

# 2023 MPAC Continuing Academic Excellence Awards

## Introducing Our Scholarship Recipients



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# Congratulations to our 2023 award winners!

As part of MPAC's Continuing Academic Excellence Award program, we are delighted to present scholarships to six successful candidates who demonstrated high academic standing and outstanding community leadership. Congratulations to our 2023 Award winners!

- **Aisha Mahmoud** | Recipient, President's Award
- **Andrew Leung** | Recipient, Janice Ovens Memorial Award
- **Lucas Choi** | Recipient, Chris Vallier Memorial Award
- **Austin Trent** | Recipient, Continuing Academic Excellence Award
- **Chloe Jung** | Recipient, Continuing Academic Excellence Award
- **Garima Sharma** | Recipient, Continuing Academic Excellence Award

# A word from our sponsor

At MPAC, we believe in investing in our most valuable asset – our people. Since its inception in 2001, the Continuing Academic Excellence Award program underscores our unwavering dedication to supporting the children of our employees pursuing higher education, and reinforces our pledge to community development.

We are honoured to introduce this year's six remarkable scholarship recipients: one winner of the President's Award, three winners of the Continuing Academic Excellence Award, and two winners of our memorial scholarships. Their aspirations and achievements are a testament to the power of education and community engagement.

A special thank you to TD Insurance for their generous support of this program.

On behalf of the staff at MPAC, I want to express my deepest gratitude to all involved in making this program a reality, and for the impact it continues to have on the next generation of leaders.



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I am so pleased to champion this important MPAC initiative that recognizes our phenomenal young people and celebrates their stellar achievements. Please join me in congratulating our 2023 scholarship winners!

**EDWARD BRODERICK**

Vice-President, Human Resources

# A look at this year's winners

Learn more about each of this year's winners. Discover what motivated them to choose their respective academic paths; learn more about the future they envision for themselves; and read why they are committed to making a meaningful impact.



Aisha Mahmoud



Andrew Leung



Austin Trent



Chloe Jung



Lucas Choi



Garima Sharma





### What do you hope to accomplish this school year?

In my first year of university, I plan to find my place on campus and be involved in clubs and activities that support my mental, physical, and emotional well-being. I find strength in connecting with my culture and heritage, which is why I'm a member of the Egyptian Students' Association. I've been an athlete my whole life, and I hope to continue playing hockey this year, a sport that has helped shape me as a leader. And most importantly, I hope to find mentorship from professors and peers; I have much to learn from those around me.

### What qualities do you feel are most important in a leader today and why?

I believe leaders must be visionaries. The future is uncertain, and the present is constantly changing. Those who rise as leaders must learn from the past in order to plan for the future. Everyone brings their own strengths, lived experiences, and ideas to a team. Leaders can unite a group of wildly different people through compassion, collaboration, and creativity and set a shared vision.

### What has been your most meaningful volunteer experience?

My faith as a Muslim is at the core of who I am. One of my most meaningful volunteer experiences was through my local mosque, where I helped package and distribute non-perishable foods to community members. Through this experience, I learned the importance of selflessness and humility. People often take for granted many of the everyday blessings we've become used to, like having food on the table. I also found a lot of joy through this experience. The other volunteers and coordinators truly loved the work that they were doing, and it never felt tedious or difficult.



## About Aisha





# Andrew Leung

JANICE OVENS MEMORIAL  
AWARD RECIPIENT

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**Major:** Honours B. Comm - Smith School of Business

**University:** Queens University

**Career Aspirations:** Strategist and  
Consultant/ Entrepreneur

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From early on, I felt this burning desire to carve out my path, not just to work, but to build something from the ground up. The idea of entrepreneurship, with its promise of financial freedom, really resonated with me. I enrolled at Queen's University, a renowned business school, because I believed it would provide me with the skills and experiences necessary to turn my dreams into reality.

### **What does winning this award mean to you?**

Winning this award as I enter my third year feels grounding and uplifting. It's a token of appreciation for my parents' sacrifices that made my education possible. It's not just an accolade; it's an affirmation from the MPAC community - a testament to their belief in my potential. This recognition amplifies my drive, knowing that the hours I've sunk into my studies, extracurriculars, and community work are genuine steps towards my goal.

### **What do you hope to accomplish this school year?**

I'm eager to land an internship within strategy, specifically in the retail or consumer goods industry. There is something incredibly fulfilling about enhancing consumer experiences and crafting strategies that align with a client's vision. On a more personal note, I have a thrilling chapter ahead: a semester in France through an exchange program. It's not just about the incredible food and sightseeing; I'm excited to experience life abroad independently, and to do a dive deep into international business norms. Meanwhile back home, the start-up I co-founded with my team has successfully marked its first year in business. With all the lessons from our first year in the rear view, I'm pumped to steer us toward greater success this year.

### **What advice would you give to students who are looking to make a difference in their communities?**

Start by identifying your driving force, whether helping those in need or advocating for a greener neighbourhood. This passion will not only fuel your dedication but will also enrich your community. It's also crucial to step out of your comfort zone. Consider reaching out to unfamiliar organizations - you might discover interests you never knew you had. All it takes is a bit of courage to reach out.



## About Andrew





# Lucas Choi

CHRIS VALLIER MEMORIAL AWARD RECIPIENT

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**Major:** Engineering Science

**University:** University of Toronto

**Career Aspirations:** Artificial Intelligence Engineer, Software Engineer

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Over the past couple of years, I have been mentored by Dr. Oscar Law, Director of Engineering at Kneron, one of the world's leading AI providers. He's shown me how AI is applied in everyday life, especially in the medical field - including diagnosis, treatment and preventative healthcare. When choosing Engineering Science as my major, the strongest deciding factor was the opportunity to work in a cutting-edge field where computer software and hardware could collaborate to alleviate some of the world's critical issues.



## What qualities do you feel are important in a leader today and why?

I feel that it is important for a leader to be open to ideas, encourage the participation and creativity of their team members, be empathetic, and create an environment where everyone feels valued and heard. A leader with these qualities will boost any group's productivity and morale.

## What has been your most meaningful volunteer experience?

Music has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. Playing the violin brings me fulfillment, and over the past few years, I have been able to share this alongside the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra. My experience performing with community orchestras, including free and accessible concerts for frontline workers, was unforgettable, and I hope to continue during university.

## What advice would you give to students who are looking to make a difference in their communities?

Don't hesitate. Whether you think you are too young or don't have the skills required to make a change in your community, there is always an opportunity to positively impact others. A few years ago, I started volunteering at Project Tech Careers, a charity devoted to bringing technological opportunities to youth worldwide. I had no previous experience, but along the way, they guided me and taught me everything I know now.



# About Lucas



# Austin Trent

CONTINUING ACADEMIC  
EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENT

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**Major:** Concurrent Education

**University:** Brock University

**Career Aspirations:** Teacher

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Winning this award means a great deal to me as it shows that my academic and community efforts over the years have not gone unnoticed. I have always taken great pride in my extracurricular involvement, and receiving this award encourages me to continue participating in all I can. I am extremely grateful to have received this award. MPAC's generosity will help me greatly in my pursuit of education.





## What or who inspired you to choose your major?

In the seventh and eighth grade, I had a teacher who greatly influenced me and my career path. From watching her interact with her students, whether we were dealing with personal issues or just wanted to have fun, she was always there for us. She made us all feel welcome and supported in our educational and life pursuits. It made me realize that I could have that same impact on students. I then began volunteering as a reading buddy at my local library, furthering my passion for teaching. Seeing their faces light up as they understood new words and phrases, I knew this was what I wanted to do for my major.

## What do you hope to accomplish this school year?

I hope to continue to be involved in lots of extracurricular activities! Whether through intramural sports, clubs, or other opportunities, I hope to continue these rewarding experiences.

## What has been your most meaningful volunteer experience?

My most meaningful volunteer experience has been with a program named Honour Them Well. It is a veteran's outreach program which honours the sacrifices made by veterans, providing students and veterans with quality time to talk, learn, and get to know each other. It is such a rewarding experience as we plan and run events such as luncheons and Remembrance Day ceremonies, making the veterans extremely happy. I also had the opportunity to learn and grow through this program by listening to all the stories and extensive life experiences that these veterans have shared. We Will Remember Them.



# About Austin





# Chloe Jung

CONTINUING ACADEMIC  
EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENT

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**Major:** Medical Sciences

**University:** Western University

**Career Aspirations:** Geneticist

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I believe the ability to connect with others individually is one of the most important qualities that today's leaders can have. The leaders that I remember are the ones who took the time and effort to get to know me beyond what I brought to the table. Creating personal connections makes a leader empathetic, able to listen and understand various perspectives, and create a strong team.



## What or who inspired you to choose your major?

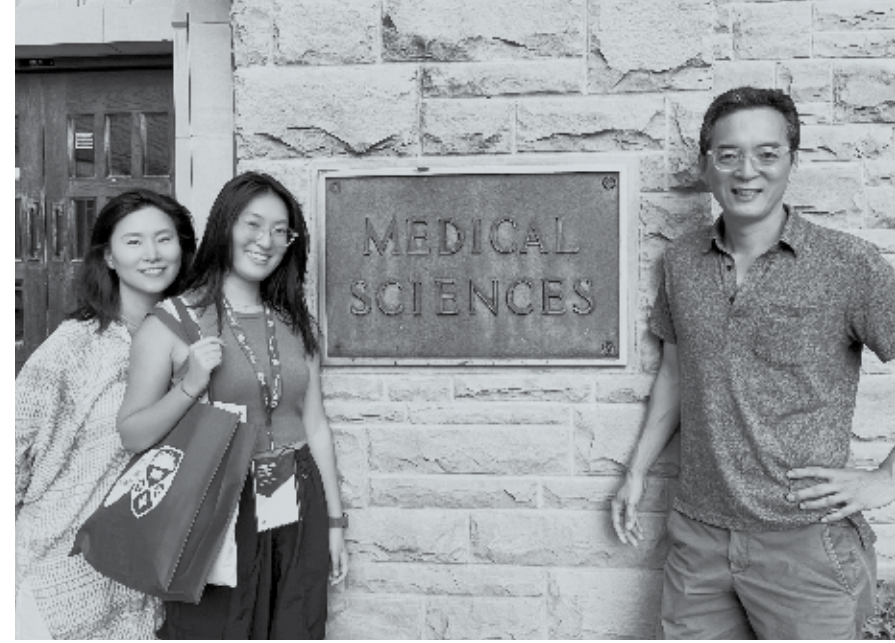
As a child, I've always been intrigued by genetics. Having close family members with inheritable diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes was the beginning of my interest in pursuing medicine. Grade 11 and 12 Biology only solidified my love of the human body, appreciating how small differences in DNA coding could lead to vastly different genes. Ultimately, I chose my major because the upper-year modules it offered would allow me to pursue a path that aligned with both my career goals and personal interests.

## What do you hope to accomplish this school year?

Apart from succeeding academically, I'd like to dive headfirst into the experiences a new school in a city away from home will give me. I'd love to join various clubs and councils where I would have the opportunity to connect with and mentor others and get involved in research, specifically research in genetics and the inheritance of specific conditions and diseases.

## What advice would you give to students who are looking to make a difference in their communities?

Don't be afraid to put yourself out there! When I first started high school, I wanted to get involved with my community, but I didn't pursue the activities or opportunities I had because it was out of my comfort zone. It took going through a global pandemic and subsequent lockdown to learn that I couldn't make a difference in my community if I didn't take the first step. The best way to make a difference in your community is to be the change you want to see, big or small.



# About Chloe





# Garima Sharma

CONTINUING ACADEMIC  
EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENT

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**Major:** Accounting & Financial Management

**University:** University of Waterloo

**Career Aspirations:** Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) and Chartered Financial Analyst

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I've observed that the perceived magnitude of their actions can dishearten many students. I've understood that even the smallest gesture can hold immense significance. Every act that brings about positive transformation, no matter how modest, is a meaningful accomplishment. It's about acting rather than overthinking the scale of impact.



## What or who inspired you to choose your major?

My high school Accounting teacher inspired me to choose my major because of his unique and engaging teaching method. He had this remarkable ability to demystify complex concepts, making them accessible and enjoyable. His real-world examples and anecdotes from his own experiences in the field gave me a clear picture of how accounting could be a powerful tool in the business world. In his classroom, I felt a connection to business, finance, and accounting, ultimately solidifying my decision to pursue it as my major.

## What has been your most meaningful volunteer experience?

During the pandemic, I became involved in a program that linked Ukrainian students looking to enhance their English proficiency with native English speakers. Of all my volunteer experiences, the one that truly left a mark was aiding these students, especially when navigating applications for education or programs in countries with stringent English requirements. This resonated deeply with my immigrant journey to Canada. The sense of fulfillment derived from helping others achieve their goals was incredibly rewarding. It also allowed me to forge meaningful connections while gaining a richer understanding of diverse cultures.

## Where do you see yourself in five years? How will this scholarship help you meet your career goals?

Five years from now, I envision myself actively working towards obtaining my CPA designation, having successfully graduated from the esteemed Master of Accounting program at the University of Waterloo, which I plan on applying to after I receive my Bachelor of Accounting degree. This scholarship is a remarkable gateway to many opportunities, encompassing top-tier education from a renowned institution and invaluable hands-on experience through co-op placements.



# About Garima







Since 2001, the Continuing Academic Excellence Award program has awarded over **\$215,000** in scholarships!

Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request.  
Email us at [accessibility.action@mpac.ca](mailto:accessibility.action@mpac.ca) or call toll free 1 866 296-6722 or by TTY 1 877-6722.



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