



Queen's University Alumni Association

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It is my pleasure to be back before Alumni Assembly again to deliver the 2025-2026 Annual Report of the Queen's University Alumni Association. This will be my third and last Annual General Meeting in the role of QUAA President - for real this time! In all seriousness, I am deeply appreciative of the opportunity to serve an additional, optional third year of my term, in accordance with the recent amendments to the QUAA Constitution and By-laws, as approved by Alumni Assembly earlier in the Spring. Thanks to those who participated and voted in that review process.

With this report, I am delighted to welcome a few new Board members to our team for the coming year – Akin, Gareth, Nicolas and Tamanna have joined us as of May 2026. Closing out 2025-2026, we said good bye for now to Ghazal Abdullah, Sarah Virani, Kahir Rahemtulla and Simon Marmura Brown. We are very grateful for our work these past few years, as we have revamped the Board structure and been in a time of transition.

At the beginning of my report last year, I noted the opportunity our Alumni Association has to enhance its role in fostering a supportive space for community in our increasingly complex and rapidly changing world. Over the past year, I have found this theme continuously reinforced as I have met numerous alumni seeking connection, meaning, and belonging, who are discovering these things through participation in our alumni community. Honestly, it's been a real source of optimism and pride for me, to be part of a group of warm and caring, like-minded people who want to uplift the next generation and one another, through the advancement of higher education.

In a few short weeks, at Homecoming 2026, the QUAA will mark its 100th birthday. I have had the pleasure of learning a little more of our Association's history over the past year, as we have been "counting down." It has been interesting to reflect on where we have been and where we are going. I anticipate that our Association will continue to play an important role in the University's future. Therefore, I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you: our alumni volunteers and donors, and our staff and administrative supporters and partners who continue to amplify our mission to reach out and foster a lifelong association with Queen's, to engage our members in the life and work of the University, and to serve the alumni community in all its diversity.

I hope you each enjoy reviewing what we have accomplished together in the past year, and I look forward to seeing what we can do next, together!

[Homecoming and the QUAA at 100](#)

Here are some of the articles that have been written by our Communications team at Queen's, highlighting the QUAA and Homecoming's milestone anniversary this year:

Countdown to 100 articles:

[Countdown to 100: Inside Queen's first Homecoming in 1926 | Queen's Alumni](#)

[Countdown to 100: A century of Homecoming in photos | Queen's Alumni](#)

[Countdown to 100: The Homecoming that gave alumni a voice | Queen's Alumni](#)

[Countdown to 100: Homecoming takes shape behind the scenes | Queen's Alumni](#)

QUAA

[A century of connection: The story behind the founding of the QUAA | Queen's Alumni](#)

[QUAA 101: What the alumni association means for you | Queen's Alumni](#)

Updates from our QUAA Board Committees

In 2025- 2026, the QUAA continued its model of work conducted through standing committees that are responsible for core, annual deliverables of the Board, paired with working groups and sub-committees which are struck on an as-needed basis to address specific questions or to undertake certain tasks.

One such working group was tasked with reviewing the Committee Structure, the Board Director and QUAA President Role descriptions, and the Committee descriptions. This resulted in the slight updating of names and responsibilities of two of the committees from last report, which are reflected below.

In addition to an **Operations Committee**, which is internally-focused and engaged with the running of the Board itself, there are currently three other committees.

The **Alumni Giving Committee** creates awareness and encourages philanthropy among the Board, Assembly, and the broader alumni community, supporting the Office of Advancement's efforts in communicating the impact of philanthropy within the alumni community. This committee has oversight of the Alumni Association Grants process, with a focus on the QUAA Mission and the Board's commitment to I-EDIAA. In 2025-2026,

- The Giving Committee led the Board's Giving Tuesday mini-campaign, which topped the 2024 program. Record new donations were raised.
- The Committee ensured 100% Participation in Annual Giving by QUAA Board. We are now at least sixteen years and running!
- We achieved 46% Participation in Annual Giving by Assembly – would love to see that number increase next year.
- In 2025-2026, the Giving Committee increased its engagement with Alumni and Students through two implementations of the QUAA Grants program (Feb 2025, Nov 2025), raising \$7000 in additional funds for the Iris Marsh Fund for future grant disbursement
- Seven organizations were selected for grants from 36 applicants. 80% were first time applicants and \$11,000 was granted and sourced from newly raised funding from

Alumni. These organizations and their initiatives are described later in the report.

- Student-led initiatives were the bulk of the applications
- Four Alumni-led applications were submitted

The **Alumni Outreach and Volunteer Engagement Committee** supports the planning and execution of alumni volunteer events with a focus on promoting and increasing volunteerism within the alumni community. It also supports the University in strengthening the ties with individual alumni and those in various constituency groups (Branches, Chapters, Faculty activity, Young Alumni etc.)

The **Alumni Recognition Committee** supports the QUAA Gala Awards process including by securing nominations, selecting award winners, and encouraging attendance at the QUAA Gala Awards celebration. The committee also identifies additional opportunities for recognition of diverse alumni (Queen's Alumni Review, Cause and Effect Podcast, Alumni to feature on social platforms, etc.)

The Alumni Recognition Committee undertook two parallel workstreams in 2025-2026 aimed at strengthening the QUAA Gala Awards program. The first was a near-term refresh of the existing selection process, timed to be in place for the 2026 Gala, while the second was a longer-term, more fundamental reimagining of the awards program intended to launch at the 2026 Gala and be fully implemented for QUAA's 100th anniversary in 2026-2027.

Honouring Exceptional Alumni and Students

On June 4th, 2026, we celebrated a slate of exceptional Queen's alumni at our [2026 Gala Awards](#) reception in Toronto. This year's recipients are:

2026 QUAA Gala Award Recipients:

[Alumni Global Citizenship Award](#), Norman Musengimana MMIE'18

[Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award](#), David Phipps Artsci'85, PhD'91

[Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenization Alumni Award](#), David Nesbitt MBA'70

[Herbert J. Hamilton Volunteer Service Award](#), Elaine Wu Artsci'98, MIR'00, Law'03

[Initiative of the Year Award](#) Somewhat Reunion

[Marsha Lampman Volunteer Award](#), David Field BSc'70 and Diana Chang Artsci'10

[One to Watch Award](#), Ally Zlatar Artsci'18

[Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award](#), Elan Mastai Artsci'97

[Outstanding Student Leader Award](#), Natalie Kearn BHSc'24

[Queen's Student Alumni Association Volunteer of Distinction](#), Yehonatan Shakarghi (selected by QSAA, awarded at Gala)

We are so thrilled to celebrate these incredibly worthy recipients!

[A night of gratitude: 2026 QUAA Gala Awards to honour 11 recipients | Queen's Alumni](#)

The Board also promoted and celebrated other alumni award recipients on our website, social channels and elsewhere.

DSA's

[2026 Distinguished Service Award winners announced | Queen's Alumni](#)

Jean Royce Fellowship, Marty Memorial Fellowship, and Alfred Bader Fellowship in Memory of Jean Royce
[From housing to health advocacy: 2026 alumnae fellowships announced | Queen's Alumni](#)

Global Alumni Engagement

The QUAA Board continued to work closely with Queen's Advancement and the Global Alumni Strategy team over the past year, as it looks to continue to strategically, meaningfully engage alumni from across the globe

A new Alumni Branch Strategy has launched to strengthen year-round engagement and campaign readiness, shifting branches from primarily event-based activity toward a more strategic, relationship-driven model. With **25 new volunteer leaders** recruited across Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, London, and New York. There is diverse representation across faculties, generations, industries, and backgrounds. Several QUAA Board members have been involved in supporting the evolution of this new strategy, recruitment of volunteer leaders and onboarding.

Coming this fall, branches will activate this new strategy through Young Alumni programming, Homecoming at Home, and Giving Tuesday, creating pathways to deeper engagement, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

Volunteer Spotlights:

[It takes two: New co-presidents of the Queen's Alumni Toronto Branch celebrate forever-connection shared by graduates | Queen's Alumni](#)

[Lasting connections: Stacy Kelly and Julie Nixon show how volunteers bring us all together | Queen's Alumni](#)

[How two student volunteers are learning from alumni and giving back to Queen's | Queen's Alumni](#)

[How two young alumni are helping their peers connect after Queen's | Queen's Alumni](#)

Funding Alumni and Student Activities

As noted above, the Grant Selection Committee, after rigorous individual scoring using a revised rubric, and through extensive deliberations, unanimously supported a recommendation to provide grants to (a) seven 2025-26 Grant Applicants, (b) for the full amount requested or the maximum specified in the application. With approval from the QUAA Board the following groups were selected as recipients Alumni Association Grant Recipients for 2025-26 supported by funds from a

combination of the Iris Marsh Alumni Expansion Endowment Fund and the QUAA Projects Trust Fund:

Alumni Networking Summit – Engineering Society of Queen's University (\$2,000)

The Alumni Networking Summit is a student-run event that brings Queen's Engineering alumni and current students together to celebrate and learn from one another. The 2026 theme, Alumni Innovators, recognized graduates creating positive change through entrepreneurship, technological advancement and bold new ideas. More than 150 students, alumni, and industry leaders participate each year, and the event has become a defining moment in how students first engage with the alumni network and it has helped strengthen the lifelong relationship that Queen's graduates have with the university.

aQuatonomous (\$2,000)

aQuatonomous, is a Queen's Engineering Design Team fully operated and run by undergraduate students. Its mission is to build smart, sustainable robotic boats—called autonomous surface vehicles (ASVs)—to be at the forefront of AI-driven autonomy. Its flagship ASV, named Nautical Disaster, after one of their partners, the Kingston band The Tragically Hip, is the vessel used for competition and water research. They are comprised of over 100 undergraduate Queen's students from faculties across the university. aQuatonomous is partnered with various Queen's research labs like Ingenuity Labs and the Beaty Water Research Centre, aligning with Queen's research priorities in robotics and environmental stewardship. "aQuatonomous", a blend of the words "aqua," "Queen's," and "autonomous," is Smith Engineering's fastest-growing interdisciplinary design team.

Kingston Canadian Film Festival (\$1,500)

Creative Industries Day is a collaboration between the Kingston Canadian Film Festival and the Department of Film & Media at Queen's University. Taking place on the Friday of the annual Fest (this year Feb 27, 2026), Creative Industries Day connects aspiring filmmakers, students, and media professionals with established industry experts. Held annually as part of the larger festival in Kingston, Ontario, this day is dedicated to exploring the practical and creative sides of Canada's film and media landscape. Creative Industries Day features a range of panels, workshops, networking sessions, and keynote presentations that provide valuable insight into the workings of the film industry. Topics typically cover screenwriting, directing, production, funding, distribution, and emerging trends such as digital storytelling and sustainable filmmaking. The event aims to demystify the process of making and distributing films in Canada, giving attendees tools and inspiration to pursue their own creative projects.

Project Smile Kingston (\$500)

Project Kingston Smile's goal is to ensure that Queen's students have access to essential oral healthcare supplies, particularly those who may face financial or other barriers to maintaining their oral health. This initiative is designed to support students who may otherwise prioritize food, housing, or tuition over oral health supplies, which is a reality that can affect their confidence, comfort, and overall well-being. By assembling and distributing oral health kits (including toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, and mouthwash) through campus outreach events and in collaboration with partners such as the AMS Food Bank and Student Wellness Services, they aim to make oral care more accessible and equitable. This initiative not only addresses immediate health needs but also promotes overall student well-being, confidence, and academic success, while fostering a healthier and more inclusive campus community.

Queen's Kaleidoscope (\$1,500)

Queen's Kaleidoscope is a mentorship program that pairs Queen's student volunteers (Big Buddies) with at-risk Kingston elementary students (Little Buddies) nominated by teachers for academic, social, or personal challenges. Kaleidoscope is unique in its mentorship-first approach and we prioritize holistic development by pairing children with consistent role models who build trust, resilience, and confidence. This relationship-centered model addresses the social and emotional needs of children who may face challenging home or school environments. Children receive encouragement, social connection, and academic support, while Queen's students gain structured opportunities to develop mentorship, leadership, and communication skills that extend well beyond their time at Queen's.

Queen's Sustainability Conference (\$1,600)

This conference's theme was "Unconventional Ideas on Sustainability" to move beyond conventional climate discourse and to foster a more nuanced, productive dialogue on environmental sustainability. It was to showcase diverse and unconventional perspectives from top political leaders, Indigenous advocates, and business or industry leaders who committed themselves into promoting sustainability efforts. The initiative is centered around a conference during March 2026 (University SDG month) and a complementary sustainability action program.

Social Issues Commission, Indigenous Initiatives Lead (\$1,994)

In support of a mural event, aiming to engage all members of the Queen's community, with the primary audience being students who engage directly in reflection, learning, and dialogue through the Indigenous Strengths Mural Display.

In reviewing the financial report included with the AGM materials, you will also note that through the QUAA Special Projects Fund, we also provided funds (\$5,000) towards a matching donation for 2025 Giving Tuesday, (\$1000) is support of AMS – Faculty Society Alumni Day and a donation (\$100) to The William C. Leggett Graduation Fellowship in memory of Bill Leggett.

Conclusion

Indeed! It was a busy year – and we are so looking forward to more great work in the year ahead. We look forward to sharing more at the AGM and connecting with you all there.

Thank you for your interest and for supporting the work of the QUAA Board.

Warmly,

Allison P. Williams, Artsci'09
59th Volunteer President, Queen's University Alumni Association
Chair, QUAA Board of Directors quaa.president@queensu.ca

Submitted by QUAA President, Allison P. Williams, Artsci'09, on behalf of the QUAA Board
September 9, 2026