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SCIENCE Leaders & Alumni Leaders



Yousif Eliya has completed his Honours B.Sc., 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.



Elger Baraku is a first-year medical student at the University of Ottawa. He co-directs material creation, peer-reviewers, and is involved with mentorship. Over the past 4 years, he co-led our IMPACT team in reviewing 150+ designs and has joined diverse student cohorts in evaluating devices for 8 community clients. Elger loves academia, being Senior Editor for an upcoming health-related publication, and researching music perception, translational medicine, and insomnia, culminating in 12 presentations/publications. He has also led through teaching, by serving instructional staff, 60 TAs, and 2500+ students as the former MacIntroPsych Head TA. Concurrently with the IMPACT Initiative, Elger engages others one-on-one through clinical assisting and mentoring. He is an accomplished pianist and loves learning tidbits of over 8 languages through his travels to 19 countries.



Mateusz Faltyn Mateusz Faltyn is in his fourth year of the Honours Bachelor of Arts & Science and Mathematics program at McMaster University. He is the Founder and CEO of lleTTonna – a healthcare technology start-up that creates software-based products to improve the lives of mothers and their families during the postpartum period. As a Student Co-Leader in the IMPACT Initiative, Mateusz is involved in engaging and presenting with IMPACT Initiative Alumni who have transitioned to prestigious professional careers.



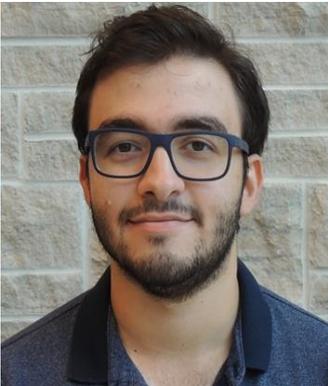
Jessica Moreira is a Year III Honours Biomedical Discovery and Commercialization student, working towards achieving her dream of becoming a Medical Doctor. She is passionate about helping others in her community, which is why she joined the IMPACT Initiative as a Student Co-Leader, and she volunteers as a certified Medical First Responder with St. John Ambulance. 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.

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Suhaila Abdelhalim is a B.Sc. graduate and studied Honours Life Sciences at McMaster University. She completed an undergraduate thesis researching the regenerative abilities of *Hydra viridissima* in Dr. Ana Campos' lab. Her other research interests include human and animal physiology, particularly pertaining to the structure and function of optical systems. Suhaila has been a part of the IMPACT initiative from her freshman year and considers the experience instrumental to her professional growth. Her extra-curricular interests include swimming, soccer, and literature.



Dadmehr Yaghoubi is a fourth-year student in the Biology program at McMaster University. He is a volunteer and researcher at Dr. Guillaume Paré's Genetics and Molecular Epidemiology Laboratory, studying biomarkers related to cardiovascular diseases 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.



Daniele Dresher has completed her degree in Biology specializing in Physiology at McMaster University. 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.



Renata Husnudinov has completed her degree in Honours Biology, specializing in Physiology at McMaster. Renata is excited to continue her studies in Medicine at McMaster. 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 first year of PhD studies at the University of Toronto (Chan Lab) where he explores how nanomaterials interact with biological systems to diagnose and treat diseases, including cancer. He is pursuing higher education in the realm of biomedical engineering to combine his love of research with the translational focus of engineering. Stefan 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 fourth year as part of the IMPACT Initiative and his third year as a student co-leader. Stefan is a passionate cancer biology researcher and completed a third-year project and thesis in Dr. Juliet Daniel's molecular biology lab.



Katarina Djuric completed her undergraduate studies in Biology with a specialization in Physiology at McMaster University. Katarina is a Clinical Research Coordinator at McGill University Health Centre Research Institute. Aside from research she aspires to pursue a career in medicine contributing to the promotion of health equity. Her goal with the IMPACT Initiative 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 third year of the Honours Biochemistry - Biomedical Research Specialization program and has been involved with the IMPACT initiative since he arrived at McMaster University starting as a student in the Impactful Initiatives in Health course. Impressed with the creativity and innovative designs that emerged from the multidisciplinary efforts to facilitate some of the daily challenges faced by the clients, Alex proudly became a student co-leader to get more involved to help bridge the gap between education, understanding and awareness alongside like-minded individuals. With a passion for research, Alex is currently reviewing ideal reconstruction techniques for anterior cruciate ligament injuries, as well as investigating gender dichotomies in insulin resistance in mice.



Camilla Wegrzynowska is a recent Biology graduate from McMaster University. In her final year, she researched motor skill development in toddlers through the Child Health and Exercise Medicine Program. Camilla is currently studying medicine at Poznan University of Medical Sciences in Poland. She has been involved in the IMPACT Initiative since 2018 as a student of the course 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 her studies in medicine where she can share her passion for making an IMPACT.

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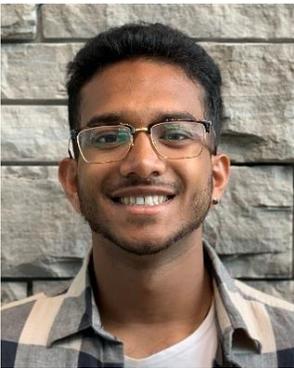
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Sundas Ramzan has recently graduated with an Honours Bachelors of Science. This is her fifth year being involved with IMPACT, and third year as a co-leader. Sundas was a mentor throughout her time at McMaster and will use these skills to bring resources and opportunities to IMPACT students. In her free time, Sundas enjoys pursuing her interests in politics, nonprofit work, and spending time outdoors. In the future, she aspires to practice medicine and offer her skills to underprivileged communities globally.



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 fourth year of Kinesiology striving to enter a career of sports medicine and rehabilitation sciences. With this being his third IMPACT Initiative and second 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 4th year undergraduate student in Honours Life Sciences. She has always been enthusiastic to learn about health and wellness and ultimately strives to pursue a career in healthcare. Kiran has been involved with the IMPACT initiative since her first year and has learned the importance and power of working in an interdisciplinary team to create change. The project has inspired and helped her to learn about the diversity of experiences and challenges faced in the community and world, and hopes to inspire others to do the same. Aside from academics, Kiran enjoys learning and choreographing dance and volunteering.

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Deeksha Polamreddy is a 4th 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, dancing and volunteering.



Vaithiegaa Mathanarajan is a 4th 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 Marcus is a fourth-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 IMPACT co-leader, Marcus hopes to inspire the next generation of volunteers through finding a passion, much like his own, in bettering the lives of others.



Sashini Kosgoda is a 3rd 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 the IMPACT initiative comes from her high interest of working with individuals of various health conditions as she has consistently volunteered at a seniors day program with individuals with disabilities for over 5 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.

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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.



Dari Hariharan is a fourth-year 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 more students and ensuring that they have an enhanced experience. Dari has strong interests in dance, fencing, mentorship, volunteering, and a future in healthcare.



Hetta Patel Hetta Patel is a 5th year undergraduate student pursuing her Science Degree with specialization in Honours Biology. She always had a passion for providing health care and thus, wishes to pursue a career in rehabilitation sciences. Throughout her undergraduate journey, she grew her passion for volunteering as a research assistant in labs and mentoring other students. She hopes to continue her passion for volunteering/mentoring. Besides her academic life, she enjoys hiking, biking, travelling and spending quality time with her family and friends



Aidan McIntyre is in his fourth year of Honours Biology at McMaster University. He is also involved in mood disorder research at St. Joseph's healthcare institute of clinical neuroscience. He enjoys spending his time volunteering in the hemodialysis unit of St. Joseph's hospital. Through his experiences, he has developed a passion for healthcare and human psychology. He is very excited to combine his academic skills, research, and experiences in the IMPACT Initiative. Through IMPACT he hopes to provide mentorship to future generations regarding community involvement and healthcare research.

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Iqra Chaudhry is an undergraduate student entering her second year in the Life Sciences program at McMaster University. This is her first year with the IMPACT Initiative and she is beyond excited to work on-one with clients part of the aging population and those with disabilities, to help design medical devices that may be beneficial to them. Her ability to provide care and support stems from her passion to lead and contribute to her community through the field of medicine. She hopes to use the IMPACT platform to make a difference in the lives of others.



Samuel Park Samuel Park is a third year student in Honours Life Sciences. He was first introduced to the IMPACT Initiative as a first year student enrolled in the Impactful Initiatives in Health course, and is excited to be a part of the Initiative as a Student Co-Leader. He has a passion for exercise science, nutrition and rehabilitation sciences and hopes to bring these passions as well as his own experience from the initiative and from volunteering at the Rehabilitation Unit at St. Peter's Hospital to provide insight and mentorship to the future generation of students. He is looking forward to seeing the creative and innovative ideas the IMPACT students come up with.



Nivethita Ganeshamoorthy is a fourth-year Honours Life Sciences undergraduate student at McMaster University. She is an enthusiastic, passionate, and motivated student who desires to pursue a career in the healthcare field. She joined the IMPACT Initiative because she wanted to contribute to the community and bring a difference in the lives of many individuals. Through her previous volunteering experiences, she realized that helping others brought her joy and satisfaction, so she excited to be a part of the IMPACT initiative.



Mahsa Gholiof is currently in level five of Honours Life Science program. She has always been passionate about applying her classroom knowledge to real world problems, which motivated her to join the IMPACT initiative back in first year. Her experience with the IMPACT initiative has taught her to effectively share knowledge as a science student and collaborate with people from different academic disciplines. It has also provided her with an opportunity to help the aging population and people living with disabilities and different health conditions which is her primary goal for becoming involved in healthcare.

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Jill Shah is a 3rd year Honours Life Sciences student and has been a part of the IMPACT project since her first year at McMaster. She appreciates the interdisciplinary approach which allows her to collaborate with a wide variety of individuals in order to work towards a common goal. Moreover, being able to make a difference in the lives of others in her community has been an incredibly rewarding experience. Jill is excited to encourage others to work towards helping those in our community. Outside of academics, she is passionate about mentorship, research, teaching and swimming.



Isabell Zabrzycki is a first year in the Life Sciences Gateway program at McMaster. She is excited to contribute her communication and leadership skills to positively influence our clients' lives. Isabell shares her passion for helping her community by volunteering at Copernicus Lodge Long Term Care Center. She is a hard-working student who hopes to one day become a physician.



Soroush Bagheri is a third year Honours Kinesiology student at McMaster University. He started his collaboration with the IMPACT Initiative in SCIENCE 2P03 and found the mega-disciplinary approach of this project to be truly crucial, especially for his future career aspirations as a physician and a researcher. Soroush is strongly passionate for exploring the field of neuroscience and psychology and is a research assistant in the labs of Dr. Lyons. He also strives to make a positive impact on his community as a volunteer in Hamilton General Hospital and extends his extra-curricular activities to taking part in several McMaster clubs. Soroush seeks to utilize his skills and abilities to facilitate a meaningful and life-changing learning experience for his peers in this project.



Sandra Alexander is a third-year student in the Honours Life Sciences program. She has a passion for helping others and loves to learn which is why she joined IMPACT in 2019. Being a part of this extraordinary interdisciplinary team has allowed Sandra to work with people from various disciplines and be a part of creating a positive change in her community. Sandra is enthusiastic to continue serving others through the IMPACT Initiative and to fulfill her goal of becoming a physician.

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Ayesha Raza is entering her third year of Honours Kinesiology at McMaster striving for a career in rehabilitation sciences or medicine. She took the SCIENCE 2P03 class during her second year and found it to be a unique opportunity to view real-world challenges with a multidisciplinary lens. Through IMPACT, she hopes students will learn the value of teamwork and apply that knowledge to solve real-world problems. In her free time, she advocates to raise awareness for the homeless and works with food shelters to promote food security. She strongly believes in the power of empathy and hopes students will learn to use it when working with disadvantaged populations.



Cristina D'Aversa is a third year Honours Life Science student at McMaster University. Starting as a student of the course, she was both inspired and compelled to continue working with IMPACT as a leader. She values mentorship and is committed to supporting her peers' success. The IMPACT Initiative has combined her passion for community involvement with her interest in health & wellness. She aspires to pursue a career in medicine and make a profound impact to the lives of others in her community.



Wajihah Khan is a 2nd year undergraduate student in the Honours Life Sciences Program at McMaster. She has been a part of the IMPACT Initiative since 2019 and hopes to continue throughout, as well as after her undergrad. Wajihah has a passion for medicine and is actively involved at the Trillium Health Partners hospital sites, as support staff for nurses and physicians. She values the role that she is able to play in the IMPACT initiative, and further volunteers as a marketing executive for NeuroHealth BC, which strives to educate others about neuronal conditions and disabilities. Wajihah aims to accomplish her goal of pursuing medicine and supporting her community, she is a conscientious individual who aspires to help improve the lives of others through knowledge and teamwork, with like-minded individuals in the IMPACT initiative.



Rebecca Borg is a fourth-year undergraduate student in the Life Science program at McMaster University. Over the years, Rebecca has displayed a strong passion for mentorship, community engagement and positively impacting the lives of others. She has been involved with the IMPACT Initiative for the past three years as a volunteer and looks forward to her role as a co-leader this year. Rebecca's involvement with the IMPACT initiative is motivated by an eagerness to better the lives of all people in an environment filled with like-minded individuals.

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Dr. Darren de SA is an orthopaedic surgeon whose clinical scope includes adult and paediatric sports medicine, arthroscopic surgery, and trauma. He completed his undergraduate studies in Molecular Biology, his medical, and orthopaedic surgical residency training at McMaster University, subspecialty training in young adolescent and paediatric trauma at Western University, and recently completed his Sports Medicine and Arthroscopy Fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. In this latter role, he acquired extensive experience as Assistant Team Physician for the Pittsburgh Penguins (NHL), and worked collaboratively with the medical teams for the Pittsburgh Steelers (NFL) and the University of Pittsburgh collegiate athletics. Dr. de SA has published over 70 peer-reviewed manuscripts, numerous book chapters, and delivering podium and poster presentations on the national and international stage. Most recently, he served as Assistant Editor for the joint JISAKOS/ESSKA “Basic Methods Handbook for Clinical Orthopaedic Research: A Practical Guide and Case Based Research Approach”, and is a manuscript reviewer for KSSTA and Arthroscopy. He is an active member of the Canadian Orthopaedic Association and Arthroscopy Association of Canada and is now the Associate Head Team Physician for the Hamilton Forge FC soccer club and Assistant Team Physician for the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. He is currently a faculty member of the Department of Surgery in Medicine at McMaster. Dr. de SA is an IMPACT mentor and continues to serve as an exemplary role model.



Dr. Spencer Sample is currently completing his residency in Emergency Medicine at McMaster University. Dr. Sample completed his degree in Honours Bachelor of Science (Physiology) at McMaster University. He has been a part of the IMPACT team in several capacities ranging from volunteering as an undergraduate student to serving as a research assistant, and mentor. His academic and research interests include: EMS, Medical Education, and Pediatric Emergency Medicine.



Kristine Gargaritano completed her degree in Honours Biology Physiology at McMaster University. She is in medical school at the Royal College of Surgeons Institute in Dublin Ireland. Kristine has been an IMPACT leader during her undergraduate studies and continues to be an IMPACT Initiative mentor. Kristine is also an outstanding painter and artist. Her paintings have been featured in several exhibitions and are inspired by her travels around the world.

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Nabil Hawwa is currently a medical student at Queen's University and a McMaster Biology alumnus. He has been a part of the IMPACT team in many capacities ranging from volunteering as an undergraduate student to teaching. He is a technology enthusiast with curriculum and game design background. Having a passion for education, he plans to integrate technology into teaching and mentorship to amplify medical learning. His specific interests are machine-learning, pedagogy, diagnostic imaging, and virtual reality.



Anish Arora is pursuing a Ph. D. in Family Medicine & Primary Care at the Department of Family Medicine in McGill University. Previously, he completed a B.Sc. in Honours Biology with a Minor in Psychology at McMaster University. Anish first become involved with the IMPACT/MMOST initiatives in 2016 as a volunteer and he now serves as a co-leader for the alumni team. Anish endeavours to positively impact the healthcare systems through patient, community, and decision-maker engagement and through innovative research methods that focus on improving primary healthcare education, delivery, and outcomes.



Joanna Faltyn, H.B.Sc., BScN completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at The University of Toronto Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing. Joanna works at Credit Valley Hospital Emergency to improve healthcare outcomes for patients in need of critical care. Her connection with the IMPACT Project stems back to her second year as an undergraduate student at McMaster University's Honours Molecular Biology & Genetics Program, which she graduated in the year of 2018. She first became involved in the IMPACT Initiative as a Science Student Volunteer and later transitioned to a student co-leader role in fundraising for health care awareness and advocacy.



Stanley Wong is currently a 3rd year medical student at the University of Ottawa. He graduated from McMaster in 2017 earning his Honours Bachelor of Science with specialization in Biology. Stanley was involved with the IMPACT project during his undergraduate studies as a volunteer and is now involved in mentoring students who aspire a career in medicine. His academic interests include medical education, inner city healthy, and technology in medicine. Outside of academia, Stanley's passions involve cooking, video games, video making, and weightlifting.

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Austin Solak is a recent graduate of the Master of Health Informatics (MHI) from the University of Toronto. He graduated from McMaster in 2018 earning his HBSc. in Biology. During his undergraduate studies at McMaster, Austin participated in IMPACT Initiatives throughout his entire four-year undergrad, holding various positions as both a volunteer and student co-leader. Austin is passionate about using digital health to help drive improved patient outcomes and access to care. He currently works for Verto Health, a health technology company based out of Toronto, ON. In his spare time, he loves language learning (currently Spanish & Mandarin), play sports, and travel.



Dr. Aditi Khandewall graduated from McMaster University in the Honours Biology program. Dr. Khandewall is an Internal Medicine physician and graduated from speciality training in Adult Hematology. She is a fellow with Canadian Blood Services studying Transfusion Medicine. She also conducts work at the University of Toronto in systems leadership and innovation.