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## SCIENCE Student Leaders



**Yousif Eliya** has completed his Honours BSc, and he is currently pursuing a masters degree in Health Research Methodology at McMaster University. Yousif has been an active member of the IMPACT project since 2014, as a volunteer and co-leader, he demonstrated a great interest in patient empowerment, leadership, cross-disciplinary teamwork, mentorship and community engagement. Therefore, he continuously strives to engage in challenging real-world situations which offer a chance to make growth choices by showing resilience and overcoming hardships through personal development.



**Daniele Drescher** is an undergraduate student entering her fourth year in Biology specializing in Physiology, and she will be starting a senior thesis this coming Fall. Daniele has been working with the IMPACT Initiative since her first year at McMaster back in 2016, and hopes to continue to help put forth all the great contributions IMPACT has delivered to McMaster and to the people of Hamilton. After graduating, Daniele hopes to pursue a career in medicine to continue serving her community, especially vulnerable and under-represented populations.



**Elger Baraku** is in his fourth year of the Honours Biology & Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour double-major program at McMaster University. He aspires to serve and contribute to the field of medicine as a physician, excitedly anticipating life-long learning about the human body and pathologies. Returning to the IMPACT Initiative for his fourth year and as a student co-leader for his second year, he will be working with other co-leaders to organize several projects and serve as a mentor. Elger greatly values mentorship and knowledge mobilization and believes that with educating society on people's circumstances, we may better be able to create a Brighter World.



**Mateusz Faltyn** is a 3rd-year undergraduate student in the Honours Bachelor of Arts & Science, Mathematics and Statistics program at McMaster University. As a MacPherson Student Partner and Student Co-Leader in the IMPACT Initiative, Mateusz is passionate about promoting undergraduate research and cross-functional collaboration in McMaster University and the Hamilton Community. Currently, Mateusz is involved in engaging and presenting with IMPACT Initiative Alumni who have transitioned to prestigious professional careers; he is also responsible for creating and managing the IMPACT Initiatives LinkedIn and newsletter. Mateusz's career aspirations include completing a graduate degree in quantum information and developing quantum computing applications for industry use.

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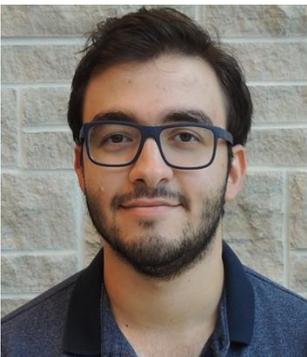
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**Jessica Moreira** is a 2nd-year Honours Molecular Biology and Genetics student, working towards achieving her dream of becoming a Medical Doctor. She is passionate about helping others in her community, which is why she joined the IMPACT Initiative as a Student Co-Leader and MacPherson Student Partner. Similarly, she volunteers as a Certified Medical First Responder with St. John Ambulance, and is a Customer Service Representative at a sports complex. Jessica strongly believes that multidisciplinary collaboration constitutes the basis of our societies, and she hopes to inspire her peers to pursue a well-rounded education.



**Suhaila Abdelhalim** is a B.Sc. candidate and studies Honours Life Sciences at McMaster University. Suhaila is currently researching the freshwater *Hydra* and focuses her studies on understanding their remarkable regenerative abilities in Dr. Ana Campos' lab. Her other research interests encompass human and animal physiology, particularly pertaining to the optical system and how its structure across the animal kingdom reflects the selective pressures of different environments and lifestyles. Suhaila possesses great research acumen, excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Additionally, she is distinctly detail-oriented and excels in leadership positions. Her extra-curricular interests include knowledge translation, swimming, soccer, and reading literature.



**Dadmehr Yaghoubi** is a third-year student in the Biology-Physiology program at McMaster University. He is a volunteer and researcher at Dr. Guillaume Paré's Genetics and Molecular Epidemiology Laboratory to pursue his passion in medicine and medical research. He wishes to contribute to the community by applying his theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios through IMPACT. He further hopes to seek a career in medicine to serve the community by utilizing his scientific and interpersonal skills. Dadmehr is highly conscientious, hard-working and self-disciplined and aspires to improve the lives of people in his community. His extracurricular activities include playing and officiating volleyball, piano and reading.



**Renata Husnudinov** Renata is in her fourth year of Honours Biology, specializing in Physiology. She has been a part of the IMPACT Initiative throughout her undergraduate career and looks forward to many more years of involvement. Renata's engagement with IMPACT has continuously reinforced her belief that through an interdisciplinary approach, individuals have the power to make real and lasting change in the lives of others. Her passion for community engagement has led her to pursue a career as a physician, where she plans to take the role beyond simply that of medicine and use it to empower those in her community. Renata's extra-curricular interests include competing in karate at a provincial level, acting as a youth karate instructor, cooking and creating recipes, running, and golfing.

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**Stefan M. Mladjenovic** is currently in his fourth year of Honours Life Sciences at McMaster University. He is enthusiastic about engaging other people and helping them to improve their lives in every capacity. This includes coaching others through leadership development seminars, to facilitating IMPACT design review sessions which enhance novel engineering tools designed to improve the lives of others. This is Stefan's third year as part of the IMPACT Initiative and his second year as a student co-leader. Stefan is a passionate cancer biology researcher in Dr. [Juliet Daniel's molecular biology lab](#). Stefan is pursuing higher education in the realm of biomedical engineering to combine his love of research with the translational focus of engineering



**Katarina Djuric** is a fourth-year undergraduate student in Biology with a specialization in Physiology. She currently researches the regulation of brown adipose tissue on high altitude deer mice. She hopes to one day integrate this knowledge into further understanding the role of brown adipose tissue in diabetes and obesity. Aside from research she aspires to pursue a career in medicine contributing to the promotion of health equity. Her goal with the IMPACT project is to advocate for disability awareness as well as for equality. Through her presentations she hopes to convey the importance of community and the power of empathy.



**Alexander Zakharia** is in his second year of Honours Biochemistry and has been involved in the IMPACT initiative since he arrived at McMaster University, starting as a student in the initial SCIENCE 1P03 course, and progressed to his position as a co-leader in his second year. Alex hopes that mentoring like-minded individuals will help bridge the gap between education, understanding and awareness to alleviate disability-associated stigmas in the Hamilton community, firmly believing that IMPACT's interdisciplinary collaborations make the initiative the most effective of its kind.



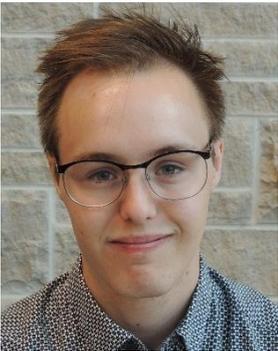
**Camilla Wegrzynowska** is in her 4th year of Honours Biology and researching motor skill development in toddlers through the Child Health and Exercise Medicine Program. She has been involved in the IMPACT Initiative as a student of the course in its first year of offering and then a co-leader. Through the initiative's interdisciplinary collaboration, Camilla has showcased her strong communication and leadership skills as well as brought enthusiasm to all interactions. Outside of academia, Camilla is also a ski instructor. She plans to remain involved in the Initiative through a career in healthcare where she can share her passion for making an IMPACT and bring a smile to people's faces.

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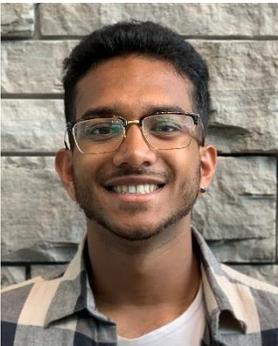
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**Sundas Ramzan** is a Level IV Honours Life Sciences student. This is her second year as a co-leader for the IMPACT Project and fourth year being involved with IMPACT. Aside from academics, Sundas volunteers in the hospital with the elderly life program and is an active member of Canada's Minister of Democratic Affairs youth council. Sundas has been a mentor throughout her time at McMaster and will use these skills to help bring resources and opportunities to IMPACT students. In the future, Sundas aspires to be a physician and offer her skills and knowledge to underprivileged communities around the world.



**David Rubus** is a 2020 candidate for Honours Life Science with a specialization in Origins of Disease. He is in the process of doing a thesis on the topic of Sea Urchin development examining Sea Urchin rudiment resorption and possible regrowth with Professor Jonathan Stone's lab at McMaster University. David has an interest in Medicine, Biophysics and Evolution. David has been actively involved in the Impact Project for three years and has been a Student Co-Leader for two years. His career aspirations are to become a medical doctor.



**Ushwin Emmanuel** is an undergraduate student in his third year of Kinesiology striving to enter a career of sports medicine and rehabilitation sciences. With this being his second year with the IMPACT Initiative and first time being in the student co-leader position, he hopes to bring his passion for human anatomy and biomechanics to help mentor and facilitate the experience of individuals enrolled in this initiative. With his past experiences of being a student field therapist and being involved with a multitude of clubs and services on campus he hopes to bring his assets to serve the IMPACT Initiative.



**Kiran Verma** is a third year undergraduate student in Honours Life Sciences at McMaster University. She has always had curiosity for health and wellness and ultimately strives to pursue a career in medicine. As an aspiring healthcare professional, she hopes to help the underprivileged and advocate for wellbeing. Kiran has been volunteering with the IMPACT project for three years and has learned about the importance and power of working in an interdisciplinary team to create change. She hopes to inspire others to learn about challenges faced in the community with empathy. Aside from academics, Kiran enjoys learning and choreographing dance, and volunteering.

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**Deeksha Polamreddy** is a third year undergraduate student in the Biology department at McMaster University. She has been apart of the IMPACT project since her first year and wishes to continue to support individuals within her community in a very tangible way with her involvement in the initiative. She is very excited to be able to combine her knowledge obtained through her studies and apply it to a real world problem. She hopes to encourage others to join the IMPACT project and provide mentorship to them. In her extracurriculars she enjoys swimming, writing and volunteering.



**Aliza Barua** is a 2020 candidate for Honours Life Sciences. She has been an enthusiastic volunteer of IMPACT since her first year and joined because of her immense passion for helping individuals with special needs. Outside of school, she has worked with children and adolescents with learning disabilities in academic and recreational settings. Along with these experiences, her leadership roles in organizations for domestic violence awareness, HIV, and Parkinson's disease have helped her gain strong interpersonal and communication skills, as well as an understanding of the diverse challenges many face. This understanding has led to her desire to improve the quality of life of others, by pursuing a career in healthcare.



**Vaithiegaa Mathanarajan** is a fourth year Honours Life Sciences student who is interested in pursuing a career in Public Health. Vaithiegaa has been involved with the IMPACT project since she first took SCIENCE 2P03 (previously SCIENCE 1P03). She is appreciative of the collaborative and interdisciplinary approach that brings together students from different disciplines. It is great to see that this project allows undergraduate students to work one-on-one with community members to achieve a common goal.



**Marcus Yurchuk** is a third-year undergraduate student in the Molecular Biology and Genetics program at McMaster University. Currently, Marcus' research focus involves illustrating a genetic comparison between therapy drugs for opioid addiction in hopes of expediting the gruelling opioid treatment process. Marcus aspires to become a pharmacist and apply his knowledge of genetics and substance abuse disorders to innovate the industry. As a returning volunteer, Marcus is now a co-leader hoping to engage with others and demonstrate his developed empathetic, interpersonal, and leadership abilities. Through IMPACT, he hopes to inspire the next generation of volunteers in finding a passion, much like his own, in bettering the lives of others.

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**Sashini Kosgoda** is a second year undergraduate student currently in Honours Life Sciences and further wishes to pursue her education to medical school and become a physician. Her great interest to get involved in this IMPACT initiative comes from her high interest of working with people with disabilities as she has consistently volunteered at a seniors day program with individuals with disabilities for over 4 years now. With this being her second year involved in the IMPACT Initiative, she wishes to continue to help make an impact to the individuals in the community. Sashini strongly believes that through collaboration and great minds working together a significant impact can be made to aid individuals with disabilities



**Dari Hariharan** is a third-year undergraduate student in the Honours Life Sciences-Sensory Motor Systems Specialization. She has been a part of the IMPACT Project since her first year at McMaster and enjoys the interdisciplinary approach taken to help make a difference in the lives of others in her community. She looks forward to promoting this initiative to other students and ensuring that they have an enhanced experience. Dari also has strong interests in mentorship, volunteering, fencing, dance and a future in the healthcare field.