Bellamy, expansion into Music Business and Music Composition programs saw music represented at every credential level at the College. HumberTunes was created and streams thousands of hours of student-produced music. With former students entering prestigious graduate schools and others feted with Junos, Grammys, and Emmys, Humber Music was once again poised for greatness.

2020s

Thus far, the 2020s have been marked by a series of retirements, the hiring of new full-time faculty members, a marriage between SCAPA's arts programming and Humber's School of Media Studies into a combined Faculty of Media & Creative Arts, and a meaningful Humber Music-wide commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion that ensures the voices shaping the future of Humber Music reflect the diversity of the community to which Humber College belongs.

It's an oft-repeated truism that the only constant is change; however, at Humber Music, another constant is musical and teaching excellence, a dedication to student success like no other, and the promise of continuing Canada's finest music programs into the next 50 years, and beyond!



Gratitude

**THE GENEROSITY OF OUR DONORS IS TRANSFORMING
THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND CREATING UNLIMITED
POSSIBILITIES FOR HUMBER STUDENTS.**

Campaign Update



We are pleased to welcome Ana Fernandes, Regional Vice-President, North York Market, BMO Financial Group, as the new Co-Chair of the Unlimited Campaign. Ana will lead the Campaign Cabinet alongside Brien Gray, former EVP, Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

Ana is a long-time partner of Humber College and has been a member and former Chair of the College's Board of Governors since 2016. Her commitment to Humber and its students has been inspiring—including leading the search for Humber's fifth and first female president.

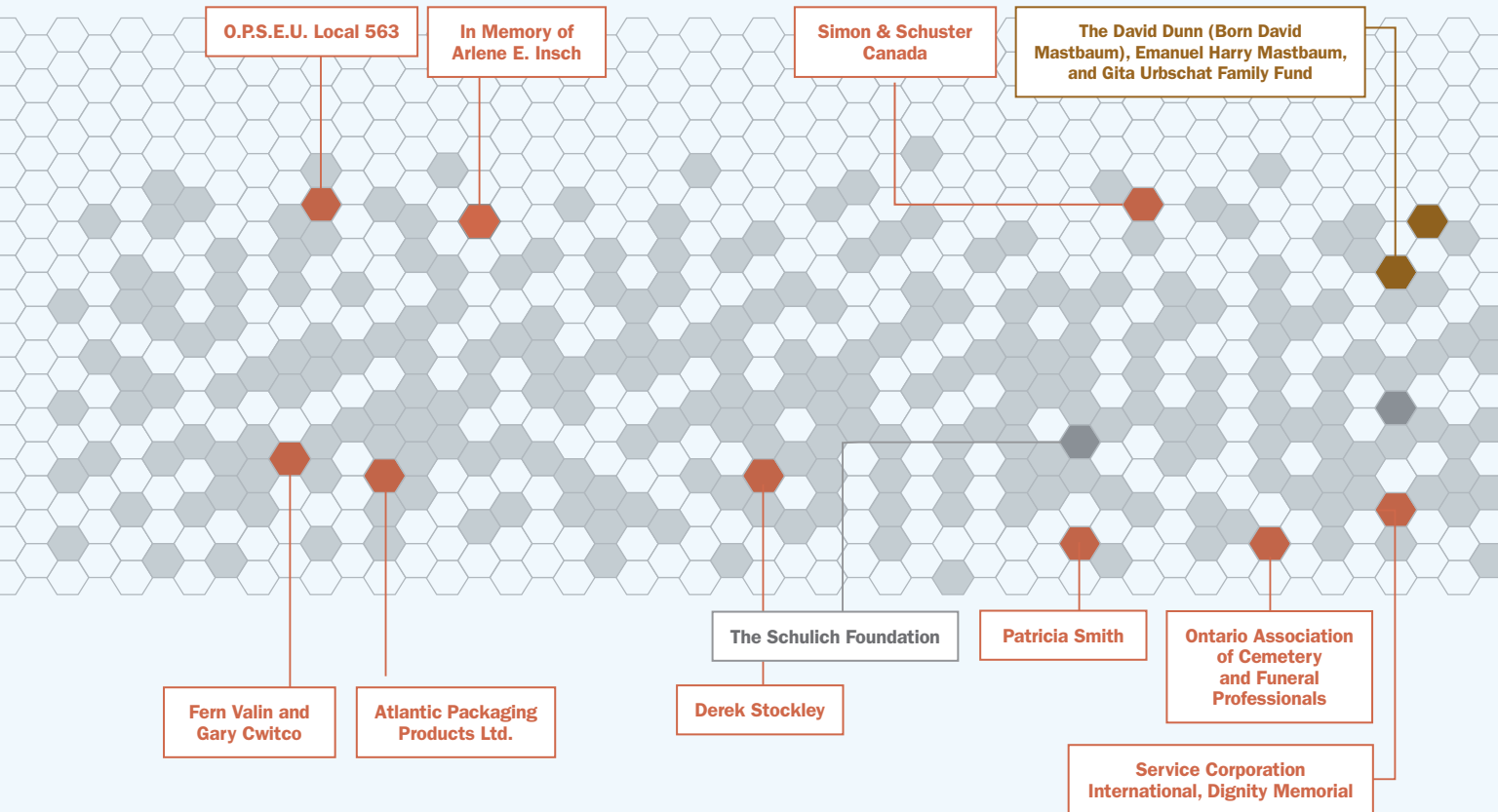
Anthony Longo, President and CEO, Longo's, will be moving on to the role of Honorary Co-Chair. Humber College would like to

thank Anthony for his outstanding leadership and support and the many contributions he has and will continue to make to the College.

Humber has successfully raised \$89.2 million towards the original \$50 million campaign goal. As Humber moves into a new era of transformation, we acknowledge the dedication, commitment and unlimited generosity that Humber's campaign leadership and cabinet members make to enhance learning and transform the lives of Humber students and the community. With this success, Humber continues the journey to raise \$100 million toward the Unlimited Campaign to benefit students and the Humber community for generations to come. ●

GRATITUDE

WELCOME TO GRATITUDE HALL



The Humber College Gratitude Hall Donor Wall recognizes individuals and organizations whose cumulative contributions to the College have reached or exceeded \$10,000.

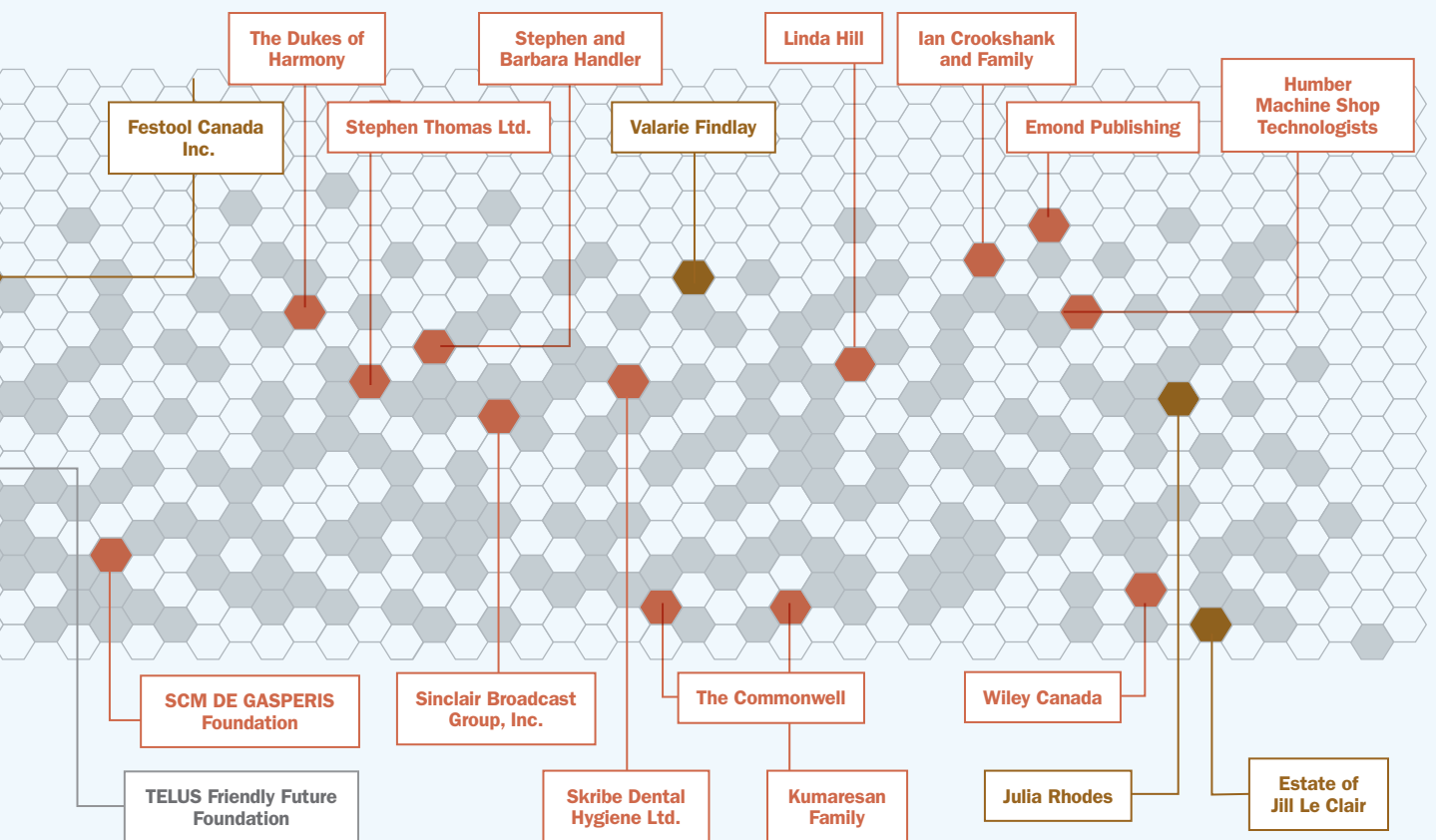
The Donor Wall takes inspiration from the green spaces and the Humber River that surround it. Geographically, Humber College is tied to the Humber River. Bordering the North Campus, the Humber River meanders south towards Lakeshore campus and eventually converges with Lake Ontario.

Humber College is uniquely situated along the watershed, which historically provided an integral connection and meeting ground known as Adoobiigok, the Place of the Alders in Michi Saagiig language for Indigenous peoples between the lakeshore of Ontario and the Lake Simcoe-Georgian Bay region.

As a whole, the Donor Wall becomes like the river. Each tile represents a single stone in the riverbed, influencing and directing the flow of the water creating an ever-changing surface—one that

forms a memorable image and larger metaphor for the College. Like stones in a riverbed, our donors and alumni represent the foundation of the river supporting and influencing Humber students. Represented by the water, our students flow through the College to pursue their dreams and advance in their career journey. While each individual element can stand alone, they create something remarkable together.

Highlighted below are recent donors who have been added or upgraded on the Donor Wall since 2022.



● Silver: \$100,000 – \$999,999
 ● Bronze: \$25,000 – \$99,999
 ● Copper: \$10,000 – \$24,999

Remembering Denny Christianson

New scholarship supports artistic excellence



Paying tribute to Denny Christianson at Humber's celebration of 50 years of music education on March 31, 2023.

DENNY CHRISTIANSON WAS A PASSIONATE musician and devoted educator at Humber College. So much so that he had “HMBR JAZZ” emblazoned on his licence plate. Christianson was a trumpeter, flugelhornist, arranger, composer, conductor, and bandleader and recorded more than 250 albums with legendary pop stars, such as Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Smokey Robinson, Diana Ross, and the Jackson 5. He enriched Humber's student experience by attracting world-class jazz figures, including Kurt Elling, Michael Brecker, Pat Metheny, Dave Holland, Jack DeJohnette, Terence Blanchard, Christian McBride, Mike Stern, Laila Biali, John Scofield, and more. His lengthy career also includes performing and recording with Pepper Adams, Diane Schuur, Tony Bennett, Michel Legrand, Guido Basso, Ranee Lee, Bill Holman, Carmen McRae, Ed Shaughnessy, Oliver Jones, Hubert Laws, J.J. Johnson, Kai Winding, Benny Carter, Steve Gadd, Sweets Edison, Kenny Drew, Mose Allison, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Sarah Vaughan, Diana Krall and many others.

Christianson was the founding program coordinator of the Bachelor of Music Degree at Humber, collaborating with music faculty to create one of the most comprehensive undergraduate music programs in Canada and the only four-year music degree at an Ontario college. Today, the program consistently produces many successful and versatile industry professionals in Canada and abroad.

In February 2021, Christianson passed away at age 78, but his legacy lives on. His dedication to music has left an enduring mark on generations of students, colleagues, Humber staff and faculty and friends. In his memory, the Denny Christianson Memorial Scholarship for Artistic Excellence was announced during Humber's celebration of 50 years of music education where Carandang Pincente Jazz Orchestra also played some of Christianson's original compositions.

“With Denny having been a scholarship donor, it was only fitting that we continue his legacy and generosity to train young artists and support their development,” said Guillermo Acosta, senior dean, Faculty of Media and Creative Arts. The scholarship is designed to encourage and support female artists to break barriers in the music industry, and it will be awarded annually to a self-identifying woman in their third or fourth year at Humber College.

“Christianson's passion for music and dedication to developing the next generation of musicians, producers and composers will live on for years to come through this scholarship,” said Dr. Ann Marie Vaughan, president and CEO. ●

For more information or to support, visit humber.ca/advancementandalumni/giving/tribute/denny-christianson-scholarship.

John McLaughlin with his bandmates.



CONTINUING A FRIEND'S PASSION IN MUSIC

The John McLaughlin Memorial Scholarship

VALARIE FINDLAY WAS BORN in Ottawa and forged a unique path—from dropping out of grade nine to earning two master's degrees and a doctorate, she balanced a long career in national security before becoming an author, business owner and canine behaviourist.

Through all her milestones, she felt blessed to have the unwavering friendship of John McLaughlin as he pursued his own dreams in music, spanning contemporary jazz, fusion, funk, world, and the experimental milieu.

Findlay and McLaughlin grew up together, and his family became a vital part of Findlay's life. After McLaughlin moved to Toronto to study music at Humber, she would ride the Greyhound bus to visit him. She was thrilled to see him blossom, with his talent recognized from the start through Humber's Oscar Peterson Program scholarship.

"John really excelled after he was in Humber's program," Findlay says. "Humber helped him understand the fundamentals of making great music. He had this deep courage and passion."

That same passion that saw him play bass in Toronto band Freedom Rains, a rock-jazz-blues-alternative

fusion band that made a splash with their 1995 debut CD, along with other collaborative groups. A kind and cordial person, he became incredibly connected and beloved within Toronto's cultural circles.

When McLaughlin passed away from cancer in 2022, it was an enormous shock and loss. "He still had so many more years in his life and his profession," says Findlay. "He had plans."

How do you honour someone so special? The answer came through Findlay's recognition of the dedication it took for her friend to stay true to his path, and the struggles musicians face along the way. "Pursuing that dream, you're always wondering how you're going to make ends meet. Talent is rare. It's important to foster it."

McLaughlin himself was able to stay the course thanks to a scholarship, so Findlay created the John McLaughlin Memorial Scholarship for fourth year students who want to be working musicians. Preference is given to those who play bass guitar. "John would be touched that we'll remember him this way."

In addition to the scholarship, Findlay has arranged a planned

Valarie Findlay with McLaughlin.



gift through her estate. "It's easy to do, and even small amounts are huge for the college."

Both are wonderful ways to support students and to remember a dear friend. Fittingly, they come as we celebrate 50 years of music at Humber—including the program that helped McLaughlin fulfil his dreams. ●

To learn more about Humber's planned gifts, visit humber.ca/advancementandalumni/giving/ways-to-give/planned-giving.

EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S NEWSMAKERS

BEHIND EVERY HEADLINE IS A JOURNALIST

whose passion for storytelling informs every word. Humber nurtures this passion through cutting-edge, contemporary programs designed to prepare talented future journalists (e.g., writers, broadcasters) to excel in today's journalism industry.

And thanks to the Reader's Digest Foundation of Canada's support to Humber's Journalism program, countless doors are being opened for aspiring newsmakers to access the education they need to transform this passion into long-term career success.

Their generous giving created two new student awards: The Reader's Digest Foundation of Canada Journalism Development Scholarship, recognizing promising students facing financial need, and the Reader's Digest Foundation of Canada Journalism Excellence Scholarship, celebrating outstanding students who demonstrate a mastery of journalistic principles. Built on the Foundation's mission of advancing quality journalism in Canada, these awards remove barriers and create opportunities for students to define the industry's future.

One such student is Nicholas Seles, a 2022 graduate of Humber's Journalism program with a particular interest in arts and entertainment.

"As Humber helped me develop my skills in writing, editing, research, print layout and even photography and videography, the scholarship enabled me to build my industry knowledge and exposure by funding otherwise expensive news subscriptions," shared Seles. "Combined, this prepared me for my exciting internship with *The Globe and Mail*, where I gained hands-on experience pitching and writing stories alongside industry professionals."

From stories on singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen to Hamilton-born filmmaker Kathleen Robertson, Seles' internship gave him the unique opportunity to publish his own work while preparing him for a full-time role as a copy editor and paginator with Pagemasters North America.

"Many students genuinely want to learn and succeed but often don't have the means to. Scholarships like this one created by Reader's Digest play a huge role in shaping the future of education for students like me." ●

Giving back through humour

"HUMOUR HAS ALWAYS BEEN

a big part of my life," says former CEO of a financial services company-turned-comedian David Goodman. Whether it was cutting jokes with his three brothers while growing up or using it to deal with issues within his family of four, Goodman always found humour to be a way of "relating to the world."

It was at his older brother's wedding when Goodman decided to pursue comedy. He made a speech that had the audience peeling with laughter and one of the band members, a Humber Music alumnus, came up to Goodman afterwards and suggested he take a week-long workshop in stand-up comedy at Humber College.

Goodman did and loved it so much, he enrolled in the workshop

twice. Shortly afterwards, in 2011, he started his own charitable event—Humour Me—which gives back through comedy.

To date, Humour Me has included headliners Paul Reiser, Gerry Dee, Howie Mandel, Jerry Seinfeld, and Dennis Miller, to name a few and raises funds in support of important causes from health care to youth initiatives. Goodman explains how his family leans on their sense of humour when dealing with challenges. "Giving back and using humour to give back seems like a natural fit."

Goodman also hasn't strayed far from Humber. In 2012, he was a member and Chair of the Comedy, Writing and Performance Program Advisory Committee, and that

very same year, created the David Goodman Comedy Scholarship. Over the years, he has generously donated to Humber's Comedy: Writing and Performance program.

Having performed his own comedic routines all over Canada and the U.S. (he says he has yet to perform in London, U.K., but would love to one day), Goodman couldn't be more excited for future students who will benefit from the Cultural Hub's new Comedy Cabaret (see page 8).

"I think it'll be fantastic to have a place like this in your own backyard that you can use, bring in interesting acts and hopefully inspire others to pursue this noble pursuit," he says. "Everybody's got challenges in life. Getting through them with a smile on your face is even better." ●

Manifesting children's musical perspectives

Humber Community Music Outreach Initiative

FOR OVER 40 YEARS, THE Humber Community Music School (CMS) has offered an alternative to traditional music programs for young children and teens. Lucian Gray, Program Manager, explains that “CMS uses jazz pedagogy to give students real-world skills.”

Jazz, a Black American tradition, forms the basis of popular music today. It also encourages improvisation, a skill that Gray says “teaches a child how to manifest their own voice and their own perspective through music.”

Now an exciting new program is enabling CMS to extend such

opportunities to underserved youth. The Community Music Outreach Initiative is an innovative response to what Gray calls the “huge experience gap” between kids who had the economic means to begin musical education at a young age and those who did not.

The initiative removes that barrier using a great equalizer proposed by Joy Lapps-Lewis—the steel pan drum.

Lapps-Lewis, who is developing the program’s curriculum, is an experienced steel pan instructor, member of the Caribbean community, scholar, composer, educator, and musician. The Toronto native has performed alongside Stewart Goodyear, Roberto Occhipinti, Larnell Lewis and the Toronto Mass Choir, and recorded with Gramps Morgan, whose 2022 release *Positive Vibration* received a Grammy nomination. She has also received numerous awards, including the 2015 Caribbean Music and Entertainment Award as Top Steelpan Soloist and the 2016 HUTTers Phenomenal Woman Award for Leadership in Community Arts.

Determined to “meet kids where they are,” Lapps-Lewis proposed a downtown location offering high accessibility at no cost. The chosen site is Canoe Landing Community Recreation Centre, where two classes (including students from Jean Lumb Public School) will draw on the steel pan drum’s extraordinary ability to help kids believe in their own creations.

“Music is often perceived as an unnecessary extra when indeed it is one of the most powerful tools for community building,” says Lapps-Lewis.

It’s anticipated that the final performance will be at Toronto’s Caribana Festival and the initiative will be widely celebrated within the community, enabling numerous local schoolchildren to discover and celebrate their own strengths and rhythms through the wonders of steel pan drums. ●



Joy Lapps-Lewis

Photo: Nathaniel Anderson

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

The Premier's Awards honour the important social and economic contributions that graduates make in Ontario and throughout the world. Here are Humber's outstanding 2023 nominees.

This year's winners are announced on November 27, 2023. Be sure to check our website for updates at humber.ca/alumni/premiersawards.



NOMINEE

KENNETH FOWLER

**Apprenticeship
Boilermakers
Apprenticeship,
2001**

Kenneth Fowler travelled throughout Ontario earning apprenticeship hours and became one of the first tradespersons in his local to earn the interprovincial Red Seal Boilermaker certification. He has managed and overseen multimillion-dollar major projects across the province and is a longstanding boilermaker and engineering specialist with the Toronto District School Board. An Innisfil resident, Kenneth was elected as Ward 5 Councillor in 2018, and then Deputy Mayor of the town in 2022, serving its population of over 44,000 while also playing an exceptionally active and hands-on role as Simcoe County Councillor.

Deepa Mattoo is an award-winning feminist lawyer whose work is rooted in equity and anti-oppression. She is the Executive Director of the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic in Toronto, overseeing legal, counselling, interpretation, and intervention services for racialized and marginalized populations of women and survivors of gender-based violence. A YWCA Women of Distinction Award winner, Deepa has appeared before parliamentary committees, the Supreme Court of Canada, and the United Nations civil society meetings, sharing her expertise and opinions about law reform and human rights and social justice issues.



NOMINEE

DEEPA MATTOO

**Community Services
Fundraising
and Volunteer
Management, 2007**



NOMINEE

CARRIE BAKER

**Business
Public Relations
Program, 2000**

As President of Canada Goose, Carrie Baker oversees the company's commercial business and brand, driving its global growth. A creative communications strategist with a passion for breaking boundaries, she was instrumental in transforming the outerwear manufacturer, founded in 1957, to an iconic Canadian luxury brand, recognized around the world. Carrie was instrumental in establishing Canada Goose's communications strategy, helping to lead its IPO in 2017 and creating its industry-leading Sustainable Impact Strategy. In 2019, she was named WXN Top 100 Most Powerful Women in Canada and one of Canada's 50 Best Executives by *The Globe and Mail* in 2020.



NOMINEE

LISA POST

Recent Graduate
Bachelor of Community Development, 2023

Rooted in community, Lisa Post is a transformational leader championing equity, diversity, and inclusion, dedicating much of her political career to representing marginalized voices and building strong social policies. In 2022, while completing her Humber degree, Lisa was elected as mayor of the Town of Orangeville after serving a four-year term as councillor, becoming the town's second female mayor since its incorporation in 1863. Lisa is an active volunteer serving on several non-profit boards and working alongside local organizations focused on culture, youth, empowerment, and safety. She prioritizes a community-first approach in her decision-making and is an advocate for the merits of lifelong learning.

NOMINEE

MATTHEW BURNETT

Creative Arts and Design
Bachelor of Music, 2014

Matthew Burnett is a sought-after global producer in the music industry, highly regarded for his Grammy-nominated and Juno-nominated (and winning) work. One of his earliest achievements was his production of "Not Afraid," the lead single on rapper Eminem's seventh studio album, *Recovery*, and the 16th song in Billboard Top 100 history to debut at number one. The co-founder of independent record label Golden Child Recordings, Matthew has enriched the Canadian music scene and cultivated the rise of artists such as R&B superstar Daniel Caesar. He has produced for world-renowned artists like Drake and Lil Wayne, doing so before turning 25.



NOMINEE

MICHAEL SANDERSON

Health Sciences
Ambulance and Emergency Care, 1977

In his 50th year in Emergency Medical Services, Michael Sanderson has been a paramedic, educator, and leader at local, provincial, national, and international levels. The Chief of Hamilton Paramedic Service since 2013, he oversees 440 staff and ensures quality clinical, operational, and financial performance within the 10th largest city in Canada. While Executive Director at BC Ambulance, he led all EMS activities for the 2010 Winter Olympics and Paralympics. Continuously giving back to his sector, Michael has served on provincial and national boards and is currently the president of the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs.



NOMINEE

ANNA SIMONE

Technology
Interior Design, 1977

Anna Simone is principal and founding partner of Cecconi Simone, an interior design practice. The company was built with a philosophy to inspire ground-breaking design that is experiential, has a unique sense of purpose, is culturally relevant and positively impacts the world. For decades, Anna has led projects in retail, corporate, hospitality and residential sectors, from large-scale condominiums and spa-resorts to boutique hotels and private residences for distinguished luminaries. Her work is recognized worldwide, with projects in Anguilla, Italy, United Arab Emirates, India, and China. Closer to home, she is a familiar name, with over 100 towers completed and counting in the Greater Toronto Area. ●



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Tips + Advice

Sharing valuable insights for new alumni on the rise

NAVIGATING THE WORLD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS



Lisa Kimmel
Public Relations,
1996

Lisa Kimmel is a global business executive, board director, communications strategist and co-founder of Lantern Media LLC. She was the former chair and CEO of Edelman Canada and Latin America, and global managing director of Daniel J. Edelman’s U.S.-based sector specialty agencies.

Kimmel has been inducted into the Women’s Executive Network Top 100 Most Powerful Women in Canada Hall of Fame and is a two-time recipient of a Financial Times & HERoes Female Champion of Women in Business award and 2019 YWCA Toronto Women of Distinction award for Corporate Leadership. Kimmel currently acts as vice chair and HR and governance chair for the Toronto Region Board of Trade and is also a board director at CivicAction.

What are your top three takeaways for young alumni who would like to find a job in public relations (PR)?

Be curious. Read, explore, and try new things. You will become much richer in

your knowledge base and more effective in the work that you (aspire to) do.

Do your homework. If a hiring manager has agreed to meet with you, come prepared. Demonstrate that you have knowledge about the company. Anticipate the questions that you may be asked—such as why you want to work for this organization.

Manage your own expectations. When you’re starting out in PR, it may require long hours, and a strong work ethic. It takes time to move up, so be patient and consistently demonstrate why you are deserving of a promotion and/or salary increase.

What are some of the most notable PR changes in recent years?

The most significant change has been the growing respect for communications expertise as integral to protecting an organization or brand’s reputation. Communications professionals now have a seat in the C-suite, which was not the case when I started out.

One fast-growing area is employee engagement. Many leaders now recognize that employees can be a company’s biggest advocates—or detractors—so communicating with employees is a top priority.

With more immersive and experiential technology being used, what is the latest and greatest in the industry today?

The obvious answer is AI, which some fear, and others embrace. There are many tasks that can be replaced with AI from media lists to social media management and monitoring. Allowing AI to take care of these “must dos,” can help humans focus on more interesting aspects such as strategy and ideation.

How important is community engagement and giving back to you?

For many years, I’ve been involved with organizations that are making a tremendous difference in the community. I match my board engagements with the things that “turn my crank.” You need to give back where you believe you can make the most impact. ●

Are you a recent graduate? Humber’s Advising and Career Services range from career coaching and community events to peer support and resume reviews. For more information, visit careers.humber.ca.

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Returning to a full schedule for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, Humber Athletics continued its unprecedented run, racking up 34 combined national and provincial medals.



Last year, Humber's women's basketball team won provincial gold.



Humber men's volleyball team.



Humber men's curling team.



A PLACE WHERE WINNING

is the norm, Humber's 2022-23 season was anything but average. The Hawks extended their record of 20-plus Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA) medals to 12 consecutive seasons, while their eight Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) national gold medals were a new program record.

In front of a sold-out crowd at the North Campus Gym, the men's volleyball team competed against the best teams in the country, capturing the CCAA silver medal. Out on the west coast, the women's volleyball team won the CCAA bronze medal—finishing on the national podium for the second time in program history.

The men's curling team was named the best in the country, winning the program's second CCAA gold medal in Sudbury, Ontario. The Hawks finished the bonspiel with an 8-1 record, defeating Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in the gold medal match, 10-3.

Humber badminton continued its unprecedented nationals run, capturing a national title for the eighth consecutive season. The Hawks left Nova Scotia winning two national gold medals and once again helped the OCAA win team supremacy.

Humber legend and first-year head coach Chloe Rowe made the difficult decision of splitting up 2022 badminton mixed champions

—Airi Moromisato and Sirapob Kongubon. Her faith in her student athletes paid dividends. Airi and Victoria Duong captured Humber's sixth straight women's doubles title, while the duo Sirapob and Nishant Batra captured the program's first men's doubles title since 2017.

The same unflappable spirit and determination guides Humber Athletics. Twenty-three Humber student-athletes received CCAA Academic All-Canadian recognition—the most in the nation for the third straight season. The award is the CCAA's most prestigious student-athlete honour, epitomizing both the organization's commitment to academic success and athletic achievement. ●

Thank you to the supporters of the 2023 Humber Golf Classic

Together, we raised over \$242,500! Funds will support Humber student scholarships and bursaries.



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EVENTS

ALUMNI GET-TOGETHERS

Here's a look at some recent events with Humber alumni and friends.

APRIL 24, 2023

The first **Alumni Beyond** event took place in Montreal, bringing graduates together for a visit with representatives of Humber. The next Alumni Beyond meet and greet takes place in Edmonton in November.



APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2023

Humber hosted 450 alumni and community members over three Toronto Blue Jays events at the Rogers Centre. Bachelor of Music alumna and R&B artist, Divine Lightbody, sang the American and Canadian national anthems before the game on September 14, 2023.



JUNE 13 – 16, 2023

More than 5,000 students crossed the stage at **Spring Convocation** as Humber hit a milestone of reaching over 300,000 total graduates.



MAY – OCTOBER 2023

Over 200 alumni and guests enjoyed 2023 movie releases at Landmark Cinemas in Whitby and Caledon, including *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*, *Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part One*, and *Dune: Part Two*.



For upcoming events, contests and more, be sure to visit humberalumniconnect.com or download the Humber Alumni Connect app.

FILM GRADS BRING YOUTH AND DIVERSITY TO THE SECTOR

ALEXANDER HENRY AND HOLLY ROWDEN (Bachelor of Film and Media Production, 2016) are partners and executive producers of Alfredo Films, a Toronto-based production company representing commercial directors in Canada and abroad.

After landing their first commercials with the ad agency Ogilvy, they have since become recognized as some of the youngest and most diverse owners and EPs in their sector.

Bringing a film background to the commercial space, they offer a unique lens while aiming to deliver work that inspires and makes a difference. Their notable projects include the “Black Elevation Map” for Black and Abroad, Mastercard’s “True Name” Campaign and DoorDash’s 2023 “Company’s Coming” campaign.

Henry and Rowden were recently named Industry Liaisons with Humber’s Bachelor of Film and Media Production program. In the role, they will develop and present a series of weekly workshops providing students with the skills, tools and knowledge necessary to secure work placements in the film and media industry.

Humber’s film and media production programs have been lauded for graduating notable alumni who have entered into successful careers in film and television production. With the building of the Cultural Hub (see page 8), staff and students will gain a state-of-the-art setting in which to hone their skills that will include post-production suites, video editing suites, foley suites, demonstration studios and a 30-seat screening room for new opportunities for students to share their works with the broader community. ●



New venture wins small business award



Janice Ishizaka (right) with her sister Cilla.

MEDIA COPYWRITING (1995) GRADUATE JANICE ISHIZAKA

(née Young) worked as a copywriter in Toronto before heading to Japan to teach English. While abroad, she was exposed to “mugicha”—which means barley tea in Japanese—a hydrating drink with no caffeine or sugar.

Years later, alongside her sister Cilla, Ishizaka made her dream venture, The Canadian Barley Tea Company, come true. They make mo’ mug[®], Canada’s first and only barley tea, with the finest organic BC barley. mo’ mug[®] is 100% natural and free of caffeine, sugar, carbs, and calories! Benefits of the product include fighting cavities, providing antioxidants and soothing indigestion. It’s enjoyed cold by steeping a tea bag in a refrigerated pitcher of water or hot as a coffee replacement.

The Canadian Barley Tea Company was nominated for the Small Business BC Awards for Best Innovation in 2021 and their products are sold in stores in British Columbia, Alberta and online across Canada and the United States. The company was recently featured in *BC Business Magazine* and *Women’s World Magazine*. ●

The Canadian Barley Tea Company (canadianbarleytea.com) is featured in the Humber Alumni Marketplace. Are you an alumni business owner? Promote your business by visiting humberalumniconnect.com.

Humber graduates continue to reach new heights in their careers and communities. Here's a look at some notable alumni who continue to make a difference around the world.

HONOURABLE MENTION



Anthony Longo

On June 14, **Anthony Longo**—president and chief executive officer of Longo Brothers Fruit Markets Inc. and longtime friend, alumnus and supporter of Humber—**received an honorary degree at Humber's Spring 2023 Convocation** ceremonies.

Anthony is a former Chair of Humber College's Board of Governors and former Co-Chair of the college's first fundraising campaign, Unlimited, helping to raise over \$85 million for the college and its students. The Longo Family Foundation has also been tremendously generous through a transformational gift of \$5 million to support scholarships and entrepreneurship programming to provide increased opportunities for students to develop the skills and experience that will set them on the road to success.

Anthony's leadership has placed Longo's as one of Canada's 10 most admired corporate cultures and one of Canada's 50 Best Managed companies, supporting growth, innovation, philanthropic giving and community support. His past accolades include the 2001 Premier's Award, the Humber College 2000 Alumnus of Distinction Award, as well as the Waterstone Human Capital's Canada's Most Admired CEO designation (2019), the Distinguished Industry Leader Award, University of Guelph's Distinguished Industry Leader Award (2016), and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2013).

*Jaden Hollingshead*

Jaden Hollingshead, Public Relations, 2019, was drawn to Humber's PR program for its reputation, although prior to applying, wasn't entirely sure what the field entailed. He enjoyed connecting with people, and through the program, developed his skills as a writer, learned how to produce a quality press release and completed an invaluable internship. Jaden's entrepreneurial spirit led him to undertake two ventures, Wake Cannabis and Lakeshore Public Relations & Communications (now Lakeshore PR & Marketing Communications), which supports small businesses in the Muskoka area with budget-friendly solutions. In 2023, Jaden was named Executive Director at the Bracebridge Chamber of Commerce in a role that revolves around supporting the local business community through advocacy, connection, education and promotion.

*Lauren Falls*

Lauren Falls, Music (Bass), 2008, has been making musical waves across the Toronto and New York Jazz scenes for over a decade. The bassist, composer, arranger and bandleader has toured North America and Europe, performing at numerous festivals and venues and appearing in Jake Epstein's Mirvish production of the multi-Dora Award-nominated *Boy Falls From The Sky*. In 2020, Lauren was a finalist for the Toronto Arts Council Emerging Artist Award and in 2023, a Juno nominee for Jazz Album of the Year: Solo. She is a faculty member at The University of Toronto and recently joined Humber's Faculty of Media and Creative Arts as a professor and the first instrument lead for bass in the college's Music program.

*Rob Yu*

Rob Yu, Apprentice Cooks, 2012; Culinary Management, 2013, is the executive chef of Yokai Izakaya, a Vaughan restaurant with a diverse food and drink menu that combines past and present Japanese cuisine experiences. Rob's culinary career has taken him as far as Abu Dhabi with the Fairmont Bab Al Bahr, and included local work with golf clubs, tapas bars, lounges, and catering companies. In 2023, with Rob at the helm of creating a menu and building a team reflective of his own values and journey, Yokai Izakaya ranked seventh on Toronto Life's annual ranking of the city's best new restaurants. This year, he made the list of Kostuch Media's Top 30-Under-30 award winners.

*Craig Shreve*

Craig Shreve, Creative Writing, 2008, wanted to be a writer from a young age and is now a two-time author. Determined to put life experiences behind his craft, Craig developed a passion for extreme activities and humanitarian work, building homes to support numerous countries in need. Craig was a semi-finalist for Amazon's Breakthrough Novel Award, 2010, and is the author of *One Night in Mississippi* (2015, Dundurn Press). His latest novel, *The African Samurai* (Simon & Schuster Canada), was released in August of 2023 and is a historic 16th-century tale based on the true story of Yasuke, Japan's first foreign-born samurai and the only samurai of African descent.

DUKE VISITS HUMBER

How a surprise visit became a testament to Humber Music's early accomplishments

By Dr. Andrew Scott



IN SHOW BUSINESS SINCE the late 1910s—when he first began aggregating the musical talent that would comprise his famed orchestra—Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington was, by the time he visited Humber College’s North Campus in March of 1973, as quick with his witticisms as he was with his trademark piano introductions. And while his claim that he did not realize there were two nine o’clocks in a single day (referencing the early start time to his on-campus visit) was overused, it was new to the many college students, administrators, and faculty who warmly greeted the visiting composer with a standing ovation before he had played a single note of music.

Visiting Toronto for an extended engagement at the Royal York Hotel, where Ellington and band performed, Ellington, according to the April 6, 1973 edition of *Coven* (Humber’s

student newspaper at the time), spoke to students about the financial risks of leading a big band during the so-called “rock era,” answered questions from the crowd, commented upon the integrity of Toronto music audiences, and performed solo piano

versions of two of his most famous compositions: “Satin Doll” and “Mood Indigo.” His advice for students: “Know all types of music in order to make a decision on what you like.”

The visit, facilitated by composer and arranger Ron Collier, who had recently accepted a job as Humber professor and “composer-in-residence” (where he taught until 1994), was as much a nod to Ellington’s lifelong commitment to music education as it was an acknowledgment of Humber’s early and meaningful successes in training a vibrant workforce for participation in the music industry.

Sadly, Ellington’s visit to Humber would be among his final. Ellington died at age 75 in a Harlem hospital just one year later, his New York City funeral attended by more than 12,000 people. But while the hallways may have changed—from the North Campus to Lakeshore’s “A” Building to the soon-to-be-completed Cultural Hub—Ellington’s music and Collier’s arrangements are still heard echoing throughout, with ever new crops of dedicated music students signing on as stewards of Humber’s rich traditions, history, and legacy. ●

If you have a great memory or story from the past—we’d like to hear it! Send your story and photo(s) to alumni@humber.ca and you could be featured in a future Flashback.



Photos: Humber archives.



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