

# 2017 Annual Report



## A Look Back

One year later, the numbers are in!

In 2010, The Hamilton Spectator's Code Red series highlighted significant social and economic disparities between Hamilton neighbourhoods, identifying ten Priority Neighbourhoods. Poverty, social exclusion, and a lack of accessible postsecondary educational opportunities remain persistent barriers in the lives of many community residents in Hamilton's most impoverished neighbourhoods. Poverty rates for lower-income neighbourhoods are more than twice as high to the city as a whole and levels of educational attainment are much lower than the municipal average. Moreover, nine of Hamilton's ten Priority Neighbourhoods identify access to education as a key challenge.

Working Together, a research report released by Mohawk College, the City of Hamilton's Neighbourhood Action Strategy, Workforce Planning Hamilton, and sponsored by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development conducted qualitative research with residents

and stakeholders and a review of literature related to educational disparities. Key informants interviewed recommended the college engage residents directly where they already are – in community centres, schools, and other organizations. Youth commonly expressed that they did not like to go to new services or organizations where they had not previously been. Furthermore, residents requested the college offer short, introductory, hands-on courses on a wide range of topics that could serve as confidence builders for participants.

Mohawk College was quick to take action in response to these needs and developed City School by Mohawk, an initiative which has now become a central feature of its institutional access strategy. After consulting community groups, residents and stakeholders, courses that would meet the needs of Priority Neighbourhood residents were developed in 2015, and delivered in Winter 2016.



## City School

by

 MOHAWK

## What is City School?

City School by Mohawk focuses on developing specialized learning programs and workshops for marginalized populations within Hamilton's priority neighbourhoods that encourage gradual steps to postsecondary and employment pathways and foster life-long learning. In partnership with Hamilton community agencies, City School by Mohawk has made effective change in the College and in Hamilton, making Mohawk Hamilton's community college.

This report presents the statistics and stories of City School by Mohawk's first year of operation.

# Meet Lyn

I am a wife and mother of four who has been out of the workforce for over eight years. I am a shy person with very little experience, and have had a hard time finding a job. I heard about City School through social media and signed up for the Job Ready Toolkit and Family Dynamics course. I have always wanted to go to Mohawk College for the ECE program, but never felt like I had the option because of my fear of failing and issues finding child care.

City School was able to help me with free child-minding with a full-time Mohawk College ECE student who has been amazing with my son. I have been enjoying the City School programs, and been able to keep up with my normal routines being a wife and mom, all while still attending my classes!

I have learned so much about myself, and have become more confident with discussing my skills in interviews, and know that I do have the ability to succeed.

Thanks City School, for offering these free courses to people like myself who wouldn't have normally had the chance to attend!



# By the Numbers

104

Number of City School Students

212

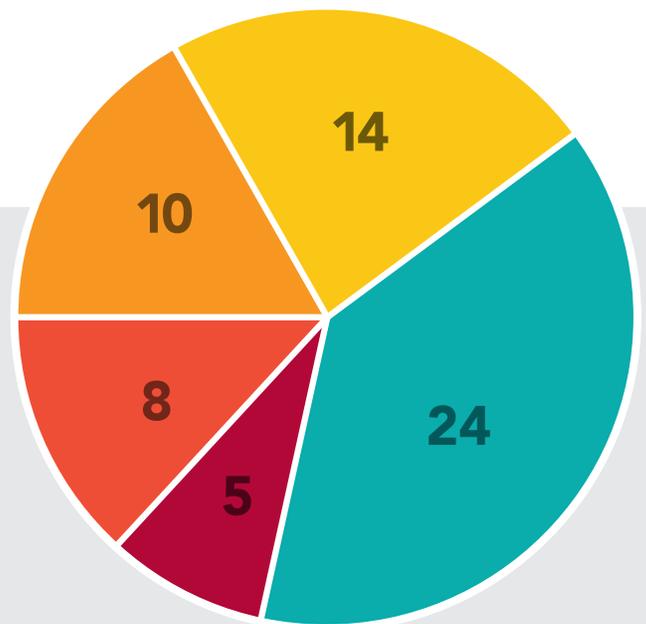
Number of City School Registrations

53

Number of College Credits Earned

56%

Credit Courses Graduation Rate



## City School College Credits Earned in 2016

- Digital Photojournalism
- Health & Wellness
- Health, Safety & Nutrition
- College 101 (Intro to PSE)
- Family Dynamics

# City School Outreach

City School by Mohawk is dedicated to ensuring that residents' voices are heard in the planning process. The communities have been heavily researched in the past, but what is missing from that research is information about what individuals want to learn. In order to capture this information, a small team of outreach staff participate heavily in grassroots community engagement activities. We began this engagement by frequently attending monthly Neighbourhood Action Strategy community planning team meetings. In total for the year 2016, 55 of these meetings were attended to raise

awareness in the neighbourhoods about City School.

The team also plans and attends other activities which range from casual drop-in hours at local cafes and Open Houses in our classrooms, to attending resident-led community events. In total, over 90 community engagement activities were attended or hosted by the City School team this year. This level of activity in the community has allowed City School to reach 2273 individuals. Importantly, those 2273 individuals have informed what courses and workshops City School delivered for the year and will continue to influence future planning.



## Youth Programming

Did you know that City School partners with Mission Services and the Eva Rothwell Centre to deliver after-school programming? Our programs are funded by the Hamilton Community Foundation through ABACUS.

Youth in grades six, seven, and eight get to participate in programming related to postsecondary courses and academic upskilling. From sitting in the cockpit of an aircraft to growing plants for healthy eating, our youth are connecting with Mohawk student mentors to gain new experiences.

145

Outreach  
Activities

2273

Number of  
People Reached



## Anita's Story

This fall I was a student in the Family Dynamics course, with the goal of going to College, and onto University to be a Social Worker. What I enjoyed most about City School (besides the fact that it's free) were the teachers! The courses are a great stepping stone to prepare for college and embedding confidence in yourself. City School helped me to realize my full potential!

# Thank you to our partners.



The partners involved in the City School Partnership represent a range of sectors—higher education, education, municipal government, and non-profit—all committed to reducing barriers for Hamilton residents to connect with educational and training opportunities and, in this way, transition out of poverty. Each partner brings assets and resources necessary to achievement of the project's goals.

City School by Mohawk has only been successful because it has fostered strong working and productive relationships with a myriad of local organizations.

- Eva Rothwell Center
- City of Hamilton
- Hamilton Community Foundation
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board & the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
- Hamilton Port Authority

City School is the first initiative of its kind in Ontario to implement such a comprehensive strategy of bringing college learning to the community hub level, thereby offering support to Ontario's Strategic Framework for Community Hubs. The City School team recognizes and acts upon the value of productive and reciprocal partnerships to drive community change. We work closely with other community organizations to deliver programming forming a collaborative approach to creating and delivering programming in priority neighbourhoods.

## What's Next

2017 will showcase a new wave of workshops and courses, including:

- 10 free college credit courses
- Job Ready Toolkit modules at Eva Rothwell and Mission Services
- An Indigenous-focused College 101 course
- A coding Boot Camp program
- Workshops in the new Trades Lab at Eva Rothwell
- Launch of City School's mobile classroom

## Contact Us

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