

FOUNDING PARTNERS AND DONORS



Toronto  
Community  
Housing



2023

# INVESTING IN OUR DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

*Celebrating 20 years*





# About the Scholarship



The Investing in Our Diversity Scholarships (IIODS) are awarded each year to Toronto youth based on academic excellence, financial eligibility and volunteer involvement in community leadership, anti-racism or diversity initiatives. The scholarships promote youth empowerment, diversity and community safety in Toronto.

**Students receive up to \$4,000 to pursue postsecondary studies or professional training.**

The Investing in Our Diversity Scholarship Program was founded in 2001 by the late Bill McMurtry, Founding Partner, Blaney McMurtry LLP, and Kevin Lee, former Executive Director of Scadding Court Community Centre. Toronto Community Housing became a partner in 2006.

Toronto  
Community  
Housing





# At-a-glance

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**37**  
scholarship  
recipients in  
**2023**



Recipients will attend  
**11**  
different colleges or  
universities across Canada



## AREAS OF STUDY

Accounting & Finance

Biological Science

Biomedical Science

Business

Commerce

Communication, Culture,  
Information & Technology

Community Development

Criminology

Dental Assistance

Dental Hygiene

Early Childhood Education

Economics

Education

Electrical Engineering

Engineering Technology

Health Science

Information Technology

International Development

Law

Life Science

Mechanical Engineering

Medical Spa Therapy

Neuroscience

Nursing

Pharmacy

Philosophy

Psychology

Social Work

Teaching



Focus on anti-racism and oppression in educational institutions

Research leading discoveries in Biological Science

Come up with sustainable ideas that help the environment

Support my immigrant parents

Work as a PR consultant for renowned skincare brand CeraVe

Making the world a better place

Pursue a graduate degree in information systems

Make a positive impact on the world's environmental sustainability

Help people who are ill

Create positive societal change

Become an Early Childhood Educator in the Toronto District School Board

Encouraging unity and problem solving in the community

I aspire to...

Work in the business information technology field

Working with marginalized groups who are facing difficult situations

Rewrite my neighbourhood's story and reduce the negative stigma around its community members

Leave a positive impact on the world

Work in the healthcare field so that I can help others and give back to her community

Facilitate inclusive and progressive environments where they're needed most

Contribute to meaningful medical research initiatives

Lighten some of the load that my single mother has been carrying for years

Help build a safe and healthy community through dental education

Make a difference in the world and know that starts with the children, who are our future

Pursue a career in neuroscience

Be a voice for countries whose rights are infringed upon

Provide legal assistance for marginalized communities

Become a nurse practitioner

Work in under-served communities and support youth in their pursuit of becoming their best selves

Become a pediatrician, with a focus on caring for vulnerable populations and treating different conditions

Make a change in my community and leave an impact on society

Lighten some of the load that my single mother has been carrying for years

Become an Early Childhood Education teacher

Work in HR and specialize in DEI and employee satisfaction

Seek new knowledge and skills to make a difference in the field of sustainable engineering

# Greetings from TCHC

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On behalf of all of us at Toronto Community Housing, I wish to congratulate each of the recipients of the 2023 Investing in Our Diversity Scholarship.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the IIODS program. For 20 years, the scholarship has recognized leadership in diversity, equity and anti-racism initiatives, as well as academic excellence.

We are so proud to support you in pursuing your educational and career goals as you have been proactive, exemplary forces of good, breaking down barriers in your respective communities.

I want to thank our donors for their generosity, support and commitment to the students and the scholarship program. Since 2003, our donors, including founding partners Blaney McMurtry LLP and Scadding Court Community Centre, have helped to ensure that as many students as possible are recognized for their contributions to their communities in the form of a scholarship.

I also want to thank the families, friends, and mentors of the students for guiding and encouraging them up to this point. Your support has been instrumental in their success.

Again, my sincere congratulations and thanks to our 2023 scholarship recipients. All of us at Toronto Community Housing wish you the very best as you take the next steps in pursuing your dreams.

**Jag Sharma**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Toronto Community Housing Corporation



# Greetings from SCCC

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On behalf of Scadding Court Community Centre, I extend my deep congratulations to the 2023 recipients of the Investing in Our Diversity Scholarship. It's a joy to recognize your hard work, and to celebrate you.

The achievements of these young people are incredible. They are community leaders, peer supporters, and advocates for social justice and equity, lifting each other up as they give and grow. It's a privilege and an honour to award their contributions and invest in their goals.

Thank you to the generous donors for supporting the ambitions and continued success of these youth. Thank you to the families, teachers, and community members who have helped along the way. Thank you to scholarship founders Kevin Lee and Bill McMurtry, without whose vision this wouldn't have been possible. And thank you to Toronto Community Housing for growing the scholarship to support more youth across the City.

Sincerely,

**Herman Ellis Jr**  
Executive Director  
Scadding Court Community Centre





# Greetings from Blaney McMurtry LLP

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Our partner, Larry Reimer, worked with Bill McMurtry and recalls Bill as a champion of diversity long before it became mainstream. Larry says, “Bill loved Toronto and was determined to see a day when injustices were corrected and racism in our city was a thing of the past. Bill spoke with passion and led with decency, fairness and respect. He had incredible faith in the leadership abilities of young people, and this motivated him to create this scholarship program to encourage them to focus on anti-racism and diversity.”

Larry adds, “We strive to do our own part to carry Bill’s spirit and values forward. We are proud of this program and its deserving recipients who have gone on to lead, both in our community and elsewhere.”

Blaneys’ partner, Jack Siegel, has been part of Scadding Court’s scholarship award committee from the beginning. He says, “We are so proud to have helped IIODS get off the ground, almost 20 years ago, with a handful of awards to Scadding Court area students, growing into a city-wide program that continues to help hundreds of students to achieve their dreams. We are delighted to help ensure that this continues to make a real difference for many years to come.”

**Larry Reimer and Jack Siegel**  
Partners  
Blaney McMurtry LLP



# SCCC DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

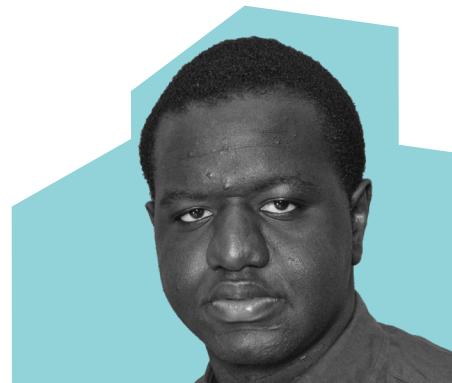
## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“On behalf of Scadding Court Community Centre, I extend my deep congratulations to the 2023 recipients of the Investing in Our Diversity Scholarship. It’s a joy to recognize your hard work, and to celebrate you.”

**HERMAN ELLIS**

**Executive Director**

**Scadding Court Community Centre  
SCCC Diversity Scholarships**



**MOHAMAD DUKURAY**

**York University  
Biomedical Science**

Mohamad Dukuray is a young man of action who has dedicated his time to making a positive impact in his community. As a member of the Black Student Alliance at his high school, Mohamad works to promote events that celebrate Black excellence. His passion for community work extends outside of the school day as well, as he also assists with his school’s after-school program and volunteers at a local mosque, acting as a mentor and a teacher’s aide. Driven by his desire to help people overcome the challenges of cancer, Mohamad aspires to become an oncologist.



**RASHAWNA BLAIR**

**University of Toronto  
Pharmacy**

Rashawna Blair is a 1st-year student in the Doctor of Pharmacy program at the University of Toronto. After completing her Bachelor of Science degree with a major in biology at the University of Manitoba, she knew that she wanted to pursue pharmacy because she is passionate about helping people in need and giving back to her community. In the summer of 2022, Rashawna was a recipient of a prestigious undergraduate research award. She chose to spend her time researching anti-tuberculosis drugs in Dr. Maruf’s lab at the University of Manitoba’s College of Pharmacy.



**ADITI AMY SOIN**

**University of Toronto**  
*Criminology, Law & Society*

Throughout her high school years, Aditi Amy Soin has dedicated herself to a wide range of meaningful community work, including teaching dance and yoga to seniors, writing letters to sick children through Pens to Pals, helping seniors and those with mental and physical disabilities with daily tasks, organizing bullying prevention weeks and community clean-up days, and volunteering at the Daily Bread Food Bank and her school’s Breakfast Club. She’s also held several student leadership roles, including student council executive and DECA president. To fulfill her dream of becoming a lawyer, Aditi plans to major in criminology with a minor in gender studies at the University of Toronto.



**RYAN AKHADIA**

**York University**  
*Psychology*

Ryan Akhadia is 17 years old and lives in the Atkinson Housing Co-op. After immigrating to Canada with his family in 2009, Ryan now volunteers to help newcomer youth familiarize themselves with their new country. Since 2019, Ryan has also served as a camp counsellor for the Child Evangelism Fellowship of Ontario. Ryan is determined to positively impact his community, and he believes education is the best equalizer for a racialized young adult like him. After he completes his undergraduate degree, he aspires to attend law school.



# WILLIAM R. MCMURTRY MEMORIAL ANTI-RACISM SCHOLARSHIPS BLANEY MCMURTRY DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“All of us at Blaney McMurtry are very happy to congratulate each recipient of this year’s Investing in Our Diversity Scholarship. Each of you has shown the kind of ambition, hard work, and dedication that will lead to your future success, in university and well beyond. As leaders of our land in the years to come, your rejection of racism and commitment to a diverse society will continue to make Canada a better place for all of us. We are so very proud to be able to enhance the opportunities that you deserve and look forward to seeing you continue to make your dreams come true.”

### **BLANEY MCMURTRY LLP**

**William R. McMurtry Memorial  
Anti-Racism Scholarships  
Blaney McMurtry Diversity Scholarships**



### **OLUWATOBI (TOBI) FALANA**

**McGill University**  
*Law*

Oluwatobi (Tobi) Falana holds a bachelor’s degree in sociology from Queen’s University and is currently a first-year law student at McGill University. After witnessing the traumatic Danzig Street shooting in 2012 in Scarborough, Tobi felt driven to start working with marginalized groups who are facing difficult situations. She has volunteered at the TAIBU Community Health Centre, which serves the Greater Toronto Area’s Black communities by promoting health and education. She also advocated for 2SLGBTQ+ students in her role as a resident assistant while at Queen’s University.



### **GABRIELLE CURATE**

**York University**  
*International development*

Gabrielle Curate is majoring in international development at York University. After she completes her degree, she plans to use her education to help her be a voice for countries whose rights are infringed upon or who are not receiving the appropriate aid to succeed. As a Black woman of colour, Gabrielle aspires to provide equity for all countries. During her time at York, she’s been involved in the university’s human rights and equity program, and she hopes to use the knowledge she’s gained to aid in providing countries with the opportunities she’s privileged to receive here in Canada.

# EVERETT, FREDERICA, ROBERT FLEMING DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“Congratulations to our scholarship winners! I applaud your continued commitment to giving back to your communities, in addition to your academic excellence. Whether you pursue studies in health, education, social services, or technology, you will be playing a critical role in society - and influencing the next generation of change-makers. Wishing you every success as you take your next important steps!”

### ANNE FLEMING

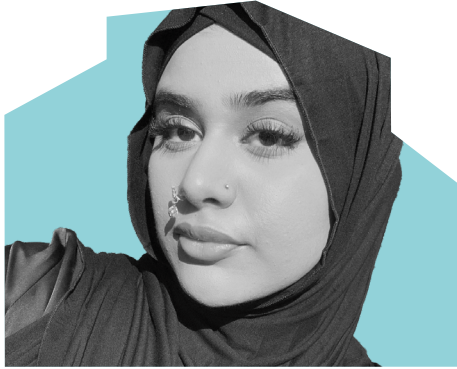
Everett Fleming Diversity Scholarship  
Frederica Fleming Diversity Scholarship  
Robert Fleming Diversity Scholarship



### TRUDYANN SHEKEEL HUPSTEAD

Bryan College  
*Medical Spa Therapy*

Trudyann Shekeel Hupstead has been engaged and proactive in her community through participating in many workshops such as the Black Mental Health Leadership, the Strong Black Women, Reclaiming Our Community Investing in Our Youth Round Table Talk, and the Janis Rotman lecture. She is passionate about being a voice, advocate, and representative for her fellow tenants in her building. Trudyann is currently attending Bryan College pursuing a study in medical spa therapy. Trudyann’s main goal is to create a shift in society through her work and her story.



**FARIDA AHMAD**

**George Brown College**  
*Dental Hygienist*

To achieve her goal of working as a dental hygienist in public health, Farida Ahmad is currently attending George Brown College to complete the dental hygiene program. After she finishes this first program, she plans on immediately starting on her bachelor's degree. During her time at college, she has shown initiative by creating group study sessions to help students better understand course material that may be difficult to grasp. On weekends she volunteers as a dental assistant to help build a safe and healthy community through dental education and to improve the community's overall health.



**BRANDY OKEKE**

**Oxford College**  
*Dental Assistance*

Brandy Okeke is a community-minded, hardworking student who loves to be involved in extracurricular activities. While in high school, Brandy was involved in a multicultural club where they prepared foods from a variety of cultures in order to fund raise for charity, and a knitting club where they made blankets for seniors in their neighbourhood. She also volunteered as a camp counsellor during the summer, where she developed her leadership, confidence, and hospitality skills. Brandy wants to work in the healthcare field so that she can help others and give back to her community.



# DENTONS DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“Dentons Canada is so pleased to celebrate your accomplishments! We are honoured to support you and your academic future, as you grow your promising careers. We know your contributions will benefit our communities as you promote social justice, inclusion, equity and diversity. Congratulations and we look forward to following your brilliant journey.”

**MICHAEL SCHAFLER**  
Partner, Dentons Canada LLP  
Dentons Diversity Scholarships



**FATIMA NAATOLI RABI HASSAN**  
York University  
*Commerce*

Fatima Naatoli Rabi Hassan has big dreams, and she’s already working hard to achieve them all. As a resident of the Lawrence Heights community, she’s been involved in many local initiatives, including 37 Kids and Revite NERDs. Naatoli will continue her studies at York University in the commerce program. After graduation, she plans to work her way up the ranks and eventually become a Chief Financial Officer at a firm. In her free time, Naatoli likes to play games and watch movies with her family and friends. She considers herself to be spontaneous, and she’s always ready for an adventure.

# SINAI HEALTH DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“Congratulations to all of the IIODS recipients! You have shown your determination to succeed, and we are honoured to be part of your journey. The career paths you have chosen will have a positive impact. We wish you every success for the future!”

**DR. GARY NEWTON**  
President & CEO, Sinai Health  
Sinai Health Diversity Scholarships



**ABHINAYAN JEYANANDARAJAH**  
University of Toronto  
*Life Sciences*

After being diagnosed with Crohn’s disease when he was in Grade 10, Abhinayan Jeyanandarajah decided to pursue a career in healthcare because he was inspired by the medical professionals who helped him manage his disease. He is currently majoring in physiology and immunology at the University of Toronto, and he plans on attending medical school to become a gastroenterologist. Abhinayan has previously worked as a teaching assistant for the Yonge Street Mission, and has also gained valuable experience in the cancer research field through his high school co-op placement. While he works to complete his undergraduate degree, Abhinayan hopes to also gain clinical experience and continue to improve his leadership skills.



**ADIBAH ANWARZI**

**York University**  
*Neuroscience*

From tutoring to joining clubs to learning Taekwondo, Adibah Anwarzi has been extremely engaged in school initiatives and extracurricular activities throughout her high school career. She has been practicing Taekwondo for more than seven years, and is currently mentoring younger students in their training. She has also created several art installations for her school council, including a photo booth for Spirit Week. Adibah aspires to become a pediatrician, with a focus on caring for vulnerable populations and treating different conditions. She plans to follow her Bachelor’s degree with a Master’s degree in neuroscience and a medical school degree.



**MARIAN MOHAMED**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*Nursing*

Marian Mohamed is the first person in her family to attend a post-secondary institution. Upon completing her nursing degree and Toronto Metropolitan University, she plans to follow up with a graduate degree so that she can become a nurse practitioner. Marian is passionate about helping people, and making them feel happy and safe. She has been an active member of her school community, with volunteer roles as a business club executive, founder of the events committee, and member of both the library club and math club. In her free time, she also conducts workshops with Student Leadership & Youth Empowerment (SLYE) and fundraises for underprivileged people in Somalia.



**BLESSING OKEKE**

**Centennial College**  
*Nursing*

Blessing Okeke is passionate about giving back to the Lawrence Heights community where she's lived for the last 15 years. In her spare time, she volunteers with Unison Health & Community Services, participating in activities such as cooking and preparing meals for seniors, caring for children, and being a teacher's aide for a babysitting course. Working with children is her dream, which is why next year she'll be attending Centennial College to achieve her dream of becoming a child and youth worker. Blessing hopes to make a difference in the world, and she knows that starts with children, who are our future.



**BASIMAH RAHMAN**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*Nursing*

Kind-hearted, empathetic, and always willing to lend a hand, Basimah Rahman is a dedicated community builder who is passionate about making the world a better place. Basimah currently works at Youth Enrichment Academy, an after-school program in Regent Park for middle school students. The program focuses on early intervention by steering young people away from risk-taking activities. She has also been involved in creating a more diverse school community by working with high school students with developmental disabilities. Basimah plans to continue to give back to her community through her education and eventual experience.



**LEVI LUMUMBA**

**University of Toronto**  
*Biological Sciences*

Levi Lumumba currently attends the University of Toronto, majoring in the biological sciences program, with a goal of working in medicine. He is an active member of his school community, as a club fair organizer who helps promote the school's many clubs, and as a member of the Future Black Physicians club, which helps support Black students pursuing medicine. Helping to spread more diversity throughout his school and his future career is a priority to Levi, both professionally and personally. In his spare time, Levi enjoys reading and playing sports, and is devoted to supporting his family in any way that he can.

# CLARK TCHC DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

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“Congratulations to the IIODS students of 2023 on the first step towards achieving your goals. Dream big, work hard and do the right thing! Best wishes for your future achievements.”

### ED AND FRAN CLARK

Clark TCHC Diversity Scholarships



### MARYAM UMEYA

University of Toronto  
*Master of Teaching*

Maryam Umeya is passionate about community justice and holds a Bachelor of Social Work from Toronto Metropolitan University, with minors in psychology and in family supports and community practice. Given the nature of her degree, Maryam was involved in numerous community projects with Toronto Community Housing as a senior program leader, working on initiatives to make sports and physical well-being more accessible to girls in low-income and marginalized communities. She also had the opportunity to work with a Black-focused mentorship program to reduce barriers for Black students wanting to enter post-secondary education. Maryam plans on continuing her work in the Master of Teaching program at the University of Toronto, where she will focus her research on anti-racism and oppression in educational institutions.





**SAHERLA ABDULLAHI OSMAN**

**University of Windsor**  
*Education*

Saherla Abdullahi Osman is an active member of her home riding York South-Weston. She was a part of the 2021 cohort of MPP Faisal Hassan’s youth council for York South-Weston, where she disseminated youth issues in the riding. She has also volunteered in the most recent provincial and municipal election campaigns, where she interacted with constituents, called and canvassed voters, did literature drops, and worked as a scrutineer on election day. Saherla plans to study education at the University of Windsor and wants to work with children with disabilities and be an advocate for their needs. Saherla is also a published author.



**HAFSA SHEGOW**

**George Brown College**  
*Early Childhood Education*

Hafsa Shegow is a compassionate and driven student who aspires to make a positive impact on her community. She’s pursuing a degree in early childhood education at George Brown College, with the goal of working in this field and helping immigrant and refugee families with young children. She also dreams of launching an in-home care service to assist families who can’t enroll their children in daycare due to work obligations, and establishing family support programs. Hafsa is incredibly thankful for this scholarship, which will assist her in covering her educational expenses and allow her to work toward her goal of helping others in her community.



**HEPZIBAH SANTHAKUMAR**

**University of Toronto**  
*Life Sciences*

Hepzibah Santhakumar is a Sri Lankan Canadian and first-generation university student. From a young age, she has been involved in community initiatives like Visions of Science and the Jays Care Foundation’s Rookie League. As a teenager, she volunteered as a youth facilitator for Visions of Science, interned with Shift Health to improve initiatives for low-income communities, interned with the Dunlap Institute at the University of Toronto, and participated in her school’s cultural council. She hopes to continue building a healthy community by studying medicine through the life sciences program at the University of Toronto, and contributing to meaningful medical research initiatives.



**SAMIRA MOHAMUD FARAH**

**University of Toronto**  
*International Development*

Samira Mohamud Farah is a Grade 12 student at Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts, with plans to attend the University of Toronto this fall to major in international development. After completing her undergraduate degree, she hopes to pursue a graduate degree in information systems. She is a member of various school clubs, such as the yearbook committee, the Black Student Alliance, and student council. Samira is passionate about helping others in her community and creating a warm, safe atmosphere for those around her. In her spare time, she also volunteers with Kids Help Phone, studies, plans school events, and reads.



**ONESSA DANAII**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*Philosophy*

Onessa Danaii plans to follow up her Philosophy degree with a law degree and pursue a career as a human rights lawyer. Throughout her academic career she has been involved in many community initiatives, including volunteering at after school programs for kids, and at fundraising events for the Red Cross Club. Onessa believes that physical health plays a huge role toward her academic success, so she dedicates specific hours of the day to be active in the gym. She credits her gym community as a crucial part of her development, helping her build relationships, boost her confidence, become disciplined, and train both her body and mind to remain resilient.

# TRIDEL DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

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“Tridel is proud to once again support the Investing in Our Diversity Scholarship program. As a community builder, we recognize that investing in people, especially youth, makes our neighbourhoods and City stronger. The young people receiving this year’s scholarships are already leaders in their communities today, and we congratulate these talented and deserving recipients as they continue their journey in their education and beyond.”

### **JIM RITCHIE**

**President, Tridel Group**  
**Tridel Diversity Scholarships**



### **UBAYY ABRAHIM ELIAS**

**York University**  
*Information Technology*

Ubayy Elias is a 1st-year student at York University with an impressive history of community service in Toronto. He has volunteered at organizations such as the Muslim Welfare Centre and Masjid Toronto, supporting marginalized individuals. Ubayy has also promoted cultural diversity by being a part of the East African club in his school. After completing a degree in information technology, he plans to become a cloud security analyst and support his immigrant parents while serving his community. He’s extremely appreciative of this scholarship, which will greatly benefit his academic journey by providing the necessary financial resources to achieve his goals.



**LUXSAN NAVAYOGARATNAM**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*Business Technology Management*

Luxsan Navayogaratnam is currently in his first year of study in the business technology management program at Toronto Metropolitan University. Throughout his high school years, Luxsan was an active member in his school community, participating in many student groups, including the multicultural club. Luxsan is incredibly thankful to receive this scholarship, which will significantly aid him in his studies and allow him to pursue his career dreams of working in the business information technology field after graduation.



**MARYAM SHAJAHAN**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*International Economics and Finance*

Maryam Shajahan is a Grade 12 student at Jarvis Collegiate Institute, where she has joined many clubs and groups to enhance her knowledge of diversity and issues in today's society. She joined the Muslim Student Association as an event coordinator and dedicates her time to planning new events, and she's also the research head of a women's group that focuses on women's rights and equality. Maryam also co-created and runs a girls' group called Regent Park Femme — a safe place and sisterhood for local girls her age. Maryam plans to study economics and aims to get a job related to that field.

# BOLT FOUNDATION DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“ We know that the construction industry is in need of talented, bright, and driven individuals to meet the growing demand for housing. That’s why the BOLT Foundation is excited to support the IIOD scholarship program and this year’s recipients. These young people are champions within their communities and we are eager to support the next generation of industry talent as they continue to advance in their education.”

**JOANNE BIN**  
Special Advisor, BOLT Foundation  
Bolt Foundation Diversity Scholarships

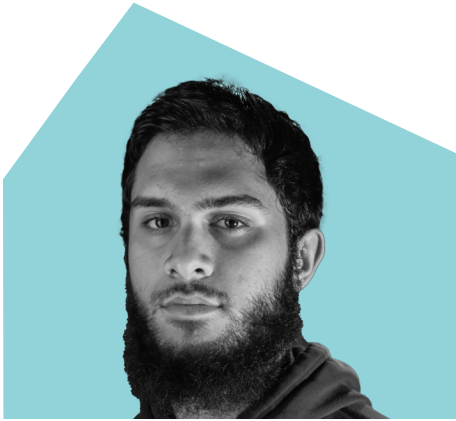


### **ANDRE ERIC DIXON BLACKETT**

**Seneca College**  
*Fire Protection Engineering Technology*

Andre Eric Dixon Blackett has always been an active part of his community, working as a volunteer with the Toronto Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club in Regent Park throughout his high school years. As he finishes up his last year of high school, Andre is planning to enter the Fire Protection Engineering Technology program at Seneca College in September 2023. His goal is to work as a CAD/Revit designer or as a fire/building inspector. He comes from a large family with nine kids, loves playing sports and going to the gym, and is a huge anime buff and horror movie fanatic.





**HUSAIN SAIM LALIWALA**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*Electrical Engineering*

Husain Laliwala is a dedicated student with a passion for community service. Throughout high school, Husain has been involved in various school and community initiatives, including organizing charity drives, volunteering at his local mosque, and participating in environmental clean-up campaigns. Husain has also been an active member of his school’s sports teams, and he has won several awards at local and regional competitions. Husain plans to attend Toronto Metropolitan University to pursue electrical engineering. He is particularly interested in the sustainability sector, and he hopes to use his education to make a positive impact on the world’s environmental sustainability.



**ABED KAKAR**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*Mechanical Engineering*

Abed Kakar is a 3rd-year mechanical engineering student at Toronto Metropolitan University and has been involved in several school and community programs including as an active member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineering (ASME). Abed plans to pursue a masters in mechanical engineering after his bachelor’s degree, which is expected to conclude in June 2024. He is passionate about taking on leadership roles to inspire others to embrace diversity and promote inclusion. Abed is a hardworking student who is constantly seeking new knowledge and skills to make a difference in the field of sustainable engineering. In his free time, Abed enjoys hiking and photography, which allows him to appreciate the beauty of nature and the importance of protecting our environment.

# TCHC DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“Congratulations to all the remarkable students who are recipients of this year’s IIOD Scholarships. You are joining an incredible alumni of IIODS recipients of the past 20 years. They have all contributed so much in their communities through their leadership in anti-racism and diversity initiatives. TCHC is proud to celebrate you and cheer you on as you continue your journey in building on your achievements in school and beyond.”

**TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION**



**IKRAAN ABDULLE**

**University of Toronto**  
*Communication, Culture, Information and Technology*

Ikraan Abdulle is a passionate community leader. She is the Youth Outreach Community Coordinator in her community, organizing various events including the food market, neighbourhood table, and free basketball training. As a member of the Black Student Alliance at her school, she also takes a lead role in organizing events, including Culture Day. Ikraan is currently finishing up her last year of high school, and will be attending the University of Toronto in the fall, majoring in communications. Her dream is to work as a PR consultant for renowned skincare brand CeraVe.



**KIARA ANGELA-JANELLE LEVERIDGE**

**York University**  
*Social Work*

Kiara Angela-Janelle Leveridge is a third-year social work student at York University. She aspires to be a child and youth social worker who uplifts youth and empowers them to be agents of change in their own lives. She is an executive member of York’s Black and Indigenous Varsity Student Athlete Alliance (BIVSAA), as well as a member of York’s Athletes in Action (AIA). As the eldest of eight children, Kiara hopes to use this scholarship to lighten some of the load that her single mother has been carrying by herself for years, while also putting more energy into her studies, her family, and God.

# RACHEL LAM DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

# CELINE MATHEWS-NEGASH DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

“The whole team at Wealthsimple Foundation is so excited to support and celebrate these deserving students. Dream big! We need more bright and brilliant minds like yours to build a better future for everyone in Canada. We hope your ambitions are boundless and know your opportunities will be limitless. Congratulations on your success so far and we can’t wait to see what your future holds.”

**LEEN LI**  
**CEO, Wealthsimple Foundation**  
**Rachel Lam Diversity Scholarship**  
**Celine Mathews-Negash Diversity Scholarship**



**ALICE ZENGUELE**  
**Humber College**  
*Community Development*

Alice Zenguele is a passionate advocate for marginalized youth who have had an encounter with our justice system. As a resident of Regent Park, Alice is determined to rewrite her neighbourhood’s story and reduce the negative stigma around its community members. To help her on this mission, Alice is currently studying community development at Humber College, with hopes of becoming a teacher in a behavioural classroom or a youth detention centre. She currently volunteers for StepStones for Youth, a non-profit organization where she leads workshops around life skills, self-care, substance abuse, and education.



**IBRAHIM MOHAMED**  
**Humber College**  
*Accounting*

Ibrahim Mohamed is a young, Black Muslim man who lives in the Lawrence Heights neighbourhood hoping to make a difference and leave a positive impact on the world. He believes strongly in the power of community, and his passion for reforming philanthropy and his eagerness to help youth are what truly drive him forward. He’s currently completing his final year in the accounting program at Humber College. After he finishes his schooling, he plans to achieve success through his efforts as a community leader, with the proper planning, resources, and support from his fellow community members.

# JOE PACE & SONS DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR

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“Congratulations on your achievements! The last few years have no doubt been a challenge and they have prepared you for the next chapter. The past crafted who you are, the present is yours to enjoy, and the future is time to turn your dreams into your memories. Be proud of your triumphs, learn from your setbacks and be your best in your future adventures.”

### FILIPPO PACE

CEO

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### DAJON THOMAS REID

Humber College, George Brown College, or Centennial College  
*Sports Management*

Dajon Thomas Reid is a talented leader and has worked hard throughout his high school career to develop these skills. Through participating in leadership training programs and facilitating recreational activities for youth. Dajon wasn't just able to teach kids in his community how to play sports, but he helped to boost their self-confidence. He has also supported his community by serving food to neighbours and interacting with families from marginalized communities. Dajon has also worked with a local summer baseball camp, supporting staff and coordinating events. These incredible opportunities have led Dajon to studying sports management at the college of his choice, still to be decided.



**EMRAN SHASH**

**University of Toronto**  
*Psychology*

While growing up in the Flemingdon Park neighbourhood, Emran Shash felt very fortunate to be supported by his family and friends. It's this unconditional support that has inspired him to give back to his community in meaningful ways. Some of Emran's most notable initiatives include co-founding a youth group aimed at encouraging unity and problem solving in the community, addressing racism in schools as part of the Black Student Association at his high school, and participating in a program that supports newcomer refugees. Emran plans to attend the University of Toronto to major in psychology, and he aspires to work in underserved communities and support youth in their pursuit of becoming their best selves.



**DESTINY ELIZABETH BAKARE**

**Seneca College**  
*Accounting*

Destiny Elizabeth Bakare is passionate about creating positive societal change. This past year she's been involved in many incredible community-building initiatives, including being a member of the Neptune Youth Council and her school's peer ministry. In March of this year, she was honoured to receive the 2023 Evanne Hunter Young Woman in Leadership Award from the TCDSB, and to represent her school, Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary School, in her final year. Destiny loves God, her family, and improving her community, and she's excited to begin her post-secondary career next year at Seneca College.





**TSYON GEBREMICAEL**

**University of Toronto**  
*Psychology and Health Sciences*

Tsyon Gebremicael is passionate about contributing to her community, and throughout her high school career she’s been actively involved in the prom committee and the Black Student Association (BSA). She plans to attend the University of Toronto to study psychology and health sciences, with the ultimate goal of becoming a psychologist. Tsyon is incredibly grateful for this scholarship, which will enable her to dedicate more time to her academic pursuits, rather than working around the clock. This significant financial support will facilitate an easier transition into her first year of university, allowing her to fully immerse herself into her studies and find new ways to give back to her community.



**PRISCILLA WARE**

**Toronto Metropolitan University**  
*Business Management*

Priscilla Ware is a fourth-year business management student at Toronto Metropolitan University, majoring in human resources. She is part of the school’s Black Business Student Association (BBSA), where she serves as a growth and development associate, creating and maintaining relationships with sponsors and students. She’s also recently become part of the Jane & Finch Youth Leadership Table, which aims to close the employment-education divide. Priscilla is passionate about learning new things, which she continues to do through boot camps at her school, and through several internships. After graduation, Priscilla aspires to work in the HR field, specializing in DEI and employee satisfaction.

# Thank you to our 2023 IIODS Scholarship Donors

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Ed and Fran Clark

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# Thank you and Acknowledgments

The IIODS team is led by Arsema Berhane, Director of Programs and Partnerships (Acting), and Toshania Williams, Program Development and Evaluation Manager (Acting).

The team works closely with Rebecca Keenan, Director of Operations, Human Resources and Administration of the Scadding Court Community Centre.

Scadding Court Community Centre is a founding partner of the IIODS program.

## **IIODS ADMINISTRATION TEAM:**

**Nadia Gouveia**, Chief Operating Officer (Acting), TCHC

**Arsema Berhane**, Director Programs and Partnerships (Acting), TCHC

**Toshania Williams**, Manager, Program Development and Evaluation (Acting), TCHC

**Chanelle Wright**, Supervisor, Program Supports & Implementation, TCHC

**Rebecca Keenan**, Director of Operations, HR & Administration, Scadding Court Community Centre

**Sanitra Henderson**, Program Coordinator, Programs and Partnerships, TCHC

**Samantha Murray**, Community Service Coordinator, Central Region, TCHC

**Phillip Auguste**, Program Coordinator, Programs and Partnerships, TCHC

**Stacy Golding**, Community Service Coordinator, East Region, TCHC

**Thangarajah Vigneswaran**, Clerk, TCHC

## **2023 IIODS PANELISTS:**

**Aly Hirji**

**Rudhra Persad**

**Kiaunna Bennett**

**Nichola Bynoe**

**Jennifer Barcelona**

**Neal Elliott**

**Olu Villasa**

**Garth Soso**

**Marsha Grey**

**Nunu Francisco**

**Samantha Murray**

**Stacy Golding**

**Daniel Yu**

**Alannah Morrison**

**Jerome Leach**

**Sanitra Henderson**



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