

MOMENTUM

MOHAWK COLLEGE COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

SPRING 2023



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ABOUT: Mohawk College educates and serves more than 30,000 full-time, part-time, apprenticeship and international students at three main campuses in Hamilton, Ontario and learning hubs across Hamilton through City School by Mohawk, and the college's Centre for Aviation Technology at the Hamilton International Airport, as well as Mohawk College Mississauga Campus in partnership with triOS College. Mohawk is among the top ten colleges for applied research in Canada. It has been named one of Canada's top employers and greenest employers, holds a GOLD STARS rating from AASHE for sustainability achievements and is home to the country's largest and first institutional building to receive dual certification for Zero Carbon Building Framework design and performance for The Joyce Centre for Partnership & Innovation. More than 135,000 people have graduated from Mohawk since it was founded. **VISIT:** Check out the digital issue of Momentum at momentum.mohawkcollege.ca and visit mohawkcollege.ca and mohawknewsdesk.ca to stay up to date. **COVER:** Jan Brimer and Jessica Mills are both graduates of Mohawk College Nursing programs. Photograph taken at Mohawk College Institute of Applied Health Sciences. **ABOVE:** Varsity soccer athletes Paige Epp, Samantha DeHaan and Lauren Snider.



From the President

I am so pleased to welcome you to the spring 2023 edition of Momentum magazine in which we celebrate student achievement and experience.

Mohawk College is a place of innovation in our teaching and in our approach to experiential learning. That is evident in our growing range of unique and collaborative degree programs, which began with our pioneering and forward-thinking relationship with McMaster University.

It is evident in our student employment and applied research opportunities and our campus facilities such as the Digital Creativity Centre. We are proud of all the ways we foster and support a complete student experience.

A special feature in this issue is a series of profiles of just a few of the thousands of international students who chose to study at Mohawk College.

These six students and one graduate from six countries come to us with a tremendous amount of work and personal experience and an incredible sense of optimism about their futures. Two of them are medical doctors seeking new health care careers. Another is a mechanical engineer now studying in our Broadcasting program.

Exceptional people leave their countries, family and friends to come to a new place to pursue an education. Thea Laidman, Associate Vice President, International, put it beautifully about our international students: "They provide an incredible example of resiliency and human spirit and courage. It reminds us how important education is and what people will do to get it."

Another notable feature in this edition is "Then and now". It's the first in a series in which Momentum connects a Mohawk College alumnus with a current student in the same program to share their experiences, insights and advice.

We start with Nursing, which is celebrating 50 years at Mohawk College. Retired nurse Jan Brimer and student Jess Mills met for a lively and interesting chat that shows the heart of nursing has never changed.

Be sure to check out stories about our Athletics department, including the women's soccer team that aims to vie for a provincial title this year, and two Aviation students who are high-flying varsity athletes.

There is so much more to explore in this issue of Momentum and I hope you enjoy what you find. ■■■

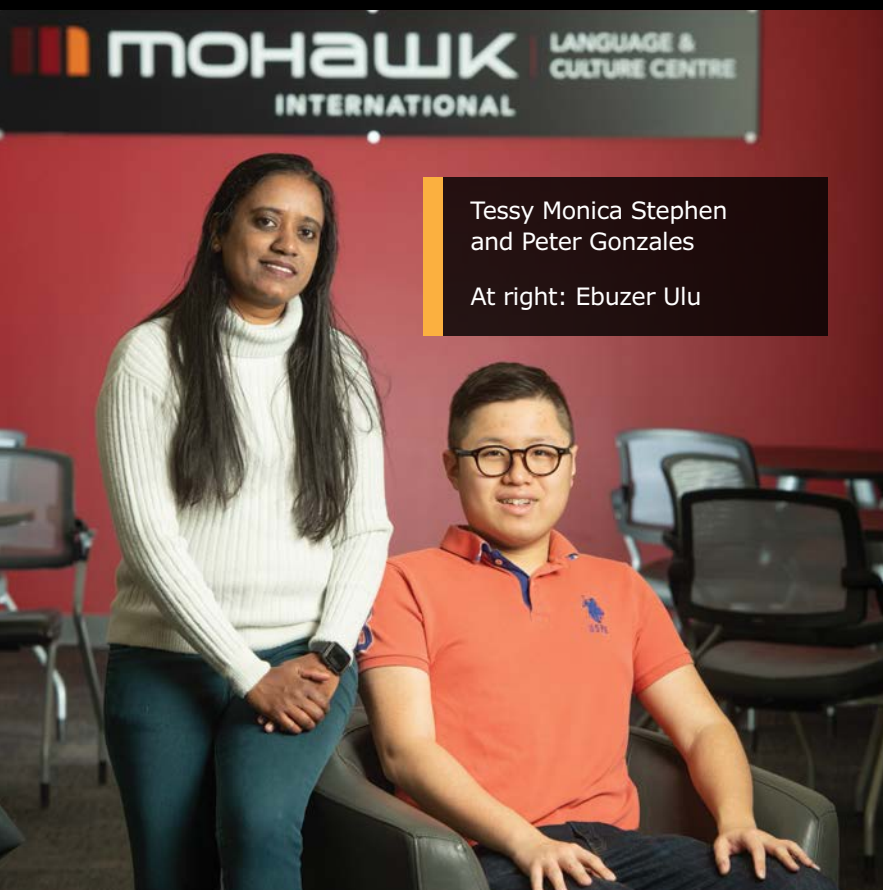
Regards,
Ron J. McKerlie

Seven students, six countries: **Why Mohawk?**

Meet some international students who are building a new future with Mohawk College.

Here we profile seven international students who have chosen to start or continue their postsecondary studies at Mohawk College. They are among the 30 per cent of the student population who have come from abroad, bringing their diverse views, knowledge and experiences to the campus.

"They provide an incredible example of resiliency and human spirit and courage. These students are making a significant investment in their future. They are giving up all that they know to come study with us. They have chosen Mohawk College for a reason, and we take that very seriously," says Thea Laidman, Associate Vice President, International.



Tessy Monica Stephen
and Peter Gonzales

At right: Ebuzer Ulu



Tessy Monica Stephen

Country: India

Program: Early Childhood Education

Background: Tessy was a teacher in India. She holds a masters and two bachelor degrees. She came to Canada on her own, leaving her husband in India.

Why Canada: "I really wanted to come to Canada and when I read about Hamilton, I found it's a really nice place to live. Canada is a very immigration-friendly country. Life is easier for immigrants. UK and New Zealand were options, but we decided on Canada. The education system is more impressive here."

Why Mohawk: "We have friends in Toronto and elsewhere and they had a good opinion about Mohawk College. Leaving my comfort zone was difficult, so I did a lot of research to feel good about my choice."

Her experience: "We were made to feel comfortable here. There are great opportunities at Mohawk College. There are so many students from all around the world and it's a nice, peaceful campus. This is a very good place for me." She spends time at the Language and Culture Centre (LCC), where she's met friends from around the world and learned about their cultures. She is part of a Mohawk Global Learning Opportunity (GLO) trip to the Dominican Republic, with 13 other ECE students who will continue to develop their intercultural competence and awareness of global barriers to education.

Peter Gonzales

Country: Philippines

Program: Canadian Health Care for Foreign Trained Professionals, two-year post-grad certificate

Background: Holds a science degree and medical degree and practised medicine in an emergency department and a dialysis clinic.

Why Canada: "My country is about to bring in universal health care and I wanted to come to Canada to experience the health care system here. I am looking at getting my permanent residency and then working in Canada."

Why Mohawk: "I think this program is a good pathway for international medical professionals to get inside the medical system.

It includes an introduction to Canadian health care, communications, research skills, ethics and values, physiology and anatomy, career preparation. It also includes 70 hours of placement."

His experience: "As an international student, you wake up with doubts about whether you made the right choice. I've experienced homesickness and missed the routine of work. But I go to the LCC and helped with the Mooncake Festival and Chinese Lunar New Year. I also show people how to do Chinese calligraphy. The support services for international students at Mohawk are very accessible. There is a lot of support when you're feeling lonely or struggling with something and I got a lot of help when I first arrived. It's really nice to be of help and to be part of the solution now."

Ebuzer Ulu

Country: Turkey

Program: Broadcasting - Television & Communications Media

Background: He worked as a mechanical engineer for 10 years. He explored an interest in photography and then videography and decided he needed a career change.

Why Canada: "It is one of the greatest countries to study in. I lived in Australia for four and a half years and that's my first love. My second love is Canada. Australia and Canada are similar. The people are kind, human rights are strong and it's very safe and peaceful."

Why Mohawk: "My brother-in-law studied at Mohawk College in this program and that's how I know about it. I asked him many questions. The program is one of the best in Ontario."

His experience: "It's not easy to change careers but I'm enjoying it. Our professors are really encouraging to us to try different things. They all are from the industry and some are still working in it. They are very knowledgeable. Mohawk is also very supportive of international students. I always get answers or help when I need it."

Ulu is part of a team broadcasting Mountaineer home games for the Athletics department and also volunteers at Cable 14. He plans to stay in Canada and hopes to get into the film industry.



Felipe Restrepo

Country: Colombia

Program: Photography Still & Motion

Background: He earned a bachelor's degree in audiovisual media in 2016.

Why Canada: "I wanted to improve my English and Canada was a great option because I also have family here"

Why Mohawk: "I wanted to specialize in photography to complement my previous knowledge in audiovisual media. The hybrid between still and motion was exactly what I was looking for and the length of the program suited my needs."

His experience: "I really enjoyed the journey at Mohawk. It was challenging because we were the first group to attend fully online classes. However, the professors put a lot of effort into delivering the program that way. The first year is mainly about gear, software and technical aspects. The second year is about creativity and pushing ourselves and our work to the next level. I appreciate that the program emphasized preparing the students to be professionals upon graduation. We created business plans, personal branding, portfolios and more to ensure students were competitive. Managing to complete my studies while working and adapting to a new life was difficult but it helped me to develop great time management skills."

He graduated with honours in May 2022 and was immediately hired. Restrepo now produces multimedia content for a local real estate company.



Maria Grisales Mora

Country: Colombia

Program: Health, Wellness & Fitness

Background: She was working as a medical doctor in Colombia and studying to be a surgeon. When the pandemic came, she worked so much that she suffered from physical and mental burnout. Her husband suggested they use their savings to emigrate and his employer sponsored him to come to Canada.

Why Canada: "We were thinking about our future and our quality of life. The best way to move to Canada is through education. Canada is a safe place to be."

Why Mohawk: "When I found Mohawk College, I fell in love with the program. I want to work in disease prevention. Medicine is all about treatment, but I would rather help people avoid getting sick."

Her experience: "It's a blessing to be here. It's exceeded all of my expectations. We practise in labs what we've learned in lectures. Everything is related to real life and our knowledge is applied."

"There are many supports for international students. I go to Coffee Club to work on my English. People are so patient and show respect when you're speaking English here. There is no judgement."



Ogba Olori

Country: Nigeria

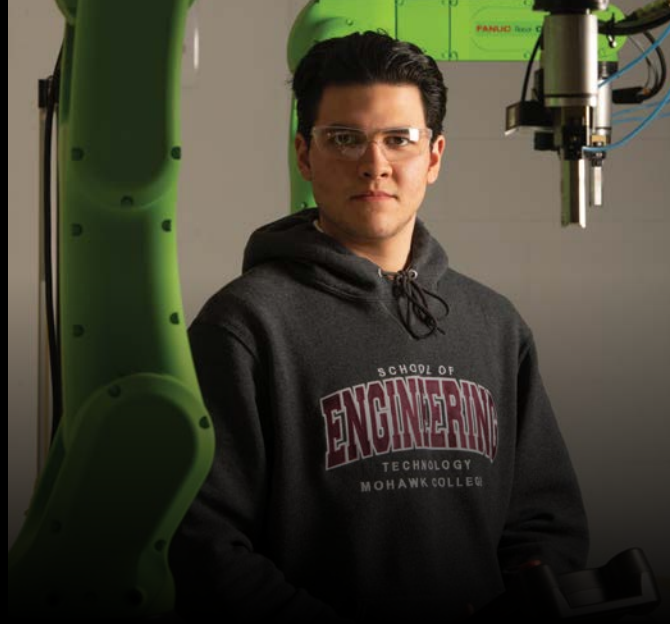
Program: Computer System Technician - Software Support - Mohawk College's Mississauga Campus in partnership with triOS College

Background: He holds an engineering diploma and worked as a software support officer for a consulting company providing application support services to the company's clients. His boss and colleagues suggested he get formal training in IT.

Why Canada: "I decided to choose Canada because of the supports given to international students."

Why Mohawk: "I met someone who was a graduate of Mohawk College. I asked him lots of questions and he said Mohawk was fantastic. I am studying at Mohawk College's Mississauga Campus in partnership with triOS College and it has been amazing. I am meeting students with different experiences and backgrounds and I'm experiencing education at a new level. Since I arrived, I felt I was at home."

His experience: "My experience has been awesome. I love it in Canada and my program has been great. My professors are so supportive. They make us know that nothing is impossible if you put your mind to it. I've taken part in a volunteer program between McMaster, Mohawk and Columbia College in which students travel to Pearson International to welcome new students who are arriving. I've been able to meet other international students from other schools and share experiences."



Salomon Briceno

Country: Venezuela

Program: Mechanical Engineering Technology

Background: He moved to Canada in 2019 with his sister to complete two years of high school. He completed a Specialist High Skills Major in manufacturing and also developed an interest in robotics.

Why Canada: "We were looking for a better life. There are a lot of political and economic problems in Venezuela. I am trying to perform as best I can for my family so I can get a good job."

Why Mohawk: "I thought about university but the tuition is too high. One of my instructors in high school said Mohawk has good technology programs and a lot of his students had gone here."

His experience: "The first part of my program was online and that made it difficult to meet people. It's been great to be back in person and meeting people without a screen. It's great to be in the classes and labs. It's really exciting to be working with the robotics technology and now I've got a job in the IoT applied research lab. I'm very excited about that. I would tell other international students to get involved with all the activities at Mohawk right away. Explore the campus and all the opportunities you have." ■■■



Nursing graduates Jan Brimer '70
and Jessica Mills '22

Then and now

In this first of a series, Momentum invites a Mohawk College alumnus to speak with a current student in the same program to share advice, wisdom and understanding of how things change and how they stay the same. In this kickoff Q&A, and in celebration of 50 years of nursing at Mohawk College, 1970 Nursing graduate Jan Brimer speaks with Practical Nursing student Jess Mills, who finished her program in December. She has been hired at Joseph Brant Hospital to work in complex and palliative care.

What has your path to nursing looked like?

Jan Brimer: I graduated in 1970 from the Hamilton and District School of Nursing (HADSON). That was just before the colleges got involved and took over the nursing programs in 1973 and four local nursing schools became part of Mohawk. I was strongly influenced by my grandmother who was a nurse here in 1918, during the Spanish Flu epidemic. I don't remember deciding to go into nursing, I feel I was born to be a nurse.

I worked for 20 years full time and part time at Joseph Brant Hospital before cutbacks came along and I shifted to home care. I retired about five years ago but I still carry my licence and I still do consultations and private visits for a local pharmacy.

Jess Mills: I am a mom of five and I live in Grimsby. I did a Pre-Health upgrade program in 2021 before going into Nursing. High school me said, 'Who needs science?' Turns out I did. I have wanted to be a nurse since I was 18 (my grandmother was also a nurse) but I started



my family young and I wasn't able to go back to school until now. I'm not sure how I did it, especially since I was studying online while trying to homeschool some of my kids during COVID, but I blinked and here I am. I just want to be a help to people.

Jess to Jan: When you first started out, what did a day in the life look like?

When I was really new, I was responsible for six or seven patients a day on the short-stay surgery ward. So many of those surgeries are day surgeries today. One of the big differences today is that drugs are administered through IV pumps. Nurses didn't do intravenous – we were giving analgesics intramuscularly (needles). It was time-consuming, but I prided myself on the fact that patients didn't feel it too much. Also, we worked eight-hour shifts. We didn't have 12-hours shifts like today.

Nurses are now thought of as part of the team but when I was starting out, there was a huge gap between doctors and nurses.

Now nurses get the respect they deserve.

Jan to Jess: What has been your most challenging experience so far?

The confidence on placements to ask questions of the doctors and the seasoned nurses. They are rocking their jobs and it's intimidating as a brand-new nursing student to talk to them. In school, it was the workload and the volume of material to cover in such a short time. Many times, I was up to 2 or 3 a.m.

Jess to Jan: When you were first going into nursing, what areas did you want to go into and were there any you never wanted to do?

I didn't really know what I wanted to do coming out of training but I did know that I didn't want to do psychiatric nursing. I wasn't comfortable with that. I loved the surgical ward and the fast turnover there. I just always wanted to do hands-on care.

Jan to Jess: Where do you see your career in five to 10 years?

I know I have found my passion in complex and palliative care. There are so many options in nursing and I do also love mental health work. It's a difficult but rewarding path there. I want to continue learning and moving forward.

Jess to Jan: What has been the hardest thing about nursing?

I never dreamed I would be laid off. It was sudden and devastating. I had always been a nurse and I didn't know what else I would do. I had a couple of odd jobs until a former co-worker got hired for home care and convinced me to apply. Home care staff don't get enough pay or respect but I took every part-time course at Mohawk College about home care and I found I loved it. So, get experience in hospitals but look at other opportunities, too.

Jess to Jan: In a career full of burnout, what's your advice for a long-lasting career?

If you feel stuck or burned out, go somewhere different. Look after yourself. Rely on your colleagues to help you through the tough times. I still keep in touch with a lot of people I went to school with or who I nursed with early in my career. And make sure you take time to enjoy your family and your time off.

What inspires you about working with patients?

Jess: We see people when they feel their worst. As a nurse, I will do whatever I can to make them feel better. I just think of the patients and their perseverance and I know I can do whatever I have to do.

Jan: To see their appreciation at the end. They may not have always liked what you were doing at the time, but they know it was for the best. In palliative, I always just wanted to make it the best it could possibly be for the patient and for the families.

What advice would you give to others considering nursing?

Jess: There is no shame in asking for help when you need it. I was doing my placement at Brantford General Hospital and my child was sick. I had to ask for help. We have to swallow our pride and ask for help. When it's your passion, you just keep going.

Jan: Don't ever stop learning. When I moved to home care, I took specialization courses in wound care and I really loved to see patients through their journey from pre-op to post-op and back home again. But when I first studied wound care, there was so much I didn't know.

What sets a nurse apart in the health care system?

Jess: For me, I have a huge passion for advocating for my patients. Nurses have the ability and drive to advocate because they have the knowledge and spend time with the patients. If we have to repeatedly go to a doctor or a manager, then we will.

Jan: I was also going to say advocating. In a home care setting, we are always trying to get more services and resources for patients and families at home. If you have to step on some toes or tick someone off, so be it. You have to know how to get what the patient needs. Whether it's 52 years ago when I graduated or this year when you are, the nurse is at the heart of the system. ■■■

50 years of Nursing at Mohawk College

The Mohawk College Nursing program began in 1973 when four schools of nursing – Brantford General School of Nursing, Hamilton Civic Hospitals School of Nursing, St. Joseph School of Nursing and the Hamilton and District School of Nursing (HADSON) – came under the college's oversight.

That move reflected the growing belief that nurses would have more professional status and career opportunities with a postsecondary college education. Those predecessor schools had been training nurses for more than 100 years.

It was an enormous task to bring those four schools into one program, says Rosemary Knechtel, who was teaching at the HADSON school at the time of the transition. "All of the schools had very good reputations. There was a sense of loss and a grieving process at first. But bringing the programs together with Mohawk College meant building on all their strengths to create something new and highly successful."

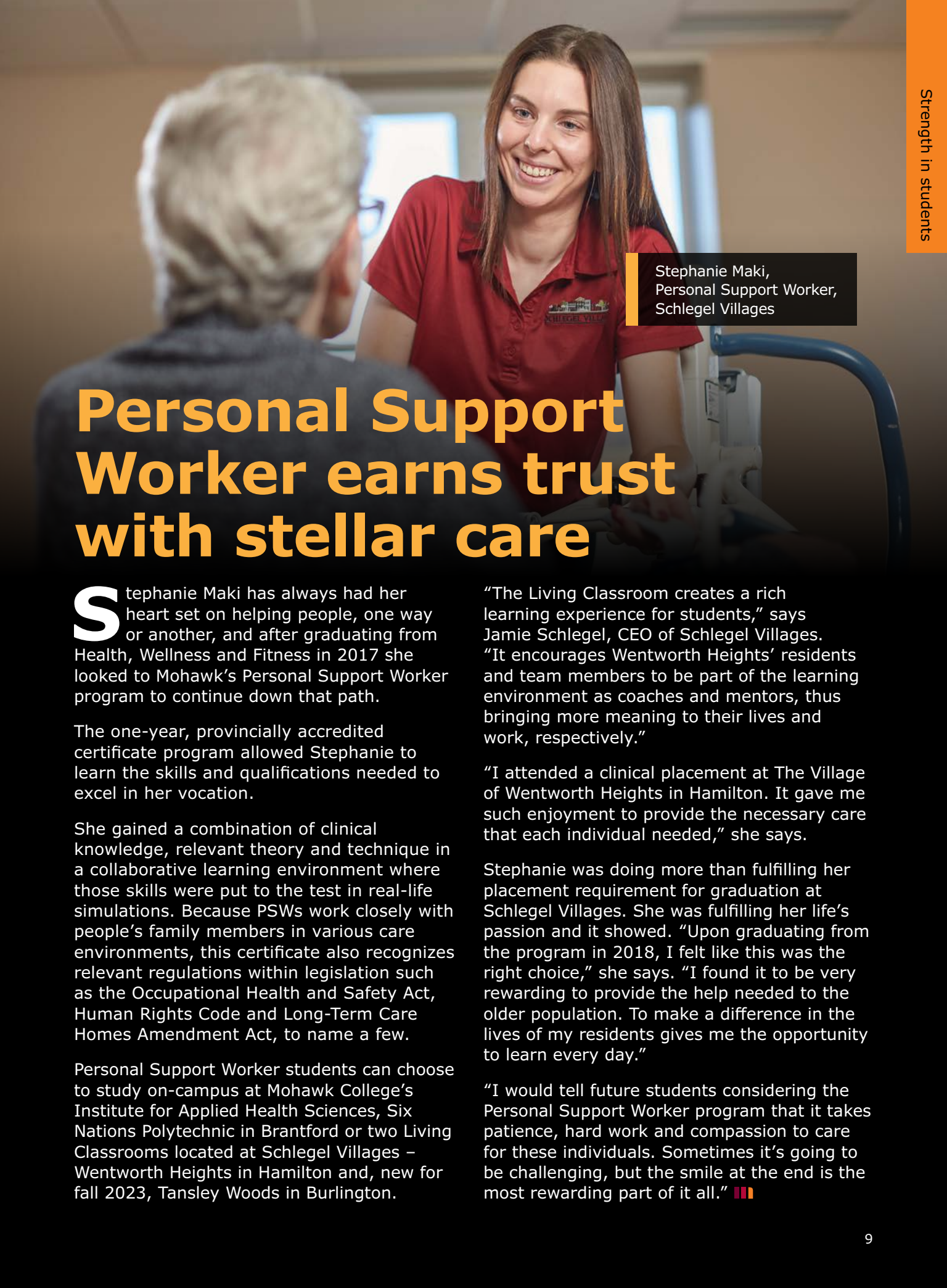
In 1978, a newly renovated HADSON facility became home to all of Mohawk College's Hamilton-based nursing students and was named the Chedoke campus.

She was a graduate of HADSON and took advantage of a "sandwich" program in which students went to Western University for a year, then HADSON for two years and back to Western for a final year. They earned a nursing diploma, along with a bachelor's of science in nursing.

The merger of the four schools paved the way for what came later, including a problem-based curriculum, new programs in Practical Nursing and Personal Support Worker, a Practical Nursing partnership with Six Nations Polytechnic.

It also laid the foundation for a partnership with McMaster University on a Nursing degree program – the first in Ontario – and a new joint facility in the Institute for Applied Health Sciences that is home to Mohawk's nursing programs, says Knechtel.

"The Nursing programs at Mohawk College are well recognized and so respected for graduates who provide top notch care because they were founded on these strong predecessor schools, the enthusiastic support of Mohawk College and later on the partnership with McMaster University in 2001." ■■■



Stephanie Maki,
Personal Support Worker,
Schlegel Villages

Personal Support Worker earns trust with stellar care

Stephanie Maki has always had her heart set on helping people, one way or another, and after graduating from Health, Wellness and Fitness in 2017 she looked to Mohawk's Personal Support Worker program to continue down that path.

The one-year, provincially accredited certificate program allowed Stephanie to learn the skills and qualifications needed to excel in her vocation.

She gained a combination of clinical knowledge, relevant theory and technique in a collaborative learning environment where those skills were put to the test in real-life simulations. Because PSWs work closely with people's family members in various care environments, this certificate also recognizes relevant regulations within legislation such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Human Rights Code and Long-Term Care Homes Amendment Act, to name a few.

Personal Support Worker students can choose to study on-campus at Mohawk College's Institute for Applied Health Sciences, Six Nations Polytechnic in Brantford or two Living Classrooms located at Schlegel Villages – Wentworth Heights in Hamilton and, new for fall 2023, Tansley Woods in Burlington.

"The Living Classroom creates a rich learning experience for students," says Jamie Schlegel, CEO of Schlegel Villages. "It encourages Wentworth Heights' residents and team members to be part of the learning environment as coaches and mentors, thus bringing more meaning to their lives and work, respectively."

"I attended a clinical placement at The Village of Wentworth Heights in Hamilton. It gave me such enjoyment to provide the necessary care that each individual needed," she says.

Stephanie was doing more than fulfilling her placement requirement for graduation at Schlegel Villages. She was fulfilling her life's passion and it showed. "Upon graduating from the program in 2018, I felt like this was the right choice," she says. "I found it to be very rewarding to provide the help needed to the older population. To make a difference in the lives of my residents gives me the opportunity to learn every day."

"I would tell future students considering the Personal Support Worker program that it takes patience, hard work and compassion to care for these individuals. Sometimes it's going to be challenging, but the smile at the end is the most rewarding part of it all." ■■■



Alex Cook, Bachelor of
Technology (B.Tech) student

Collaborative degrees

Mohawk College and McMaster University have a history of offering integrated degrees that will pave the way for partnerships of the future.

Mohawk College has a longstanding and pioneering collaborative relationship with McMaster University that has created strong diploma-degree programs.

Mohawk has three-degree clusters in technology, nursing and radiation sciences that combine for nine bachelor programs that graduate about 2,500-2,700 students a year.

"These are important programs for us and they are very innovative from a collaboration perspective," says Paul Armstrong, Chief Operating Officer at Mohawk College.

"McMaster is such a great partner and we are so respectful of the strengths we both bring to the table. We are able to layer on

applied learning to the theoretical foundations in ways that are efficient and benefit student learning."

The Mohawk-McMaster Bachelor of Science in Nursing was the first in the partnership.

"When the entry to practise requirement for nurses changed to the baccalaureate level, the province realized how important it was for colleges and universities to work together. The model that was developed was successful and paved the way in other programs," says Armstrong.

A collaborative degree in Medical Radiation Sciences degrees soon followed.

Full integration

The Mohawk-McMaster model of collaboration is much more seamless than what is found in many examples of college-university diploma-degree partnerships, says Armstrong.

“Often students study two years in college and then go to university for two years, but they are two separate programs. The Mohawk-McMaster programs are completely integrated throughout all four years. That takes more work and more planning and more discussions but it is a better experience for students.”

The integration means theory and applied learning happens hand in hand.

The commitment to the partnership comes right from the president’s offices at each institution, says Armstrong.

“Mohawk College President Ron McKerlie and McMaster University President David Farrar meet regularly about opportunities and how we can work better together. That is clearly evident in our relationship.”

Mohawk College and McMaster also offer diploma to degree pathways. One example is the Indigenous Studies program that sees students study two years at Mohawk before heading to either McMaster or Wilfrid Laurier University to finish a degree in another two years.

Another such program is the Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) program that allows Mohawk’s Engineering Technology graduates to enter McMaster’s honours degree program in year three.

Alex Cook took full advantage of that opportunity.

His postsecondary path began with a free math upgrading course at Mohawk College. His instructors encouraged him to consider the three-year Engineering Technology program.

He finished that program five years ago and worked for a couple of years before returning to complete the B.Tech program, choosing the software engineering technology stream, one of four offered. “The B.Tech is structured such that you can work full time and study part

time. It’s self-paced and online,” says Cook, who expects to graduate this summer. He is applying to master’s programs in computer science and software engineering.

Cook now teaches in computer science at Mohawk College and is considering a career in postsecondary education.

“I just kept taking the opportunities that were presented to me that the Mohawk College community has built. Everyone I’ve ever met at Mohawk has been nothing but a tremendous help to me,” he says.

“My pathway to a masters is fairly unconventional but it’s wonderful that these things are available. The strong bond between Mohawk and McMaster has opened doors for me.”

“We are a world-class college and McMaster is a world-class university. There is no need for us to compete, we need to work together.”

Another important aspect of the collaboration is that all B.Tech students come to Mohawk’s Fennell campus for lab instruction.

The B.Tech program is well thought of in industry, says Jeff McIsaac, Interim Dean, Engineering Technology & Aviation. “It commands a lot of respect in the marketplace. Our close ties to McMaster and the pathways we offer are unique differentiators for us across the college sector.”

New opportunities

New degree partnerships are continuing, says Armstrong, including a collaboration between Mohawk’s School of Health and Community Services and the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour at McMaster that includes Early Childhood Education and Applied Behavioural Analysis.

“We are always looking for where the integration of applied learning makes sense to what McMaster is trying to achieve.”

Collaboration goes beyond degrees, too.

Mohawk is offering its general credit offerings as options to students in humanities and social sciences at McMaster. They earn a certificate, which can enhance employment opportunities.

“We have a few areas of focus, including applied behavioural analysis, volunteer management, general business. McMaster is thinking of the overall educational experience of its students and how Mohawk can play a role. That is unique in Ontario and Canada.”

Mohawk College has now created a standalone degree in Digital Health and a Bachelor of Business Administration – Trades in partnership with George Brown and Algonquin colleges. A new Bachelor of Analytics and Data Management will launch in September.

Mohawk’s degree development strategy includes both more collaboration with McMaster and more standalone offerings, says Armstrong.

“There are many areas that require higher credentials but still benefit from an applied skills and competency focus,” says Armstrong. Mohawk’s strengths align in data sciences, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and sustainability, particularly in the building and built environment.

“We are exploring the best ways to deliver the credentials that the industry needs, whether that’s with McMaster, other colleges or on our own.”

The pathways that join microcredentials to advanced degrees and everything in between allow learners to go where their interests and jobs take them. Armstrong points to the example of a graduate of the Personal Support Worker program who bridged to earn Registered Practical Nurse credentials, and then a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. That led to two master’s degrees and now doctorate studies and a job leading a research group at a health care agency.

“We have to ensure we look at the whole spectrum of needs and pathways that students need to take them wherever they want to go,” he says.

“We are very proud of how we have built this relationship. The respect and mutual

understanding are deep between Mohawk and McMaster. It is built on shared decision-making and strong, well-defined governance structures that allow it to carry forward as new people come to the table.”

Medical Radiation Sciences

Medical Radiation Sciences (MRSc) allows students to earn both an advanced diploma and a Bachelor of Science degree in a four-year program.

It includes a common first year of foundational sciences. Students then choose a specialization – radiography, ultrasonography, or radiation therapy. The program’s first intake was in 2004.

“We were the first degree program in sonography and only a handful exists today,” says Laura Thomas, who is the program’s coordinator at Mohawk College.

“Across Canada, our program is seen as a leading program and it has built an incredible reputation. Our students see the value of the hands-on approach of Mohawk but also appreciate graduating with a degree. They also get to learn in a fabulous facility in the Institute for Applied Health Sciences.”

The Institute for Applied Health Sciences (IAHS), located at McMaster, includes four X-ray units, a new MRI and CT scanner, seven ultrasound machines and three ultrasound simulators. The costs of the facility and its equipment are shared 50/50.

It also features simulation suites with state-of-the-art manikins for students to practise various medical situations. Students also practise role-play scenarios. “It is the best program there is out there,” says Jessie Ma, who graduated from Medical Radiation Sciences - Ultrasonography, in 2015. “Radiologists in hospitals really appreciate graduates of the Mohawk-McMaster program. It gives students a very solid foundation and they are ready to do the job.”

Ma went on to earn a Masters of Radiation Biology at McMaster and now teaches in the Medical Radiation Sciences program.

“This program definitely set me up for success and to earn my certification and work in the field.” 🇩🇪



Ryan Tshiyoyo, student, Noah Giunta, Digital Skills Technician, Richard Mader, Manager of Digital Skills

Mastering digital skills

Makerspace and the Digital Creativity Centre help students harness their creative learning.

Business student Ryan Tshiyoyo uses Mohawk College's Makerspace every day to design and create new pieces of clothing for the brand he created in high school.

Makerspace – part of the Digital Creativity Centre (DCC) within The Joyce Centre for Partnership & Innovation – is a place for students, faculty and staff to explore, learn, experiment and create. It provides 21st century learning of digital skills, collaboration, and experiential and applied learning.

The Makerspace is housed inside the 5,600 square-foot DCC, a home to 3D printers, a laser cutter, a Cricut, a vinyl cutter, a heat transfer machine, a UV printer, a cold roll laminator, a T-shirt press, and equipment to practise coding or build digital devices. It also features a recording studio, editing suite, AV/VR studio and project rooms that feature whiteboards and large monitors.

"DCC and Makerspace are meant to be a jumping-off point for students to find something that allows them to express themselves in ways they may not have considered before," says Richard Mader, Manager of Digital Skills. "The sky's the limit on what can be done in the Makerspace."

Students use Makerspace to work on class projects, too. "As a college, it's our mandate to prepare our students for the workforce of tomorrow and the layers of digital and technical skills they will need," says Marilyn Powers, Director, Academic Technology in the Centre for Teaching and Learning Innovation.

"Supporting digital literacy and helping students master vital digital skills is at the heart of what we do in the Digital Creativity Centre. Employers want to see the digital creativity of students. The DCC and Makerspace is a great place to explore that."

Tshiyoyo is working to get his upstart "street fashion" brand off the ground. He takes second-hand clothing and upcycles it with his own designs or he produces items from scratch.

"I tell other students about it because so many people are sleeping on what's there. You are able to build and create so much and try different things," he says.

There is a constant buzz in Makerspace, says Noah Giunta, a Digital Skills Technician in the DCC. "It's not quiet like the library but it's not the cafeteria, either. It is a busy place where people work hard." ■■■



Sustainability Office student Cassi Brennan, and graduate Eva Dannys



Focused on the future

The Sustainability Office offers a range of roles for students in delivering campus programs.

Sustainability is a key pillar of Mohawk College's strategic plan and that comes to life in the Sustainability Office, which offers internships, co-ops, employment and volunteer opportunities for students. Each year, several hundred students are involved in sustainability programs at Mohawk College.

"Many of our programs and services have an engagement, outreach and peer-to-peer component to them, so students are very important to our team," says Manager Allison Maxted.

Programs include an e-waste collection program, a bike loan program, a community garden, a local food farm stand on campus, pollinator gardens, a bee apiary and more.

The volunteer Green Team, which launched in September, is an opportunity for students to collect hours towards their Co-Curricular Record. Those who contribute five hours get a Green Team designation, and a sustainability kit that includes reusable mugs, cutlery and dryer balls.

A key function of the Green Team is pop-up teaching at the centralized waste station in the Fennell campus cafeteria to help students understand how to sort properly.

Cassi Brennan, a Green Team Junior Coordinator, is in her final semester of Environmental Technology, working 15 hours a week for the Sustainability Office. "Sometimes it's a challenge to balance my studies and work, but I'm very happy to be in this role. I get to work with people who are passionate about sustainability."

Eva Dannys managed the community garden last summer after graduating from the Environmental Technician program in April 2022.

The garden is 51 plots measuring eight feet by four feet. The garden is free to use and simply requires registration in the early spring. "There is something so satisfying about growing your own food," says Dannys. "There are a lot of life lessons in gardening and a community garden brings together people from all levels of experience." ■■■



Oluwafemi Agbeye, student, Digital Health

Knowledge comes from the challenge

Digital Health degree combines computer science, health care and business into one integrated discipline.

Oluwafemi Agbeye is among the first cohort of students in Mohawk College's multidisciplinary Digital Health degree program, combining computer science, health care and business and integrates research, applied learning and placements.

All those threads interest Agbeye.

He works as a support worker for people with developmental delays, often working full-time hours. But loves to program and code and has his eye on one day managing a health care business that develops software.

"There are not many programs like this one out there," says Joe Varrasso, Program Coordinator. "This is an exploding field, particularly in the wake of the pandemic."

Digital health is a broad field, encompassing everything from analyzing the data that helps clinicians make better treatment decisions to electronic health records to virtual patient visits to remote patient monitoring.

Right now, the concept of digital health and what those skills mean isn't generally known but Agbeye is confident that his skillset will be in high demand.

"When Digital Health was introduced, it really offered everything I was looking for. I want a career that combines health care and IT."

The program is challenging, says Agbeye, "but all of that comes with benefits. Knowledge comes from the challenge." ■■■



Anand Nair and Anh Nguyen, Analytics for Business Decision Making students

Dialling into data

Analytics for Business Decision Making, a one-year post-graduate certificate, helps mid-career professionals learn the tools and skills of data.

A second cohort of students are finishing a one-year post-graduate certificate focused on Analytics for Business Decision Making.

The certificate offers executive course delivery in afternoons and evenings, with a mix of face-to-face, self-directed, and live online courses.

It requires no prior programming or statistics experience and develops skills that are applicable to any industry.

Students work with real businesses individually and in teams to develop insights from their data.

Anand Nair says the program offers a solid grounding in industrial tools that aid in business decision-making through data modelling and structuring streams of data, along with how to communicate data analytics with colleagues and supervisors and the basics of programming in multiple languages.

He has a bachelor degree in mechanical engineering and an MBA in finance and worked in mergers and acquisitions for three years in his native India.

"I decided that data analytics would be a good extension for me. I felt the faculty and the industry experience was great at Mohawk."

Anh Nguyen is in the program to build her skillset within her human resources field. "I realized that data analytics is a necessary skill because HR policies need to be backed up with data so they are of the most benefit."

Nguyen, who has worked in the banking field in her native Vietnam, says data has to be used to answer questions. "Without answering questions, the data is useless."

Nguyen says she chose Mohawk College's graduate certification program because it's highly practical, hands-on and project-based.

"It's a perfect blend of technical, business and communication skills." ■■■



Deivy Munoz-Acosta, student, Computer Systems Technician – Software Support; Mackenzie Van Vliet, research assistant, Unmanned & Remote Sensing Innovation Centre; David Brack, student, Computer Engineering and Mechatronic Systems

Research pays off

Mohawk students have plenty of job opportunities to work in college labs and innovation centres.

Deivy Munoz-Acosta is among 40 students working on applied research projects at Mohawk College through the Campus Student Employment Program (CSEP), part-time contracts and co-op placements.

A second-year student in the Computer Systems Technician-Software Support program, Munoz-Acosta works in image processing analysis. He evaluates sensor data across a number of parameters to evaluate the blast furnace's working performance with a national steel manufacturer and is now doing a full-time co-op placement.

"I love research because you are changing projects and learning new things all the time. This will be an important part of my resumé, and has been a wonderful opportunity for me."

Career path confirmed

David Brack, who is in his final year of Computer Engineering and Mechatronic Systems, also works in the Sensor Systems and Internet of Things (IoT) Lab. During this time he worked on a project with a global leading steel manufacturer that saw him develop a computer vision algorithm based on thermal images. The program automates a manual raking process to remove slag from molten steel in the steel manufacturer's ladle metallurgy facility.

"This project has been a great challenge for me since a lot of the concepts needed, such as computer vision, are taught later in my program. I was also unfamiliar with thermal imaging, which meant I needed to review a large amount of research papers before starting to get familiar with the concepts."

His applied research work has demonstrated to Brack that he wants to pursue a career in computer vision and AI.

"The project was a great opportunity for me to build on the skills I learned at Mohawk, while challenging me to be creative and learn concepts outside my education and comfort zone. It forced me to think about what I want to do after I graduate and enabled me to make a plan to achieve those goals."

Research in the sky

Mackenzie Van Vliet spent a week experiencing cold like she had never felt before while working in -50C weather in Churchill, Manitoba in January to conduct cold-weather testing of drones for Hamilton-based company, Skygauge. She is a research assistant in Mohawk's Unmanned & Remote Sensing Innovation Centre (URSIC).

Van Vliet, who is studying in the Digital Health degree program, had never considered working with drones, but when she happened upon a drone demonstration at a fair, she was immediately intrigued. Now she's interested in how drones can be applied to health care.

Since landing a job in URSIC, she's worked on a series of projects, including using drones to measure the volumes of ponds, and support police operations, and a drone pilot certificate in advanced operations. "We are getting to do things that haven't been done before. If you want to try something, you try it. If it doesn't work, that's OK. You try something else." ■■■



Alysson Claxton, student,
Recreation Therapy

Teamwork in action

Varsity athletes might get a lot of the glory but it takes 150 people to make Mohawk College's Department of Athletics and Recreation operations run smoothly.

"So much of what we do goes beyond varsity athletics," says Director Matt Ferreira. "We are one of the largest employers of students on campus. We employ close to 100 students across our department."

All told, the Athletics department employs 150 people, including coaches and assistant coaches and four full-time administration staff.

The department instituted a high-performance culture and structure for varsity athletics a few years ago but that mindset extends into every aspect, says Ferreira.

The student employees in Mohawk College's Athletics department work in facilities

management, manage intramurals, extramurals, and drop-in sports, broadcast games, write game-day stories, post on social media, set up for game day, and act as commentators, statisticians and table staff.

Students also serve as team managers, handling team uniforms, setting up equipment and assisting the coaching staff for the nine varsity teams.

Mohawk College is home to the state-of-the-art David Braley Athletic and Recreation Centre (DBARC), which houses three gymnasiums, a fitness centre with a weight room, cardio equipment, and walking track, a multi-purpose fitness and spin studio, two outdoor basketball courts, multiple socialization areas, and meeting and office spaces.

Managing those facilities requires a team of 52 students, who are either employed or on co-op placements, says Facilities Supervisor Ashley Mamone, who's been with the Athletics department since 2018.

The Facilities team interacts with Mohawk students, athletes, faculty, staff and community members who rent gym space. They check in facilities users, clean and maintain equipment, help out with intermural and extramural leagues, provide customer service, and provide game-day set up and tear down.

"We ensure that all programs – varsity, intermural, extramural and community – operate smoothly."

"This is a busy place and very customer service-focused. The people who typically are interested in working here aspire for a sports-centric career. This shows them what the day-to-day operations are all about."

"There are incredible opportunities here from a student staffing perspective. This is a big operation and we are really proud of it."

Recreation Therapy student Alysson Claxton works in facilities within the Athletics department as a Wellness Customer Experience Representative.

"Athletics is a great environment to work in. I'm a very go-go-go person and there is always something going on. I love coming to work every day." ■■■

Aviation Maintenance students
Stefan Anisko and Matias Tessel

High-flying athletes

Mountaineer athletes, cross-country runner Matias Tessel and basketball guard Stefan Anisko balanced varsity athletics with their studies in Aviation.

Cross-country athlete Matias Tessel has qualified two years in a row for the national championships and was named both seasons to the all-Ontario second team.

Tessel began running cross-country three years ago when he decided to transfer to Mohawk College, from Wilfrid Laurier University.

"We run 8 kilometres. We do hills and forests, generally in a 2-kilometre loop. That requires building endurance and strength."

It's tough to balance varsity athletics with an intense, hands-on program, but Tessel focused on time management. That included studying ahead, waking up early to run in the morning or squeezing a run in on his lunch break.

Stefan Anisko, a first-year Mountaineer basketball player, loves the hands-on work in Aviation Maintenance and the state-of-the-art facility at the Hamilton International Airport.

"I'm really enjoying the program, and we had a great season on the court, so it's a win-win."

Anisko, who is at Mohawk College on a basketball scholarship, had a great year, averaging more than 20 points and five rebounds per game.

Anisko's schedule was intense. Classes run every day from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then he had a 90-minute practice four days a week and a weekly workout in the weight room. And once, sometimes twice a week, there were games, which could sometimes be hours away.

"As long as I stayed on top of things, I could manage it. My instructors were very helpful. They were always available and so were my coaches."

Anisko says he enjoyed the travel time to away games because it was bonding time with his teammates.

"We are more than a team. We are more like a family."

The college supports its athletes in many ways, says Tessel, including buying professional software that tracks training and performance and providing access to a mental performance coach. He says having a smaller roster of sports at Mohawk College is a strength.

"It's a small community and everyone knows each other. The high-performance focus means everyone is working together to win." ■■■



Alex Macdonell, Health,
Wellness and Fitness student

Spreading the word

The Sports Information team documents athletic performances and aims to fill the bleachers.

As Mohawk College ramps up its varsity athletics performance, the Athletics department is ensuring the achievements of its athletes are well-documented.

Sports Information Coordinator Satbir Singh runs the Athletics website, manages all the social media platforms, liaises with external media, and oversees all the stories, photography, videos and news releases produced within the department.

That includes the work of two student journalists who write game recaps and managing the relationship with the Broadcast Media program whose students film home games. There are also student positions in photography, social media and graphic design.

Singh, a Burlington native, worked at the student newspaper at Brock University for five years and served as a broadcaster for basketball and volleyball games. He then worked at a newspaper in Niagara for two years covering community news and politics.

The opportunity to focus on sports again drew him to the opportunity at Mohawk College.

"All my experiences in student positions were so valuable to me. It's great to give those experiences to students at Mohawk."

One of his hires is Alex Macdonell, a Health, Wellness and Fitness student, who is filming all home games and producing highly stylized highlight reel videos (also called hype videos) that are being widely shared on the Mohawk Mountaineers Instagram account.

It's been a busy year. He's often filming two games a week, which takes about five hours of time. Then sorting through footage and editing it together takes another 10 to 12 hours.

"I love videography so much that I will make sacrifices to do it. That usually means staying up late."

"We are celebrating our student-athletes' achievements and we want to show future students that Mohawk College is the place to come play." ■■■

Pitch perfect

Undefeated in the regular season last year, the women's soccer team have their sights set higher for this coming season.

The women's soccer team at Mohawk College went undefeated in the regular season last year – the first time that's been done since 1998 – before getting knocked out in the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association's quarterfinals in October.

Ever since, the squad has been focused on reaching the championship this year and on winning regular season games in an even more convincing way. "We had a lot of close games last year," says midfielder Paige Epp. "We hope to get some leads in the first half next season."

Fourteen of the 18 players from last year are returning this year. And the team has ramped up its off-season training regimen.

"I've coached lots of teams and this is a special group of young women. They do everything for the team and make it easy to coach," says coach Paul Giannini.

Giannini has focused on recruiting players from degree programs and has particularly zeroed in on Mohawk's Nursing programs. "It takes a long time to build the unity of a team and the leadership of student athletes, so four years gives us more time," he says. "And Nursing students have very good time management and they are committed and focused. They make ideal players."

Giannini points out that the grade point average necessary to get into the collaborative Mohawk-McMaster Nursing degree program is more than 90 per cent. "These are young women who work really hard off the field and on the field."

One of his recruits is Lauren Snider, a recent Practical Nursing graduate who is playing both varsity soccer and basketball. It meant a challenging pace, especially September to November when both seasons are running.

Students Paige Epp, Samantha DeHaan, and Lauren Snider

Absent from photo: Abi Woods, student and team captain

It meant five hours of training and practices a day, followed by a 12-hour placement the next day. On top of that are games, midterms and assignments.

"The best part of playing two sports is I also had double the support from both teams, which makes balancing a lot easier," says Snider, who has applied for the bridging program to the Mohawk-McMaster Nursing degree program.

Centreback Abi Woods, who is team captain, a first team all-star and a Practical Nursing student, says the players and coaches have fully committed to success. "Each game and practice we are always progressing. Our coaches push us and challenge us and it's up to us to achieve."

Epp and goalie Samantha DeHaan both earned nods as Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association Athlete of the Week last season.

DeHaan says the demands of her Nursing program sometimes means she has to miss a practice. "But if I can't make it, I set aside time to train on my own. Our team never wants to let each other down." ■■■



Amaris Branco and Nicholas Kidd,
Advertising and Marketing Communications
Management students

Amassing awards

It was a banner year for Mohawk's Advertising students, who earned almost two dozen nods in national and global competitions.

The industry awards piled up for Advertising students at Mohawk College in 2022.

"I think the industry has a lot of respect for our students. Awards are a way of validating what we do at Mohawk," says Professor Jef Petrossi. Striving for awards changes the standard of student work, he says.

"They are always reaching for a better idea. It adds an extra level of competitive thinking. That's great preparation for the industry. Awards prove that you think differently."

In last year's One Show student competition, Mohawk College had 11 finalists and Gold Pencil winners in third-year advertising students Catherine Looy and Jan Benavente. The school finished tied for 26th globally.

"Powerhouse ad schools from around the world enter," says Petrossi.

In Canada's biggest award show, the Ad and Design Club of Canada (ADCC), Mohawk College also came away with Gold Medal Winners in Nick Kidd and Amaris Branco, along with four Silver and three Bronze winners.

In the Applied Arts awards, Mohawk amassed three wins. And in the National Advertising Challenge, which asked students to develop concepts for the Toronto Zoo, Nichole Fazzari won Gold.

Kidd and Branco converted a win for their Sleep Country campaign at the ADCC awards into internships and a job offer to join a large agency in Toronto as a team.

"We were over the moon to be named as finalists and to get to go to the awards show. It was so cool to get to see amazing industry work," says Kidd. "When they announced we had won, we thought we had misheard. We were in shock."

They got to accept their award on stage and Branco shouted: "Take that imposter syndrome!"

"It was a fate-changing moment for the both of us," she says. "I still struggle with imposter syndrome but winning that award definitely helped. I'm here for a reason."

The College is choosy about the awards program it enters into, says Petrossi.

"We really focus on the awards that will get us eyeballs in the industry."

What sets advertising apart is that its awards programs bring industry and student awards together. It is a tremendous opportunity for students to make connections with potential employers, says Petrossi.

Petrossi, who has taught at Mohawk for 15 years, says the college encourages its students to build portfolios that show a diversity of ideas, sectors, brands and platforms.

"Advertising is a thing without a right answer. Portfolios are often received differently by different people. But if something has won an award, people will look at that work differently, even if they didn't like it, because they know a team of judges has liked it."

Anisa Rouhani has earned five awards in industry competitions, along with a faculty award. Her honours include a win at the 2022 Applied Arts Awards for a Grey Poupon campaign called "Hip Hop's Favourite condiment." She also earned two Silvers in the ADCC awards in 2022.

Now in her last year, Rouhani has been hired to work as a Junior art director at an agency downtown Toronto.

While Rouhani appreciates the awards, it is her instructors who stress that they will open doors in the field. "It's great to get the recognition that what I'm doing is good."

Both Kidd and Branco have high praise for Mohawk's program, which is split into two streams: creative and business/strategy. Students have a common curriculum in first year and choose their stream for years two and three.

"I feel lucky to have enrolled in the best Advertising program in Canada that anyone can find," says Kidd.

"For an exceptional advertising education and portfolio building experience, I highly recommend Mohawk College", says Branco. ■■■



Mladen Ivankovic, student and Engineering Services Technician – Standards & Asset Management at Burlington Hydro

Degrees in trades

A new Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management) is a collaboration between Mohawk, George Brown and Algonquin colleges.

Mladen Ivankovic learned about Mohawk College's new Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management) program through a LinkedIn post. He was immediately intrigued and contacted a dean at Mohawk. He was granted entry into the fourth semester in September 2022 based on his previous diploma.

Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management) is a degree completion program in collaboration with George Brown, Algonquin and Mohawk colleges. Those with apprenticeship/journeyperson training, or trade-related diploma programs are eligible for advanced standing.

"It is exactly what I was looking for. I'm looking at expanding my career development into project management and handling budgets and timelines and I want to know more about the corporate finance and accounting side so that I can get into management."

The program focuses on the business administration, managerial, accounting, project management, leadership, communication, application of data to make decisions, and applied research competencies needed by people working in or with the skilled trades to grow their own businesses, take on greater responsibilities in their current work environments, or pursue management careers.

"It's a great program. The advantages of having three colleges involved is that there is a broader spectrum of instructors who are involved. These are experts in their fields."

Ivankovic says the program is demanding but practical.

"We came to Canada as refugees from Serbia. I learned a lot from my parents about perseverance. They had to rebuild their lives in a new country with two young children."

His father was an assembly line worker at Ford in Oakville and his mother – a nurse in Serbia – studied at Mohawk College to become an RN in Canada.

"She balanced it all, so I know I can. My parents are my mentors and my idols. I have so many opportunities in front of me because of them."

Ivankovic was working at Ford when he quit to go to Mohawk for Electrical Engineering Technology. He graduated in 2018 before working for an electrical company in Chatham and then as an engineering services technician at Burlington Hydro in 2020.

"With a full-time job, it's a challenging workload. Time management is critical. You have to stay on top of things. You can't fall behind. It's achievable if I set time aside for studying."

That means waking up at about 4 a.m. and working well past dinner to fit it all in. He also studies hard on weekends.

Ivankovic has his eyes set on doing an accelerated Masters of Business Administration at McMaster.

"This program is giving me the education background that will grow my career." ■■■

Highlights

MOHAWK HAPPENINGS

1. A Talk with Chris Hadfield at Mohawk College's Fennell Campus. **2.** Mohawk College, lead for the Canadian Colleges for a Resilient Recovery (C2R2) coalition of institutions from across Canada, receives funding from Government of Canada. **3.** RCAF visited Mohawk College Centre for Aviation Technology to speak to students about careers in the armed forces. **4.** Ten outstanding graduates were recognized as Alumni of Distinction. **5.** Student art exhibit honours women in Ontario skilled trades. **6.** Mohawk College and Schlegel Villages announce new training location at Burlington's Tansley Woods. **7.** Fennell Campus – a "living lab" to educate on Mohawk College's commitment to achieving a net-zero future.

To learn more about the happenings at Mohawk, visit mohawknewsdesk.ca



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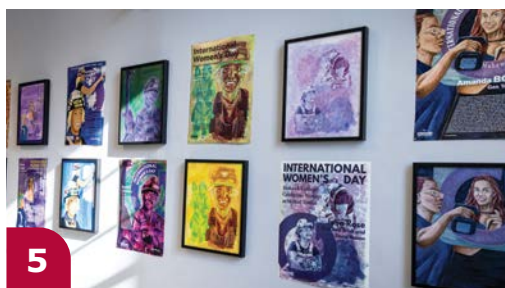
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7

Mackenzie,
Bachelor of Digital Health
(Honours) student

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