

2022-2023 | UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO





HART HOUSE YEAR IN REVIEW 2022-2023

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
YEAR-AT-A-GLANCE	6
STRATEGIC PLAN	8
GOVERNANCE	9
PROGRAMMING	10
HART HOUSE IN THE COMMUNITY	12
FOR YOUR INNER ARTIST	15
FOR AN OPEN DIALOGUE	18
FOR WHAT MOVES YOU	21
FOR BUILDING LIFE SKILLS	24
HART HOUSE FACILITIES AND SPACES	28
AWARDS	31
DONATIONS, ALUMNI IMPACT AND GRANTS	33



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hart House is more than a building. It is a dynamic and inclusive centre for experiential education outside the classroom where students from all three University of Toronto campuses find welcoming and unique ways to connect with each other and the broader world through engagement with the arts, dialogue and wellness.

From social justice-based community talks to art exhibitions, theatre workshops and wellness classes to strengthen the body and spirit, Hart House offers something for everyone. It is our vision to enable U of T students to become well-rounded and resilient individuals, more knowledgeable and compassionate leaders, and better informed and engaged local and global citizens.

We are pleased to present the *Year in Review* for 2022-2023, a period that began on May 1, 2022, and ended on April 30, 2023. We cannot capture all the activities, student and alumni successes, popular events, muchloved programs and breathtaking facilities so, instead, we showcase the highlights and, in doing so, paint a vivid picture, a compelling snapshot, of our year. Indeed, this report taps into the many ways that U of T students benefitted from their engagement with the House over the course of the year.

We have a strong foundation; our work is grounded in the current Strategic Plan's five commitments, starting with fostering a climate of inclusivity and belonging in our spaces and programs.

Governance, including the Hart House Board of Stewards, as well as the many Clubs and Committees, and our commitment to the tri-campus mandate form the bedrock of our work and align with the commitments in our Strategic Plan.

In capturing the year's highlights, the numbers provided in the Year-at-a-Glance section can tell a story and speak to student engagement as much as our dedication to those students and Hart House's inspirational recovery from the pandemic. Students, alumni and members of the community returned to the House this year in large numbers.

In recounting the year, the qualitative aspects, lived experiences and personal stories are equally important as the numbers. Hart House was "there" for students, offering them artistic outlets for expression and creativity, transportive opportunities for social engagement and exciting avenues for exploring the joys of physical movement and holistic wellness.

With students themselves actively involved in developing programming, Hart House is a rare space where artists work on their jump shot, engineers make music, scientists strut the stage and athletes debate the great issues of the day. Our diverse array of programs offers unique opportunities to collaborate, develop leadership and communication skills, exercise creativity and foster empathy – attributes necessary for success in an increasingly globalized and rapidly changing landscape.

This year has also seen many much-needed improvements and transformational changes to Hart House spaces and facilities, in particular accessibility upgrades, such as the universal washroom – one of the most accessible washrooms on campus – supported by the University of Toronto Students' Union.

This Year in Review additionally showcases the student leadership awards and theatre accolades, as well as illustrates our support of the pan-University Defy Gravity campaign and the lasting impact of donors and grants. We hope you enjoy this Year in Review. Thank you for your abiding interest in Hart House. Your ongoing support and encouragement are integral to the House's success. We look forward to seeing you in the coming year.



YEAR-AT-A-GLANCE



of traditionally underrepresented students agreed or strongly agreed that Hart House is an inclusive space for U of T students – up 11 percentage points from last year, when it was 81%.



of traditionally underrepresented students agreed or strongly agreed that Hart House is a supportive and caring community. This is up 6 percentage points from last year, when it was 82%.

Hart House delivered a great year of programming with a range of partners:

Hart House had 15 UTM/UTSC events this year.

The House engaged with 88 unique partners in 2022-2023. These included campus partners, such as First Nations House; and community partners, like The 519.

Hart House was involved in two project teams that were awarded the inaugural Exemplary University of Toronto Ambassador Awards. It led the second while the first was a tri-campus initiative.

- The Advancement Equity Diversity Inclusion Task Force
- Hart House Facilities Renewal Project Team

Since January 2023, our staff received 85 True Blue recognitions.

This award represents an opportunity for faculty and staff members to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of their colleagues. Those acknowledged in this way have shown qualities of collaboration, innovation and leadership.

32% of Hart House's highly involved students were graduate students.



Hart House has reduced its carbon footprint by 22% compared to 2018-2019.



of highly involved students were satisfied with their Hart House experience.

Note: Data in the above points are from the 2022-2023 Hart House Highly Involved Students Survey.



of event clients were satisfied with their experience at Hart House.

Note: from regular client satisfaction surveys

3,359 The House had **3,359 event** space bookings – up from 670 in 2021-2022 – supporting 100 unique U of T student groups.

2,228 registrants in our Creative LifeSchool and Clubs and Music Programs.

116,615 The Hart House Fitness Centre recorded 116,615 in-person visits. This is up from last year's 30,675 visits. This is progress towards pre-pandemic levels.



Instagram followers: 20,196

X Twitter followers: 16,021

Facebook followers: 22,901

NEW! TikTok: launched July 2022, video views **9,158**

377 Earned media (on and off campus)
– up from 302 last year. This is an almost 25% increase.

932,291 Hart House website pageviews, up from 588,891 last year. This 58% jump indicates that engagement has returned to prepandemic levels.

36,916 *Quarterly* newsletter subscribers (including 21,764 alumni). This is up from 35,434 last year, a modest **4% jump**.

12,911 Hart House Weekly subscribers, up from last year's 11,525, indicating a 12% increase.



51% of non-appointed staff contracts are held by students, compared to 46% in 2021-2022.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, *Preparing the Table*, was launched in 2021-2022. This five-year plan for Hart House underscores the idea of a table, central to Hart House's historical identity, as a place for bringing students together.

Through this framework, we will conscientiously work to ensure that all U of T students not only feel welcome at the table, but that they know, with a deep certainty, that the table is already theirs.

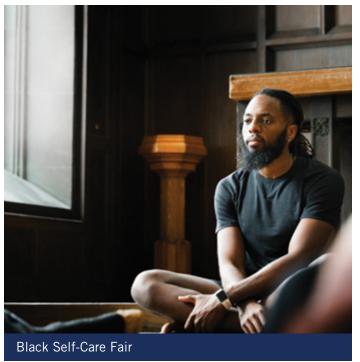
The five core Commitments of *Preparing the Table* are to:

- Foster a climate of inclusivity and belonging in our spaces and programs;
- Encourage students to explore who they are and who they aspire to be through the arts, dialogue and wellness;
- Offer students rich experiential learning opportunities;
- Deepen student engagement with local and global communities and issues; and
- Steward Hart House resources and relationships carefully and creatively to meet the challenges of today and the opportunities of tomorrow.

We have made progress on all of the commitments, and highlights of this work are profiled in this *Year in Review*.

Hart House is a place for all students, including those who have been traditionally under-represented. This includes those from equity-deserving communities; those who are Indigenous, Black, Racialized, living with a disability, LGBTQ2S+, gender fluid or gender non-conforming, asylum seekers and others.





GOVERNANCE

GOVERNANCE

HART HOUSE BOARD OF STEWARDS

The Board of Stewards is the House's highest governing body. The Warden of Hart House consults with members of the Board on matters of policy and practice. The Board helps to keep Hart House on track in pursuing its goals and priorities each year, and it reviews and approves the House's annual budget before it is submitted for consideration and approval to the University's Council on Student Services, the Service Ancillary Review Group and the University Affairs Board.

Students make up the majority of voting members of the Board of Stewards. The Board includes a representative from each of the nine student-led Standing Committees and each of the five student unions across the University's three campuses, as well as representatives of U of T's President, Governing Council and the Hart House Community Members Committee.

"The Board offers a valuable opportunity for us to acquaint ourselves with available resources, stay updated on Committee developments and actively champion our own initiatives. It broadens our perspective on our roles and leadership, imparting valuable lessons in promoting democracy and equity within this expansive institution and its community. I take immense pride in my involvement in this remarkable place."

—Yihang Xu, Steward of Hart House Student Music Committee

HART HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEES

These Committees allow students to acquire and practice the skills of good governance and to work together toward common causes. Through their active membership, students and other members of the House pursue their passions and gain practical and organizational skills to help them in their studies, careers and lives.

Hart House has 10 Standing Committees.

HART HOUSE CLUBS AND REGISTERED PROGRAMS

Hart House Clubs and Registered Programs, including musical groups, offer a chance for members of the Hart House community to come together through exploration of common interests or to try new things. Archery, debating, chess, photography and a range of musical pursuits from Chamber Strings to Jazz Choir help to build community among participants.

Students, alumni and community members of all ages and abilities come together in these Clubs.

"The Club is great for making new friends. There are people of all playing levels. There are many who are very good at blitz chess [a single, time-controlled game of one to 10 minutes, also known as speed chess], as well as those at an intermediate level and there are also beginners ... It's good for everyone." —Hart House Chess Club member. Nicholas Vettese

TRI-CAMPUS MANDATE

Hart House is a community for the practice and enjoyment of the arts, dialogue and wellness that is deeply committed to engaging and serving the students on all three U of T campuses.

Every U of T student supports the House through the compulsory payment of ancillary fees, and Hart House takes very seriously its commitment to ensuring that all students see themselves and their priorities reflected in the House's work.

Hart House staff members also work closely and regularly with partners at St. George campus, University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) campus and University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) campus to co-create programming specifically tailored to the needs and priorities of each location.



PROGRAMMING

Hart House programs range from fun, drop-in activities to initiatives that explore pressing social issues. All programming, whether in the arts, dialogue or wellness, is grounded in shared leadership with students with intergenerational connections across diverse communities.



Chess Tournament

Voter Apathy...Dialogue Event



U of T Black Graduation Ceremony



Hart House Changemakers



Nation Building Through Poetry: A Poet Laureate Cypher



Hart House U of T Festival of Dance



Hip Hop Skate



Student Staff Appreciation Event



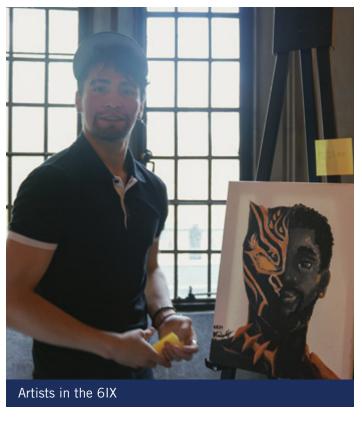
HART HOUSE IN THE COMMUNITY

Hart House is more than just the bricks and mortar that form its spaces. It is a unique physical (and sometimes virtual) environment that brings people together to learn more about themselves, others and the world we share.

Importantly, our community-based activities, involving many partners and different kinds of collaborations, work across our pillars of arts, dialogue and wellness.

ARTISTS IN THE 6IX

This virtual exhibition opened on April 29, 2022, and ran for one month. This is an annual showcase as part of Toronto Youth Week featuring the talent of young artists from across the city – many of whom have never before publicly shown their work. The House partnered with the City of Toronto in this initiative.



BREAKING CANADA

On April 29, 2023, Hart House was centre stage for some of the best breakers, or breakdancers, in Canada. The House hosted the Ontario Open – the qualifying rounds of the Canada DanceSport (CDS) National Championships. The winner of this Championship will progress to the World Dance Sport Federation (WDSF) World Breaking Championship in Belgium in September 2024.

BROTHERHOOD OF ETHNIC EXCELLENCE (BEE)

The Brotherhood of Ethnic Excellence (BEE) is a youth advisory program. In partnership with several Toronto District School Board (TDSB) high schools, BEE provides transformative learning, leadership skill development and mentorship for Black male-identifying students in Grades 9 to 12.

Highlight of this year: BEE worked with Oakwood Collegiate Institute and Central Technical School; and had several events including a Hart House visit, a *Black Boys* film screening and a trip to the Hart House Farm.

"I got involved with BEE 2 years ago. [...] This is a program that I would have joined in a heartbeat when I was in high school. This program is very important as I believe that it is the first step needed to break the systematic and societal barriers that keep young Black men from succeeding."—Student-staff Ambassador

COLLABORATIONS WITH THE 519 AND OTHERS

As part of our Youth Access work, community-based partner organizations like the Kiki Ballroom Alliance,

Oakwood Collegiate Institute, the 519 Community Centre, and Native Child and Family Services facilitated visits to Hart House for high school-aged youth from June through August, 2022. We offered these young people recreational activities, workshops, fitness classes, games and a trip to the Hart House Farm in mid-July 2022.

"Having the flexibility to freely learn, explore and think have been truly rewarding opportunities to test the feasibility of my unconventional ambitions. [...] The open and flexible nature of learning these skills promoted growth in the areas of my interest, helping guide and influence my future pursuits."

– High school co-op student

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS AT HART HOUSE

As part of Indigenous Education Week, from October 13 to November 6, 2022, Hart House partnered with First Nations House and Toronto's Dia de los Muertos (Day of the



Marking Day Of The Dead with First Nations House and Toronto's Dia de los Muertos Collective

Dead) Collective. The Day of the Dead celebration seeks to educate, honour, mobilize and delight with its signature mixture of music, dance and theatre performances. This was the first time U of T was a site for the Collective's celebrations, both at Hart House and First Nations House. Participants could drop by Hart House and add to the public community ofrenda (altar), join a cempasuchil marigold-making workshop or attend dance and theatrical performances.

HART HOUSE STUDENT AMBASSADORS

These Ambassadors champion innovative ideas to engage students in the House's events and programs. This year, there were seven in number, and they worked across three campuses. Through active engagement on Instagram (@harthousestudents), they engaged with students on a peer-to-peer level.

Activities led by the Ambassadors included events in The Arbor Room, such as the Board Game Café, from September 2022 to April 2023. Other events included the World Cup Final Watch Party in The Arbor Room on December 18, 2022, and winter movie screenings in the East Common Room in December 2022.



Brotherhood of Ethnic Excellence (BEE) at the Hart House Farm



NATIONAL THEATRE SCHOOL DRAMA FESTIVAL

The National Theatre School Drama Festival provides an opportunity for high school students to express their creativity and find their unique voice. It brings together a large community, under the guidance of professionals, adjudicators and workshop leaders to celebrate, discuss and support one another's creative efforts.

The event is a hub for theatre crafts, promoting them through teamwork, problem solving and entrepreneurship. It presents to audiences the world of possibilities that theatre has to offer.

This year, from April 13 to 15, 2023, the Drama Festival held its 2023 Toronto Regional Showcase at Hart House Theatre. The Toronto Regionals have been held at this Theatre since 1953.





She was deeply engaged in the Committee before graduating in 2008. Today, this alumna and accomplished global citizen works in Canada's highest political office, as Director of Operations, Outreach and Planning in the Office of the Prime Minister of Canada. She says her

and fortified her distinguished career.

"In the [Hart House Student Social Justice]
Committee, I was very inspired by the people around me. I wanted to be around them, to listen to them.
That truly helped to shape me. That's how I found

"HART HOUSE WAS MY NORTH STAR"

MINISTER'S OFFICE

SAYS U OF T ALUMNA NOW WORKING IN THE PRIME

undergrad Vandana Fatima Kattar found her calling in the Hart House Student Social Justice Committee.

experiences at Hart House shaped her path forward

Sixteen years ago, Faculty of Arts & Science

me. I wanted to be around them, to listen to them.
That truly helped to shape me. That's how I found myself," she says. "Hart House is, to me, the heart of

U of T. It was like the anchor for me. It was like a home more than an iconic building."

FOR YOUR INNER ARTIST

Providing opportunities for artistic expression and creativity across music; dance; drama; film; photography; and literary, visual and digital arts is a cornerstone of Hart House.

HART HOUSE MUSICAL GROUPS

There are seven Hart House musical groups:

- Hart House Chorus
- Hart House Chamber Strings
- Hart House Jazz Choir Onoscatopoeia
- Hart House Jazz Ensemble
- Hart House Orchestra
- Hart House Singers
- Hart House Symphonic Band

In 2022-2023, all seven groups saw a return to in-person rehearsals and performances.

HART HOUSE THEATRE

The Theatre had a busy season in 2022-2023. Our programming featured new initiatives, the expansion of our student-led activities and performance opportunities for all. Performances, which returned to in-person this year, included the following:

- Three Sisters (October 28 to November 12, 2022), a donor-supported co-production with The Howland Company, a venue and educational partnership that had Howland Company members taking on educational and leadership roles with students throughout the academic year;
- THE BIRDS (November 25 to December 10, 2022), a Venue Partnership with Bygone Theatre; and
- The Gray: A Wilde Musical in Concert (April 20 to 22, 2023), winner of "Best Original Work," "Best Direction" and "Best Virtual Show" at the U of T Drama Coalition Awards. 2022.

Hart House Theatre is supported, in part, by generous donors who make annual donations, and who helped create a permanent Hart House Theatre Endowment Fund. Taken together, donors have been important partners in helping the next generation of students discover Hart House Theatre.

MURAL BY INDIGENOUS ARTIST

In the autumn of 2022, Quinn Hopkins' mixed media mural, *Intertribal*, 2022, was installed at Hart House on the basement level. It depicts a pow wow in Toronto, merges technology and art in a provocative and highly original way, and brings with it a remarkable gift: the message of love.

"Having my work in Hart House is looking at the next generation, those students, those warriors who are learning and propelling our communities and our society into the future. It's an honour to have them learn something new from this mural or just enjoy it; sit there, meditate or whatever people do when they look at art. Maybe it's a quick glance, but whatever it is, I hope it brightens their day or they feel something," said Quinn.

The Quinn Hopkins story, "Indigenous Artist Finds Powerful New Ways to Connect at Hart House," published in the Hart House Quarterly in October 2022, was very well received. The mural was covered by The Toronto Star. The artwork was also profiled in U of T's internal publication, The Bulletin Brief; U of T News; and The Varsity student newspaper.





TALKING WALLS EXHIBITS

Talking Walls is an on-going series of informal exhibit spaces staged throughout the House and associated with the Hart House Student Art Committee. Talking Walls seeks to build understanding and awareness by giving voice to challenging and engaging subject matter.

7 LESSONS

One popular *Talking Walls* exhibit this year was *7 Lessons*, skateboard collaborations between Oasis Skateboard Factory and 7 Indigenous Artists. This ran from November 5, 2022 to February 20, 2023. The Oasis Skateboard Factory is an award-winning alternative TDSB high school program where students earn credits by building and selling skateboards, and running a small design business.

TRACES OF WAR

From February 24 to March 31, 2023, *Talking Walls* featured a compelling exhibit: *Traces of War*, which represents the emotions and stories of Ukrainian youth and how they got through, and are still getting through, the war. The exhibition consists of paintings, text messages, photographs and diary pages made by the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy students, their relatives, friends and acquaintances.

The exhibition was part of *Unissued Diplomas*, a large-scale international project organized by Ukrainian students in cooperation with the Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union. *Unissued Diplomas* honours the memory of 36 Ukrainian students who will never graduate because they were casualties of war.



HART HOUSE THEATRE STAGES CANADIAN DEBUT OF MUSICAL BY U OF T UNDERGRAD

For three nights in April, 2023, Hart House Theatre presented an in-concert workshop version of a new work *The Gray: A Wilde Musical in Concert*, a novel twist on the Oscar Wilde classic.

This was a Canadian debut. On the heels of the play's success in its virtual/audio version, produced last year by the Victoria College Drama Society, this

was the first time *The Gray* had been executed on stage.

This musical is the brainchild of student Anthony Palermo, Executive Producer of the English & Drama Student Society at UTM. Anthony is an actor, director, writer and composer who recently graduated from U of T/Sheridan College's Theatre & Drama Studies program. They created the book, music and lyrics for *The Gray* production, on top of directing it.

Hart House Theatre had a huge impact on Anthony. "The entire team [...] supported me as an artist and a theatre professional. They were such grounding forces for me. They helped me build confidence," they say. "Hart House has been a place of connection. I've been able to network with so many theater professionals and artists."







SEARCH FOR HOME: HART HOUSE ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE GIVE POWERFUL VOICE TO THE MIGRANT EXPERIENCE

Through the Hart House Innovation Fund, the House supported two Artists in Residence from January to April 2023: musician Nina Platiša and photographer Masoud Riyazati, an anthropology major at Woodsworth College. This program allows the artists to share their experiences coming to Canada and utilize their journey as inspiration for their work.



Nina sums up the experience, "Hart House is not only an experiential educational community and an institution that's part of U of T, but it's also an art community with many resources. It's got a real community feeling."

Masoud reflects on how coming to U of T has transformed his life. "Being at U of T means a lot. Since I started here, many things have changed for me in my personal life. [...] U of T gave me a direction. This is the path; this is where I need to go."



FOR AN OPEN DIALOGUE

Hart House has a long history of hosting forward-thinking conversations where students can share ideas and delve into essential issues of the day. In 2022-2023, the House provided a wide array of dialogue-based experiences that were engaging and transformative.

BLACK FUTURES

Hart House explores the idea of Afrofuturism to blend the knowledge of the past with a re-imagining of the future. *Black Futures* (donor supported through the Hart House Innovation Fund) reflects the experiences of today's Black leaders and artists while providing a platform for real-world knowledge that helps students be empowered, self-aware and future-ready citizens.

Highlights of the year include:

BLACK CAREERS IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

On March 7, 2023, in the Debates Room, Hart House hosted *Let's Talk Careers in Entrepreneurship*. This event offered African Black Caribbean students access to Black professionals, industry knowledge and pathways to careers in entrepreneurship. Participants could connect and network in facilitated table groups with professionals from U of T and the broader African Black Caribbean community. They

Black Self-Care Fair

gained new insights into various entrepreneurial careers; and received tips, tools, strategies and funding leads.

The event was sponsored by African Black Caribbean Student Engagement. Partners included the African Impact Initiative, Black Students' Association and the National Society of Black Engineers, U of T Chapter.

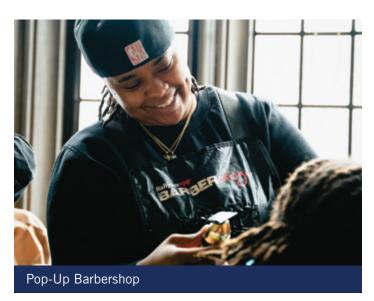
BLACK SELF-CARE FAIR

In the Reading Room on February 28, 2023, the Black Self-Care Fair brought together resources to promote and encourage self-care for Black students with a particular focus on how self-care has been practiced within the BIPOC community. It was a day of crafting, pampering, learning and connecting, part of Black Futures/Hip Hop Education/Well Being Collective @ Hart House.

NATION BUILDING THROUGH POETRY

In this event on February 28, 2023, three Poet Laureates representing central, eastern and western parts of Canada came together to discuss the impact of spoken word poetry as a method for nation building, marking major events and raising awareness about literary arts.

Hart House welcomed Edmonton's current Poet Laureate, Titilope Sonuga; Ontario's first Poet Laureate, Randell



Adjei; and former Halifax Poet Laureate, Rebecca Thomas. Angeline Tetteh Wayoe of CBC Music's *The Block* hosted the evening. The event was held in Hart House Theatre.

CHANGEMAKERS

Launched in 2021, *Changemakers* was a series of firesidestyle chats featuring inspiring guests whose discontent with the status quo propels them to be the change they want to see in the world.

One highlight was *LGBTQI+ Individuals & the Search for Home* on October 26, 2022. Here, Hart House's former Warden John Monahan engaged with the Rainbow Railroad's Executive Director, Kimahli Powell. The Rainbow Railroad is working with the Government of Canada and local politicians, and joined by activists in Canada and around the world, to support *LGBTQI+* people to escape persecution and find a new home in a more accepting community.

HART HOUSE GLOBAL COMMONS

This initiative, supported by the Michael R. De Angelis & Family Global Innovation Fund, engages students from all three U of T campuses in an interdisciplinary space. Here, they connect in real-time dialogue with students from global partner locations in India, France, Colombia, South Africa and the United States of America; share perspectives; and learn from and with each other as they discuss pressing global issues.

This year's theme was Migration: Global Perspectives on the Search for Home.

One high point was the Design Jam, a two-part workshop that invited participants to explore and unpack the complexities of migration through storytelling, art and design. Guest speakers with lived experience of migration and creative activism anchored the event with narrative









storytelling, laying the groundwork for a deep dive into a collective design process. Participants were guided through design research activities both individually and in breakout groups, with ample opportunities for dialogue and making new connections. Sessions ran over March 2023. Photographer and Hart House Artist in Residence Masoud Riyazati was one of the speakers in Design Jam.

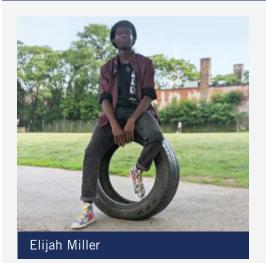
This initiative was co-presented by 14 universities and organizations as well as Hart House.

HART HOUSE HIP HOP EDUCATION

This donor-supported program examines the use and impact of Hip Hop as a bridge to culture, social justice, diversity, connection and understanding. It supports values of representation, collaboration and social justice. One key event of the past year was *Women in Hip Hop: Refusal, Resistance and Interruption*, co-presented by Hart House; Fresh, Bold, and So Def at the Universal Hip-Hop Museum; and the Hip-Hop Education Center.

Kashema Hutchinson moderated the event, which was held on March 8, 2023. Guests included Michie Mee, Canada's queen of Hip Hop, actor, author, entrepreneur and mentor; April Walker, fashion designer/author/educator; and Keziah Myers, Executive Director, ADVANCE, Canada's Black Music Business Collective.





"HART HOUSE IGNITED A SOCIAL JUSTICE FIRE IN ME," SAYS FORMER CO-OP STUDENT, NOW U OF T UNDERGRAD

As a high school co-op student, Elijah Miller created a winning podcast on the climate crisis with help from Hart House Programming. At the House, he worked closely with the team through *Support*, *Engage*, *Experience* (*SEE*) *U* of *T*, a collaborative access program initiated by U of T and the TDSB. This program encourages students who come from

communities historically underrepresented at U of T and post-secondary institutions to view post-secondary education as a viable destination.

Today, the U of T student says the experience was hugely meaningful. "The work that I did with Hart House really ignited a social justice fire in me. Working on the podcast, I began to question all of the ideas around climate change, to interrogate and to think about it more deeply."

FOR WHAT MOVES YOU

HART HOUSE FITNESS CENTRE

This is a place for every body, whether an individual is new to strength training, a cardio master or trying to make holistic wellness a daily practice. Members have access to a 25-yard pool, indoor track, weight room, drop-in classes and membership enhancements like personal training and specialized registered programs.

This year saw the return and evolution of in-person programs with enhanced women-only strength and swim programs, and the Hart House exclusive campus offering, Reformer Pilates. Reformer sessions and classes allow participants to engage in full mind-body movement education.

RETURN OF THE INDOOR TRIATHLON

This popular annual event, overseen by the Hart House Recreational Athletics and Wellness Committee, returned after a break due to the pandemic, on February 25, 2023. It consisted of three, 15-minute intervals where participants swam, ran laps around the track and rode on stationary bikes for as long as possible within the given time frame. Participants could register for the triathlon as an individual or a three-person relay team. Individuals at all levels of fitness were encouraged.

SWEAT & RESET EVENT

This year, the Fitness Centre held a brand-new wellness event: Sweat & Reset, on April 6, 2023, in the Gymnasium.



The sold-out event consisted of a 30-minute HIIT session followed by a 30-minute restorative yoga flow led by guest instructors.

Post-sweat, participants enjoyed refreshments, had a chance to mix and mingle, and connect with the community. There was a live DJ. Treats also included swag bags and sports apparel giveaways. The Fitness Centre partnered with Lululemon and Red Bull for this successful event.

"[The Hart House Fitness Centre] is a true urban oasis – quiet, peaceful, clean and really beautiful. The pool, with all that light coming through the ceiling, is reminiscent of a swimming bath from the 1920s. A couple of lifeguards play jazz quietly during lane swim. It's a slice of heaven on an otherwise crazy day."

-Tracy Solomon, Assistant Professor – Teaching Stream at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

GET CRAFTY!

This is a fun and engaging drop-in creative session held on Thursdays from 11 am until 1 pm. In these stress-free sessions and workshops, participants can learn the basics of sewing, collage, printing, painting and more. Tools and materials are provided.

Attendance was close to 1,000 this year.

Another success this year: *Get Crafty Mobile*, where the Get Crafty! team partnered with different U of T student groups and departments. *Get Crafty Mobile* attended 25 events, with attendance at those events ranging from 10 to 500 people.

WELL BEING COLLECTIVE @ HART HOUSE

This is a collaborative initiative, supported by the Hart House Innovation Fund, which explores wellness with a focus on the experiences and practices of Indigenous, Black and Racialized students and their communities.



"When I'm at Hart House, it's a really great community. Everyone is very nice. Everyone I worked with on the Well Being podcasts wanted some level of communication with me or needed to work with me for music. They've been so receptive and kind."

–Bill Xu, who worked in the Producers' Circle program, designing the music for the Well Being Collective @ Hart House podcast

OUTDOOR WELLNESS RETREAT TO HART HOUSE FARM

Another high point from the past year was the Collective's Outdoor Wellness Retreat, staged at the Hart House Farm on September 17, 2022. In this collaboration between the Multi-Faith Centre and the *Well Being Collective @ Hart House* participants connected with nature and spirituality through reflective meditations and wellness activities, while building community.

More specifically, Demiesha Dennis (Founder and CEO of Brown Girl Outdoor World) offered engaging activities for participants, including a bonfire camp session with storytelling and smores. Asha Frost (Indigenous Healer, Medicine Woman and Spiritual Mentor) hosted a ceremony filled with love, connection and guidance. Participants also engaged in a sacred smudge ceremony, teachings on the land and a healing activation. Bryan Clyde Jones, yoga and meditation specialist, oversaw an outdoor yoga session with headsets that allowed participants to connect on a more personal level and come away with a calm mind.





U OF T ALUMNA AND FORMER FITNESS CENTRE TRAINER BESTOWS MEANINGFUL GIFT TO HART HOUSE

It was a trial by fire: After attending a few classes at the Hart House Fitness Centre, undergrad Debbie Sabadash was spontaneously asked to sub when an instructor was delayed. She stepped up and led the class of 100 participants.

Just minutes later, the instructor appeared, but Debbie was hooked. This began her 30-year stint

as an aerobics instructor (and much more), deeply committed to the tight-knit community at Hart House, which she describes as her "home away from home."

She says, "Hart House is such a warm, inviting place, and the classes were so creative. The instructors came from every walk of life. The choreography was famous, too, all over the campus. The music was great. The classes were euphoric. It was, like, Endorphin City."

Debbie, now a retired English teacher, has played a vital role in the Hart House Fitness Centre for more than a quarter century. She recently planned ahead and decided to make a gift to the House through her will, to support a community she cares about deeply.













FOR BUILDING LIFE SKILLS

Hart House offers employment opportunities to students across a broad set of roles and functions, contributing to our many programs, services and operations. These opportunities provide meaningful work-integrated learning experiences. The students can strengthen their skill sets, deepen their knowledge base and explore future career possibilities.

In 2022-2023, the House offered a variety of student employment opportunities including student staff positions and work study roles. This is in addition to the many students who obtained valuable experience through their participation in Hart House Standing Committees and Hart House Clubs and Registered Programs. Highlights from the past year include:

CO-CURRICULAR RECORD

Hart House participates in the University's Co-Curricular Record (CCR) initiative. The CCR helps students find opportunities at U of T beyond the classroom. The students' Record then acts as a tool to articulate the strengths they've developed through co-curricular experiences.

In 2022-2023, 582 students received CCR recognition for their engagement at Hart House. Students represented 51% of non-appointed employment contracts.

STUDENT- OR COMMITTEE-LED PROGRAMMING

artWORK CONFERENCE

This annual event, facilitated by the Hart House Student Art Committee, connects the U of T and Hart House

communities with Toronto's leading arts professionals. It highlights the diverse career opportunities within the city's artistic communities. Participants heard from artists, curators and arts professionals about their current work and experience transitioning into the professional art world. This year's artWORK Conference, on April 5, 2023, featured artist Golboo Amani, artist and U of T Professor Patrick Cruz, artist Shirin Fahimi, and artist Dainesha Nugent-Palache.

ENGAGING WITH PLANTS AND THE LAND

The Hart House Student Farm Committee organizes social activities, food and agriculture projects, and works to maintain the Hart House Farm in Caledon.

This year, it led many initiatives where students could engage with plants and the land. For example, on September 22, 2022, and January 26, 2023, this Committee hosted its biannual plant sale at Hart House – a hugely popular event. On April 15, 2023, the Committee led *Sugaring Off*, a day of outdoor activities at the Farm, which featured some maple flavours in food offerings, light hiking and more. This Committee also initiated a *Fall Wellness Trip*, executed in conjunction with the Hart House Recreational Athletics and Wellness Committee, and a day trip to the Hart House Farm.



FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOPS

The Hart House Finance Committee provides opportunities to learn valuable skills in financial management by participating in conversations and decisions about budgetary and financial policies and issues.

This year, the Committee provided Financial Literacy Workshops in the Fall and Winter terms. Topics included debt management, credit management, savings and taxes.

WEALTH BUILDING SESSIONS FOR RACIALIZED STUDENTS

Black Futures facilitated Wealth Building Sessions for Racialized students, in partnership with the Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology at UTM. This five-week program, which ran from January 23 to March 6, 2023, empowered students from equity-seeking groups and the BIPOC community with the ability to navigate barriers and understand their personal finances. Students had the chance to ask questions and demand change for greater access and equal opportunity to financial literacy knowledge.

Dr. Radha Maharaj (aka Dr. M.) led the series and shared her economic and financial literacy knowledge and life experience with students in an engaging and activity-based format.

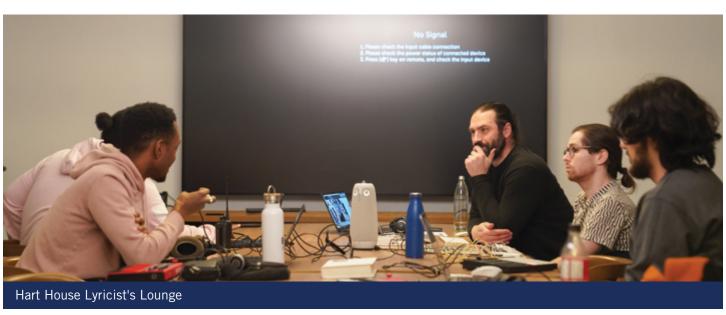
LYRICIST'S LOUNGE

Black Futures and Hip Hop Education created Lyricist's Lounge this year, which ran from January 27 to March 31, 2023. In partnership with Toronto 2.0, these low-key sessions were for anyone interested in exploring the craft and the art of writing lyrics, and learning about everything from performance to the pen to telling your story. The Lyricist's Lounge was intended as an homage to the community created by Danny Castro and Anthony Marshall (American Lyricist Lounge Founders), as well as compilation records (Lyricist Lounge and Soundbombing) created by Rawkus Records in the late 1990s.

Student and poet Nidhil Vohra and artist Dylan Konde Johnson (aka Caijo) were the hosts of *Lyricist's Lounge* this year.









PRODUCERS' CIRCLE

In collaboration with Arts, Culture and Media UTM, *Producers' Circle* brought students together to share music for creative expression and artistic development as part of Hip Hop Education. The program ran from September 14, 2022 to March 29, 2023.

This supports Hart House's *Hip Hop Education* by bringing together beatmakers, producers and music creators in an informal and open space to share beats, tracks, techniques, questions and ideas.

The sessions built a supportive music production community of practice dedicated to creative expression and artistic development. They offered an inclusive environment for music producers of all levels and anyone interested in music production.

THEATRE WORKSHOPS SERIES

Curated and run by U of T Student Spotlight, a series of roughly 20 theatre workshops were offered to students this year. Topics included:

- Theatre School is Over. Now What? (July 27, 2022);
- Design on a Dime (January 16, 2023);

- Discussing Drag: An Educational Make-up Tutorial with Tifa Wine (January 30, 2023);
- Musical Theatre for Beginners (February 1, 2023); and
- Introduction to Stage Combat (February 27, 2023).

These experiences enhanced the engagement of students from all three campuses in theatre activities outside of the classroom.





FORMER U OF T STUDENTS, NOW SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS OWNERS, COME HOME TO HART HOUSE

Hart House has played a leading role in one entrepreneurial couple's life for over a decade. Their story, the latest chapter of which sees them supplying their own coffee at The Arbor Room, illustrates that a life-changing university experience is about more than the lab or lecture hall. It can help to build life skills.

Meet Michelle Conte and Julian Zadorozny. She is an alumna from Victoria College with an honours Bachelor of Science in Human Biology and Psychology. He was at Innis College. They met at Hart House, both working in the food and beverage department. Today, they own the Chaveta Coffee Shop that supplies coffee to The Arbor Room.

"Hart House is a great community. It's a great place for students to go, to meet people. I met my social group," says Michelle.

"It's like coming full circle to be back at Hart House," Julian adds.









HART HOUSE FACILITIES AND SPACES

In 2022-2023, transformational changes were made to several spaces in Hart House, and important accessibility enhancements were instituted to propel Hart House's commitment to operational excellence.

ACCESSIBILITY AND BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

This year saw many building improvements, including stair nosing (where a strip of material is attached to each stair edge in a staircase as a safe way to finish the flooring by hiding the edges) and improved lighting to illuminate some of the darker passageways around the House. Broadly speaking, improvements, such as the universal washroom (detailed below) focused on accessibility in all Hart House spaces.

COMPLETION OF THE UNIVERSAL WASHROOM

Building upon the shared goal of realizing a more accessible Hart House for all students, the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU) generously supported the construction of a comprehensive universal washroom at the House. We are grateful to the UTSU for their support and for being champions for students with accessibility needs. The Rick Hansen Foundation offered expert advice on universal accessible design for this project. At the project's completion, the Foundation rated it as one of the highest scoring washrooms in their index.

This universal washroom at Hart House is also one of the most accessible washrooms on campus. This single-use room is large enough for fully motorized mobility devices. It includes an adult-sized, powered change table, a power ceiling lift system that moves across the washroom, three ADA coat hooks at varying heights, fully powered doors and emergency alert push bars throughout.

The universal washroom opened on October 13, 2022.

"This gift supports one of the key tenets of the UTSU: to make campus more accessible for all. UTSU shares Hart House's vision of a campus that is universally accessible and fully integrated into the social, cultural, intellectual and environmental life of the University and the city."

- Omar Gharbiyeh, UTSU President

RICK HANSEN GOLD CERTIFICATION FOR THE ARBOR ROOM RENOVATION

The Arbor Room, located in the basement of Hart House, was renovated from 2018 to 2023 and profiled in the last *Year in Review*. With extensive student and community input, as well as specialized guidance from the Rick Hansen Foundation, the renovation was driven to ensure where possible spaces at Hart House become accessible and to achieve or exceed AODA (*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005) compliance wherever possible.



This year, The Arbor Room renovation, in tandem with the University of Toronto Students' Union supported Universal Washroom, received Gold Certification from the Rick Hansen Foundation. To achieve an Accessibility Certified Gold rating under the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ represents a significant achievement that further underscores Hart House's dedication to accessibility. Hart House is the first building on campus to receive the Gold Certification for one of its spaces.

EVENTS & SERVICE EXCELLENCE

The Hart House Events team had a fully booked calendar this year with conferences, campus, corporate and student events in addition to always being one of the most acclaimed wedding venues in the city.

Hart House obtained an average rating of 4.9/5 from clients who reviewed us on EventSource.ca, the special GTA event planning resource website. Kristie and Sarah's wedding story, below, is a perfect example of how we provide exceptional service for our clients.

"Absolute perfection!! ... Our guests fell in love with the Quad, Great Hall, all the unique architecture and delicious food. It was a whole experience." – Event client

"If you want a unique experience for you and your guests, Hart House is your place! It's truly magical." – Event client

HOSPITALITY ACHIEVEMENTS

THE ARBOR ROOM

In March 2023, Hart House Hospitality assumed full

operations of The Arbor Room. Under the leadership of Executive Chef and Culinary Operations Manager Marco Tucci, The Arbor Room served over 6,449 guests this year. Every Monday to Friday, the restaurant offers high-quality budget-friendly breakfast and lunch. It is a buzzing social space where students, staff, faculty and community members enjoy connecting with each other over great food, may it be in the dining area or on the patio.

A couple of notable events happened in The Arbor Room this year. Students and guests were glued to the excitement of the 2022 FIFA World Cup broadcasted on the two big screen televisions. Extended opening hours in the evening during Ramadan in Spring 2023 became an opportunity for anyone and everyone on campus who needed a space for quiet reflection or being together.

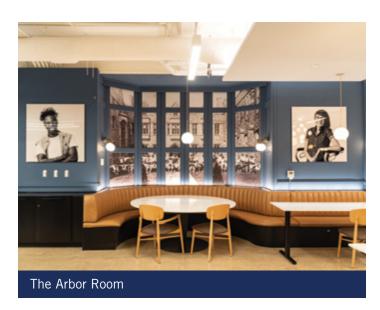
GALLERY GRILL

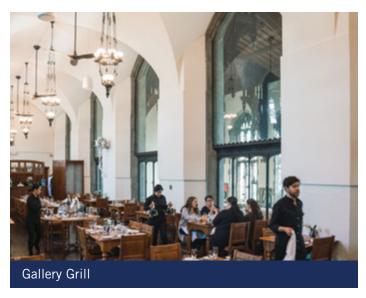
With a 4.9 star rating (out of 5) on OpenTable, also with Marco Tucci at the helm, the Gallery Grill offers first in class culinary experiences for our dining patrons. The delicious and unique menus are crafted with locally sourced ingredients and the restaurant is ideal for lunch, social and corporate events, celebrations, intimate weddings and group dining.

"The meal was very good. The wait staff and service are outstanding, among the best I have encountered at any restaurant."

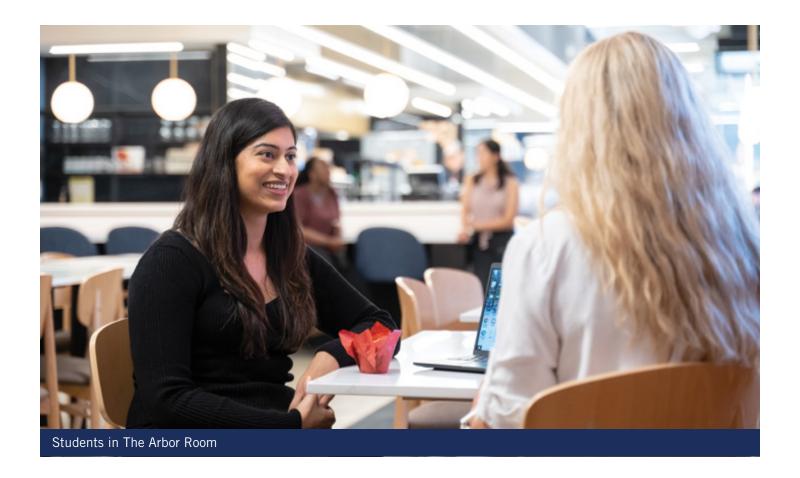
-Gallery Grill guest

"Original and delicious dishes, always." –Gallery Grill guest, OpenTable 5/5











KRISTIE AND SARAH'S PICTURE-PERFECT WEDDING AT HART HOUSE

U of T PhD candidate Kristie Serota first met psychologist Sarah Glaser at a Hallowe'en party where the two bonded over research methods to the bewilderment of other partygoers. When friendship bloomed into romance and the two decided to tie the knot, Hart House was the obvious choice where they wowed guests with stunning architecture, an oyster bar and 1,000 origami cranes to honour Sarah's Japanese roots.

"Hart House has always struck me as such a beautiful, unique space in downtown Toronto because of the historical elements, the cathedral ceilings, and how private and quiet that courtyard area is," Kristie says. "I've never seen any other building downtown that has that same kind of intimate outdoor space. And so, when we were looking at wedding venues, it seemed like the obvious choice."

Sarah adds, "It was definitely one of those things where we went to go look at Hart House and it was an instant yes, this is where we're going to get married. It just felt right."

AWARDS

STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Each year, Hart House recognizes the outstanding contributions that students make through their commitment and leadership.

AUDREY HOZACK STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Named after Hart House's legendary, long-time Assistant Warden who passed away in 2016, the Audrey Hozack Student Leadership Award was created by her estate and friends in 2017 to recognize and celebrate excellence in student leadership.

The 2022-2023 winner of this award was U of T student **Aayu Pandey**, Co-Chair of the Hart House Student Literary and Library Committee. They also assist in maintaining Hart House's Social Justice Reading List and Book Club, and curating for the Hart House Library.

JUDI SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Created by the estate of Judi Schwartz, founding Curator/ Director of the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at Hart House, the Judi Schwartz Memorial Scholarship recognizes achievements in student-led programming at Hart House. Students who received the scholarship in 2023 were involved in a wide range of Hart House activities.

This year's recipients were as follows:

- Daniella Ysabel Aguilar
- Stephen Barber
- Kathryn Beukeboom
- Fergie Galeromeloe
- Jesse McDougall
- Malieka Shahid
- Jaime Sit
- Jiaqi Sun
- Ania Suri
- Samara Tower
- Elizabeth Wong
- Bill Xu
- Victor Zheng

U OF T AND HART HOUSE AWARDS

This year, some Hart House staff was awarded with the inaugural Exemplary University of Toronto Ambassador Awards.

For the first award, part of U of T's tri-campus mandate, Hart House's Advancement team was part of the Advancement Equity Diversity Inclusion Task Force. This Task Force is recognized for its efforts in embedding equity, diversity and inclusion principles into the advancement culture, programs, practices and values, and fostering an inclusive working and learning environment.

The second award is Hart House's own. The Hart House Facilities Renewal Project Team was recognized for making the spaces of the century-old Hart House and Hart House Farm more accessible and more sustainable than ever before. The Team continues to embody the "True Blue" attitude through their commitment to building, enhancing, maintaining and monitoring spaces where our students and other members of the Hart House community can engage safely and fully with the arts, dialogue and wellness both now and in the years to come.

As well, since January 2023, our staff received **85 True Blue recognitions** (the University's peer recognition program).





THEATRE AWARDS BESTOWED AT THE HART HOUSE U OF T DRAMA FESTIVAL

This U of T Drama Festival provides an encouraging platform for the development of student talents, promotion of creativity and the recognition of excellence in theatrical performance and production. The Festival provides an opportunity for U of T students from all campuses to compete for fun and adjudicated awards.

This year, the Festival was held from February 16 to 18, 2023.

DONALD SUTHERLAND AWARD FOR BEST **PERFORMANCE**

This donor-supported honour is awarded to the student who achieved the highest quality of delivery, character development and contribution to the annual Hart House U of T Drama Festival.

This year's winner was **Brynn Bonne** for *Jackes and Jills*, produced by the Victoria College Drama Society.

JANET BESSEY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN STAGE **MANAGEMENT**

This donor-supported award, also part of the annual Hart House U of T Drama Festival, acknowledges stage management excellence.

This year's recipient was Mikaël Bennett for God Save the Queen, produced by UTM English and Drama Student Society (EDSS).

ROBERT GILL AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTION

This year's winner was **Maggie Tavares** for *God Save the* Queen, produced by UTM EDSS.

ROBERTSON DAVIES PLAYWRITING AWARD

This award was bestowed upon Luis Sanchez of TCDS for The Pomodoro Technique.





Hart House Student Leaders Recognition Event



Hart House Student Leaders Recognition Event

DONATIONS, ALUMNI IMPACT AND GRANTS

DONATIONS AND ALUMNI IMPACT

The iconic and inclusive Hart House brings together U of T students from diverse experiences and disciplines to build community with all members of the University; pursue passions beyond their academic studies; find their calling; and become well-rounded, resilient and engaged citizens with the skills needed to take on the world's toughest challenges.

Hart House is an essential part of the U of T experience. As part of the U of T Defy Gravity campaign, the House is working with donors and alumni to deepen and enhance the life-changing opportunities that students discover here.

"For over 100 years, Hart House has been a critical part of the U of T experience. The House continues its vital work of bringing together students from all campuses, faculties and colleges to build community and pursue their passions. What students discover at Hart House creative expression, spirited debate, physical and spiritual well-being, and a sense of belonging has always been essential for students to thrive and become the leaders and citizens they aspire to become. Thank you to the alumni and supporters who helped strengthen this unparalleled U of T community."

 Peter Wambera, Associate Director, Advancement

Sold-Out Concert: On March 25, 2023, the Hart House Singers performed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The concert, which featured 80 singers and a 50-piece orchestra, sold out. This is a wonderful example of grassroots fundraising (having secured support from 40 donors) and the Paul Paton Music Fund, coming together to support an exceptional concert.

HART HOUSE INNOVATION FUND

Donors supporting the Hart House Innovation Fund are helping to build an exciting and innovative future for students at Hart House. This Fund supported Community Access & Outreach Programs, Hart House Hip Hop Education as well as Black Futures. The Fund also supported programming at Hart House Farm and broke down the barriers of accessibility to the Farm by funding transportation.

HART HOUSE REVITALIZATION FUND

Donors supporting this Fund are helping to renew and revitalize Hart House's iconic building on the St. George Campus. This year, this Fund supported the universal washroom in conjunction with University of Toronto Students' Union. (See page 28 for details.)





HONOURING SANDY HENDERSON: HART HOUSE FARM

Sandy Henderson was a deeply influential figure in the long history of the Hart House Fitness Centre. He was the Director of the Fitness Centre for over 30 years, from 1979 to 2010. Sadly, Sandy passed away on September 14, 2022, and his family requested that in lieu of flowers, gifts should be made to the Hart House Farm. As a way of honouring the life and contribution of Sandy and his love for the Farm as a place that can bring people together, the generous gift allowed the Farm to purchase much-needed furniture. The new tables are accessible, made of recycled materials and have a 50-year life span, which will allow for communities to gather for many years to come.

HART HOUSE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

2022-2023 was the seventh year of the Hart House Mentorship Program. The Program builds on Hart House's decades-long tradition of fostering meaningful mentorship relationships between students and alumni. It is one of the only mentorship programs at U of T focused on graduate and mature students, and is open to all students, regardless of academic program. This Program matches mentors and mentees on the basis of both their professional ambitions and their personal priorities, interests and passions.

In 2022-2023, we matched 147 students with mentors. The Program's closing reception and networking event in March 2023 was well attended. Hart House Hip Hop Community Connector, Marcus Singleton, was a special guest speaker, discussing the importance of mentorship to Hip Hop and his own educational journey.

- "I really enjoyed getting to meet so many new people. I enjoyed spending time with my mentor and gaining insight on how to make the best of my time here. I honestly wish the program were longer."
- Naomi Inniss, Hart House student mentee



- "I loved connecting with students and supporting them in their journey towards excellence!"
- Alexandria Ramoutar, U of T alumna and Hart House mentor

GRANTS

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING FOR ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

This year, the Post-Secondary Education Funding for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL), a provincial initiative, supported the role of an **Indigenous Community**Engagement Coordinator (ICEC). The ICEC is a new role, filled in September 2022, with a focus on helping Hart House to build relationships on campus and in the community, facilitating student access to Hart House Farm, as well as providing resources and perspective to our work.

PEFAL supported this role as well as land-based learning opportunities at the Hart House Farm.

SUSTAINABILITY GRANT FOR THE INDIGENOUS GARDEN

Following Hart House's commitment to engaging Indigenous students and community at the Hart House Farm, we secured funding to create a land restoration project based in Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and sustainability practices. Via the Adams Sustainability Grant, the Hart House Farm Land Restoration Garden Project received funding to support the first phase of this project.





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