

York University launches historic \$500-million fundraising and alumni engagement campaign

As President & Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri says, York University is at an inflection point. “Though we are relatively young, we have already established ourselves as a postsecondary leader, and we have an unparalleled track record of impact on some of our world’s most pressing issues. In so many ways, it is clear that York University has truly arrived.”

With this proven track record of excellence now established and countless exciting possibilities ahead, York University has launched its most ambitious and comprehensive fundraising and alumni engagement campaign ever.

Impact: The Campaign for York University was officially kicked off at a launch event on April 21, which saw more than 120 alumni, students, staff, faculty, alumni, donors and friends in attendance – including Campaign leadership President Shoukri, Chair of the Board of Governors Rick Waugh and Chancellor Greg Sorbara. The celebration was held in the High Bay Structures Lab at the base of the recently opened Bergeron Centre for Engineering Excellence, a shining new landmark on York’s Keele campus that has already been recognized as one of the top new buildings in Toronto.

“For almost 60 years, York has pushed boundaries and explored the unknown with groundbreaking research, leading-edge programs, a diverse student body and alumni making an impact all over the world,” Shoukri continued. “This Campaign is our promise that together, we can drive advances in the classroom and in communities around the world and accelerate the impact that we have had and continue to have, each and every day.”

The Impact Campaign aims to achieve two important goals: 1) to raise \$500 million in support of York’s strategic priorities and our students; and 2) to double the number of alumni engaged in making a difference in the lives of our students and the communities we serve.

Shoukri also took the opportunity to announce that, with record fundraising results achieved in the last few years, the Campaign is already more than halfway to its goal, with more than \$270 million already committed by alumni and friends at this important time in the history of Canada’s third-largest university.

The event itself demonstrated York’s impact in a number of exciting ways, including the release of the University’s new Campaign video, a digital-mapping demonstration, a number of interactive Faculty-based exhibits and engaging performances by aerial artists, students from the School of Arts, Media, Performance and Design, and violinist Sarah Davidson-Gurney (who herself is also a York alumna). And, as a symbol for the impact the University hopes to affect

throughout the Campaign and beyond, a massive Newton's Cradle was suspended over the reception space while each guest walked away with their own miniature keepsake version.

As a two-time York alumnus himself, Chancellor Greg Sorbara acknowledged the important role that the University's nearly 300,000 alumni play in the success of the Campaign and the future of York.

"The alumni community collectively has had, and is continuing to have, an immeasurable impact on our society, whether locally, nationally or globally, across countless academic and professional fields. We believe that telling the story of this impact is an important way to further the mission of the University – and I am here today to let you know that our Campaign is squarely focused on not only celebrating alumni impact, but also amplifying it."

Among the evening's attendees were not only members of the University's Chancellor's Circle – outstanding donors who have each contributed more than \$1 million to York – but also several members of the Campaign's leadership from among both the Honorary Patrons and the Campaign Cabinet.

"All of these exceptional Campaign volunteers have stepped forward in their roles to meet this exciting challenge and are ready-and-willing to help us reach our full potential," Rick Waugh shared with the evening's guests. "Now we turn to the rest of our alumni and friends to join us on this journey – because York University's impact has only just begun."

Sorbara fittingly closed out the speaking program by sharing the University's excitement for this monumental next step. "I'd like to thank you all for joining us tonight and for answering our call to serve as ambassadors of York as we prepare to join with alumni, friends and community to show what we can do through the upcoming Campaign. This is your opportunity to make an impact – and impact starts with you."