



RETIREES' ASSOCIATION
OF MOHAWK COLLEGE



Fall 2025

RAMC Newsletter

RAMC Fall 2025 Newsletter: Welcome & Updates



We hope that everyone had a wonderful summer. It sure was a hot one!!

On behalf of the Board, I extend a warm welcome to our new members and welcome back former RAMC members. It was great to see so many retirees at our AGM in June. I find that the AGM, as with other RAMC events, is special, because it allows us to stay connected and to honour the remarkable contributions retirees have made to the college. All members of RAMC are to be commended for the role you played in building a strong college and community.

At the RAMC Annual General Meeting held on **June 6, 2025**, the following bylaw changes were made:

- Membership fees will be increased to \$25 annually. An August email communication outlined the rationale for this change and spoke to how these funds will be used to support students in need.
- It was also decided that the RAMC fiscal year should correspond to our membership year (September 1 – August 31) to make the work of our Treasurer more manageable.

We are looking forward to another RAMC year and having this fall newsletter keeps us connected and up to date. We hope you enjoy reading it.

Enjoy your fall everyone!

Neil McMahon
Chair, RAMC

Want to hear a joke?

What's a tree's
favorite subject
in school?

Geome-tree.



What is a gourd
farmer's favorite
sport?

Squash.



Greetings from Paul Armstrong



I am pleased to share an update with you as we approach the end of our fall semester at Mohawk College.

At the inaugural President's Kick-Off, hosted at the Fennell

Campus on August 28, I had the privilege of sharing some exciting news about Mohawk's future that I think will be of interest to you as well.

This fall, we are launching a bold new brand strategy—the result of more than a year of research, consultation and reflection involving students, employees and partners. This strategy will ensure Mohawk College is no longer the “best kept secret,” but the first and best choice for students, employers, governments and international partners.

This new identity will be brought to life through our next Strategic Plan, with consultations beginning later this year. This plan will be about reimagining the future, staying agile and ensuring Mohawk College leads change.

There are many more exciting initiatives on the horizon, including:

- New degree programs and partnerships through the School of Climate Action.
- A planned expansion into Burlington that will provide new capacity in high-demand programs in areas such as healthcare.
- Continuing the modernization of processes and systems through projects such as our Banner Business Transformation initiative, one of the largest and most complex in our history.

These projects, together with our renewed brand strategy, reflect a college that is not content to stand still. Mohawk College is moving forward with confidence, ensuring we remain a place where people aspire to study, work and collaborate.

The President's Kick-Off also saw the return of the Service Milestone Recognition program for employees. The program celebrates the dedication, contributions and continued commitment of Mohawk College employees at key service milestones with employees receiving a special pin at 5-year increments beginning at their 5th year of service. More than 1,000 employees at the college have more than 5 years of service.

If you would like to learn more about any of these exciting initiatives, please reach out to Wendy Makey, Senior Community Relations Advisor.

As valued retirees, you can take great pride in knowing your service has shaped the college we are today and continues to inspire the path ahead.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Armstrong'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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.



RAMC fees at work to support students

As you know, your RAMC fees go primarily to support students. For the last five years we have funded two bursaries and one scholarship annually, each worth \$1,000.

To give you an idea of the impact of these awards on the recipients, we've pulled some quotes from the thank you letters they sent.

This year's bursaries went to two first-year students:

"Receiving this bursary is such a blessing to me because my ability to work and support myself has been put on hold in order for me to pursue my dream of higher education and so I thank you so much for your support in helping me to achieve this dream. It is generous people such as yourself that truly make a difference in a student's life! ... I will be a good steward of your financial gift, and your kindness has inspired me to give back to the school one day when I am financially able to. Indeed, I will be sure to "Pay It Forward" to future students

to help them achieve their goals like you have helped me."

"Receiving this bursary will ensure that I can focus on my studies, worry less about financial concerns and instead turn towards education and my schoolwork. In moving forward, I plan to work hard not only to achieve my academic goals, but also to try and push this act of generosity and kindness forward. This act of true selfless generosity pushes me to not only be a better student, but also a better person, assuring that I will be able to achieve the dreams this bursary will help me achieve. I cannot thank the donors of this bursary enough; I am eternally grateful and promise to use this bursary to the absolute fullest."

As the City School program is closing, this year's recipient of our scholarship will be the last from this program. The RAMC Board will be considering other options to re-direct this scholarship going forward. This student used the City School program as a launching pad to enter a Mohawk nursing program.

“Receiving this scholarship has been incredibly meaningful to me, as it will help alleviate some of the financial burdens associated with my education. As a nursing student, I am deeply committed to my academic journey and future career in healthcare, patient advocacy, etc. This award will allow me to focus more on my studies and practical training without the added stress of financial constraints... Your generosity has provided me with financial assistance and reinforced my motivation to excel in my academic and professional pursuits. I hope to one day contribute to my community in meaningful ways, just as you have contributed to students

like me. Once again, thank you for your kindness and support. I truly appreciate this opportunity and will strive to make the most of it.”

In the last few months, \$1,000 of your RAMC fees has also been donated to the MSA to help Mohawk students experiencing food insecurity.

As per the thank you note we received from Wendy Rolfe, Director of Student Experience at the MSA, this donation will directly benefit students, many of whom have become more dependent on these services in 2025. Here are some statistics she provided:

592

uses of our emergency grocery gift cards

1,438

visits to the community fridge

2x

weekly free breakfasts at three campuses



Regular snack carts at three campuses



The introduction of free meal tokens for students who need an immediate meal

We all know you can't learn on an empty stomach! Wendy also shared that as the need grows, their services are evolving as well. In response to a food security survey conducted by the MSA, they will be launching a series of educational initiatives to empower students. This will include a series of workshops and videos covering topics like **cooking essentials, smart shopping, balanced nutrition, portion control and meal preparation**. They are designed to build confidence in the kitchen and support healthier, more cost-effective food choices for our students.

The RAMC Board is confident that our members will agree this is a good investment.

SCHOLARSHIP



Drafting tools donated by Bill Stafford's family. Bill Stafford honoured RAMC with a \$2,500 bequest in his will. A gift agreement was entered into with the Mohawk Foundation to provide two \$1,000 scholarships to outstanding students in the Architectural Technology Program. The remaining \$500 was given to MSA to support their Emergency Food Security Service for students.

Stafford Memorial Scholarship acknowledgment

On May 23, three members of the RAMC board met Heather Fontaine, the daughter of William 'Bill' Stafford, for lunch at Shelly's Family Dining in Cayuga. The weather was perfect for a drive through the countryside to this charming and cozy converted church building.

Heather shared a few items (above) to be added to Mohawk College's archives, and her signature was obtained for the William Stafford Memorial Scholarship.



Heather Fontaine (third from left), meets with RAMC Members (L to R) Debbie Bruce, Margaret Thurston and Liz Aldrey.

GOLDEN GRAD

Celebrating 50 years later

Each year, a few RAMC members attend the Golden Grad celebration which honours students who graduated from Mohawk 50 years ago. This year's event on May 9th saw 95 grads and guests, with a total of 160 in attendance. Recreation Leadership was the largest class represented, with 15 registered, mostly due to the diligent efforts of class member and Mohawk retiree, Laurie Cahill.

Laurie was also chosen as the representative of the Class of 1975 to speak on behalf of all the 2025 Golden Grads. Laurie graduated from the Recreation Leadership program and distinguished himself as a varsity basketball captain, winning two silver medals as a member of the men's varsity basketball team. He coached varsity basketball from 1977-1982, and in 1985 he joined the staff of Mohawk College as a Manager of Varsity Athletics and Facilities. He later became the Athletic Director and worked tirelessly as a board member with the Ontario College Athletic Association. He was named to the OCAA Hall of Fame as a Builder in 2003 and to the Mountaineer Hall of Fame in 2017.



Laurie Cahill speaking at Mohawk College. Laurie hosted a fun lead-up to the Golden Grad event late last summer for his classmates from the Recreation Leadership class of '75 (below).

"It was an honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the Class of '75. I was actually nervous as I looked out at everyone in attendance that day, thinking of all the amazing accomplishments and life stories of my fellow graduates in that room!" - Laurie Cahill



RAMC members attend joyful reunion

By Hans Bastel

As retired faculty members we found it most interesting—and also gratifying—to meet our former students who travelled to Mohawk College from all across Canada. Virtually all of them had retired by now!

After talking to these graduates a few impressions are worth mentioning:

- These former students seem to remember their teachers with all their idiosyncrasies a lot more than the teachers remember their students.
- They all spoke highly of their educational and social life experiences while at Mohawk.
- Surprisingly, many of them met their spouses while at Mohawk or during a co-op placement.
- They all remember that it was OK to smoke in the classroom.
- They were impressed as to how much the Fennell Campus had expanded since 1975.

This Golden Grad event was extremely well-organized beginning with the registration process and continuing with the official greetings and words of welcome by College Officials, including President Paul Armstrong. There was a very special recognition of the class of '75, followed by lunch and an opportunity to network and tour the campus. At the end, everyone was invited to celebrate in The Cellar.

As retired faculty members we could not help but feel good about the successful careers and lives of our students. We encourage all Mohawk retirees to attend future Golden Grad celebrations and are sure they will enjoy it as much as we did.

As a special remembrance, the Alumni team ordered commemorative bookmarks for each grad from a small, local creative business.

Turns out, the creator, Tannu Rani, was a Mohawk student who just graduated from one of the college's healthcare programs and had a side hustle designing handmade gifts! Take a look at the lovely bookmark below.



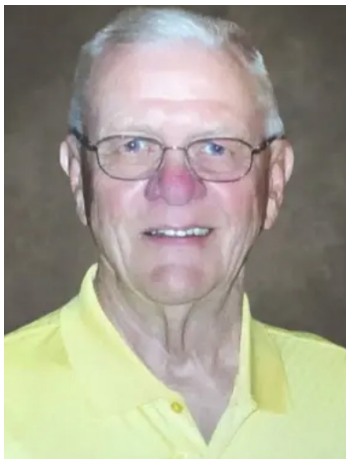
Time flies. RAMC members Tom Sutton (top) and Margaret Thurston (bottom centre) reunite with their students.

In Memoriam

The RAMC Board invites you to join us in remembering the following Mohawk employees who have passed away since our last newsletter. **Please click on the name below the photo to view their online remembrance.**



[Joyce Aylward](#)



[Harold William
"Bill" Hanson](#)



[Louise Packer](#)



[Ray Price](#)



[Jeffrey Tottman](#)

Muriel Dickinson

May 18, 1940 - August 3, 2025



Muriel Dickinson (L) with friend Ann Bryson.

By Anne Bryson

We lost a dear colleague on August 3 this year. Muriel died peacefully at St. Peter's Hospital in Hamilton. Muriel has been my friend for 60 years, when we both started at the Adult Retraining Program way back in 1965. The program was later taken over by Mohawk in 1970 when the Saltfleet Campus was opened. We started when a typewriter was a typewriter and if it broke down, you might have had to manually separate the keys or change the ribbon. Those were the good old days! As time went on, we tried out word processors, then came computers. Our kids all grew up together and our grandkids. We were all good friends and loved our jobs at Mohawk.

When we retired, we all kept in touch with each other and enjoyed lunches together and also our department lunches at Christmas time at Glendale Golf and Country Club. We still keep in touch with each other and treasure our friendships.

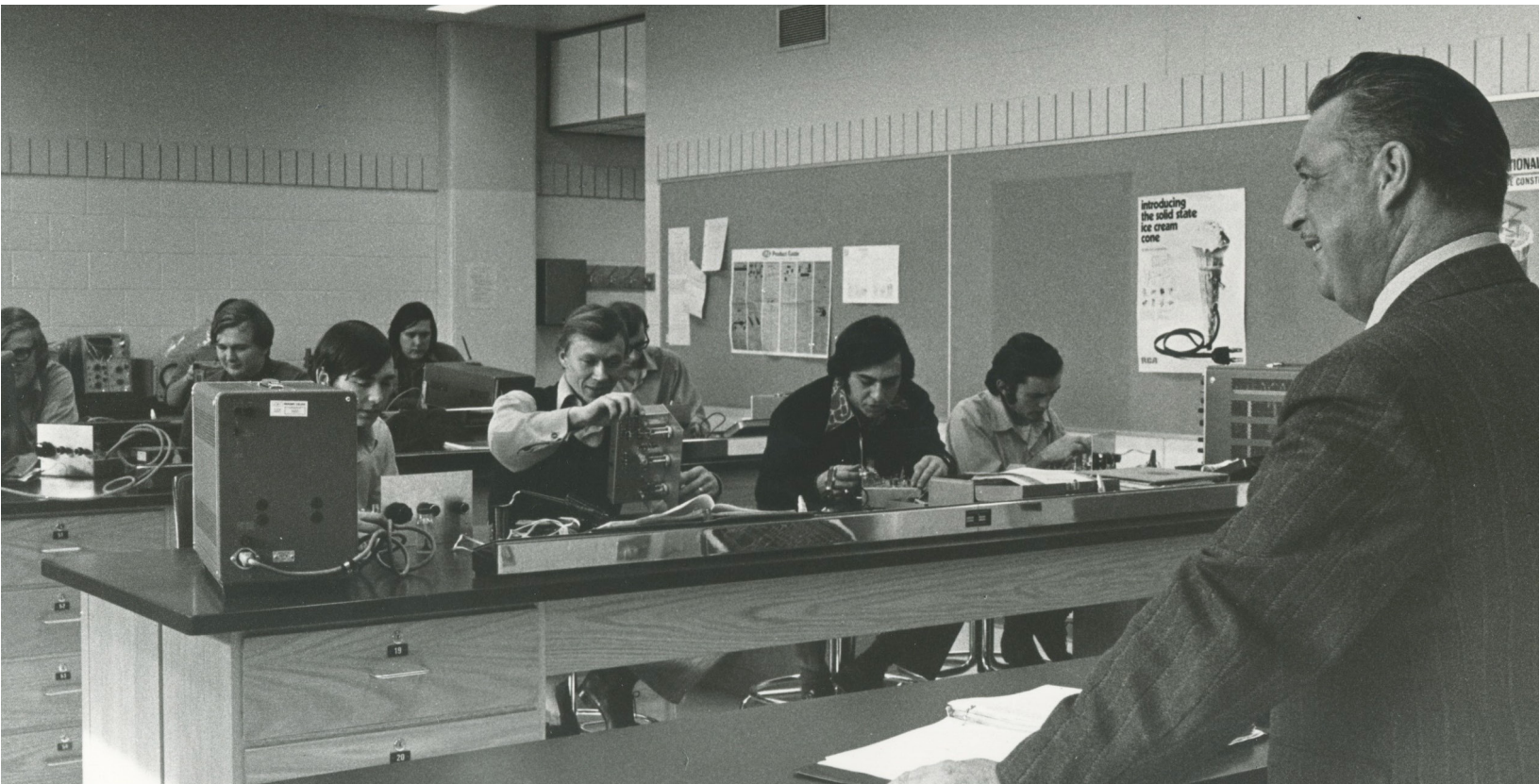
Update on Louise Packer Memorial Award:

We informed RAMC members in the summer about the award that was set up in Louise's memory. The family has let us know that their goal was reached! The first presentation to a deserving student (as determined by the nursing faculty) will occur in January 2026. Mohawk has agreed to match this with a second Louise Packer Memorial Award for the next 10 years (until 2036), and then a single presentation will continue on yearly in perpetuity.

If you attended the President's Kick-Off, you may have noticed a memorial plaque on the arm on your seat. A plaque, as a further remembrance of Louise, will be installed in the theatre. It will read:

Louise Packer, RN
Nursing
Wisdom and Empathy

Fun Fact



Providing context

RAMC member Bruce Hutchinson let us know a little bit about a historical photo selected by the Marketing Team to enhance the article in our Spring edition written by Peter Edmonson. Bruce writes: *"That was taken in a Two-year Electronics Technician class in the early 70s. The instructor is John Harris who joined the Electronics Dept. in 1968 and sadly died of cancer in 1975. John was a real character, and we all were sorry to have him die before his time."* We're always happy to hear from members who can provide some context to photos pulled from the archive!

Connect, enjoy, give back

 **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 fall or in the new 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 fall. Watch the President's Highlight videos:

[September](#)

[November](#)



The Mohawk College Foundation is deeply grateful for the generous support it has received from the Retirees' Association of Mohawk College itself and many of its members on an individual basis. On behalf of our students and the College a big THANK YOU to you.

The impact of your giving over the years has enriched the learning experience of our students in so many ways, whether it be for scholarships and bursaries, student life activities, or supporting various capital projects on our campuses.

Fall is a time when many of us reflect on our annual giving as the end of the year approaches. For those who wish to include Mohawk College in their giving for 2025, please visit our [Ways to Give website](#).

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

Charitable Registration
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Retirees' Association of Mohawk College (RAMC) - Established 1992-1993

Inform, Encourage, Unite, Serve - celebrating & honouring Mohawk retirees!

Stay Connected! Our Association is organized exclusively for the benefit of its membership and for assisting Mohawk College in its aims and objectives especially as these relate to the support of students. The links, material, information and views expressed in messages/articles/newsletters are those of the writer and are provided for your general information and personal interest and do not represent the views of RAMC Board of Directors.

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Contact us

Email: retirees@mohawkcollege.ca

Website: The Retirees' Association of Mohawk College has dedicated members who support the Board's mandate. Would you like to join? Do you have a special event that you would like to coordinate? Can we help promote a reunion? Contact us at retirees@mohawkcollege.ca.



RETIREES' ASSOCIATION
OF MOHAWK COLLEGE

The Retirees' Association of Mohawk College, a long-standing partner of the college, is the largest such organization in Ontario's college system. The Association was established in November 1992, and formally approved by the President in January 1993. Our Charter was signed on May 18, 1993. Our Association is organized exclusively for the benefit of its membership and for assisting Mohawk College in its aims and objectives, especially as these relate to the support of students.