



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
WOODSWORTH COLLEGE

YEAR IN REVIEW

MAY 2024—APRIL 2025



MESSAGE FROM ACTING PRINCIPAL KAREN REID

On behalf of the students, faculty and staff of Woodsworth College,

I am delighted to share highlights of the 2024–2025 academic year. I am honoured to serve as Acting Principal, while Principal Carol Chin takes a well-earned leave. This past year our students, faculty, and alumni came together to achieve extraordinary things. I invite you to explore this year-in-review to learn more about the wide array of activities across the college and celebrate with us the many successes of our students.

Our students distinguished themselves not only in their studies, but also through many opportunities outside the classroom. The Alumni-Students Mentorship Program continues to pair students with dedicated alumni who offer one-to-one guidance and opportunities for professional growth. The Woodsworth College Alumni Association hosted numerous events for alumni to engage with the college community and for students to benefit from the wisdom and encouragement of our alumni.

Thanks to your generosity, many of our students were supported with financial aid and excellent student experiences. Our access students thrived in programs like the Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program and Diploma to Degree. And the new Woodsworth Academic

Building is growing day by day, ensuring that future generations will have space to learn and collaborate.

Among the many individual successes of our students, the story of Class of 2025 grad Youness Robert-Tahiri stands out. A psychology major determined to support children who have experienced adversity, Robert-Tahiri, designed a program to help children build resilience and coping skills using a perhaps unexpected tool: improv comedy. With guidance from Professor Ruth Speidel, Robert-Tahiri designed an innovative comedy-based mental health program for children that combines psychological themes with improv exercises to help kids who are facing adversity develop confidence and emotional regulation skills. Robert-Tahiri's achievements were recognized as he was one of the recipients of the Gold - Brookfield Peter F. Bronfman Scholarship program.

These pages offer stories of what makes Woodsworth College special: students who are ready to make a difference, faculty and staff who create an environment in which students can thrive, and alumni and donors who champion their success. Thank you for continuing to shape lives through your generosity.



REGISTRAR'S OFFICE – ACCESS PROGRAMS

MILLIE ROTMAN SHIME ACADEMIC BRIDGING

Last fall, an alumni reunion was held for graduates of the Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program (ABP) and the Pre-University Program in Hart House's Great Hall, celebrating 57 years of access and welcoming mature students to the University.

In April 2025, 82 students successfully graduated from ABP and will begin their degree studies this fall. Of these, 73 students are pursuing studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, while 12 are enrolled in Life Sciences.



Speakers at the Academic Bridging Program Reunion. From left to right: Natasha Jesenak, Helen Tewolde, Zak Jones, David Nimmo, Beau Hayward, Kavary Bedar, Carol Chin, Cheryl Shook, Antoinette Handley. *Photo: Steve Frost.*

MORNEAU MCCAIN SCHOLARSHIP

In Fall 2024, two new scholars were welcomed to Woodsworth. They have successfully completed the Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program (ABP) and will be entering degree studies this fall.

Two more scholars arrived in May 2025 and will begin ABP, science stream, this fall. This brings the total number of students participating in this program to over 20 to date.



Morneau McCain scholars and Woodsworth staff welcoming incoming students at the airport.



Group photo of participants and staff at a SEE U of T Celebration. *Photo: Saksham Tripathi.*

SEE U OF T

February 2025 marked the relaunch of SEE U of T (Support, Engage, Experience University of Toronto) after a two-year hiatus. In 2019, Woodsworth piloted this new access program in collaboration with the Toronto District School Board.

The aim of this access program is to empower racialized and historically under-represented secondary school students to gain university experience by immersing themselves in experiential and academic learning on campus.

In year one, Grade 11 students participate in student life activities while completing a co-op placement at the St. George campus, and in year two, during their Grade 12 year, the same cohort of students obtain a post-secondary credit by completing a first-year course.

This year there were 13 students who participated, from four schools: Jarvis C.I., Central Technical School, Western Technical School and Central Toronto Academy.

DEAN OF STUDENTS

The academic year started off with a successful Orientation that welcomed a new cohort of students to Woodsworth. Upper-year students led the activities as student leaders.

Throughout the year, the Dean of Students office provides a variety of engaging opportunities for students to connect and find support. The Dean of Students office also works closely with the Woodsworth College Students' Association (WCSA) in providing activities for all students.



Students at Orientation 2024.

WOODSWORTH ONE

Woodsworth One continues to have a strong reputation as both an engaging and enriching First-Year experience. Due to high demand, three sections of both the Fall and Winter courses were offered, each capped at 25 students. The program continues to be very much in demand for incoming students.

Woodsworth One continues to contribute meaningfully to the life of the college. Sixty-six percent of Woodsworth College Students' Association (WCSA) presidents since 2013 have been program participants. This is an interesting fact as Woodsworth One represents less than one percent of the Woodsworth student body. Woodsworth One students have also been disproportionately represented on the WCSA council and among Bronfman Award winners.

A highlight of the Fall term was a seven-week simulation in which students were assigned to small "communities" within a fictional island nation where growing inequality, and crime, prompted students to engage in collaborative problem solving. It was a very good experience for all involved.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES

There were 212 students enrolled in the introductory courses during the 2024–25 academic year.

Several new courses were introduced and for the first time since the pandemic a Digital Humanities conference was held. Students presented a wide variety of intriguing and insightful research such as exploring the lives of Chinese-Canadian UofT scholars during the oppressive Immigration Act of 1906. Presenters considered the making and breaking of knowledge media by analyzing a medieval riddle about manuscript copying by building a Twine video game adaptation. The conference celebrated Digital Humanities students' research excellence by awarding the Woodsworth College – CDHI Undergraduate Digital Project and Research Award as well as an Honourable Mention to two exceptional projects.



2024 Summer Abroad in Siena, Italy.

PROFESSIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

SUMMER ABROAD

The Summer Abroad program experienced a successful year in 2024 with almost 700 students embarking on transformative global learning experiences. From immersive classroom instruction to dynamic hands-on activities, students explored the world alongside their peers, gaining invaluable academic and cultural insights.

Building on over 51 years of excellence, the Summer Abroad program offered more than 30 diverse courses across 17 international destinations.

Thanks to the contributions of generous donors, students who might otherwise face financial barriers were able to participate in the Summer Abroad program. In 2024 alone, an impressive \$397,594 in financial aid was awarded to summer abroad participants – opening doors for students to explore the world, expand their perspectives, and engage in life-changing academic journeys.

THE500

In total 45 senior PhD candidates and post-doctoral fellows completed the THE500 program where they improved their teaching practice by becoming more knowledgeable about the ways in which students learn and about different teaching theories and styles.



Woodsworth College – CDHI Undergraduate Digital Project and Research Award presentation. Kaylee Hartigan-Go (Honourable mention, left) and Brianna Silva (Prize winner, right).

WOODSWORTH COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Woodsworth College Alumni Association (WCAA) had a very well organized and busy year. There were numerous events that attracted alumni including alumni café lectures, an arcade games night and a UofT Varsity Blues evening, where Woodsworth alumni cheered on the men's and women's basketball teams. WCAA also hosted a 50th Anniversary Celebration in honour of the college's milestone anniversary.

Members of the board attended university-wide functions throughout the year, representing the college at events such as the college's annual lectures and the Defy Gravity Milestone event.

The WCAA Board continues to work collaboratively with the college to engage alumni and support Woodsworth students with great success.

Akshika Dave (BA 2018), Jesse Grimstead (BA 2010), Huda Henry-Riyad (BSc 1999, MSc 2002, PhD 2005), Ayotola Osigbogun (BSc 2016) and Maina Rambali (BComm 2016) were recipients of the 2024 Arbor Award for their exceptional and longstanding volunteer contributions of the college, its students and alumni.

Maina Rambali, WCAA president, and Jesse Grimstead, WCAA treasurer, with guests at the Annual Awards Celebration at Hart House.



Attendees at the WCAA 50th Anniversary Celebration.



Nathalie Sehgal and Sofiya Datsyuk, WCAA secretary and past-president, respectively, at the WCAA 50th Anniversary Celebration.