



RETIRES' ASSOCIATION
OF MOHAWK COLLEGE



Winter 2026

RAMC Newsletter

RAMC Winter 2026 Newsletter: Welcome & Updates

Sadly, we lost our beloved chair, Neil McMahon, on March 2, 2026. It was unexpected and a shock for the members of our board. As a tribute to Neil, we have decided to include his last message as Chair in this newsletter. Our heartfelt condolences to Neil's family and friends. Rest in peace.

Happy New Year to all of our RAMC members!

Wow, this winter has been brutal with record breaking temperatures, and a 50 cm snowfall to go along with these horrible temperatures!!

I did read in the Hamilton Spectator, that this winter has been particularly hard on seniors! Conditions like this keep us indoors and really less active. I know that my walks with my dog have been day- to-day, assessing whether I should take her out for a walk or let her out in the backyard while I have a cup of Barry's Irish tea.

Members on the RAMC Board have been busy revamping the RAMC website. The college has been extremely helpful lending us their expertise on web page development.

The college also now has a new parking process accessed through the HONK app which I have used twice already, and it

sure beats standing out in the rain or cold trying to enter your code, in those outdoor machines, which never seem to work, and you need your reading glasses to follow the instructions. Now you can book your parking pass from the comfort of your home, without standing out in the rain or fighting off those cold winter temperatures.

I do have to acknowledge the support RAMC has had from college, and particularly from Wendy Makey, who is RAMC's liaison at the college, and the ongoing support of Paul Armstrong, who always makes himself available to pop into RAMC's board meeting whenever his schedule allows.

I hope that everyone enjoyed the Olympics and I am sure that we are all looking so forward to the spring!!

Take good care everyone!

Neil McMahon
Chair, RAMC

Note from the Editor

In this issue we are embarking on what we hope will be a continuing series of articles about college programs. When we have asked, retirees consistently indicate an interest in learning more about what is new since their time at Mohawk. Thanks to the dogged and creative work of Board member, Margaret Thurston, we have two such pieces in this newsletter. Both also offer information about how retirees can interact with the

programs in ways that will be beneficial to students. **We'd love your feedback** and your ideas for programs/initiatives to feature in future issues. Please send your suggestions to retirees@mohawkcollege.ca.

Thanks, as always, to Wendy Makey for being our ever-patient liaison with the College and to the Marketing Team for producing a readable creation from our many bits and pieces.

Marilyn McDermott
Newsletter Editor

Greetings from Paul Armstrong



Mohawk College Retirees,

As you may be aware, the college recently completed a second round of workforce reductions. Although these changes were necessary to align staffing with current enrolment levels and to ensure long-term financial sustainability, this past

year has been one of the most challenging in our history. It is never easy to say goodbye to friends and colleagues who have left the college.

With these changes taking place, I can confirm that the workforce reduction process that began in late 2024 is now complete. We do not anticipate having to repeat this process next year. Our focus now shifts to stability and renewal, and the need to align our work with the needs of employers in our community.

As we look ahead, I'm pleased to share a few recent updates on behalf of the college.

In February, Mohawk College signed a Letter of Intent with Hanwha Ocean and Ontario Shipyards to establish an embedded shipbuilding training hub at Ontario Shipyards' Hamilton facility. This initiative is aligned with the long-term workforce needs of the marine and defence shipbuilding sector. This agreement along with a Memorandum of Understanding between Hanwha Ocean and Ontario Shipyards establishes a coordinated industrial and workforce development framework intended to position Ontario as a centre of excellence for defence-related shipbuilding and advanced marine manufacturing in the Great Lakes region. It is an excellent example of how Mohawk College continues to work closely with industry partners to prepare the next generation of skilled workers.

Also announced in February, the Government of Ontario is investing \$6.4 billion in postsecondary education. This is a generational commitment that recognizes the critical role colleges play in driving economic growth, strengthening local industry partnerships and preparing graduates with the skills employers need to thrive in today's economy.

At Mohawk College, we remain focused on delivering industry-led learning that aligns with workforce priorities.

Our Mohawk Mountaineers had another successful season with many teams making it to provincials.

A few highlights include:

- The women's and men's cross country teams both earned medals at OCAA Championships with the men securing gold and the women bronze.
- Both the men's and women's curling teams captured bronze medals in the OCAA provincial championships.
- For the first time in a decade, both the women's and men's basketball teams qualified for the OCAA Championships, with the women taking home bronze and the men securing silver.

Another exciting development is that Mohawk College recently became the Official Post-Secondary Education Partner of TD Coliseum, placing the college at the centre of Hamilton's most high-profile and transformative entertainment destination. Through this partnership, Mohawk College's brand will be prominently featured throughout the newly transformed venue reaching hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

This partnership will allow the college to showcase the opportunities it offers students while contributing to long-term economic prosperity and workforce growth in Hamilton.

Before I close, I would like to share my condolences for the significant loss of long-time Mohawk College employee Neil McMahon. His role as Chair of the Retirees' Association of Mohawk College Board was only the most recent position he held in dedication to the college and greater community. He will be sincerely missed.

To each retiree thank you for your lasting legacy at Mohawk College. Your dedication helped shape the institution into what it is today and continues to inspire the work we do for our students and community.

Warmest regards,

Paul Armstrong
President, Mohawk College

P.S. If you are interested in staying connected on a more regular basis, sign up for the weekly Inside Mohawk newsletter by emailing wendy.makey@mohawkcollege.ca.



Leading the conversation: Paul Armstrong opens winter speaker series

Paul Armstrong spoke to a very full house of Hamilton seniors at the Westdale Theatre on January 28 as the initial speaker in the Winter 2026 series of talks sponsored by Hamilton Third Age Learning.

His talk was entitled “Mohawk College: Our community’s hidden gem” and the description follows:

“Join Mohawk College President Paul Armstrong for an engaging look at the evolution of Ontario’s college system—from its early roots to the vital role it plays today in driving innovation, skills development, and economic growth.

The talk will explore the challenges facing colleges in a rapidly changing world and highlight how Mohawk College is meeting them head-on through new programs, partnerships, and bold plans for the future.”

Paul was an engaging and informative speaker, and the audience peppered him with questions afterwards. It was an eye-opening session for many!

If you are interested in subscribing to the Spring 2026 series of HTAL talks, please keep an eye on the website: [Htal.ca](https://htal.ca)

Interesting pension history

Submitted by

Bruce Hutchinson (Retired in 1997)

Former Mohawk employees who have retired in the last 25 years may be surprised to learn that there are three pre-Mohawk College retirees still alive. Unless there are some hidden members that I don't know about, only Andy Tapajna, Cheryl Fowler, (formerly Cheryl Scullion) and I, are still on the right side of the sod.

I joined The Hamilton Institute of Technology, or HIT for short, in 1964. At the time, in jest, it was sometimes referred to as The South Hamilton Institute of Technology. As I'm sure you know, HIT, by order of the provincial government became Mohawk College in 1967.

When I joined HIT, our paycheques came from the Department of Education in Queen's Park and the faculty were enrolled in the Ontario Teachers' Pension

Plan commonly known as OТПP. In 1967, the faculty were given the choice of joining a new Mohawk pension plan or staying with OТПP. The new plan was devised to cover faculty and support staff in all the newly legislated Ontario Community Colleges. The majority, if not all faculty, stayed with OТПP, which turned out to be a wise decision. In my case, with OТПP's annual cost of living increases, my pension is now more than my salary was when I retired! There was some pressure at the time to switch to the new Mohawk plan, but the long successful history of OТПP appeared to be a better choice. That is why there are still two retirees that I know of benefiting from the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan.

Cheryl was a member of the support staff in 1965 when she joined HIT and was not eligible for this option and therefore joined the Mohawk plan. She has no regrets after retiring following 45 years employed by Mohawk College.

'71 FACULTY



The faculty in the Business and Applied Arts division at Mohawk College in 1971. Photo submitted by RAMC member Tom Sutton.

The Marshall family's philanthropic support

You may have noticed the Marshall name attached to the School of Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship at Mohawk College or read [this article](#) that the College published in the spring. We asked RAMC member, **Linda Marshall**, to provide a bit of background to her family's philanthropic support of these college programs.

"Before retiring, I spent 32 fulfilling years at Mohawk College in a variety of roles—years that shaped both my professional life and my deep appreciation for the college's impact. Throughout that time, I held a quiet but enduring hope: if ever I had the capacity to give back to Mohawk, I would. At the time, fundraising across the education sector—particularly for colleges—was challenging, and charitable giving was limited.

In 2006, shortly after my father passed away, my family and I were given the opportunity to turn that hope into action. We made a donation to enhance Mohawk's Truck and Coach Apprenticeship program at the Stoney Creek campus—a meaningful and lasting tribute to my father, the founder and owner of G. Marshall Transport Ltd. It was important to us to give back to the very program that trained the skilled tradespeople who supported our business and continue to contribute to its success today.

We were deeply impressed by how thoughtfully and strategically Mohawk invested in the Stoney Creek campus. That confidence led us to announce on August 16, 2017, a \$1.5 million gift to expand apprenticeship programs and transform the Stoney Creek campus. In recognition of this contribution, Mohawk College named the Marshall School of Skilled Trades & Apprenticeship in our family's honour.

We remain immensely proud of our ongoing connection to Mohawk college and grateful for the opportunity to support its mission. We wholeheartedly encourage others to consider giving back to the college in whatever way they can—every contribution helps shape the future of skilled trades and education.

This commitment has never been about a gift alone, it has always been about legacy, values and impact. Our family's giving reflects a belief in education, in community, and in the power of skilled trades to build strong futures for individuals, families, and entire communities. Today, that commitment spans generations and continues to grow through the lives of students, apprentices, and the broader workforce that Mohawk College serves".



Members of the Marshall family proudly pose with Paul Armstrong.



Keith McIntyre proudly holds the commemorative keepsake ring (left) and poses with President Paul Armstrong and Matthew Ferreira, Director, Athletics & Recreation at Mohawk College (right).



Keith McIntyre recognized by the Mountaineers

In November 2025, former college president and long-time RAMC member, Keith McIntyre, was inducted into the Mohawk Mountaineers Hall of Fame in the “builder” category. Along with eight other individuals, Keith was welcomed into the 19th Hall of Fame class, honouring those who have made a lasting impact on the history of Mohawk Athletics. More than 50 previously inducted Hall of Famers were also in attendance, and all received a commemorative keepsake ring to mark the occasion.

Read more about the event [here](#).

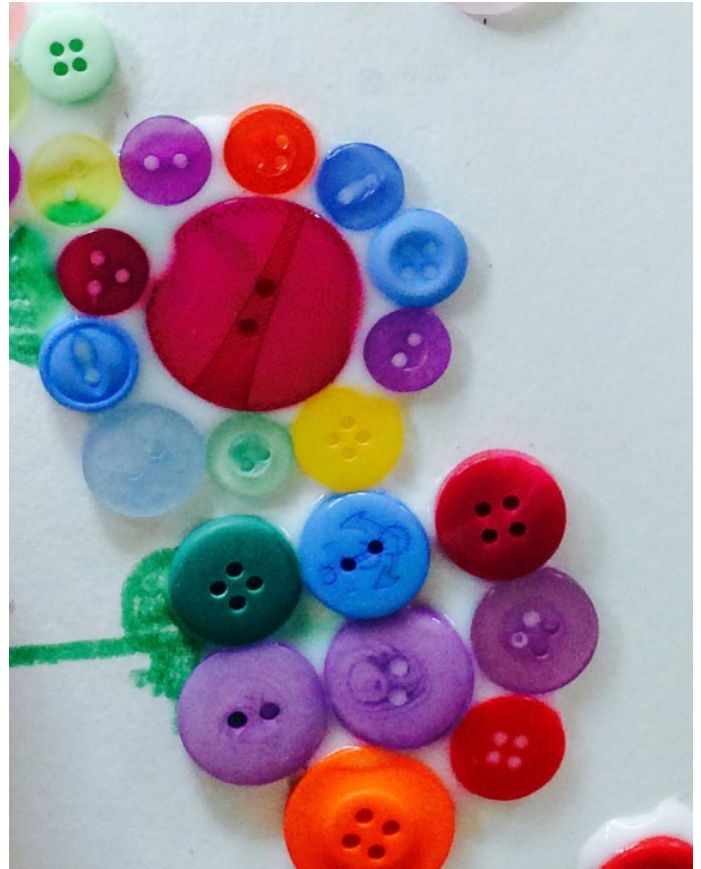
The Beautiful Junk Project: Creativity and sustainability in Mohawk's ECE program

Many retirees may remember Mohawk College's Early Childhood Education (ECE) program from years past, including a time when child care was offered on campus for employees and the community. While the program has evolved, its core purpose remains unchanged: preparing caring, capable educators to support young children's learning and well-being.

One current initiative in the ECE program is the Beautiful Junk Project, a hands-on learning experience that connects creativity and sustainability in a very practical way. "Sustainability" can feel like an abstract term but simply put, it means being mindful of resources, reducing waste, and finding value in what we already have. In early childhood education, sustainability is explored through everyday experiences children can understand.

The Beautiful Junk Project uses clean, donated materials that might otherwise be discarded and transforms them into open-ended learning tools. Instead of toys with one set purpose, children are encouraged to explore, build, imagine, and problem-solve. There are no instructions and no "right" outcomes. ECE students discover that meaningful learning does not require expensive materials—just curiosity, creativity and thoughtful guidance.

For many, this approach may feel familiar. It reflects long-standing values of reuse, resourcefulness, and care for future generations. Sustainability, in this sense,



is not a new idea, it is stewardship. The Beautiful Junk Project is one way Mohawk's ECE program honours its history while preparing educators for today's world and aligns with the college's current strategic goals.

Donations can be made at Fennell campus in A111 (during business hours) and A226 (by appointment). If you would like more information about the Beautiful Junk Project or are interested in donating materials, please contact Kerry Drake, ECE Faculty, at kerry.drake@mohawkcollege.ca.



**All donated items must be clean and safe.
Examples include:**

- Fabric pieces, scarves, ribbon, yarn
- Buttons, corks, large beads, lids, spools
- Cardboard tubes or packaging
- Wood offcuts, smooth sticks, small blocks
- Gift wrap, greeting cards, paper samples
- Small baskets, metal tins, jars (no lids)
- Kitchen utensils, muffin tins, pots/pans, measuring cups/spoons

Materials are used for open-ended creative exploration, not structured crafts.

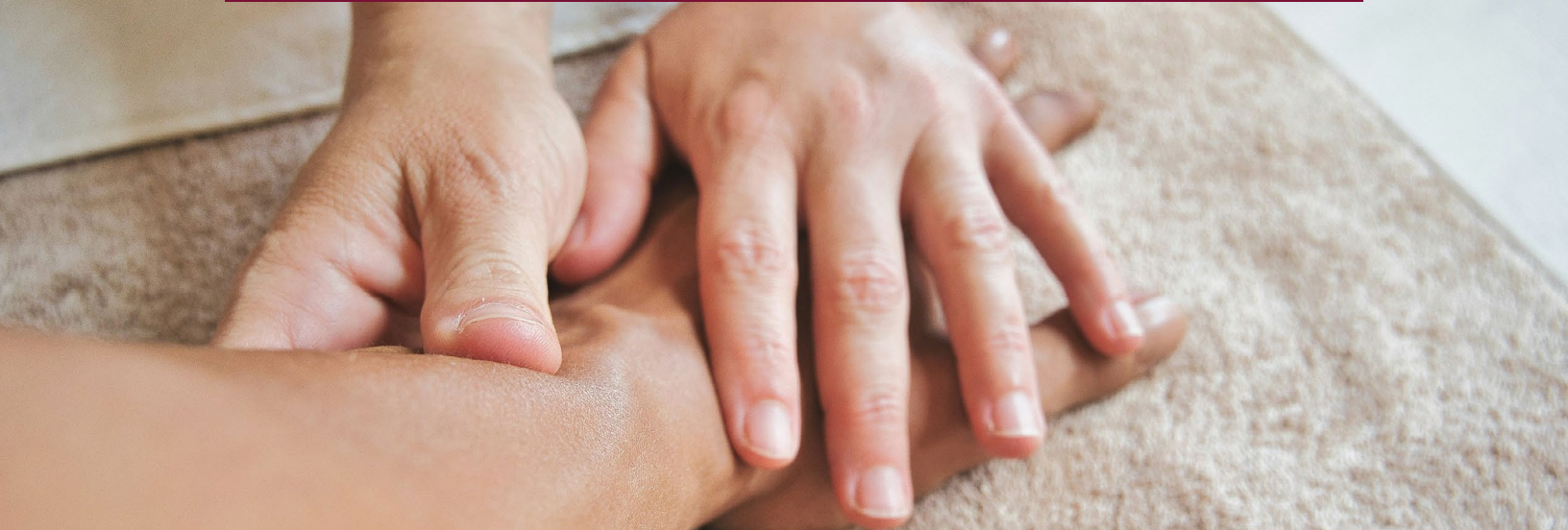


Here's an example of a play kitchen made from donated materials.



A lovely Christmas lunch at Mandarin restaurant was attended by many Mohawk College retirees.

MASSAGE THERAPY PROGRAM



Putting your trust in our students' hands

Mohawk College's massage therapy students regularly provide meaningful, evidence-based healthcare to members of our broader community. By visiting one of our clinics, you can play a vital role in helping our students practice their trade, build their competence, and prepare themselves for their professional examinations.

Massage therapy students provide care in a variety of settings such as athletics, long-term care, hospice, prenatal, pediatric, seniors, corporate, and the larger community. Through the assessment and treatment of soft tissues and joints, our students are helping patients alleviate pain, improve joint mobility, rehabilitate injury or dysfunction, reduce muscular tension, and maintain physical health and activity.

With specific consideration for an aging demographic, massage therapy can relieve pain due to chronic conditions such as arthritis or fibromyalgia. It can also help improve mobility and balance, enhance mental health, boost circulation and immunity, and manage symptoms of dementia.

Massage therapy education has evolved over the past decade and now faces an important challenge. To meet the standards of accreditation, all Ontario college students are required to complete a minimum of 330 hours of direct care to patients before they can graduate.

To address this challenge, Mohawk's program operates two primary clinic spaces—Fennell campus in the David Braley Athletic Centre (DBARC) and St. Elizabeth's Village (SEV) at Garth & Rymal. **Appointments are available between 8 am and 9 pm.** To meet the requirement for client care hours, we need to fill those appointments with patients from diverse populations.

As retirees of Mohawk College, who have been dedicated to student success, we invite you to put your trust in our students' hands by booking appointments in either of our clinic spaces. Your participation not only supports the next generation of healthcare practitioners, but it also directly shapes their confidence and competence as future registered massage therapists.



How to Book Your Appointment

To show our appreciation, your first appointment will be **FREE!**

1. Appointments can be booked online using the link provided here: mohawkcollegemassage.janeapp.com
1. Choose your preferred site (SEV or DBARC)
1. Select the MOHAWK, McMASTER, and DBARC treatment option (regular cost is \$15 plus HST).

To receive your free appointment, include a note when booking that states you are a new client from RAMC or show a copy of this article when you arrive.



Remember, as a member of RAMC, you can use one of the 10 free parking passes you have received for Fennell campus, using the Honk app. Parking is always free at the SEV location.

The Massage Therapy Program at Mohawk has been in operation since 2013 and has graduated hundreds of healthcare professionals into a very rewarding career. Graduates of our program complete examinations with the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (Board exams) to become Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs).

To learn more about the positive impact Mohawk's Massage Therapy Program has had on students, visit the following blog posts and videos:

Blogs:

[Massaging potential into purpose](#)

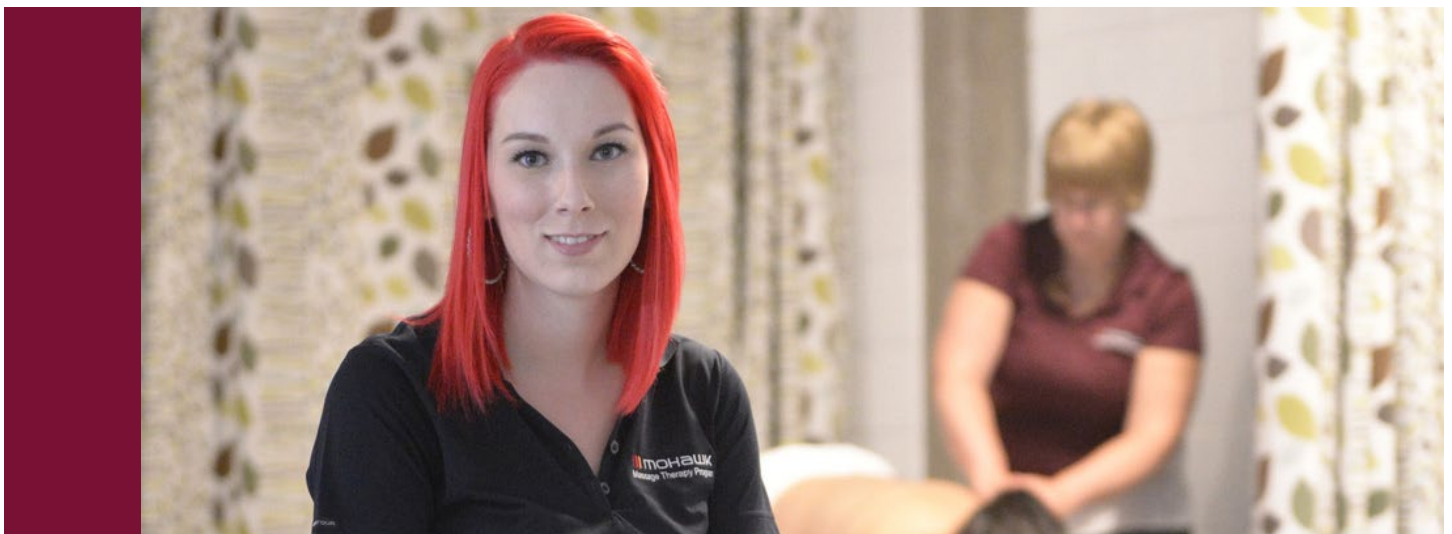
[Saying yes to a career pivot](#)

[How Serena discovered her passion for Massage Therapy](#)

Videos:

[Building a new future](#)

[Saying yes opened doors](#)

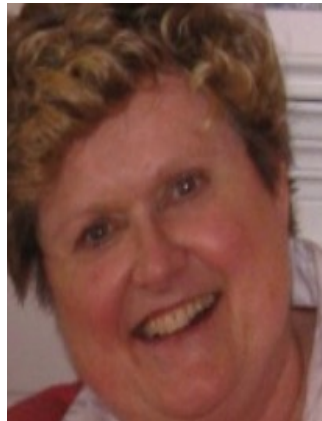


In Memoriam

The RAMC Board invites you to join us in remembering the following Mohawk employees who have passed away since our last newsletter. **The active links will take you directly to their online remembrance.**



[Gertrude Dolson](#)



[Barbara Dutton](#)



[Judi Mansfield
-Jones](#)



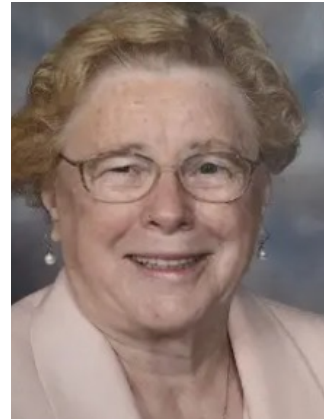
[Neil McMahon](#)



[Keith Nixon](#)



[Sheila Ranalli](#)



[Shirley Anne Wray](#)

Note from Human Resources

If you would like to update your contact information with the college, you may do so by emailing compbenefits@mohawkcollege.ca or by calling your Benefit and Pension Specialist, as assigned by the first letter of your surname:

A – M

Amenpreet Kaur: 365-227-0593

N – Z

Nicola Bogucki: 365-227-0530

If you would like to receive email communications from the College, you can complete the Mohawk college Retiree Email Collection & Consent Form below:

forms.office.com/r/LWXGdycBjE

FYI the main phone number for Human Resources is 905-575-2047.

Want to hear a joke?



READER'S DIGEST, GETTY IMAGES



NICOLE FORNABAIO/RD.COM



Reflection on Christie Lake

This photo was taken by our member, Jim Thurston, on November 18, 2025, during a hike with his regular Tuesday hiking group. While hiking around the west end of the lake at Christie Conservation Authority, he looked up and thought this scene would make a great photo. At home and reviewing the photo, his attention was drawn to the reflections in the lake: double layer of clouds, trees in the background and the reeds in the foreground. He recognized that this was one of his better snapshots. Jim reads the Hamilton Spectator regularly and knew that subscribers were encouraged to submit photos to: eyeonthearea@thespec.com. This was his first submission, and it was published on December 6, 2025.



Connect, enjoy, give back



Dear Members of the Retirees' Association of Mohawk College,

At the Mohawk College Foundation, we often say that philanthropy is about possibility—the possibility for students to grow, compete, graduate, and step confidently into their future. Thanks to those who support us, that possibility is becoming a reality every single day.

We wanted to take a moment to share an update on the incredible momentum surrounding the Mohawk Mountaineers Athletics program—and to thank you for being part of a community that continues to elevate student success.

In the Spring of last year, we surpassed our Athletics' Campaign Goal of \$500,000, raising a total in excess of \$520,000. As we look to the future, we seek support that will continue to build strength and energy, helping ensure student-athletes have the resources they need to succeed academically, athletically, and personally. The program is experiencing unprecedented national rankings, championship performances, and academic excellence—a pivotal moment for Mountaineer Athletics as we rally our community toward a shared vision for the future.

Simply put, this is not just about sport—it is about leadership development, mental health supports, community engagement, and creating a world-class student experience.

The past year has been one of the most successful in program history. Mountaineer teams captured three OCAA championships and earned three national medals, marking the first time the department has reached that milestone.

Highlights include:

- **Women's Basketball** winning its first provincial championship since 1991—a breakthrough moment that was decades in the making. ([No. 15 Mountaineers capture OCAA Championship for first time in 34 years](#))
- **Men's Curling** is making history with the program's first-ever national championship. ([Mountaineers Men's Curling Team wins first-ever CCAA Championship](#))
- **Cross Country** is continuing its legacy with championship performances and consecutive provincial medals. ([Mountaineers capture 2025 OCAA men's cross country championship](#))

Equally inspiring is what happens off the field: dozens of Mountaineers continue to earn national academic recognition, proving that excellence in competition and the classroom go hand in hand. ([Mohawk Mountaineers](#))

If you are a sports enthusiast, please come out to support a Mountaineer game and experience the excitement! ([Mohawk Mountaineer Athletics](#))

For those who may wish to support our Mountaineers or other areas of personal interest, please visit mohawkcollege.ca/Foundation/Ways-To-Give.

Or contact John Wood, Senior Development Specialist – Major Gifts, at john.wood15@mohawkcollege.ca.

The Mohawk College Foundation continues to be thankful for the generous support it received from the Retiree's Association of Mohawk College and many of its members on an individual basis. THANK YOU...THANK YOU...THANK YOU...

Charitable Registration #11924 5744
RR0001



Inside Mohawk Newsletter

Inside Mohawk Weekly Newsletter

Stay connected with Mohawk College by receiving the weekly Inside Mohawk newsletter. Keep your finger on the pulse every Friday and look for stories, events and news from the Mohawk community delivered right to your inbox. Email **Wendy Makey** at wendy.makey@mohawkcollege.ca to have your name added to the distribution list.



McIntyre Performing Arts Centre

Looking for some entertainment this year? Check out upcoming events at Mohawk in the [McIntyre Performing Arts Centre](#).

President's Highlights

See updates from across the college that were shared with the Board of Governors this winter. Watch the President's Highlight videos:

[February 2026](#)

Your Retirees' Association of Mohawk College (RAMC)

RAMC was established in 1993 and was the first association of its kind in Ontario.

Through its ongoing collaboration with the College, RAMC actively contributes to the achievement of the college's strategic priorities. By working in partnership, RAMC supports the college in addressing student financial needs and underscores a shared commitment to student success.

2025-2026 RAMC Directors

Chair

Vacant

Secretary

April Speare

aprilspeare@gmail.com

Treasurer

Margaret Thurston

margaretthurston@cogeco.ca

Communications & Newsletter Editor

Marilyn McDermott

weinerdogqueen@gmail.com

Membership

Margaret Thurston

margaretthurston@cogeco.ca

Marilyn McDermott

weinerdogqueen@gmail.com

Directors

Peter Maurin

vinylprofessor@outlook.com

James Humphreys

james.humphreys@gmail.com

Board appointed non-voting members

Official Photographer

Liz Aldrey

Newsletter Support

Tina Brajic

Contact us

Email: retirees@mohawkcollege.ca

Website: mohawkcollege.ca/Retirees

How RAMC Helps

Financial support for students

- We provide financial assistance to students by funding bursaries and scholarships to help to support their educational success.

Communications and engagement

- We regularly publish a newsletter featuring stories and topics that are relevant to the retiree community.

Community building

- We serve as an advocacy group, representing the interests and concerns of retirees to the college.
- Through our relationship with the college, we keep members informed and engaged with college activities.
- We build a sense of community and strengthen connections by sharing information about upcoming RAMC and college events.



RETIREES' ASSOCIATION
OF MOHAWK COLLEGE

The links, material, information and views expressed in RAMC posts and publications are provided for general information and personal interest only and do not represent the views of RAMC's Board of Directors or Mohawk College.