



# DONOR IMPACT REPORT

2025



If you require an alternative format of this publication, contact [giving@durhamcollege.ca](mailto:giving@durhamcollege.ca).

Durham College is situated on the traditional lands of the First Peoples of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. These lands are covered under the Williams Treaties and rest within the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg. We offer our gratitude to the Indigenous Peoples who care for and, through the treaty process, share the lands on which we live, learn, teach and prosper today.



## LETTER FROM **DR. ELAINE POPP & ARIEL SULLY**

This year's Donor Impact Report highlights some of the inspiring ways your generosity has been making major impacts for our students at Durham College (DC).

As a post-secondary institution, we take great pride in the work that we do to deliver the innovative lifelong learning that students, communities, and industries need most.

From a historic multi-year gift, to individuals making an impact in the classroom, and alumni giving forward to the next generation, this report highlights how our community's generosity has helped us advance excellence in teaching and learning. Their support has helped remove barriers to education, invest in emerging technologies, and strengthen long-term sustainability.

We value each and every one of you. Not purely for your financial contributions, but for your trust in us to deliver the education our students need to equip them for the future.

In the coming months, we're excited to invite you to learn more about our ambitious *Equipped* campaign, which will continue to help support future-focused growth at DC.

Thank you again for your support. Together, we are empowering our students, employees, and communities to thrive.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elaine Popp

PRESIDENT

Ariel Sully

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT,  
ADVANCEMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS



## LARGEST GIFT IN DC'S HISTORY SUPPORTS THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE

Durham College (DC) has received multimillion-dollar, long-term funding from the Barrett Family Foundation, marking the largest philanthropic gift in the college's 59-year history.

This transformational donation will amplify the impact of the Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture (Barrett Centre), a community-based living lab where DC students and community members gain hands-on learning experiences through urban agriculture programming and operations. Learning opportunities will be enhanced through new programs, expanded scholarships and bursaries, and open educational resources. The purchase of new equipment and technologies will ensure graduates are career-ready, with the knowledge and skills to advance sustainable practices in the agriculture industry.

---

"We are deeply grateful for the Barrett Family Foundation's continued investment in Durham College," said **Dr. Elaine Popp, President**. "This support reflects the power of our partnership — creating future-focused learning environments for students while strengthening connections between education and the evolving needs of communities and industries. Together, we are making a meaningful impact on the future of sustainable urban agriculture in Durham Region and beyond."

---

Since opening in 2023, the Barrett Centre has cultivated thriving partnerships rooted in a commitment to developing strong, locally sourced food supplies and educating future generations about nutrition and the importance of diverse food systems.



To date, more than 37,000 community members have participated in workshops and activations and over 9,000 pounds of food have been donated to local food banks and partners.

The Barrett Centre aims to be a benchmark institution helping to shape the future of sustainable food systems. This includes driving systems change across Canada and globally, empowering communities to replicate and scale the successful farming operations already established at the Barrett Centre's Ajax Urban Farm and the college's Whitby campus.

"Durham College is a leader in urban agriculture education," said the Barrett Family Foundation. "Our financial contribution reflects our shared belief that sustainable urban agriculture is a key factor to building more resilient, food secure communities while also creating rewarding career opportunities."

The Barrett Centre currently features approximately two acres of productive market gardens and orchards, an apiary, season extending hoop houses, the Food Literacy Innovation Zone, and an accessible indoor hydroponic farm – the first of its kind at a Canadian post-secondary institution. From June to October, the Barrett Centre's Ajax Urban Farm is open to the public during its Farm Gate Sales, when community members are invited to tour the farm and purchase fresh, low-cost produce grown on-site.



## DC'S ALUMNI ASSOCIATION GIVING FORWARD

The college's alumni association has a long history of giving forward to support current students and future Durham College (DC) graduates. In 2025, the Durham College Alumni Association (DCAA) provided \$30,000 in matching funding to support two priorities at the college: DC's Food Access Bursary, which provides assistance to students who are navigating unforeseen financial challenges, and the college's most recent campaign helping to refresh, expand, and acquire innovative new equipment and technology in learning spaces.

"By providing matching funding, the DCAA amplifies the generosity of others," said Ariel Sully, Associate Vice President, Advancement and Alumni Relations. "The alumni association has been such a long-standing and loyal supporter, and we're truly grateful for their commitment to giving forward to the next generation of students."

Further to contributions to the college's fundraising campaigns, the DCAA supports three scholarships and numerous on-campus initiatives benefiting students, including the Indigenous Fall Feast organized by the First Peoples Indigenous Centre, the DC IT Student Expo, the BIPOC Small Business Showcase, and Enactus DC.

The DCAA is guided by a dedicated Board of Directors whose time at DC gives them each a unique perspective but a collective understanding of the value of their education and how their student experiences shaped their future.

Heather Brown, current DCAA Board Director and two-time graduate – Social Service Worker, Class of 2021 and Human Resource Management, Class of 2022 – remembers how much participating in Enactus DC benefited her as a student.

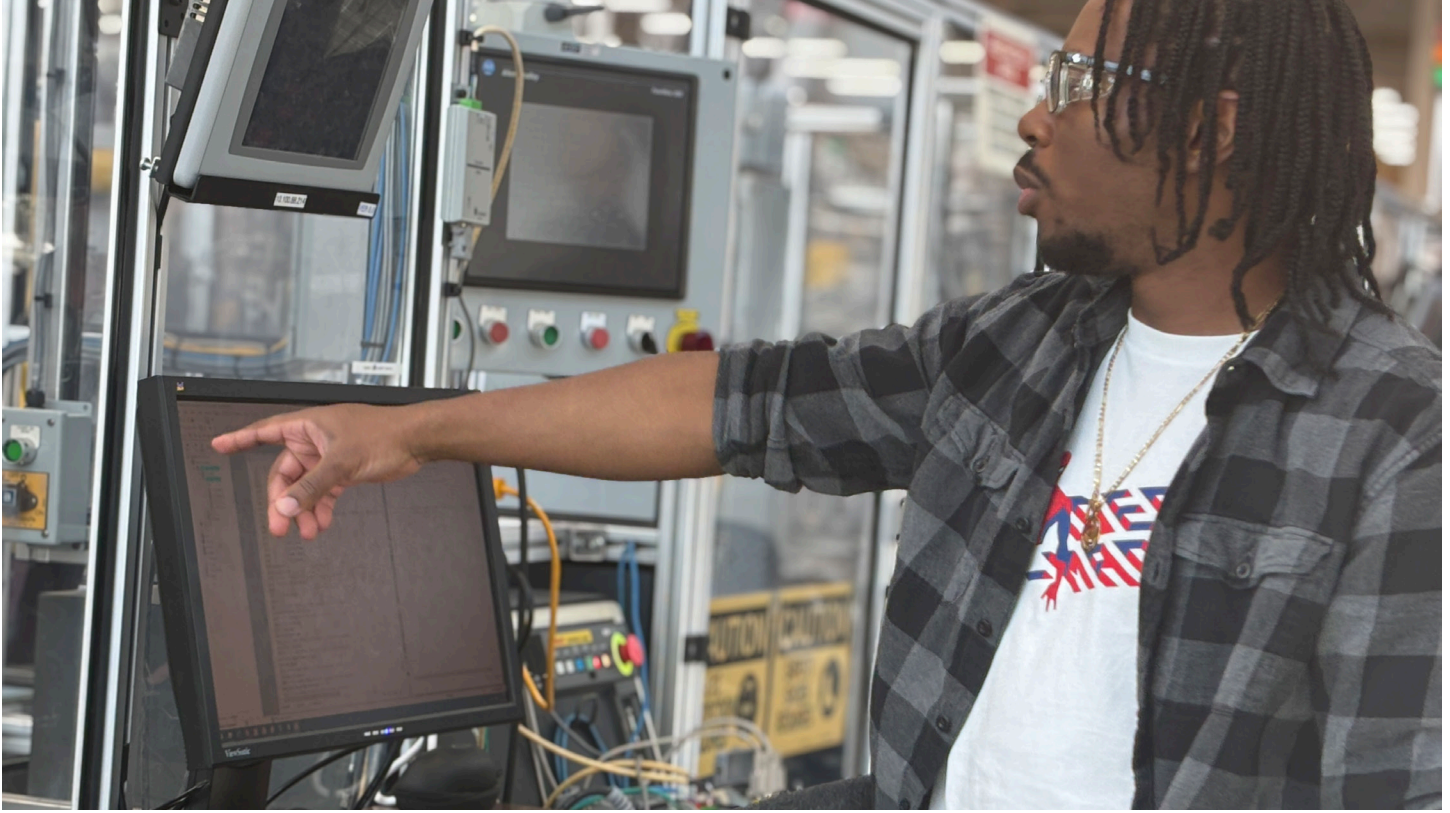


“As a person who spent the majority of their life working through a complex history of mental health, there was concern around my ability to cope, participate and integrate into college life. To be honest, many doubted that I would make it through my first semester,” explained Brown. “But I found a home on campus with Enactus DC and a community of like-minded students who were spending their valuable spare time developing projects to make the world a better place. Enactus caused a life-changing shift in how I view myself within the world, my ability to make change and be successful.”

Enactus is national network of post-secondary student leaders committed to using business as a catalyst for positive social and environmental impact. The organization empowers young people to use innovation and entrepreneurship to tackle some of the world’s biggest problems. Heather continues to stay connected to Enactus DC as a team liaison, where she also gets to work alongside current Enactus DC Vice President and DCAA Student Representative, David Moge.

Ultimately, the DCAA’s purpose is to foster a lifelong sense of belonging through connection, engagement, and shared pride in DC. Its financial contributions to the college help build meaningful partnerships with alumni, students, industry, and the broader community to establish networks, create value, and drive lasting impact and innovation.

“Students are the foundation and future of our community,” said **Heather Brown, DCAA Board of Directors**. “I am proud to serve on the DCAA Board and hope that our contributions will lead other students to experience life changing moments and build skills for long-term success in whatever career path they take.”



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

# DARIN MERRITT

### ELECTROMECHANICAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

*Darin Merritt is a third-year Electromechanical Engineering Technology (EMTY) student whose career outcomes have been directly shaped by community-connected philanthropy. Since 2023, Johnson Controls has contributed close to \$400,000 in grant funding to Durham College (DC). The successful partnership has made a profound impact on the EMTY program and its students through bursaries, funding equipment, and expanding hands-on learning opportunities that align education with industry needs.*

*Through this partnership, Merritt participated in a mentorship program and has since secured a full-time position with Johnson Controls.*

#### **WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CHOOSE A CAREER IN ELECTROMECHANICAL ENGINEERING?**

Ever since I was a young child, I have cultivated a passion for technology. My close proximity to computer systems through my father's work and my interest in science fiction media guided me to pursue a career in developing advanced technology systems that will enhance modern life.

After researching a variety of career paths, I believe electromechanical engineering aligns perfectly with my ambitions.

#### **HOW HAS THE HANDS-ON LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN THE INTEGRATED MANUFACTURING CENTRE (IMC) EQUIPPED YOU WITH THE SKILLS YOU'LL NEED IN THE WORKPLACE?**

The IMC is a diverse combination of industrial equipment, software, and systems that simulate real-world applications. Having the opportunity to directly interact with this environment helped me build a strong foundation in my knowledge and capabilities in the fields of industrial automation, instrumentation, and robotics. Through designing, integrating, analyzing, and troubleshooting projects, I can confidently state that I am thoroughly prepared to begin working in industrial environments. The IMC is the ideal learning space to acquire expertise that is immediately applicable in the workplace.



### **WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM YOUR ACCESS TO A MENTOR THROUGH THE JOHNSON CONTROLS PARTNERSHIP?**

My mentor taught me that networking is a key part of this industry and that I should not be afraid to contact professionals within the field if I have queries or would like additional information on projects or technologies that companies are developing. I have contacted professionals from several organizations, namely Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and Siemens, to learn more about the major projects that they are involved in.

### **YOU PARTICIPATED IN A TRIP TO RIPLEY'S AQUARIUM, WHERE STUDENTS WERE ABLE TO GET A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK INTO JOHNSON CONTROL'S REAL-WORLD BUILDING SYSTEMS PROJECTS. WHAT WAS THAT EXPERIENCE LIKE?**

The trip to Ripley's Aquarium was an enlightening experience. The amount of dedication, time, and care that goes into building a structure like Ripley's Aquarium is inspirational. Having the opportunity to ask the employees at Ripley's and Johnson Controls about the mechanisms that permit the operation of the aquarium, while observing the actual system, provided insight on what I can expect to witness out in the field. This trip with my peers deepened my enthusiasm to pursue a career within this field and is a memory that will I cherish for life.

### **WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU AS YOU BEGIN YOUR CAREER?**

I was offered the position as a Controls Systems Technician at Johnson Controls, where I will apply the knowledge and experience that I attained from my program to perform system commissioning and troubleshoot and resolve basic HVAC mechanical, electrical, and controls problems.

Moreover, I plan to start the process of achieving a Certified Engineering Technologist qualification offered by the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists to amplify my professional development.

### **ANY WORDS YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH DONORS LIKE JOHNSON CONTROLS WHO HELP SUPPORT DC AND ITS STUDENTS?**

I would like to express my appreciation to donors like Johnson Controls for providing DC and its students with the means to further educational endeavors. Student awards lessen the financial burden, providing the opportunity to invest in projects and resources that benefit educational development. Having this support contributes to the success that students like me will achieve upon entering the industry.

## DONOR PROFILE

# KIRSTINE FARMER

### ALUMNI LEADER

*Kirstine Farmer is a Public Relations graduate who is recognized as an Alumni Leader for her continued philanthropic support of Durham College (DC) and its students, particularly in the skilled trades. After graduating in 1988, she worked as an administrator at Community Care Durham for 16 years before taking the role of Vice President at her family company, Ranfar Steel Ltd. Located in Courtice, Ontario, Ranfar Steel is privately owned and operated metal fabrication and supply company. Kirstine recently shared more about her journey with DC and why giving forward is important to her.*



When I think about why I give to Durham College (DC), it really comes down to gratitude. DC gave me the confidence, practical skills, and sense of purpose that carried me through a long and meaningful career with Community Care Durham, and now into my role as Vice President at Ranfar Steel Ltd. Supporting the college feels like a natural way to honour the place that helped me become who I am.

My education at DC prepared me exceptionally well for the work I would go on to do. The focus on collaboration, critical thinking, and hands-on learning gave me a strong foundation that has stayed with me throughout my career. Whether I was working directly with clients, leading teams, or navigating complex organizational challenges, I often found myself drawing on lessons I first learned at DC. Even today, in our fast-paced manufacturing environment, those same principles guide my leadership.

Staying connected to the college over the years has been incredibly rewarding. Every time I return to campus, I'm struck by how much it continues to grow and evolve. Seeing new facilities, observing and feeling the energy of students working and learning in the classrooms, labs, and shops reminds me why supporting DC matters. It is inspiring to see the next generation preparing to step into their future with confidence.

One of the areas closest to my heart is the skilled trades. I believe deeply in the importance of trades education, not only for the students but for the strength of our entire region. When students have access to modern equipment, updated labs, and real-world training, they're better prepared to succeed in industries that are essential to our economy. Knowing that my contributions have helped to support this is something I'm truly proud of.

Beyond financial support, I have been in the position to contribute in other ways. Through Ranfar Steel Ltd. we've supported initiatives that help bridge the gap between education and industry. I believe employers should be visible, engaged, and supportive of students as they are preparing to enter the workforce. Making students aware of opportunities ahead of them makes their goals feel more attainable.

Supporting DC is far more than philanthropy — it's an investment in our community, our workforce, and the next generation of leaders and skilled professionals. At Ranfar Steel, thirty-five per cent of our workforce are proud DC graduates, and that number continues to grow. Their skills, work ethic, and readiness for industry are a direct reflection of the quality of education DC provides.

One of my favorite memories was attending my grandson's graduation from the Welding Engineering Technician program in 2022. Sitting in that room, surrounded by families, faculty, and students stepping into their futures, I was reminded of how deeply DC shapes lives — and how important it is that we continue to support that mission.





## A LASTING GIFT TO DC SUPPORTS **FUTURE SCIENTISTS**

Durham College (DC) is proud to honour the legacy of Armando Martone by naming the Chemical Instrumentation Lab in recognition of his generous bequest to the college's Student Experience Fund – a gift that is already shaping the learning experiences of today's students.

After immigrating from Italy to Canada in 1967, Armando Martone attended classes at DC before building a successful career in Canada as a chemist at St. Mary's Cement and later with Ontario Power Generation. His journey — from student to industry professional — now comes full circle through a gift that helps DC students gain the hands-on skills they need to succeed in science-based careers.

Recently, Armando's wife Sylvia Martone and her family visited DC to tour the lab and learn more about how his gift will celebrate his career and make an impact for students. The Armando Martone Chemical Instrumentation Lab is a key component of the college's Environmental Technician, Biotechnology – Advanced, and Chemical Engineering Technology programs, where students have access to industry-standard tools and learn skills essential to their future careers in science.

"In this lab, students learn how to operate industry-standard analytical instrumentation to analyze fine chemical, food, and environmental samples using methods that mimic those seen in their respective fields," explained Christine Hand, Program Coordinator in the Faculty of Science and Engineering Technology. "The skills obtained in this lab are transferrable between industries and expand students' career options upon graduation."



The Student Experience Fund supports areas of greatest student need across the college. Currently, donations to this fund are helping DC refresh, expand, and acquire innovative new equipment and technology.

“This gift is the perfect example of how bequests can turn someone’s legacy into an inspiration for generations of students to come,” said **Ariel Sully, Associate Vice President, Advancement and Alumni Relations**. “We are very fortunate to have the support of donors like Armando and his family who empower us to continue to offer students the opportunity to learn these high demand skills.”

After exploring the lab filled with the tools and technology similar to the equipment her husband would have used everyday in his career as a chemist, Sylvia paused before leaving the room and said “he would have been so proud.”



## **DONOR PROFILE**

# **HERMAN KASSINGER FOUNDATION**

### **CHARLES MORISON, TRUSTEE**

#### **CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT HOW SUPPORTING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ALIGNS WITH YOUR FOUNDATION'S GOALS?**

One of the goals of the Herman Kassinger Foundation is to support local initiatives that provide a positive impact on our community. In our view, supporting post-secondary education today, supports our community leaders of tomorrow. We look to those community leaders of tomorrow to make a positive impact on our community.

#### **WHAT INSPIRED THE FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH A FUTURE-FOCUSED ENDOWMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE FACULTY OF SKILLED TRADES AND APPRENTICESHIP AT DC?**

Herman Kassinger was a visionary and able to see the long-term benefits of investments today. We try to emulate that vision looking beyond the immediate impact of a single donation. An endowment fund is a vehicle that will continue to provide benefits to students long after the foundation is wound up.

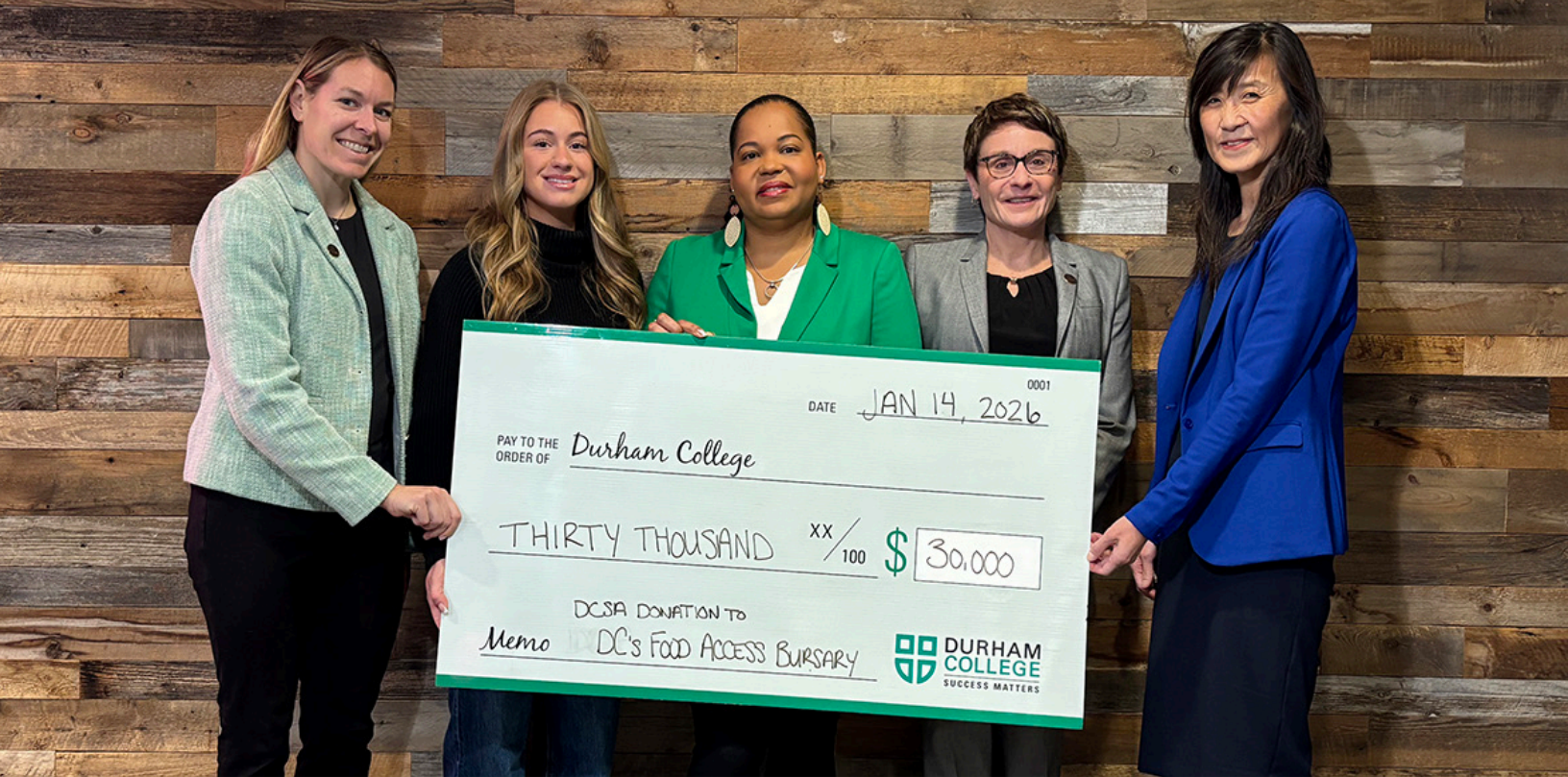
#### **HOW DO YOU FEEL THE FOUNDATION'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COLLEGE HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR STUDENTS?**

We understand that government cannot be an unlimited source of funds for post-secondary education and that students may not have the financial ability to fully fund the true cost of their own education. It is our hope that the contributions of the Herman Kassinger Foundation will provide an opportunity for students to make the most of their education opportunities.

#### **WHAT ADVICE OR WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER FOUNDATIONS INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING EDUCATION?**

To anyone interested in contributing to the betterment of our community, I would say, "come and join the party." The best time to plant a tree is fifty years ago. The next best time to plant a tree is today. An investment today will benefit your children, grandchildren, and future generations to come. If Herman Kassinger were alive today, I think he would just say that this is his thank you to the community that provided so much to him during his lifetime.





## DC COMMUNITY RAISED NEARLY \$80,000 FOR FOOD ACCESS BURSARY

Over the holiday season, members of the Durham College (DC) community came together to raise \$79,312 for the college's Food Access Bursary, providing relief for students facing food insecurity. Each year, applications for the Food Access Bursary open to full-time students in November and recipients receive a one-time bursary helping students cover the cost of a holiday meal, giving them a chance to enjoy the season and ease financial stress.

Together with the many DC employees, alumni, students, and community members that made donations to the bursary, three on-campus partners helped ensure funds were available for students in need. The Durham College Student Association (DCSA) returned as the campaign's greatest supporter with a \$30,000 gift to the fund, while the Durham College Alumni Association (DCAA) continued its support by matching the first \$10,000 raised.

"By supporting this bursary, alumni are helping to meet students' needs with compassionate and practical support so students can focus on their education," said **Jesara Holla, DCAA President**. "By matching donations each year, we hope to turn our shared Durham College experience into lasting impact for current and future students and to inspire others to give and amplify the impact of every contribution."



DC's on-campus food provider Chartwells also jumped in to help by engaging with students on campus during their Connecting Through Food campaign, with a focus on raising awareness of food insecurity. Chartwells also made a matching contribution on purchases of select products sold at both the Oshawa and Whitby campuses.

In addition to funding available through the Food Access Bursary and Financial Aid, DC students have access to The Support Hub run by the DCSA. Thanks to a partnership with Feed the Need in Durham, The Support Hub provides full-time students with fresh produce, meat, dairy products, non-perishable and perishable food items, and hygiene products.

"At The Support Hub, we have seen firsthand how food insecurity can impact a student's ability to succeed academically, and most importantly, to self-actualize," said Nicole Shillingford-Grell, Manager of The Support Hub. "The DCSA is proud to contribute to the Food Access Bursary, an impactful resource that demonstrates what's possible when people come together with a shared commitment to supporting students."



DURHAM  
COLLEGE



2025

# GIVING TO DC BY THE NUMBERS



**CAPITAL & PROGRAMMING CONTRIBUTIONS**

**\$3,659,285**



**STUDENT AWARDS**

**\$1,258,637**



**TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED**

**\$4,917,922**



**TOTAL ENDOWMENT**

**\$784,800**

# 2025 DONORS

Thank you for your generous support and for empowering us to educate and inspire students through the best in innovative and transformative education. This list illustrates contributions received in the 2025 calendar year.

## \$250,000+

Diane Blake	The Barrett Family Foundation	The Schulich Foundation
Ontario Power Generation	The Joyce Family Foundation	

## \$50,000–\$249,999

Canerector Foundation	Estate of Armando Martone	Regional Chair's Classic in memory of Roger Anderson
Durham College Alumni Association	Estate of Lois Sleightholm	The Corporation of the City of Oshawa
Durham College Student Association	Johnson Controls Inc.	
Edmond and Sylvia Vanhaverbeke Foundation		

## \$10,000–\$49,999

Bird Infrastructure Ltd.	DoorDash Technologies Canada Inc.	PineRidge Arts Council
Birnie Electric	Harmonize for Speech	Gordon and Irene Rahme
Black & McDonald Limited	Herman Kassinger Foundation	Brent Taylor
Dewar Industrial Services Inc.	Masonic Foundation of Ontario	Paul J. Vessey
D.G. Biddle & Associates Limited	Pickering Horticultural Society	

## \$5,000–\$9,999

Aecon Nuclear	Allen Gates	The Ben And Hilda Katz Charitable Foundation
Compass Group Canada	Smart Serve Ontario	The Farmer Family
Bryan Cresswell	TD Asset Management	Thermëa Spa Village – Whitby
Durham College – Athletics	TD Insurance	

## \$1,000–\$4,999

123Dentist	Carol and Don Hart	Pathwise Credit Union
Brandon Bird	George and Sally Hillis	Peter Pryce
Campus Living Centres	Bill & Barbara Howe	Prosecutor's Association of Ontario
Canadian Council of Independent Laboratories	Suzanne Land	Rotary Club of Oshawa
Canadian Institute for NDE	Patrick Lyver	Nancy Shaw
Olinda Casimiro	Massage Addict	Ariel Sully
Samson Yiu Fung Chung	Stephen McCoy	The Regional Municipality of Durham
Durham Regional Police Services Board	Dr. Gail Johnson Morris	Nina Veltri
Carol Gifford	NuStadia Recreation	Wealthsimple Investments Inc.
Gym-Con Ltd.	Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries	Michael Whittaker

**\$500–\$999**

---

Dr. Wanda E. Thomas Bernard

Brooklin Horticultural Society

Button's Heating & Air Conditioning

Jennifer A. Clark

D.M. Wills Associates Limited

Durham College Retirees Association

Vanessa Hughes

Stew MacDonald

Minto Corporate Services Inc.

OPSEU Local 353

Drew Samuels

SUMA Enterprises Inc., o/a Subway

The Benevity Community Impact Fund

Lucy Romao Vandepol

Vaso Vujanovic

Mary Weller

# 2025 ENDOWMENTS

Thank you to the individuals and groups who have invested in the future of Durham College and its students through endowments. A portion of endowment income is paid out annually in support of student awards and capital projects.

Andrew Foundation	Robert La Croix	The Michael Starr Memorial
Aramark Canada Ltd.	Lenovo (Canada) Inc.	The Regional Municipality of Durham
Jeffrey S. Boyce	Lewis Beaton Trust	UA Local 401
Canadian Healthcare Engineers Society, Ontario Chapter	Ross Mackie	
Carpenters Local 397	Janice MacMillan	
Donald and Vanessa Carson	Masonic Foundation of Ontario	
CFUW Oshawa and District	Paul and Dale McErlean	
CIBC	Denyce McKeen	
Thomas Cunningham	Métis Nation of Ontario	
Durham College Alumni Association	OACETT	
Durham College Student Association	Ontario Power Generation	
Durham Filipino-Canadian Society Inc.	OPG Employee & Pensioners' Charity Trust	
Durham Region Concert Association	Oshawa Community Credit Union Ltd.	
Durham Region Heavy Contractors Association	Oshawa Double "B" Sports Club	
Durham Region Home Builders Association	Nathalie Parly and Family	
Durham Regional Police Appreciation Committee	Paul J. Vessey	
Durham Regional Police Services Board	Phoenix Quality	
Estate of Anne Sabat	Pickering Horticultural Society	
Estate of Armando Martone	Piggott-Baldwin Families	
Estate of Linda Sagar	PineRidge Arts Council	
Estate of Lois Sleightholm	Gary Polonsky	
Estate of Ralph Newton Jennings	Lois Polonsky	
Estate of Robert P. Hann	Purdue Pharma (Canada)	
Estate of Robert Percy Hann	Gordon and Irene Rahme	
Estates of Kathleen Nawrot and Jean Kroll	Retired Teachers of Ontario District 28	
Kent & Douglas Farndale	Smart Serve Ontario	
General Motors of Canada Company	Special Olympics 2008 Spring Games	
Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce	Stanley Lovell Memorial Award	
Tyncel Hasan Award	Student Experience Fund Endowment	
Heritage Educational Foundation	TD Bank Group	
Herman Kassinger Foundation	TD Friends of the Environment Foundation	
Dr. Gail Johnson Morris	The Estate of Kerry Ernest Willoughby	
Knowledge First Foundation	The Joyce Family Foundation	





[WWW.DURHAMCOLLEGE.CA](http://WWW.DURHAMCOLLEGE.CA)