



**HUMBER**

Community Outreach &  
Workforce Development

# COMMUNITY MATTERS

Newsletter | Volume 1

JANUARY 31, 2024

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



I am pleased to launch the inaugural bi-annual newsletter of the Community Outreach and Workforce Development (COWD) department. This issue will showcase the innovative initiatives that have been delivered during the period April to November 2023.

The work of the department is focused on advancing the College's capacity to further equity, diversity and inclusion in our local communities. This is achieved by providing access to post-secondary education, training and employment for underrepresented groups. This includes diverse youth, women, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, newcomers to Canada, and those facing economic hardship.

COWD delivers a range of programs and projects that are developed and initiated through collaborative partnerships with Humber faculties and departments, industry and community partners. The COWD team has been very effective at attracting significant amounts of funding to deliver these initiatives through federal and provincial grants and has also received corporate donations sourced through the Advancement and Alumni Office to deliver these initiatives.

This issue will highlight the incredible work carried out by our staff teams and partners and the achievements of our program participants and students who have worked hard to achieve their goals and start on their future career pathways.

I have recently retired from my position in December 2023. It has been an enormous privilege to lead the COWD department over the past 12 years and to support the COWD teams and partners carrying out this impactful work.

If you are interested in learning more about COWD or becoming involved in an initiative, please reach out to Lynn Vanlieshout ([lynn.vanlieshout@humber.ca](mailto:lynn.vanlieshout@humber.ca)) Acting, COWD Director.

**Geraldine Babcock**

Outgoing Director, Community Outreach and Workforce Development

## NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

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A Message From  
The Director

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Ontario's first ever  
donor-supported  
bridging program

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Sister2Sister  
Advanced Leadership  
Program

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DeWalt Donation:  
Pathways to the  
Skilled Trades

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Projects Supported  
Through Humber  
Community  
Partnership Fund



**HUMBER**

Community Outreach & Workforce Development

# BY THE NUMBERS

**APR 1 - SEP 30, 2023**



**919**

Program Participants



**324**

Outreach Events



**1098**

Community Contacts



**\$5.8M**

Total Project  
Funding



**\$145K**

Community Partnership  
Funding Approved



**2718**

Community Access  
Program Participants

# IMMIGRANT PROGRAMS & SERVICES



Internationally trained professionals come from all over the world to start new lives. We acknowledge newcomers' professional accomplishments, and understand how challenging it is to re-establish oneself in a new country. COWD is dedicated to helping newcomers achieve their career goals through tailored training programs which address these barriers and meet their specific needs.

Since 2010, COWD has provided employment-focused training to over 6000 internationally trained professionals which has led them to employment in their desired fields.

## **Bridging Programs**

Short-term, specialized, training programs that provide newcomers with the skills currently in demand by Canadian employers.

## **Occupation-Specific Language Training**

Language training that provides newcomers with the technical work-related language skills and awareness of Canadian workplace culture needed to restart their careers in Canada.



## COWD DEVELOPS ONTARIO'S FIRST EVER DONOR-SUPPORTED BRIDGING PROGRAM

COWD, in partnership with the Faculty of Applied Science & Technology (FAST), has developed the province's first ever donor-supported bridging program for newcomers to Canada. This was made possible thanks to a generous donation from the Barrett Family Foundation.

The Engineering & Architecture Bridging Program began with a full cohort of 30 internationally-trained participants in September 2023.

Designed in collaboration with industry and community, the bridging program provides participants with comprehensive technical training, soft skills development, and employment support - all tailored to the specific needs of immigrant engineers, architects, technologists and technicians - in the fields of civil engineering, architecture and mechanical engineering.

With the relaunch, the program has been updated to reflect the current industry needs of employers as well as to recognize each participant's prior learning as they move along their journey of restarting their careers in Canada. This tailored program will empower newcomer engineers & architects by fostering their integration into the workforce while contributing to the growth of an inclusive Canadian economy. [Learn More](#)



## BRIDGING PROGRAM COMPLETION DINNER CELEBRATES AND CONNECTS LEARNERS & ALUMNI

Newcomers often experience several challenges when immigrating to another country - a lack of confidence, adjusting to a new workplace culture, insufficient social & professional networks, as well as fear and uncertainty about their careers.

The bridging program completion dinner is a celebration of the efforts and accomplishments of our newcomer learners who have completed the program. It also provides an opportunity for learners to connect with graduates of the program who are currently working in their fields. At this dinner, we heard from 3 success stories as they share how Humber's bridging programs had a transformational effect on their careers and their lives in Canada.

[Watch video >](#)





## COWD PARTNERS WITH NEWCOMER WOMEN'S SERVICES TO DELIVER SISTER 2 SISTER ADVANCED LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Sister2Sister Advanced Leadership program (ALP) is a skills and leadership development program that bridges the gap between employer needs and newcomer women skills through an intensive training in soft and hard skills capped by a paid internship. Sister2Sister ALP is offered in partnership with a number of universities and colleges as well as skills development training partners.

The program includes Humber's Digital Fluency in the Workforce micro-credential delivered through the COWD department, and trains participants to utilize digital tools effectively, communicate professionally in digital spaces, manage digital information safely, and solve problems collaboratively using a critical lens. Equipping participants with the core digital competencies required by employers across industries in Canada. [Learn More](#)



Humber College is pleased to partner with Newcomer Women Services Toronto to empower, uplift, and offer skills and leadership development programming to internationally trained and racialized newcomer and refugee women.

Employers are looking for skilled workers, and as part of the Sister2Sister Advanced Leadership program, participants will earn Humber's Digital Fluency for the Workforce micro-credential, which will equip them with the current digital skills and tools needed to gain meaningful employment and contribute to the Canadian economy."

**Kelly Jackson - Vice-President, External Affairs and Professional Learning, Humber College**



## SYED RESTARTS HIS IT CAREER IN CANADA THROUGH BRIDGING PROGRAM



I joined the program seeing that it's designed for internationally skilled newcomers. My expectation from this program was to ensure a job in my field and to refresh the skills I have - and it perfectly met my expectation.

After completing the program, I was more confident on my technical abilities. Moreover, I secured my current job with the help of job developer of this bridging program."

**Syed Hussain**  
**IT Support Analyst, HEM Innovative Solutions**



## WATCH VIDEO: GALINA'S INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEY AFTER BEING FORCED TO FLEE FROM UKRAINE

Galina Gavrina was a well established IT professional in Ukraine when the war forced her to flee her homeland. Despite the challenges of being away from her partner who stayed back to fight in the war, Galina was determined to restart her IT career in Canada. While she had a wealth of IT experience, Galina felt that her language skills were holding her back from getting the jobs she wanted. She decided to enroll in Humber's Occupation-Specific Language Training (OSLT) program to develop her communication skills.

Shortly after the program, Galina wrote to thank the OSLT program staff to share that she had landed the exact job she was looking for since her arrival.







# PATHWAYS TO POST-SECONDARY



COWD offers tailored access programs that support youth to successfully transition into post-secondary education.

## **Pathways to the Trades**

FREE 8-week program targeting clients who are currently unemployed, interested in exploring the trades, and are experiencing financial hardship.

## **Pre-Apprenticeship Programs**

FREE programs that are designed to help youth, women, and other equity-seeking groups, transition to an apprenticeship in the skilled trades.

## **Autism CanTech!**

FREE program offering technical training, skills development, and employment support to youth who are on the autism spectrum.

## **Youth Transition Program**

FREE program to help youth (between the ages of 19 and 29) make a successful transition to college, whether they have completed high school or not.





## GLORIA LAKOR REACHES NEW HEIGHTS THROUGH PATHWAYS TO THE TRADES PROGRAM

The Pathways to the Trades program at Humber College is a paid training program that supports those furthest from employment, who have an interest in the trades, but have not chosen a trade to pursue. Participants are exposed to multiple trades within a sector to help them decide which one fits them best.

“Humber’s pre-apprenticeship program gave me the skills and the confidence to be a valuable addition to my current team”, says Gloria Lakor, a graduate of the program who secured an apprenticeship with Evergreen Tree Care after the program.

“A pivotal moment for me was having my skills recognized and acknowledged during the chainsaw class. The instructor, Bob Smith, encouraged me to pursue Arboriculture and convinced me that I would be good at it. Thanks to the support I also received from Julie Campbell, our advisor, I was able to secure a trial day with the employer and I have never looked back since.”

Gloria also says that she had to overcome a lot of personal challenges and feelings of anxiety to complete the program.

“Personally speaking, I don’t think that this field is a common career choice, especially for people in my community and even more so for females. However, I’m glad to have taken the Arborist program and I’m grateful for the staff and connections that aided me along the journey of finding this career and healing my mental health.”



Personally speaking, I don’t think that this field is a common career choice - especially for people in my community and even more so for females.

However, I’m glad to have taken the Arborist program and I’m grateful for the staff and connections that aided me along the journey of finding this career and healing my mental health.

**Gloria Lakor,  
Arborist Apprentice, Evergreen Tree Care**



## DEWALT PARTNERS WITH HUMBER TO SUPPORT THE NEXT GENERATION OF SKILLED TRADES PROFESSIONALS

DEWALT is helping Humber College students in the skilled trades thanks to a partnership and \$300,000 donation that will be used for scholarships, tools for students and additional meaningful supports.

“DEWALT is proud to be a partner of Humber College, providing financial support for training and scholarships, tools and equipment.

We believe it is important to work with programs such as those offered by Humber College to help ensure that Canada’s young tradespeople have the training and tools they need for their future success.”

- Allan Hawes

General Manager, Stanley Black & Decker Canada



The gift will be used to establish the DEWALT Pathways to the Trades Scholarships. There will be two scholarships of \$2,500 each that will be given out annually as well as \$6,000 allocated for emergency bursaries in the Centre for Skilled Trades and Technology. It will supplement the Centre’s collection of tools and will also go towards providing students who demonstrate need with tools they require for their profession once they graduate. The support also includes funding for the Pre-Apprentice and Pathways to the Skilled Trades programs.



## DIANA KOWAL FINDS HER CALLING IN THE SKILLED TRADES THROUGH COWD’S ELECTRICIAN PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Diana always felt the calling to a career in construction, that’s why studying Architecture in university seemed like a natural choice. It allowed her to explore her fascination with the art of building. However, she soon realized that her true passion lay in understanding how things were actually built, and the desire for a more hands-on approach began to grow within her.

Then, her parents, sensing her growing interest and wanting to support her, came up with a brilliant idea: exploring opportunities in the trades! So Diana decided to give it a chance and started Humber’s Electrician pre-apprenticeship course focused on introducing participants to the electrical trade. Diana says she felt a solid connection to the field through the program. Upon completion of the program, Diana secured an Electrical Apprenticeship with PlanGroup.



## AUTISM CANTECH TESTIMONIAL

NATHAN TOLENTINO



Before I took up Autism CanTech, I was working at a part time job at Tim Hortons because I was struggling with post-secondary.

Participating in the Autism CanTech program developed my data skills, helped me to create a resume in a presentable format, and taught me how to conduct myself during interviews.

I gained skills like formatting data and calculating on Excel sheets, creating graphs and charts on Power Bi, and organizing as well as naming files using a conventional system (alphabetical, date, etc.).

If you are a young adult with a disability, I would highly recommend on taking up the Autism CanTech program since it may help you to pursue a full-time career or inspire you to take a course that will upgrade your skills even further."

## WATCH VIDEO: YOUTH TRANSITION PROGRAM GRADUATE, SARAI WATTS, ENROLLS IN HER DREAM PROGRAM

Until recently, Sarai Watts didn't think that a post-secondary education was within her reach. She struggled to get into the program of her choice and the soaring cost of education was yet another barrier standing in the way of her goals. That's when she enrolled in COWD's Youth Transition Program. The program helped her create a personal pathway plan to achieve those goals and also provided her with access to exclusive bursaries to help fund her tuition costs. After completing the 7-week program, Sarai was accepted into the upcoming cohort of Humber's Visual and Digital Arts diploma program.

"The Youth Transition Program has really helped me change and grow as a person. That relates to my artwork a lot because each symbol has a message about life and it's challenges. Like 'change' and 'adaptability' and 'endurance'."

Hear directly from Sarai, as she shares her experience and success with the youth transition program.







## HUMBER COLLEGE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FUND

The Humber College Community Partnership Fund (HCCP Fund) has been established to provide funding for community projects that create educational/training pathways for local children, youth, Indigenous Peoples, newcomers and other equity-seeking groups in our community.

Projects funded through this initiative provide the opportunity for local community organizations to cultivate partnerships with Humber College faculties and administrative departments.

Projects that are funded will contribute to improving access to post-secondary educational possibilities for the target groups listed above. These might include pathways into education, training and/or employment and/or building the organizational capacity of community agencies who share this same focus. Additionally, sponsorships that build community inclusion are also supported.

Humber student participation in projects is encouraged as this is an opportunity for them to build their co-curricular record.



## Q-SUMMIT ARTS PROJECT SUPPORTED THROUGH FUNDING FROM HUMBER COLLEGE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (HCCP) FUND

The Q Summit Project was an arts-based initiative that created programming space at the North campus for high school students ages 13 to 18 who are part of the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Participants were recruited broadly from the Etobicoke area and through QMAP (Rex Pride) – a 2SLGBTQIA+ youth group that exists in partnership with the Rexdale Community Health Centre. The project was led by the Faculty of Social & Community Services.

A workshop series using mixed media (clay, paint, collage, etc.) was facilitated weekly, beginning in Fall 2022 and then throughout the Winter term (February – April) culminating in a weekend Art Retreat in May 2023 at Humber's North Campus.

Humber students from the Faculty of Social and Community Services acted as Peer Mentors throughout the program. The Spring Art Retreat brought the youth participants together to celebrate participants' accomplishments, offer arts-based workshops, and exposed youth to post-secondary educational pathways.

A key goal of the initiative was to build youth's confidence that they can find and foster safe spaces on campuses and a sense of belonging in furthering their education.

Feedback from youth validated for the partner the importance of the arts in helping young folks explore their personal identities. Throughout the project, participants were able to spend time with others and engage in meaningful and important conversations to build personal resiliency and create a community of acceptance.





## NEW VISTAS: A PLATFORM FOR EQUITY-DESERVING ARTISTS IN TORONTO

New Vistas aims to share the work of equity-deserving artists with the public in the west end of Toronto, through an exhibit at the Etobicoke Civic Centre and a performance at the Assembly Hall, in December 2023. These two linked events were co-produced by the City of Toronto (in keeping with its social equity mandate) and by the arts management program of Humber College, as part of its fall “Planning” class.

The goal was to raise the profile and status of these artists, and with the support of Humber’s Community Partnership fund, to amplify the concept of pursuing educational pathways in visual and performing arts, technical support, as well as arts management, for contributors, participants and audience members.

## FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION 2024 - CRESCENDO presented by HAAS

30 teams have registered for Humber’s 6th year hosting FIRST Robotics District Competition at our North Campus’ gymnasium happening March 18th-20th, 2024.

The event, which is offered in partnership with For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics Canada, have teams, and the robots they created, competing against each other using skills that combine sport, science and teamwork.

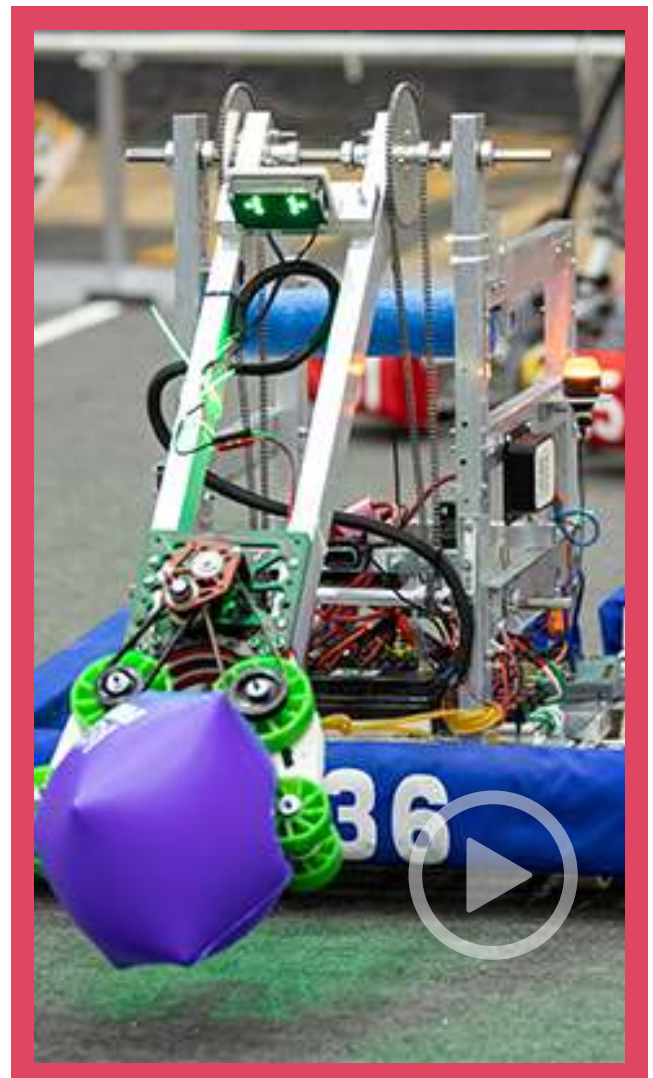
The students build robots to perform prescribed tasks against the field of competitors. The teams also work collaboratively to both build and program the machines.

The theme for this year’s competition is CRESCENDO and teams will use their engineering skills and creative power to entertain and move the world.

Using *Gracious Professionalism*, each team creates a team identity, raises funds to meet its goals, and works to promote STEM in their community.

Opening Ceremonies will be at 11:00 am on Tuesday, March 19th in the gym, with playoffs beginning at 2:30 pm on March 20th.

[Watch Video >](#)



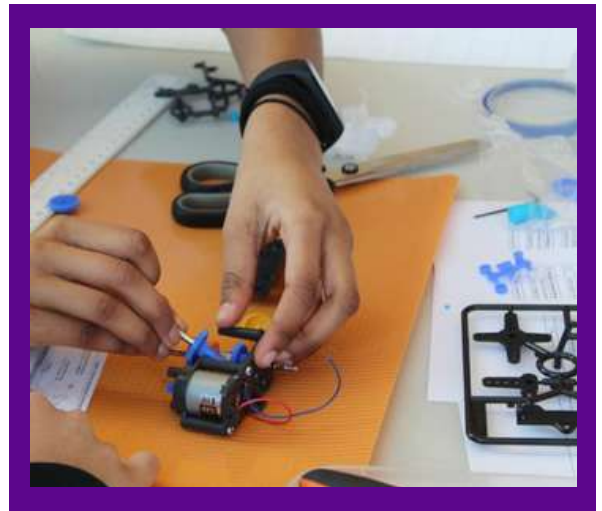


## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS VISIT HUMBER FOR WIND TURBINE DESIGN CHALLENGE

Dozens of high school students were recently at Humber College showing off their skills as part of a design challenge that tasked them with creating a wind turbine. Hamid Dehkordi, a partial-load professor with Humber's Faculty of Applied Sciences and Technology, helped organize the event that was held with the assistance of Mohandes, which is the Canadian Society of Iranian Engineers and Architects. Dehkordi is a member of Mohandes.

A total of 18 teams of four students each created their own wind turbines as part of the challenge. The judges, who were from Humber College and Professional Engineers Ontario, judged the entries on their design and the voltage they produced when tested in a wind tunnel, which was designed and built at Humber. The winning team's design generated 4.8 volts. This initiative was funded by the Humber College Community Partnership Fund.

Dehkordi also thanked the Humber College Community Partnership Fund Committee, saying without their help it would not have been possible to offer the youth the extracurricular activity.



## HCCP FUND BY THE NUMBERS

April 1 - Sep 30, 2023

6

Sponsorships

4

Projects

\$145K

Funding Approved



**HUMBER**

Community Outreach &  
Workforce Development

For more information on our programs, and to partner with us, please visit the Community Outreach & Workforce Development website at:

**[humber.ca/community](https://humber.ca/community)**

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