

## Endowment impact 2024–2025

The University of Toronto’s standing among the world’s most respected institutions of higher learning is strengthened by generous endowed gifts. These gifts provide a permanent source of funding that helps attract outstanding students, researchers and scholars to our campuses. They support groundbreaking research, advance transformative education across nearly every field and create a lasting impact for our communities and beyond. This report offers a snapshot of just some of the remarkable initiatives made possible through endowed support at the University of Toronto.

### Advancing community health through engineering innovation

Since its founding in 2008, the University of Toronto’s Centre for Healthcare Engineering (CHE) has served as a vital link between academic research and the healthcare sector, with the goal of strengthening our healthcare system and elevating patient care.

**Tselot Tessema**, the 2024 recipient of the Industrial Engineering 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Award in Healthcare Engineering, exemplifies this mission. Supported by generous alumni from the Industrial Engineering Class of 1966, the award recognizes outstanding PhD students who apply engineering principles to create transformative healthcare solutions.

Tessema’s work centres on human factors engineering—a field that examines how people interact with technologies and complex systems. Her doctoral research focuses on designing digital self-care interventions for individuals living with chronic heart failure, with an emphasis on serving marginalized communities that face barriers to accessing specialized care.

In addition to her academic research, Tessema is a trainee with Transform HF, a partnership between U of T and the Ted Rogers Centre for Heart Research. This initiative brings together researchers, industry leaders, community organizations and philanthropic partners to drive innovation in heart failure care.



“Health systems improvement and technology design are fields I could see myself working in for the rest of my life.”

— **Tselot Tessema**, PhD candidate in industrial engineering, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering and recipient of the 6T6 Industrial Engineering 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Award in Healthcare Engineering



## Celebrating diversity in visual arts

The Shelley Peterson Student Art Exhibition celebrates the vibrant and diverse artistic voices of undergraduate students in visual studies programs across U of T's three campuses.

Made possible by a generous gift from Shelley Peterson and Chancellor Emeritus David Peterson, the exhibition is permanently supported through this endowment. Their visionary contribution provides lasting funding to student awards for the annual showcase, held at the University of Toronto Art Museum.

**Sean Lee** (BA 2015, UTSC), is the director of programming at Tangled Art + Disability, a Toronto-based not-for-profit. Sean was featured in the third annual Peterson exhibition and received the Peterson Award of Excellence. Soon after graduating, he became the inaugural resident curator of the Tangled Art Gallery, whose mission is to support disability identified artists, to cultivate disability arts and to increase opportunities for everyone to participate in the arts as both artists and audiences.

Today, as director of programming, Sean fosters recognition of professional and emerging artists by drawing on his own experience as someone who identifies as a queer, disabled person of colour.

“To bring my identity into the work I do is liberating.”

— **Sean Lee**, BA 2015, UTSC

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Photo: Sean Lee by Michelle Peek Photography, courtesy of Bodies in Translation: Activist Art, Technology & Access to Life, Re•Vision: The Centre for Art & Social Justice at the University of Guelph



## At the intersection of materials science and AI

**Anatole von Lilienfeld** arrived at the University of Toronto in 2022 from the University of Vienna as the inaugural holder of the Clark Chair in Advanced Materials. One of Europe's leading materials scientists, Dr. von Lilienfeld's research applies artificial intelligence and advanced computational methods to accelerate the discovery of new materials with the potential to address pressing societal challenges.

Created by an endowed gift from Ed and Fran Clark, the Clark Chair reflects the commitment of these long-time U of T donors to fostering excellence in teaching and research, with a particular focus on harnessing the potential of AI to transform society.

With appointments in both the Department of Chemistry and the Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Dr. von Lilienfeld is deeply embedded in U of T's collaborative research culture. As a faculty member of the Vector Institute and a scientific leader within the Acceleration Consortium, he both contributes to and draws on Toronto's uniquely interconnected community of experts in AI, science and engineering. This environment enables him to advance pioneering work using AI and robotics to accelerate the creation of new, beneficial materials that do not yet exist.

“This generous endowment has allowed for groundbreaking advancements at the intersection of materials science and AI. It's enabling the rapid discovery of new materials that can be used to address critical global challenges.”

— **Anatole von Lilienfeld**, Inaugural Clark Chair in Advanced Materials, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering and the Vector Institute

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Photo: Prof. Anatole von Lilienfeld (centre) at the Acceleration Consortium's first annual Accelerate conference, by Clifton Li, Acceleration Consortium



## Investing in Indigenous scholars

**Jasmine Dorothy Wemigwans** received the Ontario Library Association Indigenous Student Scholarship and the Edward and Dorothy Dawson Award for Indigenous Students—two endowed awards that reflect U of T’s deep support of Indigenous scholars.

Currently in her second year of the master of information—library science program, Jasmine has a strong interest in Indigenous cultural preservation and the decolonization of library spaces. Jasmine received The Ontario Library Association Indigenous Student Scholarship, which honours the 40-year public library career of Grace Buller, who worked to meet the needs of equity-deserving groups across the provincial library system. She also received the Edward and Dorothy Dawson Award for Indigenous Students, which supports young scholars in financial need, especially those enrolled in science-related studies.

“I hope to be a positive inspiration and kind influence in the library and information sector, bringing Indigeneity to the space in creative and inviting ways. Receiving this support encourages me to feel confident in myself as a young Indigenous woman and to keep striving for my dreams. I am determined to succeed!”

— **Jasmine Dorothy Wemigwans**, second year, Master of Information, Library Science

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Photo: Jasmine Wemigwans, a recipient of two scholarships supporting Indigenous students at U of T, painted this mural on lockers at Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts.



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