

Algoma
UNIVERSITY

Empower • Inspire • **Transform**



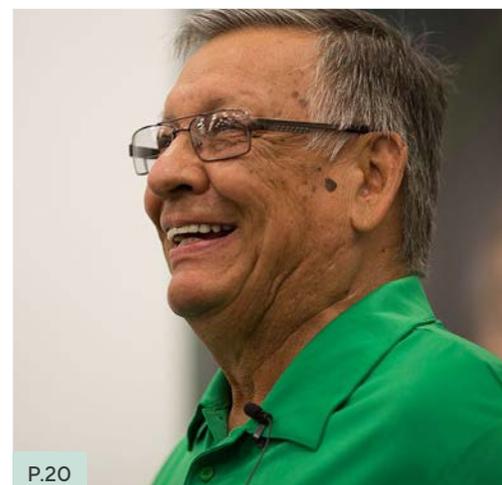
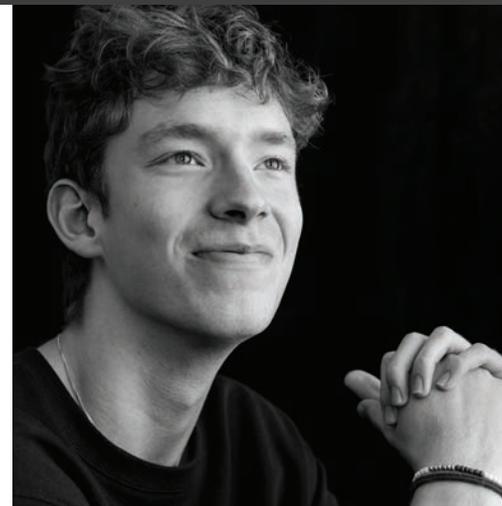
DONOR IMPACT REPORT
2024-2025

Empower • Inspire • Transform

DONOR IMPACT REPORT 2024-2025

Table of Contents

3	Land Acknowledgement Special Mission	19	Algoma University student shines at international AI camp
4	Message from the Interim President and Vice-Chancellor	20	Scholarship sustaining the legacy of Arnold Michael Cachagee
5	Message from the Director of Strategic Advancement	22-26	Donor Features Giving graduate students an Edge Orlando M. Rosa: John R. Rhodes Scholarship Dinner 2024 honouree John Cutruzzola: Boosting aspiring Indigenous artists, entrepreneurs Ashish Sidhu: Encouragement for the future
6	Message from the President, Algoma University Students' Union		
7	Message from the President, Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association		
8-9	Institutional Highlights State-of-the-art research facilities inaugurated on Sault Campus New partnership with Altitude Accelerator sparks student Innovation Protecting freshwater ecosystems through international collaboration and innovation Researchers awarded \$107,000 and remain globally competitive	27-28	Faculty Profiles Dr. Bill Dew: Advancing vital environmental science Shahrukh Khan: Delivering transformation business education
10	Producing tomorrow's digital leaders	29-31	The Power of Generosity
12	Realizing the potential of extended reality	29	Make a difference through monthly giving; Brian Leahy Carrying a name forward
14	Our students and alumni stay true to our Special Mission	30	Making a difference with a legacy gift: Nancy and Dr. Jim Tibbles
16-18	Alumni Profiles Continuing the legacy of Algoma U's Special Mission: Dr. Hannah Caicco Quazance Boissoneau Connor Flood Spencer Congdon	31	Leaving a legacy helps future generations of students
		32	Your impact
		33-38	Acknowledgement of donors who established scholarships and bursary awards
		39	Our students thank you!



Land Acknowledgement

Algoma University acknowledges with respect that its three campuses are situated on the traditional lands and territories of Indigenous peoples, including treaty lands. For many centuries, these lands have been inhabited and cared for by the Indigenous peoples, who still maintain their connection with these lands.

The Sault Ste. Marie campus is situated in an area known as Baawaating, which is located on sacred lands reserved for education as envisioned by Chief Shingwauk for our children and for those yet to be born. This land falls under the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and has been the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek, specifically the Garden River and Batchewana First Nations, as well as the Métis People. In addition, Sault Ste. Marie is home to various urban Indigenous communities.

We also acknowledge that;

The Brampton campus is located on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We would like to specifically acknowledge the territory of the Anishinabeg, including the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. We also recognize the land that is home to the Métis and, most recently, the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, who are direct descendants of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

The Timmins campus is situated on Treaty #9 land, also known as the James Bay Treaty. This area is the traditional territory of the Ojibwe/Chippewa, Mattagami First Nation, Mushkegowuk (Cree), Algonquin, and Métis Peoples.

Special Mission

Our commitment to cross-cultural learning between Anishinaabe communities and the world is evident in every aspect of campus life.

The grounds upon which Algoma University is currently located were generously provided by Chief Shingwauk and his community with the explicit purpose of educating the Anishinaabe people in the ways of the European settlers who came to this land. At the same time, they aimed to teach the newcomers to live in harmony with the Anishinaabe people and the natural world.

As a part of our efforts to transform and move forward with the nation's priority of healing and reconciliation, we will utilize our history and stories to educate people about the Residential Schools' history in Canada. Simultaneously, we will strive to fulfil Chief Shingwauk's initial vision for education on this site, which is focused on cross-cultural learning and teaching.





Message from Dr. Donna M. Rogers

Interim President and Vice-Chancellor

We are honoured to share this Donor Impact Report with you – our dedicated supporters, champions, and friends. Your generosity and belief in Algoma University’s vision continue to shape the future of our students, our campuses, and our communities.

This past year has been one of remarkable growth and transformation. With your support, we have deepened our commitment to our Special Mission, expanded research and academic initiatives, and further woven reconciliation into the fabric of our institution. Our students thrive in innovative learning environments, and our impact is felt not only in Sault Ste. Marie, Brampton, and Timmins, but across Canada and beyond.

From cutting-edge research in mental health and Indigenous knowledge systems to expanded global partnerships and new opportunities for experiential learning, your contributions have made a tangible difference in the lives of so many. This report reflects that collective impact – ***one that is only possible because of you.***

One of the most significant milestones this year has been the progress of Makwa Waakaa’igan, a cultural and academic centre dedicated to truth, healing, and reconciliation. With your support, we have taken meaningful steps towards bringing this vision to life, ensuring it will serve as a space for learning, dialogue, and community for generations to come.

As we celebrate these achievements, we also take a moment to recognize a leader who has played a pivotal role in shaping Algoma University’s trajectory over the past eight years. Dr. Asima Vezina’s transformative leadership has guided Algoma through extraordinary change, championing reconciliation, inclusion, and innovation at the heart of everything we do.

Under her leadership, Algoma U has strengthened its academic and research programming, fostered meaningful partnerships, and driven projects such as Makwa Waakaa’igan that will leave a lasting legacy. As Dr. Vezina moves on to her next chapter, we extend our deepest gratitude for her vision, passion, and unwavering commitment to this institution and its people.

Asima, chi-miigwech, for your dedication to Algoma University – you have left an indelible mark, and your legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

Finally, we want to recognize the dedication and hard work of our faculty and staff. Their commitment to the University and its Special Mission is the foundation upon which our collective impact is built. Their passion for teaching, research, and student success ensures that Algoma University continues to be a place of learning, innovation, and transformation.

To our donors, supporters, faculty, and staff – thank you for walking alongside us on this journey. Your impact is immeasurable, and together, we will continue to build a future filled with possibility.

Miigwech, thank you, and we look forward to continuing this work together.

Dr. Donna M. Rogers (she/her/elle)
Interim President and Vice-Chancellor,
Algoma University

Message from Colin Wilson

Director of Strategic Advancement



At Algoma University, our commitment to academic excellence, student success, and community engagement continues to grow. This past year has been one of progress and impact, made possible by the dedication of our faculty, staff, students, and, of course, our valued donors and partners.

With your support, we have expanded learning pathways, strengthened research initiatives, and enhanced experiential opportunities across our campuses. From collaborative projects in health and sustainability to partnerships that connect local and global communities, your generosity has opened new doors for students and faculty alike.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on deepening our Special Mission, ensuring Indigenous knowledge, reconciliation, and inclusivity guide every aspect of our work – from curriculum development to student services to community outreach.

Your generosity provides scholarships and bursaries that alleviate financial barriers and invests in state-of-the-art learning spaces that inspire innovation and discovery. This year, the new Containment Level 2 Lab and faculty-led initiatives demonstrated the transformative impact of these investments, equipping students with the tools and opportunities to excel.

Every gift, large or small, plays a crucial role in shaping an inclusive and transformative educational experience.

We are immensely grateful to you – our donors, alumni, community partners, and friends – for making this journey possible. Your support fuels our momentum and strengthens our impact on campus, in our communities, and beyond.

This Donor Impact Report is a testament to the difference you make in the lives of our students and the broader Algoma University community.

On behalf of our students, faculty, and staff, thank you for your generosity and belief in our vision. We look forward to continuing this journey together and building an even brighter future.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Wilson'.

Colin Wilson (he/him/il)
Director of Strategic Advancement,
Algoma University



Message from Minion Paul

President, Algoma University
Students' Union

As president of the Algoma University Students' Union (AUSU), I am filled with immense pride in the dedication, passion and hard work of my team in serving our students with integrity and enthusiasm. This year has been one of both significant effort and meaningful accomplishments for AUSU. We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support from our community donors, as it inspires and motivates us to keep pushing forward in our mission to serve our students. Thanks to your generosity, we are able to provide crucial academic support and a range of valuable services that enhance the student experience at Algoma University.

With heartfelt appreciation, we are proud to inform you that, thanks to your unwavering support, AUSU successfully hosted a variety of events throughout the year that reached and served a broader range of students across all of our campuses. This year, the Food Pantry at our Equity Centre served an average of 1,300 students each month, highlighting the consistent demand for this essential service.

We are also excited to share that our staff and volunteers harvested nearly 81 kilograms of produce from the People's Garden this year. In addition, the garden hosted workshops on fermentation, seed-saving and native flower potting, and organized a community dinner and indoor gardening for the winter months. My

team has also initiated growing Indigenous plants on the Sault Ste. Marie campus as part of our commitment to sustainability and cultural respect.

AUSU is thrilled to announce that we are in the planning stages of a three-phase project to develop a food pantry on our Brampton campus. In the interim, our executives have taken proactive steps by organizing food drives each semester to support our Brampton students and combat food insecurity.

Furthermore, we are incredibly proud to introduce a new student service we have launched in collaboration with Student VIP – the Virtual Health Clinic. This service allows our students to access health consultations 24/7 via their personal devices, ensuring they can easily get care when needed. Additionally, we have installed Tyto machines at our Sault Ste. Marie and Brampton campuses, which allow students to remotely conduct physical exams on themselves and diagnose more than 500 types of ailments.

Once again, thank you for your continuing support. We look forward to another year of working together to create a positive and lasting impact on our students and community.

Minion Paul (she/her)
President, Algoma University Students' Union

Photo from left to right: AUSU leaders Anvi Thakkar, Brampton Representative; Nidhi Patel, VP Student Life; Minion Paul, President; and Abdul Hayyi, VP Campus Affairs.



Message from Nina Toulouse

President, Shingwauk
Anishinaabe
Students' Association

As president of the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association (SASA), I am delighted to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your ongoing support and generosity. Your contributions have been instrumental in empowering Anishinaabe students and amplifying our voices within the vibrant community of Algoma University. In deepest appreciation, *chi-miigwech*, thank you.

SASA has organized impactful events such as the Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow at GFL Memorial Gardens, as well as full moon ceremonies, special awareness days such as Every Child Matters and Red Dress Day, traditional health clinics, sweat lodges, feasts and many traditional craft workshops across all three of our campuses. These initiatives celebrate our rich Anishinaabe culture and provide essential resources and supports for Anishinaabe students to thrive academically and spiritually.

We take great pride in welcoming our entire student body to join us at many of our events. Together, we share and exchange our beautiful cultures, and we are passionate to carry this relationship forward.

I cannot express enough gratitude for your commitment to our cause. Your kindness and support are the foundation of SASA's work; without your contributions, our impact would not be possible. Together, we are creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for our First Nation, Métis and Inuit students at Algoma University.

With deepest appreciation, *chi-miigwech*, thank you.

Nina Toulouse (she/her)

President, Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association

Photo from left to right: SASA leaders Madison Mitchell, Communications Coordinator; Hannah Thibault, Cultural Coordinator; Elizabeth Nahwegezhic, Vice-President; Shelby Bennett, Secretary; Nina Toulouse, President; Domanique Camara, Treasurer; and Lauren Lavallee, Events Coordinator.

State-of-the-art research facilities inaugurated on Sault Campus

Two state-of-the-art research facilities have opened at the Sault Ste. Marie campus of Algoma University: the newly renovated Animal Care Facility and the advanced Containment Level 2 (CL2) Laboratory. This funding was made possible by the support of the former MPP for Sault Ste. Marie, Ross Romano, and the Ontario government through its investment via the Ontario Builds program.

The CL2 Laboratory enables research in health sciences, biology and environmental science. It is built to global biosafety standards and allows students and faculty to work safely with microorganisms and tissue cultures. The renovated Animal Care Facility supports research with small animals and aquatic models, fostering hands-on experience in responsible animal care.

“These investments position Algoma University as a leader in both education and research,” says Laurie Bloomfield, acting dean of the Faculty of Science.

New partnership with Altitude Accelerator sparks student innovation

This past year, our University has partnered with Altitude Accelerator, a non-profit organization in Brampton that provides commercialization support to tech startups, to create exciting new opportunities for students and entrepreneurs across Ontario. Through a memorandum of understanding, the two organizations are working together to foster innovation and drive the growth of Ontario’s entrepreneurial landscape.

This collaboration will enhance hands-on learning for students in the Faculty of Business and Economics and the School of Computer Science and Technology. Students will gain real-world experience through internships, cooperative education and work-integrated learning. They will also have opportunities to work directly with Altitude Accelerator professionals on key projects, capstones and thesis papers, and participate in guest lectures on research and innovation.

“By combining the expertise of our academic faculties with Altitude Accelerator’s support services, students will be empowered to bring their tech innovations to market and drive business growth,” says David Marasco, director of strategic initiatives and partnerships at Algoma University.

“This partnership allows us to bring students and entrepreneurs together, providing a platform that supports innovative products and contributes to the growth of the regional economy,” says Pam Banks, executive director of Altitude Accelerator.

Marasco and Banks both say that with this partnership, Algoma University students will have an incredible opportunity to bridge the gap between education and entrepreneurship, positioning themselves as leaders in Ontario’s growing startup ecosystem.



Protecting freshwater ecosystems through international collaboration and innovation

Algoma U is playing a pivotal role in understanding and addressing the impact of oil spills on the Great Lakes in order to protect the environment and local communities, including Sault Ste. Marie. By bringing together a dozen organizations and 24 scientists from across the U.S. and Canada and partnering with Lake Superior State University, Algoma U is leading important research into the ecological consequences of oil contamination in freshwater, an issue that has historically been under-researched compared to oceanic oil spills.

Backed by a \$4 million funding initiative from Natural Resources Canada, this collaborative research network focuses on assessing the environmental effects of oil spills, particularly in colder weather. As more than four million barrels of oil are transported through Canada daily, there is a risk to key waterways such as the St. Mary's River (Baawaating), which is a vital link for industry and wildlife.

Playing an instrumental role in the effort is Michael Twiss, a biology professor at Algoma University and a member of the research coordinating committee of the International Joint Commission, a U.S.-Canada organization that cooperates to manage water systems along the border. His work ensured the integration of scientific research with Indigenous perspectives, advancing both environmental and social justice.

Algoma U's programs, such as the newly established graduate studies programs in biology and computer science, contribute to these vital initiatives. These programs align with the IJC's mission to safeguard water quality, ensuring future generations can continue to rely on these precious freshwater resources.



Photo left: Michael Twiss, PhD, Department of Biology, Algoma U



Photo above right: Jennifer Foote, PhD, Department of Biology, Algoma U



Photo far right: Christine Madliger, PhD, Department of Biology, Algoma U

Researchers awarded over \$107,000 and remain globally competitive

Two of our researchers have been awarded \$107,038 by the John R. Evans Leaders Fund, which supports infrastructure such as labs and equipment at Canadian universities. Part of the Canada Foundation for Innovation, this fund ensures researchers can remain globally competitive.

Recipients Dr. Jennifer Foote and Dr. Christine Madliger of the Department of Biology are recognized for their leadership in wildlife ecology and conservation physiology. Foote's project, Integrative Approaches to Disentangle Network Structure in Territorial Songbirds, received \$32,040, while Dr. Madliger's project, Infrastructure to Support the Multi-stressor Conservation Physiology Laboratory, was allocated \$74,998.

"We're incredibly proud of our researchers, whose work drives continuous innovation at Algoma U," said Interim Vice-President Academic and Research, Dr. Donna M. Rogers. *"This funding supports critical projects, allowing our faculty to explore evolving research questions in ecology and conservation. It's a clear recognition of the quality and impact of research at Algoma University."*

Algoma
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF
COMPUTER SCIENCE
& TECHNOLOGY

Imagine - Create - Innovate



Producing tomorrow's digital leaders

With digital innovation continuing at an exhilarating pace, Algoma University's new Master of Computer Science program is ideally positioning students to thrive in the expanding knowledge economy.

Introduced in the winter of 2024 at the Brampton and Sault Ste. Marie campuses, this course-based program builds competencies in core technology expertise such as software engineering, applied artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics and cybersecurity. Geared to students with a bachelor's degree in computer science, information technology or a related area, this three-semester program aims to develop computer scientists who can use current IT tools and methods to solve practical problems.

"This program was optimally designed to equip students with the capabilities that today's IT organizations are looking for," said Dr. Simon Xu, acting dean of the Faculty of Computer Science & Technology at the Sault Ste. Marie Campus.

Dr. Xu, a specialist in software engineering who has been a professor at Algoma since 2002, led efforts to conceptualize and execute Algoma U's first graduate program in computer science. Through a comprehensive four-year process, Dr. Xu and his team of program developers gathered vital input on how to shape the program from faculty members, computer science undergraduates and industry partners. They also enlisted an external higher education

Photo: Simon Xu, PhD, Acting Dean, Faculty of Computer Science & Technology.

“Students in this program become well prepared to thrive in the digital sector after graduation. They will be able to position themselves as the experts that industry needs.”

– Dr. Simon Xu, PhD



consulting firm to provide assistance with scanning the marketplace of similar academic programs in this area and determining the right mix of courses.

The resulting program features 10 courses, eight of which are required and focus on subjects such as data analysis with Python, neural networks and deep learning, cloud computing, cybersecurity and human-computer interaction. For their two electives, students can choose from courses on topics such as machine learning, robotics, mobile programming and cryptography. Combined, these courses enable students to develop a sufficient breadth and depth of today’s most in-demand technology skills, plus other key workplace competencies, such as research, collaboration and communication.

Several of the more than 20 faculty members teaching in the program have significant experience working in the IT field, Dr. Xu says, which means students gain deep insider insights on current technology trends and industry needs. In a capstone course, students get to contribute to real-world digital technology projects with industry partners. Past projects have focused on topics such as generating unilingual and multilingual captions for images and videos; implementing a virtual reality port; and developing a decentralized energy non-fungible token marketplace.

Students in this program also enjoy opportunities to further advance their IT knowledge and skills outside the classroom. They can engage with the University’s new National Centre of Excellence for Immersive Technology, a hub of learning and applied research focused on extended reality, which encompasses the domains of augmented reality, virtual reality and mixed reality. Through its XR accelerator, the centre connects computer science students with opportunities to support local businesses looking to bring their XR ideas to market.

As well, in July, Algoma University’s Brampton campus will host the annual conference of the International Association for Computer and Information Science/Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and the Faculty of Computer Science & Technology is serving as the conference organizer. Called the International Conference on Software Engineering, Artificial Intelligence, Networking and Parallel-Distributed Computing, this distinguished IT sector event is a rich source of learning and professional networking for students.

Like all students at Algoma U, participants in the Master of Computer Science program enjoy the benefits of personalized learning featuring small class sizes and ample one-on-one interaction with professors. The University also embraces cross-cultural learning in educational content and practices by amplifying diverse perspectives and methodologies that will support students’ success in our multicultural workforce.

“Students in this program become well prepared to thrive in the digital sector after graduation,” Dr. Xu says. “They will be able to position themselves as the experts that industry needs.”

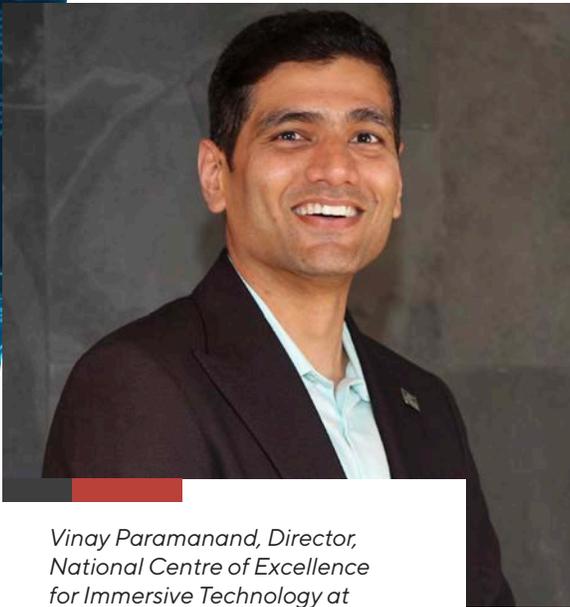
Realizing the potential of extended reality

A large, modern exhibition space with a blue monochromatic theme. The word "XR" is prominently displayed in large, white, illuminated letters on a central wall. The room is filled with interactive digital displays, including a large floor-standing screen showing a network map of India. Several people are seen wearing VR headsets and interacting with the technology. The space is lit with blue neon-like lines and spotlights, creating a futuristic atmosphere.

XR

“These individuals will lead us into an immersive future through entrepreneurship, research and community building. This is the kind of economic development we are trying to stimulate.”

- Vinay Paramanand
Director, National Centre of
Excellence for Immersive
Technology at Algoma University



Vinay Paramanand, Director,
National Centre of Excellence
for Immersive Technology at
Algonia University.

Algonia University is catalyzing extended reality (XR) innovation through its new National Centre of Excellence for Immersive Technology. This first-of-its-kind centre in Canada fosters a dynamic ecosystem of XR education, entrepreneurship and industry leadership. XR encompasses augmented, virtual and mixed reality, which blend our physical and digital worlds in diverse ways.

“When it comes to XR, our focus is to educate, innovate and engage with the community,” says Vinay Paramanand, who leads the centre at the University’s Brampton campus. *“We want to build knowledge, thought leadership, advocacy and market activity around these emerging technologies in the local, provincial and national contexts.”*

Paramanand highlights, among the many initiatives, the centre’s one-of-a-kind XR accelerator. This accelerator helps local startups from diverse sectors bring their XR ideas to market by matching them with expert faculty members from Algonia University’s Faculty of Computer Science & Technology. Students enlisted to support these projects develop competencies and connections to help them thrive in the evolving digital economy.

The centre offers Game Development and XR micro-credentials, which cover the fundamentals of building immersive 3D games and industry solutions using Unity, a leading game engine. Last year, the center hosted its inaugural Startup GameJam, a two-day intensive game design and development session for students. Five student teams emerged from that event, working with the centre to refine their game and presenting it to a panel of industry judges at Game Incubator Demo Day.

Paramanand says an immersive space equipped with state-of-the-art XR technology is currently in the works. Students, faculty and the community will be able to use it to test and showcase their XR projects.

“We’re building a pool of talent skilled in cutting-edge technology,” Paramanand says. *“These individuals will lead us into an immersive future through entrepreneurship, research and community building. This is the kind of economic development we are trying to stimulate.”*



Our students and alumni stay true to our Special Mission

The individual missions of our students are an important part of what sets Algoma University's mission apart – and brings us together.

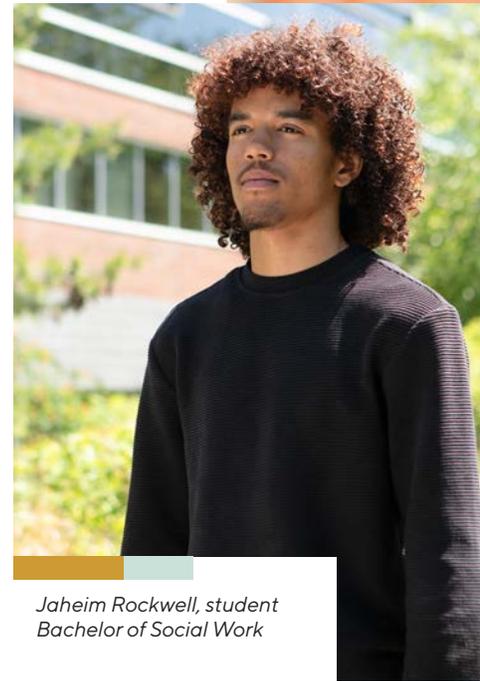
Jahiem Rockwell's Mission: Bridging social work with community development

Jahiem Rockwell's mission is to study the connection between humanity and the environment, with a focus on community development and culturally relevant job skills. As a social worker student, he aims to create programs that support youth development while addressing their physical, mental, social and spiritual needs.

"At Algoma University, I've been able to integrate my goals with the University's mission of cross-cultural learning. Through courses such as Indigenous Social Work and Global Perspectives in Social Work, I've gained a deeper understanding of how diverse cultures approach social issues," Rockwell says.

He chose Algoma University for its inclusive bridging program, affordability, and opportunities to apply his learning in the field. Additionally, he has participated in cultural events and workshops that have enriched his perspective on social work.

Rockwell's mission is to develop programs that foster immediate and long-term positive outcomes for individuals and communities, promote sustainable development and holistic well-being, and strengthen connections between people and their environments.



*Jahiem Rockwell, student
Bachelor of Social Work*

Isabella DiBernardino's Mission: Leading groundbreaking neuroscience research

Isabella DiBernardino's mission is to lead transformative research on Alzheimer's disease. To integrate this mission with Algoma University's Special Mission, she has participated in the Truth Walk, an interactive educational experience about the Indigenous history of the Shingwauk Indian Residential School, which was formerly on the site of the Sault Ste. Marie campus.

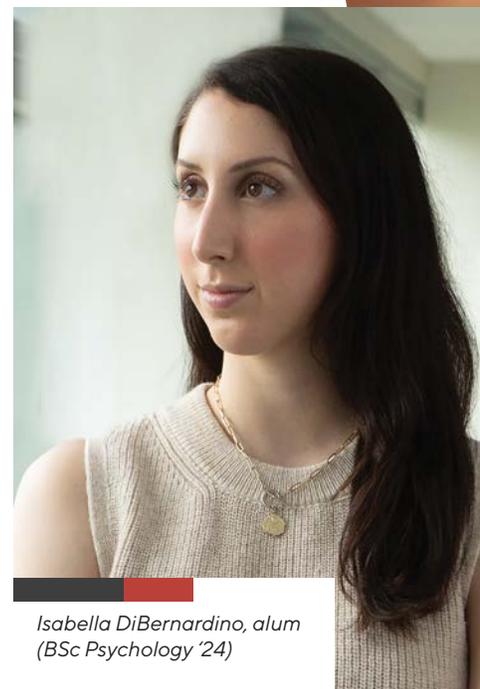
"Participating in the Truth Walk, and courses like Sustainable Development in Turin, Italy, have allowed me to see the world through a global lens and understand how various cultures navigate complex issues," DiBernardino says.

Currently pursuing a master's degree in neuroscience at another institution, DiBernardino explores Alzheimer's care from a cross-cultural perspective to develop inclusive treatment strategies based on diverse cultural approaches.

A founding member of the BRIDGE Lab, which focuses on research that improves lives, she is committed to offering opportunities that uplift students, the community and the environment.

"It's crucial to leave our earth better than we found it, and learning from others with broader perspectives is key to achieving that," DiBernardino says.

DiBernardino is continuing her mission at the University of British Columbia, where she will further her research and continue learning from the global community at Algoma U and beyond.



*Isabella DiBernardino, alum
(BSc Psychology '24)*



Sophia Alphanso's Mission: Using technology to connect the world

Sophia Alphanso's mission is to use technology as a universal language by bridging cultural divides and creating connections through innovative software solutions.

As a second-year Bachelor of Computer Science (Honours) student at Algoma University who is originally from India, Sophia has found a supportive community that has made her feel at home despite being far from her roots. *"The support from professors, IT teams and fellow students has been invaluable. Algoma has truly become my second home,"* she says.

Alphanso's academic journey reflects Algoma U's commitment to cross-cultural learning. She is passionate about ethical software development and is focused on backend coding, system development and security. Currently, she's creating a travel app aimed at fostering connections between travelers and cultures to help others find a *"global home."*

Alphanso also sees potential to improve customer service while ensuring security and software integrity in the retail software and e-commerce industries. *"I want to build software that not only enhances the digital landscape but does so ethically, fostering connections and innovation,"* she says.

Alphanso hopes to inspire others to embrace their transformative journey at Algoma University.

Sophia Alphanso, student
Bachelor of Computer Science



Continuing the legacy of Algoma U's Special Mission

Algoma University alumni are known for their drive, commitment to education and deep sense of community. These individuals embody the spirit of Algoma U's Special Mission through their dedication to cross-cultural learning, advocacy, and a shared goal of fostering a more inclusive world. From Indigenous advocacy to global leadership, our alumni continue to break boundaries, contribute to their fields and impact the communities they serve. The following alumni are shining examples of how Algoma U's Special Mission has shaped their paths, allowing them to lead purposefully, innovate with passion, and uplift those around them.



Dr. Hannah Caicco

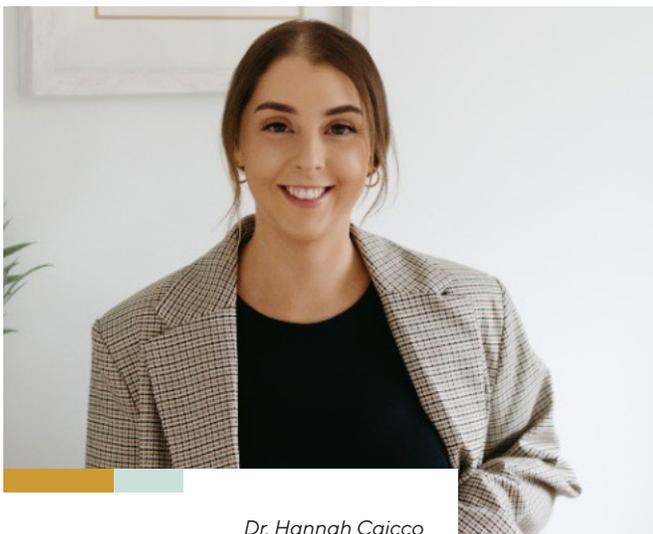
(BA English / History '19)

Dr. Hannah Caicco's academic and professional journey is a testament to her unwavering dedication to Indigenous advocacy and educational reform. A proud graduate of Algoma University, she completed her double honours in English and History with a focus on Indigenous history in 2019. Her time at the university was deeply shaped by the university's unique connection to the Shingwauk Indian Residential School, which was previously located on the site of what is now Algoma U's Sault Ste. Marie's campus. This link provided her with invaluable insight on Canada's colonial past. Dr. Caicco presented her undergraduate thesis on the gendered experiences of residential school survivors in Shingwauk Hall, a powerful moment that solidified her commitment to decolonizing education.

She continued her academic journey with a master's degree in Indigenous Curriculum at Queen's University and a doctorate in Educational Leadership at the University of Western Ontario, where she focused on Indigenous sovereignty and the inclusion of Indigenous voices in Impact Benefit Agreements.

Dr. Caicco's work extends beyond academia. She now serves as the education manager for Garden River First Nation. Her leadership is guided by a vision of inclusive educational pathways grounded in Indigenous perspectives.

"I am committed to leading with passion, writing with purpose, and embracing change as a force for good," she says.



Dr. Hannah Caicco

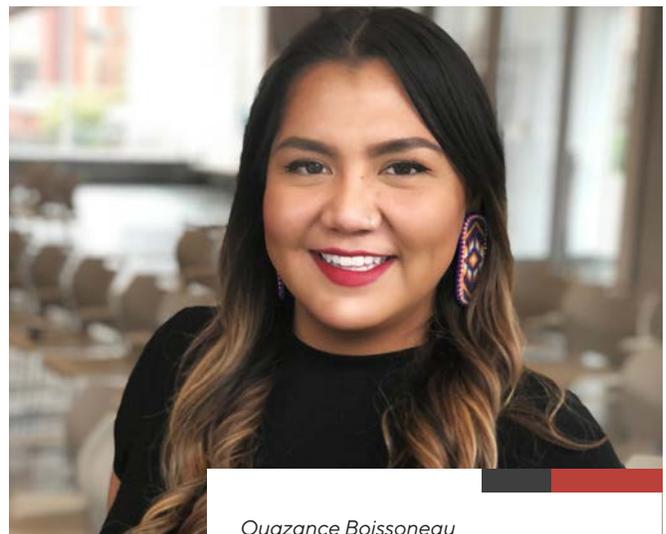
Quazance Boissoneau

(BBA Human Resources '12)

A proud graduate of Algoma University, Quazance Boissoneau earned her Business Administration degree with a focus on human resources and public administration in 2012. From the start, she exemplified dedication, balancing rigorous academic pursuits with varsity basketball and leadership roles such as serving on the Shingwauk Anishinaabek Students' Union and as a student representative on Algoma U's bid to join the Ontario University Athletics Association. Her passion for Indigenous culture led her to actively participate in Anishinawbemowin classes and engage in the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association.

Her academic journey took her beyond Algoma U as she pursued postgraduate studies in Sports and Event Marketing at George Brown College and in Indigenous Public Policy at Carleton University. Today, as the manager of Indigenous education & engagement at Humber College, Quazance champions equity for Indigenous learners, from streamlining residence applications to pioneering the first Indigenous rugby jersey for the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association.

"Education is a powerful tool for change," Quazance says in reflecting on her commitment to creating opportunities for others. Her work in global forums and on numerous boards, along with her continued involvement in basketball, further showcases her dedication to advancing Indigenous representation. Quazance's story inspires others to bridge the gap between culture, education and community.



Quazance Boissoneau

Connor Flood

(BSc Computer Science '15)

A proud Thunderbird, Flood has consistently exemplified the core values of the seven grandfather teachings, the principles of character that guide the Anishinaabe people in living a good life: love, respect, bravery, truth, honesty, humility and wisdom. Flood uses them as a guiding force throughout his academic and professional life. His journey from Algoma U student to becoming a senior software engineer at Tesla embodies the University's spirit of excellence, resilience and community leadership.

While at Algoma U, Flood distinguished himself not only through his academic performance but also through his deep commitment to his community. Entering the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science program directly in his second year, he earned the prestigious Carl J. Sanders scholarship and several entrance awards. His leadership shone through as a frosh week leader, organizing programming competitions and engaging with prospective students and parents.

After graduating cum laude, Flood pursued a Master of Mathematics in Computer Science degree at the University of Waterloo, where his innovative research in the Symbolic Computation Laboratory led to the creation of a web application for pen-input interfaces. His side project, a mathematical proof-generating app, caught the attention of Wolfram|Alpha, ultimately leading to a job offer and global recognition.

At Tesla, Flood continues to drive innovation. "I owe much of my success to the community that supported me," he says, reflecting on his journey. His work and mentorship inspire future technologists, making him a deserving recipient of Algoma U's 2024 Alumni Achievement Award.



Connor Flood

Spencer Congdon

(BSc Computer Science '08)

Spencer Congdon looks back on his time at Algoma University with fondness, highlighting the personal connections he formed thanks to the small class sizes. "I've always been a pretty shy person, so the size of Algoma U suited me quite well," Congdon says, reflecting on how the university's intimate environment fostered his academic growth.

During his studies, Congdon embraced every opportunity to engage in the world of technology, competing in computer programming competitions and attending software development conferences. His participation in the prestigious Dare to be Digital video game development competition informed his career path, igniting his passion for the gaming industry. "That experience solidified my future," he recalls, marking the beginning of his journey toward success.

After completing his undergraduate degree in 2008, Congdon continued his education with the Computer Games Technology master's degree at the University of Abertay in Dundee, Scotland, which was offered through Algoma U. Studying in his community with like-minded peers made a lasting impact on him. "When you get to that point in your education, you're alongside people who share your passions," he says.

Now a Senior Software Engineer at HB Studios, Congdon has contributed to the development of high-profile titles for game series such as PGA Tour 2K, NBA Live and WWE. "It's been rewarding to dive deep into sports that were new to me and explore new technologies as they emerged in the gaming scene," Congdon says. Congdon's pride in his work and his connection to Algoma U's efforts to uplift its Anishinaabe studies program speaks to his commitment to community and education.



Spencer Congdon

Algoma University student shines at international AI camp

“This experience has motivated me to pursue a career in AI development.”

- Muhammad Hassan Jamil, student,
Bachelor of Computer Science



Muhammad Hassan Jamil, student,
Bachelor of Computer Science.



Mahreen Nasir, PhD, Assistant Professor,
School of Computer Science and
Technology, Algoma University.

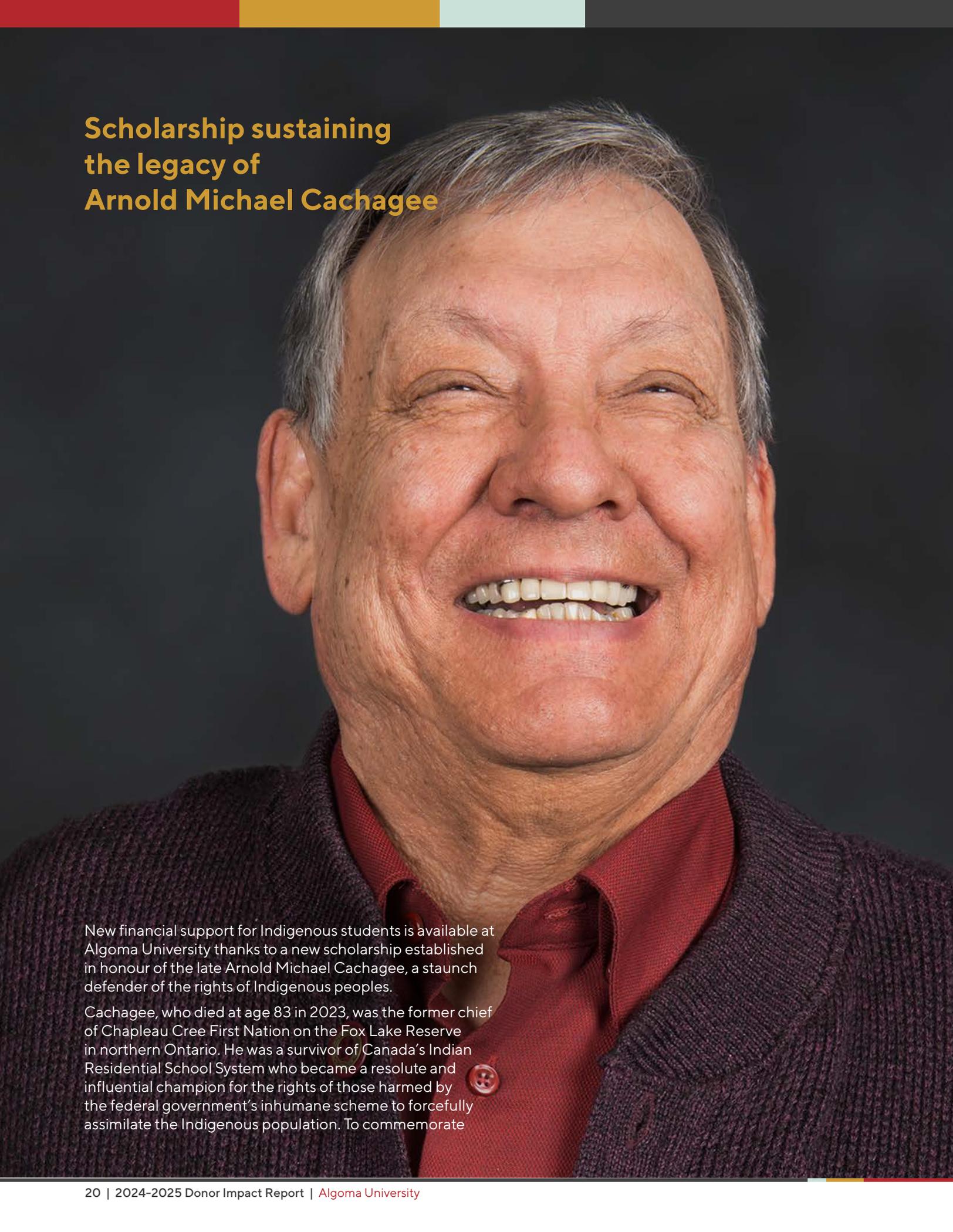
Muhammad Hassan Jamil returned from Stuttgart, Germany, with a gold medal in hand after competing in the 2024 International AI Summer Camp hosted by Stuttgart Media University. Jamil was part of a select group from Algoma U, the only Canadian university that participated in the event.

During the two-week camp, students explored large language models, the technology behind platforms such as ChatGPT. The program culminated in a competition where participants pitched AI-driven business ideas.

Jamil’s concept for an AI-powered sleep improvement program earned him the gold medal. His innovative idea involved a wristband device that collects vital signs, tracks sleep patterns, and syncs with an app to create optimal sleep conditions by adjusting web-connected home devices.

“This experience has motivated me to pursue a career in AI development,” Jamil says.

In addition to Jamil’s gold, Algoma U also earned a bronze medal in the competition. Dr. Mahreen Nasir, Assistant Professor at Algoma’s School of Computer Science and Technology, emphasized the importance of such opportunities in enriching students’ knowledge and career prospects in AI.

A close-up portrait of an elderly man with grey hair, smiling broadly. He is wearing a dark, textured sweater over a red collared shirt and a red tie. The background is dark and out of focus. At the top of the page, there are three horizontal bars in red, yellow, and light blue.

Scholarship sustaining the legacy of Arnold Michael Cachagee

New financial support for Indigenous students is available at Algoma University thanks to a new scholarship established in honour of the late Arnold Michael Cachagee, a staunch defender of the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Cachagee, who died at age 83 in 2023, was the former chief of Chapleau Cree First Nation on the Fox Lake Reserve in northern Ontario. He was a survivor of Canada's Indian Residential School System who became a resolute and influential champion for the rights of those harmed by the federal government's inhumane scheme to forcefully assimilate the Indigenous population. To commemorate

"I hope this scholarship provides motivation for Indigenous students to continue their studies, and provides a stepping stone for those who also want to advocate for our people."

- Jennifer Jones,
Executive Director,
Weecheetowin Support
Services and granddaughter
of Michael Cachagee



Arnold Michael Cachagee

his illustrious legacy of Indigenous rights advocacy, his descendants created the Michael Cachagee Memorial Scholarship and Bursary, which supports three First Nations students annually who are continuing their academic studies in the area of Indigenous studies, political science, business or economics.

"He was a very strong advocate for our people and made sure our voices were heard," says his granddaughter Jennifer Jones, the executive director of Weecheetowin Support Services in Sault Ste. Marie. *"This scholarship is part of our effort to sustain his memory and continue his important work."*

Weecheetowin Support Services, which was formerly known as Ontario Indian Residential School Support Services, helps those adversely affected by current and historic anti-Indigenous racism. The organization was founded by Cachagee, who was forced to attend three residential schools from age 3 to 16. The church-run schools executed the Canadian government's plan to erase the cultural identity of more than 150,000 Indigenous children. Among the schools he attended was Shingwauk Indian Residential School, which was on the site of what is now Algoma University's Sault Ste. Marie campus. This disturbing chapter of Canadian history is preserved by a cross-cultural research and educational project between Algoma, the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and the National Residential School Survivor Society. Cachagee helped create both of these organizations to document injustices and support the healing of survivors.

Cachagee earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science at Algoma University College in 1994. Keen to support the success of Indigenous youths, he later worked at the University as a native student advisor, and then as dean of Native Studies at Confederation College. Within the Fox Lake community, he served as the lead negotiator in the claims process for the Treaty Land Entitlement.

More broadly, Cachagee served as the Ontario health support coordinator for the Independent Assessment Process, which was part of the Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the largest class-action settlement in Canadian history, and the catalyst for the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Cachagee was present on the floor of the House of Commons in 2008 when then prime minister Stephen Harper apologized for the federal government's role in the Indian Residential Schools System.

Algoma University formally acknowledged Cachagee's significant role in Indigenous advocacy by awarding him the school's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2011, and by making him an honorary member of the University in 2017.

"My grandfather felt there was always more work to do for Indigenous rights and justice," Jones says. *"I hope this scholarship provides motivation for Indigenous students to continue their studies, and provides a stepping stone for those who also want to advocate for our people."*

Giving graduate students an edge

Driven by a belief in the transformative power of higher education, and seeking to strengthen Sault Ste. Marie's workforce, Orlando and Rose Rosa have established a new student award at Algoma University.

The Orlando and Rose Rosa Family Endowment Scholarship will be awarded annually to a student pursuing post-graduate studies in any program at Algoma U's Sault Ste. Marie Campus. The scholarship prioritizes students who have already completed an undergraduate degree at Algoma U, and if multiple students qualify, volunteering and community involvement activities will be considered.

"An institution like Algoma University is so critical to our community, because it's a place where people can better themselves and then improve society," says Rosa, a civil and commercial litigation lawyer who serves as counsel to Wishart Law Firm LLP. *"We're happy to be able to lessen the financial burden for local students so they can continue their education."*

"I think this is a wonderful way to encourage the development of local talent, and make it easier for people to stay in the community and potentially build their careers here," Rosa says.

Rosa, who grew up in the west end of Sault Ste. Marie, says his immigrant parents instilled in him a profound and lifelong appreciation for education. Both of the Rosas say they have been delighted to witness the institution evolve from an affiliate of Sudbury's Laurentian University to a fully autonomous university in 2008. Algoma U's educational offerings have personally enriched the Rosa family, with Rose having attended to study English, and their son, Adriano, having completed a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science degree and a Bachelor of Computer Science degree.

As well, Wishart, where Orlando previously served as a long-time managing partner, has long been an active supporter of Algoma University. The Arthur A. Wishart library at Algoma U is named after the firm's late founder, a Sault Ste. Marie resident who served as a cabinet minister in the Ontario government. The firm has also sponsored the John R. Rhodes Scholarship Dinner at Algoma U. The University's most prestigious scholarship, it was established by friends and family of John Rhodes, a local broadcaster and provincial cabinet member.

Orlando has long served on the committee for the John R. Rhodes Scholarship Dinner. At last year's dinner, which raised a record-breaking \$250,000, Orlando was honoured for his exceptional leadership and dedication to the Sault Ste. Marie community.

"Algoma University holds a special place in my heart for its commitment to education and empowering future generations, and I am truly grateful for this recognition," said Orlando at the event. *"I am proud to be part of a community that values learning and gives back to ensure students have the opportunities they need to thrive."*



Top photo: First-year biology student Lisa Brisson (left), recipient of the 2024 John R. Rhodes Scholarship with that year's honouree, Orlando Rosa (right).

Photo, second from top: Orlando Rosa (centre) with his wife, Rose (right), and son, Adriano (left).

Photo right: Orlando Rosa speaks at the John R. Rhodes Scholarship Dinner and Art Auction, The Machine Shop, Sault Ste. Marie.

A photograph of Orlando M. Rosa, an older man with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and blue patterned tie. He is smiling and speaking into a microphone at a podium. The background is a light blue wall.

Orlando M. Rosa honoured at 2024 John R. Rhodes Scholarship Dinner and Art Auction

Algoma University celebrates community leadership and educational excellence with record-breaking fundraiser

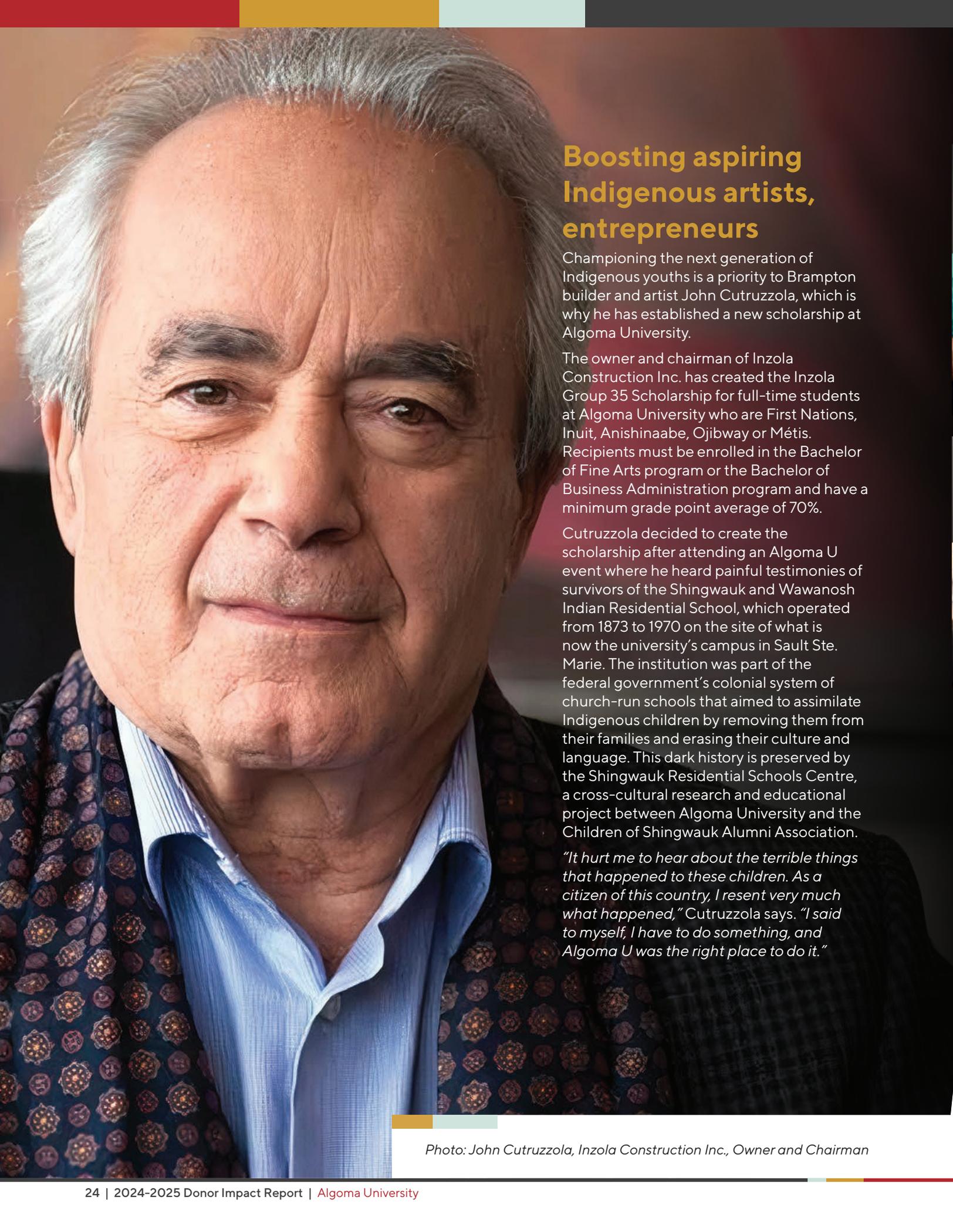
The sold-out John R. Rhodes Scholarship Dinner and Art Auction, held at The Machine Shop, was the setting where Algoma University proudly honoured Orlando M. Rosa as the 2024 honouree. This spectacular evening raised an impressive \$250,000, setting a new record and marking the event's most successful fundraiser in history, all to support student scholarships.

Rosa is recognized for his remarkable leadership, dedication to education, and unwavering commitment to the Sault Ste. Marie community. He has made significant contributions as counsel at Wishart Law Firm for more than four decades. *"I am deeply humbled to be named this year's honouree,"* Rosa shared. *"Algoma University holds a special place in my heart, and I am*

proud to be part of a community that empowers future generations."

The evening also celebrated first-year biology student Lisa Brisson, who received the John R. Rhodes Scholarship, furthering Algoma's commitment to nurturing community leaders.

The success of this year's event is a testament to the dedicated Rhodes Scholarship Committee, whose passion, hard work and unwavering commitment played a pivotal role in its unprecedented achievements. Through their efforts, they continue to honour John Rhodes' legacy by creating life-changing opportunities for future leaders at Algoma University.



Boosting aspiring Indigenous artists, entrepreneurs

Championing the next generation of Indigenous youths is a priority to Brampton builder and artist John Cutruzzola, which is why he has established a new scholarship at Algoma University.

The owner and chairman of Inzola Construction Inc. has created the Inzola Group 35 Scholarship for full-time students at Algoma University who are First Nations, Inuit, Anishinaabe, Ojibway or Métis. Recipients must be enrolled in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program or the Bachelor of Business Administration program and have a minimum grade point average of 70%.

Cutruzzola decided to create the scholarship after attending an Algoma U event where he heard painful testimonies of survivors of the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Indian Residential School, which operated from 1873 to 1970 on the site of what is now the university's campus in Sault Ste. Marie. The institution was part of the federal government's colonial system of church-run schools that aimed to assimilate Indigenous children by removing them from their families and erasing their culture and language. This dark history is preserved by the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, a cross-cultural research and educational project between Algoma University and the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association.

"It hurt me to hear about the terrible things that happened to these children. As a citizen of this country, I resent very much what happened," Cutruzzola says. "I said to myself, I have to do something, and Algoma U was the right place to do it."

Photo: John Cutruzzola, Inzola Construction Inc., Owner and Chairman



“With this scholarship, I hope to not only provide support, but signal to others in the community that they can also make a difference.”

- John Cutruzzola

*founder, Inzola Group 35
Scholarship at Algoma University*

Cutruzzola has a long and productive connection with Algoma University. In the past, he has spoken to business students about his five-decade journey building up Inzola, which he operates with his two brothers, Tony and Frank. Inzola is a general contracting, design, build and project management company that serves industrial, commercial, institutional and high-rise residential clients across the Greater Toronto Area. The firm got its start by transforming old structures in Toronto’s Yorkville neighborhood, blending modern and traditional styles with a particular emphasis on revitalizing the area’s cultural district. Over the years, Inzola has designed the concepts and built landmark structures in Brampton such as Brampton City Hall, the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives, the historic Dominion Building and Garden Square. Along the way, Cutruzzola guided Algoma University in establishing its campus in downtown Brampton. Inzola’s developments have been honoured by the Brampton Urban Design Awards and the Ontario General Contractors Association, while Cutruzzola has been named Brampton’s Citizen of the Year and Business Person of the Year.

What prompted Cutruzzola to make visual art students the scholarship’s first priority recipients is his own joyful art practice, which he says was inspired by the traditional architecture and monuments of his southern Italian city hometown of Gagliato. He enjoys capturing everything from the female form to landscapes in oil and watercolour paintings and sculptures, and has produced more than 350 artworks over the years. Some of them are on display at Gallery 35, which he established in downtown Brampton, and which supports Indigenous artists through an endowment fund affiliated with Algoma University. Cutruzzola has also nourished Brampton’s cultural scene by supporting the Rose Theatre, the Brampton Arts Organization and Visual Arts Brampton. The federal government recognized his outstanding contributions to art in the city by honouring him with the Lescaibot Award.

“I want aspiring Indigenous artists or entrepreneurs to be able to have opportunities to grow and be what they want to be,” Cutruzzola says. “With this scholarship, I hope to not only provide support, but signal to others in the community that they can also make a difference.”

Top photo from left: Peter Cutruzzola, Annette Cutruzzola, Anthony Cutruzzola, and John Cutruzzola. Peter and Anthony are John’s sons, and Annette is his wife.

*Bottom photo:
Back row from left, grandchildren Luca, Alissia, Marina, Makayla and Caleb. Front row from left, Annette and John.*

Encouragement for the future

“This scholarship is a ray of hope and a reminder for students that their dream for their life can be doable.”

- Ashish Sidhu

Specsavers,
Owner and Operator



Photo from left to right: Ashish Sidhu with his second daughter Parneet, son Vedanth, wife Gaganpreet and eldest daughter Anika.

With continuing education having been so pivotal to helping him realize his entrepreneurial goal, Ashish Sidhu is keen to give a hand up to today's students.

Sidhu, who owns and operates a Specsavers store at Shoppers World Brampton, has established the Specsavers Award for Improvement at the Brampton campus of Algoma University. The \$1,500 scholarship awards one student annually who is continuing their studies in any degree program and has achieved the greatest improvement in their grade point average over their previous academic year. Priority is given to students who have switched academic programs and have served their community.

“This award is meant to encourage students to believe their goals are achievable,” Sidhu says.

For Sidhu, who moved to Canada from India in 2002, ongoing learning has been key to easing his immigrant journey and helping him establish a sustainable livelihood. Over the years, he has taken various courses to support his occupational path, which has included working as an accountant, running a car detailing business and, since 2023, leading the Specsavers store.

With education having been so important to his success, Sidhu says he is grateful that local community members have opportunities to better themselves at Algoma U's Brampton campus. Likewise, he hopes the award he has established will provide incentive for students to sustain their academic momentum.

“Sometimes, a little push can go a long way,” Sidhu says. “This scholarship is a ray of hope and a reminder for students that their dream for their life can be doable.”

Advancing vital environmental science

“The Animal Care Facility is actually beyond state of the art ... I can now train students using the latest and greatest animal research equipment.”

- **Dr. William Dew, PhD**
Assistant Professor,
Department of Biology



Photo: Dr. William Dew, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology.

Research on how to protect the cold-climate ecosystems of the Great Lakes against the impacts of oil spills will benefit from the specialized expertise of Dr. William Dew, an aquatic ecotoxicologist at Algoma University.

An assistant professor of environmental science in the Department of Biology at the Sault Ste. Marie campus, Dr. Dew studies how pollution affects the way fish perceive their surroundings through their sense of smell. He is putting those expertise to use in a five-year, \$2.2 million study that involves multidisciplinary scientists from multiple Canadian and U.S. universities, plus partners such as the U.S. Coast Guard and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

As the investigators evaluate the impacts of oil contamination on the coastal wetland ecosystem of St. Marys River — an outlet for Lake Huron — Dr. Dew is conducting electrophysiology and behavioural testing to determine how pollutants are affecting the olfactory physiology and related behaviours of bluntnose minnows, a freshwater species of fish that is native to the river.

“Understanding how a species like this fares in the presence of crude oil spills and marine diesel emissions reflects the health of the environment, and helps with determining the optimal remediation approaches,” says Dew about the study, which is funded by Natural Resources Canada’s Multi-Partner Research Initiative.

Recently, Dr. Dew’s research capacity was significantly enhanced by Algoma U’s introduction of two advanced

research facilities. The newly constructed Containment Level 2 Laboratory enables in-depth analysis of microorganisms and tissue cultures in a setting designed to global biosafety standards. Meanwhile, the upgraded Animal Care Facility, where Dew conducts most of his work, allows for conducting responsible research on fish and rodents in ways that align with national standards.

“The Animal Care Facility is actually beyond state of the art — it’s a really high-quality space,” Dr. Dew says. *“It significantly expands the kind of research I can do. As well, I can now train students using the latest and greatest animal research equipment.”*

Dr. Dew’s fish research also encompasses a study on the impacts of a chemical designed to kill the larvae of lampreys, a parasitic invader in rivers and lakes. Supported by a grant from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Dr. Dew, along with Algoma U assistant biology professor Christine Madliger, is studying how to optimize the timing of lampricide operations to avoid harming juvenile sturgeon, an endangered species whose numbers in the area are dwindling.

Reflecting on the highlight of his research endeavours at Algoma University, he says the community within the Department of Biology is what drives his momentum.

“This is a very vibrant setting to do research. Everyone has active projects on the go, and the leadership is so supportive,” Dr. Dew says. *“It makes coming into work exciting.”*



Photo: Shahrukh Khan, MBA, Professor,
Faculty of Business and Economics (BBA Marketing '15)

Delivering transformational business education

“We’re creating opportunities for students to gain practical experience, and for employers to access a high-quality pool of talent,”

- Shahrukh Khan, MBA
Professor, Faculty of Business
and Economics

This summer, a cricket match will take place at Grace Court, an independent living apartment in Brampton for low-income seniors. The event is a fundraiser for upgrades needed for the 65-unit building, which is a vital source of affordable housing in the community. What is unique about the event is that it is being conceptualized, planned and executed by business students at Algoma University’s Brampton campus under the guidance of professor Shahrukh Khan.

“If you’re able to get students engaged, the learning environment is going to be positive and the outcomes more meaningful,” says Khan about the value of the learning project, which he facilitated as part of the fourth-year capstone course he teaches, Current Topics in Administration 1.

Animating foundational business knowledge and skills through practical assignments is key to how Khan teaches in Algoma U’s Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree program. Connecting students with a handful of local non-profits each semester, he supports them in understanding the organizations’ operational challenges and how to implement effective fundraising approaches.

Khan facilitates similar experiential learning activities in other business courses he teaches, where he connects students with local startups needing help with scaling up their operations, developing a marketing strategy and accessing government grants. He also engages business students in participating in the Northern Ontario Business Case Competition, an annual event

the University hosts that involves fourth-year business students from multiple regional institutions.

A member of Algoma U’s Faculty of Business and Economics since 2019, Khan deeply understands how to deliver on Algoma U’s promise of transformational education partly because he experienced it first-hand as an Algoma U business student, having completed his BBA in 2015. In addition to teaching at Algoma U, Khan is a talent partnership developer in the University’s Career and Experiential Education Department, which involves liaising with local employers to provide business students with work-integrated learning experiences.

“We’re creating opportunities for students to gain practical experience, and for employers to access a high-quality pool of talent,” says Khan, who completed his MBA at the Australian Institute of Business in 2022, and is currently pursuing his PhD in business. *“Our prime goal is to gear students up for the real world.”*

Understanding that the real world is shaped by various cultural perspectives, Khan also advances Algoma University’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) by serving as chair of the Anti-Islamophobia Committee, a chair of the Asian Racism Awareness Working Group, and EDI lead for the Career and Experiential Education Department.

Says Khan: *“Our focus is ensuring that when somebody comes to Algoma University, whether it be a student, staff member or faculty, you should feel like you belong.”*

MAKE A DIFFERENCE THROUGH MONTHLY GIVING

Carrying a name forward



Top photo: Brian Leahy (BA Economics '98)
Bottom photo: The late Dr. Olabanji Akinola, PhD

For Brian Leahy, a long-standing staff member at Algoma University, giving monthly is a way of remembering Dr. Olabanji Akinola. Dr. Ola, or “Banji,” as he was known to many, was a professor in Law and Justice and Political Science programs who passed away shortly after the pandemic due to cancer.

“Banji was the real deal,” Leahy shares. “He was one of those rare individuals who truly embraced and embodied everything great about the university. He went above and beyond to support students, living out our Special Mission and truly championing cross-cultural learning at every opportunity. In the short time Banji was part of the university community, he made a meaningful difference. He would encourage debate and dialogue. He did it in a kind way — a way that helped others learn,” reflects Leahy, who says the students fortunate enough to have learned from Banji are better off today. “We continue to see the impact of having Banji grace our hallways and teach in our classrooms.”

Leahy recalls that during Banji’s first winter at Algoma, he promised to visit students in Timmins at a time when many were feeling disconnected due to remote learning. Despite a brutal snowstorm, Banji made the long drive from Sault Ste. Marie, risking his own life to keep his word. “When Banji made a commitment, he kept it,” Leahy says. “That’s just who he was.”

After Banji’s passing, his faculty colleagues in the Law and Justice and Political Science programs established a named scholarship to honour his legacy at the University. Even though Leahy donates to multiple causes both within and outside the university, he didn’t hesitate to support it. “His name should be carried on in memoriam for everything he did for the students and the university.”

For Leahy, monthly giving is a way to provide ongoing support without necessarily having to give a large contribution at one time. “It’s such a small amount from each pay cheque that I barely notice it. But when I see the annual tax receipt, I think back on Banji and feel good knowing I’m helping in some way to carry forward what mattered to him, supporting the success of our students.”



Join Brian in Giving Monthly

Support the
**Dr. Olabanji Akinola Global
Citizenship Award for Excellence in
International Relations,**

or give in memory of someone who made a difference in your life.

Carrying a name forward is one of the most powerful things you can do.

Making a difference with a legacy gift

Higher education played a profound role in the growth and opportunities realized by Nancy and James (Jim) Tibbles. To pay it forward in gratitude for how learning enhanced their lives, they have established a legacy gift to benefit Algoma University students.

Fulfilling their shared wish, Nancy and Jim established two bursaries for undergraduate students — one for those studying natural sciences, and one for those studying mathematics. The awards will be continually funded through a provision Nancy and Jim included in their legacy gift.

"We believed greatly in the value of higher education in addressing a lot of the world's problems," Nancy says. "We can make great leaps in solving issues if people understand each other, and I don't know another way to do that but through education."

The Sault Ste. Marie couple enjoyed the rewards of higher learning in distinct ways. Nancy notes that for Jim, who died in 2024, the opportunity to pursue science education in diverse areas through to the doctoral level enabled him to enjoy a rewarding career with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, where he directed a program that mitigated the impacts of the invasive sea lamprey. Nancy, meanwhile, is an Algoma U graduate who earned a degree in math, simply *"for the love of the subject,"* with a minor in French.

"I did my math degree part time while working, raising two children and taking care of my aging parents. I liked math because it helped me relax," says Nancy, who for 34 years worked as a lab technician, and later lab supervisor, at the Ontario Forest Research Institute, which is a division of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

As Nancy notes, being able to access higher education contributed to enduring benefits for the couple in terms of their quality of life. These included enjoying opportunities to travel together worldwide, which they considered an education in itself.

Nancy and Jim donated significantly to Algoma University over the years. In their later years, they decided it would be sensible to bequeath a gift to the University. Nancy hopes that by alleviating the financial burden of higher education, her and her late husband's gift can help shape a better world.

"Getting an education is important, and cost shouldn't get in the way," Nancy says. *"If we can make things easier for students, they might stick with it, finish their degree and be of service to the world."*

"We can make great leaps in solving issues if people understand each other, and I don't know another way to do that but through education."

– Nancy Tibbles,
*co-founder of two
student bursaries*



*Top photo: Nancy Tibbles (BA Mathematics '88)
Bottom photo: The late Dr. James (Jim) Tibbles*



Leaving a legacy gift helps future generations of students

Support Algoma University student success now and into the future

The decision to make a legacy gift is highly personal and starts with considerations for your spouse, children and grandchildren. Leaving a gift in your estate or through your life insurance is a powerful way to create a lasting legacy and honour the causes you value most. It's not only about paying it back but about paying it forward.

We strive to ignite the spark of curiosity in students, and equip them with the knowledge and tools they need to succeed as future leaders. As the world around us changes at an unprecedented pace, your legacy gift can provide a solid foundation for the next generation.

If you have included Algoma University in your estate plans, please let us know so that we have the opportunity to thank you. We want to ensure we understand the intentions of your gift. Any information exchanged will be held in the strictest of confidence.

Ways to make a legacy gift:

- A bequest in your will.
- A gift of life insurance.
- A gift of publicly traded securities.
- Establishing an endowment.
- Other types of legacy gifts.

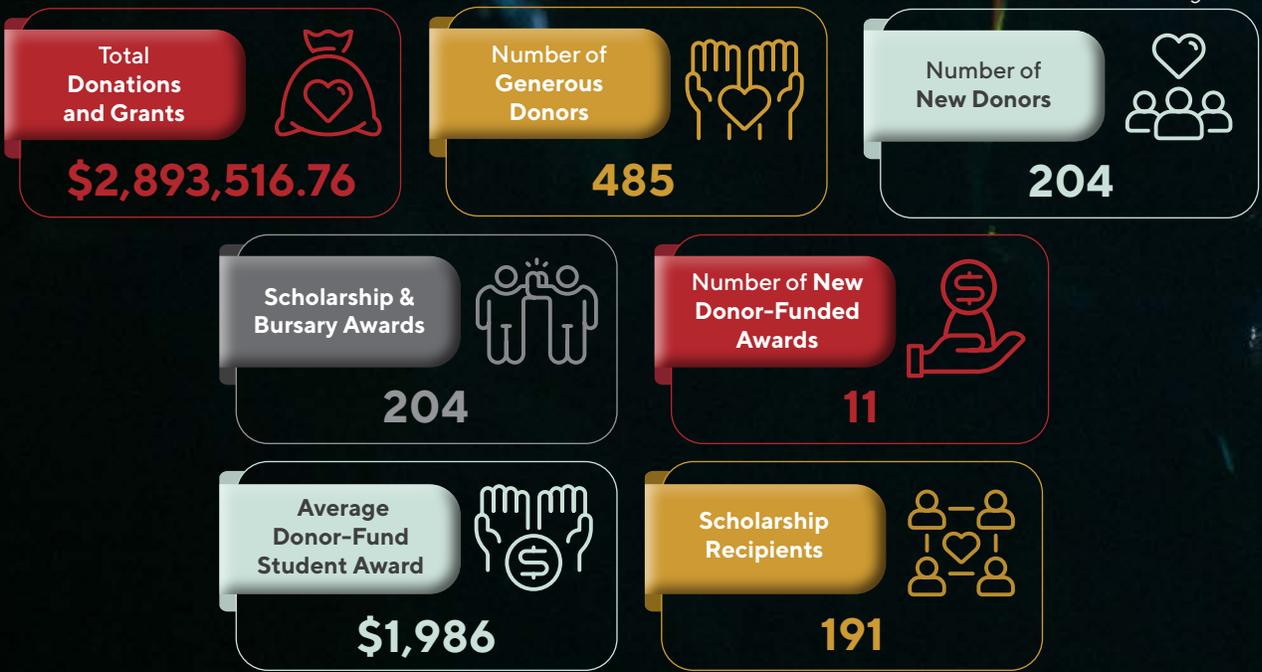
Choosing to leave a legacy gift is a deeply personal act of generosity. If you'd like more information or want to speak to someone directly, we invite you to reach out to:

Giselle Chiarello, Manager, Advancement
705-251-0141
giselle.chiarello@algomau.ca

To learn more about this giving opportunity or other ways to support students, visit:

www.algomau.ca/giving

YOUR IMPACT



ENDOWMENT GROWTH OVERVIEW

(Fiscal Year: May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024)

Total Endowment Value at Closing:	\$8,454,609
Growth Over the Past Year (Includes new donations and strong investment returns):	\$635,794
Overall Growth Rate (Reflects both new contributions and investment performance):	7.5%

INSTITUTIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Total Student Enrolments in the 2024/2025 academic year

(Includes students completing undergraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates; graduate certificates; master's degrees)



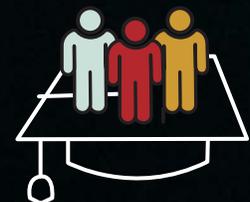
10,297

Total Graduates in 24/25



3,674

Total Number of Alumni



17,206

Thank you to our donors

Many thanks to all donors who have contributed to the Annual Named Scholarships and Bursaries Student Awards Program.

Algoma Highlands Conservancy
Algoma U Alumni
Algoma University Students' Union
Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie & Algoma District
Ashish Sidhu from Specsavers
Brampton Arts Organization
Business & Professional Women's Club
Carol & Dwight McFarlane
CPA Ontario Foundation
The Family of Michael Cachagee
The Family of Rose, Vanaja & Juliana
The Family of Shirley Roach baa
Jane Rodgers
Joe & Carole Meating
John Rhodes Dinner Planning Committee
Kiwans Club of Lakeshore
Kiwans Club of Sault Ste. Marie
Maitland Ford Lincoln & The Family of Brent Lewis
Michael Gekas & Family
Naomi Sayers & Anita Szigeti
Norpro Security Ltd.
Northern Insurance Brokers
OSSTF - District 35, Algoma University Support Staff
Prince Women's Institute & Prince Township
Retired Teachers of Ontario - District 3
Rotary Club of Sault Ste. Marie
Sault Ste. Marie Fire Fighters Association, Local 529
Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association
Steel City MMA
Strong Minds
Soo Mill & Lumber Company
Tenaris
V. S. Goela
Zonta Club of Sault Ste. Marie

Algoma University gratefully acknowledges all donors who have created Endowed Funds through donations to the institution.

Aboriginal Veteran's Award, in memory of J. Edward Boissoneau
– established by Judy Syrette

ACCANO Scholarship
– established by the African Caribbean Canadian Association of Northern Ontario

The ADnet Bursary
– established by the Algoma District Community Network

Albert Lucarelli Fine Arts Scholarship
– established in memory of Albert Lucarelli

Alexander M. Ross Award
– endowed by Alexander M. Ross

Algoma Steel Inc. Student Award
– established by Algoma Steel Inc.

Algoma U Student Humanitarian Award, in memory of Dr. G. Ed Mohamed
– established by family and friends in memory of Gerald Edson Mohamed

Askin Family Bursary
– established by Muriel Askin

AUSU's Next Chapter Bursaries & Scholarship
– established by Algoma University Students' Union

The Bud & Anne Wildman Scholarship
– established by Bud and Anne Wildman

Carl J. Sanders Scholarship
– in recognition of the Sanders Family

Christine Paquette Bursary
– established by Tammi Paquette, Vince Merrifield & family

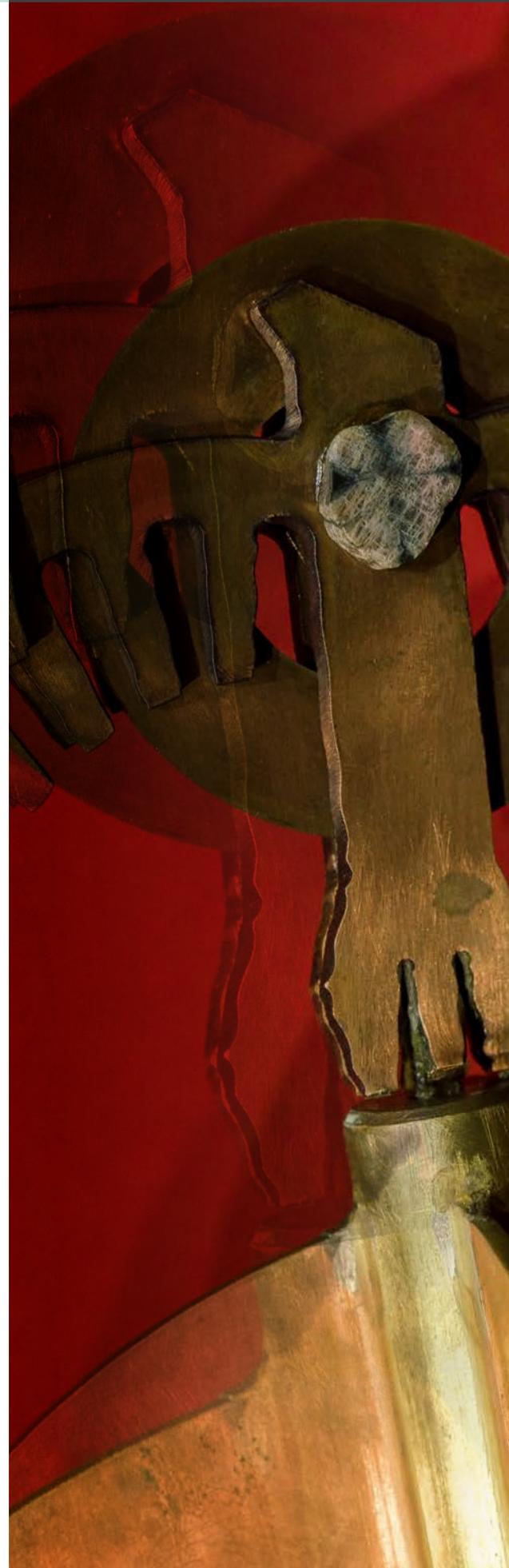
Dr. David Walde Humanitarian Scholarship
– established by friends and family of Dr. David Walde

Dr. Edwin Giesbrecht Student Award
– established by the estate of the late Dr. Edwin Giesbrecht, along with family & friends

Dr. J. James Tibbles & Nancy Rathbone Tibbles Bursaries
– established by Dr. J. James Tibbles & Nancy Rathbone Tibbles

Dr. J. MacBain Cameron Memorial Fund
– established in memory of Dr. J. MacBain Cameron

Dr. Jong You CESD Student Award
– established by Algoma U's Community Economic & Social Development faculty and staff in honour of Dr. Jong You





Dr. Ken McLarty Research Award

– endowed by Dr. Ken McLarty

Dr. Lou & Mae Lukenda Foundation Bursary

– established by Dr. Lou & Mae Lukenda

Dr. Olabanji Akinola Global Citizenship Award

– established by friends & family of Dr. Olabanji and the faculty in the Law and Justice and Political Science programs at Algoma University

Dr. Robert Ewing Geography Award

– established by friends and family on the retirement of Dr. Robert Ewing

Dr. Robert V. d’Amato Student Award

– established by Theatre Algoma

Edward & Frank McGrath Award of Excellence

– established by the late Edward and Frank McGrath

Elvi & Lloyd Leitch Scholarship

– established by the estate of Elvi & Lloyd Leitch

Elvi & Lloyd Leitch Student-Athlete Bursary

– established by the estate of Elvi & Lloyd Leitch

Elsie Savoie Fine Arts Award

– established by Elsie Savoie

Evan D. Young Memorial Bursary

– established by friends and family of the late Evan D. Young

Evolugen by Brookfield Renewable Environmental Science Bursary

– established by Evolugen

G. Verdi and Princess Marie José Lodges, Order of Sons of Italy of Canada

– established by G. Verdi and Princess Marie José Lodges, Order of Sons of Italy of Canada

Gabriel Barban, P. Eng. Bursary

– established by family, friends and colleagues of the late Gabriel Barban, P. Eng.

Gerald E. Nori, Q.C., Student Assistance Fund

– endowed by family, friends and colleagues in honour of Mr. Gerald E. Nori, Q.C.

Gladys McNeice Award

– established by the estate of Gladys McNeice

Gloria Jean Grossett Student Award

– established by Quattra CSC, in memory of Gloria Jean Grossett

Great-West Life Student Assistance Fund

– endowed by the Great-West Life Assurance Company

Great-West Life Student Assistance Fund for Indigenous Students

– endowed by the Great-West Life Assurance Company

Hannah Lois Morris Bursary

– established by Jill Morris, in memory of her mother,
Hannah Lois Morris

The Honourable Ronald A. Irwin Student Leadership Bursary

– established by family and friends of the Honourable
Ronald A. Irwin

Ian W. Hollingsworth Science & Technology Bursary

– established by the late Ian W. Hollingsworth

Indigenous Students Assistance Fund

– established in memory of Gary Corbiere

Inzola ‘Group 35’ Scholarship

– established by Inzola Group

Johanna Bischooping Bursary Fund

– established by the estate of Johanna Bischooping

John Deakin Buckley Walton Scholarship

– established by the estate of John Deakin Buckley Walton

John Hayes Jenkinson, B.E.M., Memorial Scholarships

– established by the estate of John Hayes Jenkinson

John R. Rhodes Scholarship

– established by friends and family of the late John R. Rhodes

John Rowswell, M.Eng., P. Eng., P.E. Bursary Award

– established by friends and family of the late John Rowswell

**Judge John Hay McDonald & Mrs. Vera McDonald
Memorial Scholarship**

– established by the estate of the late district court judge
J.H. McDonald

Judge M. G. Gould Award

– established by the Algoma District Law Association in honour of
the late district court judge, M.G. Gould

Katherine Jean Dunster Student Award

– established by the estate of Katherine Jean Dunster

Kenneth & Colleen Moodie Scholarship

– established by the children, grandchildren and friends of Kenneth
and Colleen Moodie

Leone Hamilton Bursary

– established by the estate of Leone Hamilton

M. Wright Family Award

– established by The M. Wright & Family Foundation

Maria Francella Scholarship

– established in memory of Maria Francella

Maria Francella Scholarships in Psychology and Social Work

– established in memory of Maria Francella

Maris Pone Scholarship

– established by Dr. Jong You, Dr. Krishna Kadiyala,
and Prof. Jim Gibson





Métis Nation of Ontario Bursary Fund

- endowed by the Métis Nation of Ontario

Michael Cachagee Memorial Scholarship

- established by the family of Michael Cachagee

Moyra & Edward O'Pallie Bursary

- established by Moyra O'Pallie

Orlando and Rose Rosa Family Scholarship

- established by Orlando and Rose Rosa

Paul & Bricken Dalseg, Pioneers of Lake-of-the-Woods Student Assistance Fund

- established by Paul Dalseg in memory of his parents, Paul and Bricken Dalseg

Peggy & Willmont MacDonnell Scholarship

- established by the estate of Peggy and Willmont MacDonnell

Peter McGregor Memorial Award

- established by friends and family of the late Peter McGregor

Professor Tony Sharman Bursary

- established by Professor Tony Sharman, in memory of Lesley Sharman, AUC student 1979-81

Rita Adams Bursary

- established by Rita Adams

Sardar & Rajwant Sohi Rotary Bursary

- established by Dr. Sardar Sohi and the Rotary Club of Sault Ste. Marie

Sardar, Rajwant, Paul & Anita Sohi Family Bursary

- established by Dr. Sardar Sohi

Sar-Gin Developments (Sault) Ltd. Student Award

- endowed by Sar-Gin Developments

Sault Recreation Hockey Association Fun Through Recreation Award

- established by the Sault Recreation Hockey Association

Scotiabank First Nations Bursary

- established by Scotiabank

Scotiabank International Merit Scholarship

- established by Scotiabank

Scotiabank Student Assistance Fund

- endowed by Scotiabank

Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association Student Award

- endowed by the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association

TD Environmental Science Scholarship

- established by the TD Bank Group

The Brenda Gallander Memorial Scholarship for Community, Economic, and Social Development

- established by Brenda Gallander

The Gloria Cote Memorial Bursary

- established by the late Rose Marie Blais, in memory of her daughter Gloria Cote

The Henry Lang, Q.C. & Mrs. Helen Lang Law & Justice Bursary

- established by the family of Henry & Helen Lang

The Hogg Family Endowment for the Carolyn Harrington Award

- endowed by the Hogg Family

The Hollingsworth Family Bursary in Business and Economics

- established by the Hollingsworth Family

The Honourable Ray & Mary-Kay Stortini Bursary

- established by The Honourable Ray & Mary-Kay Stortini

The Kresin Engineering Scholarship for Math and Science

- established by Chris Kresin and Michael Kresin

The R.N. Tagore Scholarship

- established by Bharati Mukherjee

The Rose Nolan Memorial Scholarship

- established by the Ted Nolan Foundation

The Rosemary O'Connor Memorial Bursary

- established by family and friends in memory of Rosemary O'Connor

The Rotary Club of Sault Ste. Marie North Bursary

- established by The Rotary Club of Sault Ste. Marie North

The Team Jacobs "Follow Your Dreams" Bursary

- established by Team Jacobs (Brad Jacobs, Ryan Fry, E.J. Harnden & Ryan Harnden)

The Very Reverend Meletios Christoforou Scholarship

- in honour of Very Reverend Meletios Christoforou

The William M. Hogg Scholarship

- endowed fund in honour of the late William M. Hogg

Tracy E. Cresswell, B.Sc. (Honours), L.L.B. Bursary

- established by the family and friends of the late Tracy E. Cresswell

Tulloch Engineering Student Award

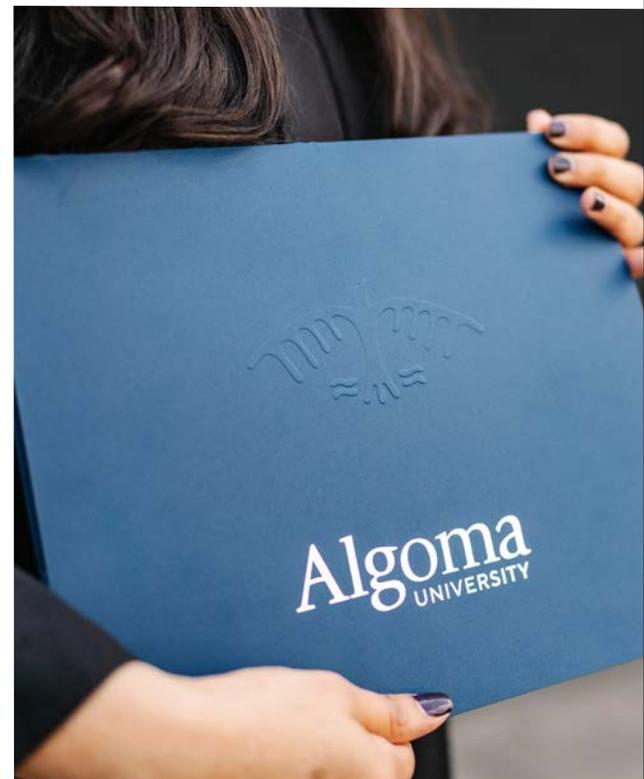
- established by M.F. Tulloch Engineering

USW 2251 Student Award

- established by John Kallio

Walter Yurechuk Memorial Scholarship

- established by friends and colleagues in memory of the late Walter Yurechuk



Our students thank you!



"Your generosity has done more than ease my financial worries – it has reminded me of the kindness that still exists in the world. You opened doors I thought were closed, and I am determined to pay that kindness forward and create positive change in others' lives."

Vidhi
Bachelor of Computer
Science (Honours)
3rd year

Recipient of
Chancellor's Award

"An elder once told me that if you help even one person, you've already made a difference in the world. You've done that for me – and for many others."

Jessica Wabigwan
Bachelor of Social
Work (Honours)
4th year

Recipient of
The Sardar, Rajwant,
Paul and Anita Sohi
Family Scholarship

"Studying social work is not just a career path – it's a commitment to serve and advocate for others. Your support has helped relieve financial stress so I can focus on gaining the skills and experiences I need to make a real difference in my community."

Thierry Nsega
Bachelor of Social
Work (Honours)
4th year

Recipient of
The Alexander M.
Ross Bursary Award,
ACCANO Award and
Athletics Award

"While intergenerational trauma exists, so does intergenerational healing – and that is what I strive for each day. This award helps reduce stress and allows me to focus more time and energy on what truly matters – my family and my future."

Shannon Courchene
Bachelor of Social
Work (Honours)
4th year

Recipient of
The Rose Nolan
Memorial Scholarship



Empower • Inspire • **Transform**

www.algomau.ca/giving

Algoma
University

Brampton
Sault Ste. Marie
Timmins

info@algomau.ca
1.888.ALGOMA.U

algomau.ca

For giving opportunities, please contact:

Manager, Advancement

Department of Strategic Advancement & Alumni Affairs

1520 Queen Street East

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6A 2G4

705.949.2301 ext. 4125

