

**CHFT**  
DIVERSITY  
SCHOLARSHIP

# 2020

## CHFT Diversity Scholarship Event Program

CHFT founded our diversity scholarship in 2004. It has awarded over 380 scholarships in our membership area. We have partnered with regional federations and CHF Canada to distribute over 110 additional scholarships. Together with our partners we have awarded over **two million dollars** in scholarships to people in nine areas of Canada.



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# Dexter Johnston Scholarship Recipients

## **Rafee Rahman**

Atkinson Housing Co-operative



Rafee is graduating this year from Harbord Collegiate Institute. He has been a volunteer with the Harbord Tutoring Club, specializing in math and science help, and in the Robotics Club, where he worked to get more girls involved. He took the Leader in Training program at Scadding Court Community Centre and now helps with the after-school basketball program there, running activities and drills with younger children. He will attend the University of Toronto to study computer science.

## **Abdelbacet Rezig**

Metta Housing Co-operative



Bacet volunteered for more than four years with the Wellesley Youth Council, including serving as its president. The council held consultations and workshops with youth in the Wellesley and St. James Town community and organized community service events such as food drives, as well as an annual basketball tournament. Bacet also coached soccer at Jarvis Collegiate Institute and raised money for players' equipment. He is going into the second year of a business human resources program at George Brown College.

## Sunil Singh

Richmond Hill Co-operative Homes



Sunil is graduating this year from St. Robert Catholic High School. He has volunteered at a physiotherapy clinic, helping to take care of equipment and organize files. For the Silver Knights basketball club in York Region, he has served as a scorekeeper. Sunil helped a teacher at Doncrest Public School with classroom organization and recess supervision. He will study paramedicine at University of Toronto.



**Dexter Johnston** was a great athlete and a role model for young people in his Alexandra Park neighbourhood. As a teenager, he encouraged and mentored younger children by the example he set. He played every team sport but was best known as a basketball player at Central Commerce Collegiate and then at Seneca College.

He eventually became a police officer and served the force until illness forced him to retire.

It was qualities like youth leadership and team work we had in mind when we decided to name a scholarship after Dexter Johnston.

# Joan Miller

## *Success Becomes You*

# Scholarship Recipients



### **Maimunat Ajayi**

Chadwick Towers Co-operative



Maimunat is very active in her co-op and has been a director and secretary to the board since 2017, during a major refinancing and capital repairs program. She mentors several co-op committees and mediates community conflicts. She also volunteers with her church's many food programs. While studying early childhood education at Seneca College, she mentored new students in her department. Maimunat is going into the second year of an online program in child and youth care at the University of Victoria.

### **Suban Ali**

Muriel Collins Housing Co-operative



Suban is going into the third year of an anthropology degree at the University of Toronto. She is a volunteer in the university's association for anthropology students, helping to promote the discipline and bridging the gap between students and faculty. At her co-op, she does snow removal and gardening. Suban has also volunteered at the Bata Shoe Museum.

### **Ryan Mendonca**

Diane Frankling Co-operative Homes



In high school Ryan joined UforChange, a youth arts organization, first as a student and later as a mentor, teaching music production and composition. He travelled to Guatemala in 2016 with Operation Groundswell, helping on coffee farms and learning about fair trade products and sustainability. He has also volunteered with Flow Mates, which hosts drives to collect hygiene and menstrual products for homeless women. Ryan will study interdisciplinary science at Laurentian University.

## Susanna Redekop

Dufferin Grove Housing Co-operative



Susanna co-founded the Equity Committee for the Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust, to help the organization accurately represent and reflect its community. She co-founded an Equity Committee at Parkdale Public School as well, to counter bullying and to provide resources that support the area's diverse population. Susanna continues to serve on these committees and belongs to the Toronto Food Policy Council, which advises city staff. She is starting a master's degree at York University this fall, in the Faculty of Environmental Sciences.



The *Success Becomes You* Scholarship recognizes people who have faced difficulty in their lives but have remained determined to continue their education at the post-secondary level.

These scholarships were established by David Miller in honour of his mother, **Joan Miller**. They celebrate Mrs. Miller's legacy of commitment to education, excellence, achievement and community service. David Miller has supported our scholarship program right from the very beginning.

# Pam McConnell Scholarship Recipients

## Ayan Absiye

Marketview Housing Co-operative



Ayan is graduating this year from Jarvis Collegiate Institute, where she was involved in social justice issues and took several leadership roles. She volunteers twice a week at her mosque, cleaning and helping with games night. At the Regent Park Community Food Program, she was a steady volunteer for four years. Ayan did canvassing and phoning last summer for a candidate in the federal election. She will study social sciences and humanities at the University of Toronto.

## Kissiah Griffiths

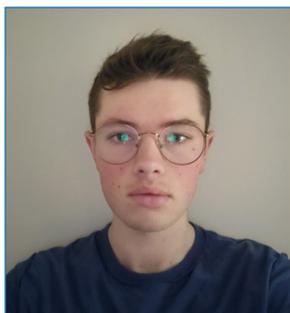
Neill-Wycik Co-operative College



Kissiah is going into the second year of business management at Ryerson University. She was marketing director of United Black Students at Ryerson in her first year, doing social media promotion and planning workshops and conferences. Kissiah worked on a survey of Ryerson students' political views for the Ryerson Ontario Young Liberals. She has been training for the past year to be a mentor to children in the Children's Aid Society Black Special Friend Program.

## Patrick Kinchsular

Thurlestone Co-operative



Patrick graduated last year from Neil McNeil High School, where he was active in several sports and in the Big Brother program that welcomes new students to the school. He also tutors students with learning disabilities and has helped with community events at his local neighbourhood association. This year he taught English in Vietnam with International Volunteer HQ. Patrick is entering the University of Toronto this fall and will study arts and humanities.

## Rachel Otchere-Gyan

Cardiff Housing Co-operative



Rachel is going into fourth year at Queen's, studying psychology and history. She has been active in many ways at Queen's. She has helped with logistics for the annual film contest at the Focus Film Festival. She plans Live In for Literacy Week, a fundraiser for Room to Read, which provides literacy opportunities for women and girls in parts of Africa and Asia. Rachel also organizes speakers for the annual conference of the Queen's Black Academic Society.

## Ada Tulay

Spruce Court Co-operative



Not long after her arrival in Canada, Ada created an orientation program for LGBTQ+ refugees at the Metropolitan Community Church, providing support and outreach. At the University of Toronto, where she is studying English and classics, she supports and mentors students in the Transitional Year Programme. Her role includes working with instructors as well as one-on-one help for students. Ada is also a consultant for the university's Student Life: Diversity & Inclusion Training portfolio.



The Pam McConnell Scholarship is named in honour of city councillor, co-op champion and social justice advocate **Pam McConnell** who passed away in 2017.

Pam was a delegate to CHFT, a board member and then the president. She was elected three times to the CHFT board. She served for 12 years on the Toronto board of education and she also managed two co-ops.

Pam was elected to Toronto City Council in 1994 and as a municipal politician, she was a persistent advocate for poverty reduction. She was a city councillor who served with five mayors and developed the City's anti-poverty strategy.

# Penny Bethke Scholarship Recipients

## **Alia Omar-Bujak**

Robert Cooke Co-operative Homes



Alia is graduating this year from Richview Collegiate Institute. All through high school, she has been a First Aider with MedVents Canada, a vocational program of Scouts Canada. First Aiders get training in providing medical coverage at events. She is also a youth leader and mentor at her church, helping with a teen drop-in night. Alia served as a teacher assistant, helping younger kids with reading and schoolwork. She will attend University of Toronto and study paramedicine.

## **Raquelle Johnson**

Innisfree Housing Co-operative



Raquelle is graduating this year from Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts, where she has helped with fundraisers and events at the school's Antilleans Culture Club. For several years she was a Healthy Schools representative at Wexford, promoting good nutrition. One summer she volunteered at a City drama and arts camp, helping with dance and theatre performances. Raquelle will be starting a forensic science program at the University of Toronto.

## **Makeda Kafele-Green**

Cawthra Mansions Co-operative



Makeda is graduating this year from Oakwood Collegiate Institute. She has been active at Oakwood since her first year as an Ambassador, introducing new students to the school community through the Reach Ahead program and field trips. As a member of Afro-Can, she started the Black Youth Book Club, aiming to break stereotypes about black students and literacy. At her co-op, Makeda belongs to the Membership Committee. She will attend Wilfrid Laurier University to study Community Music.

## Madhumitha Ramamurthy

Mimico Co-operative Homes



While attending Bishop Allen Academy, Madhumitha volunteered at St. Joseph's Health Centre in the summers and at Lakeshore Lodge, a long-term-care home, on weekends. At the hospital, she welcomed and directed visitors. At Lakeshore Lodge, she planned and assisted in recreation activities in arts and music for the residents. She also served as vice-president of the youth council, helping to coordinate youth volunteers. Madhumitha will start the second year of her life sciences program at the University of Toronto in the fall.

## Taylor Seichter

Brimell Court Co-operative



Taylor is graduating this year from Winston Churchill Collegiate Institute, where she has been involved in a range of social justice activities. She has provided 400 hours of service over two years to Rosalie Hall, an agency that assists young parents and children. Her regular roles are sorting and distributing donations and helping with child care, but she has also dressed up as Santa Claus for holiday photos for Rosalie Hall families. She will enter Centennial College this fall to study child and youth care.



The **Penny Bethke** Scholarship is given to those people who have shown a commitment to social justice in their communities.

Among Penny's most significant positions were President and Vice President of the Co-operative Housing Association of Ontario, Executive Director of the Labour Council Development Foundation and Alumna Board member and general manager for Campus Co-op Residence.

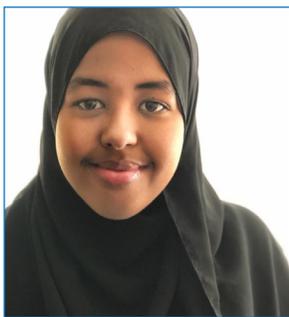
Penny passed away in 2011.

# Randy Padmore Scholarship Recipients



## Asiya Abdullahi

Birmingham Homes Co-operative



Asiya graduated in 2019 from Al-Risala Academy, where she helped younger students prepare for a cultural fair. She has volunteered with a winter coat and food drive and with the annual Being ME conference for Muslim women for four years. At the Lakeshore Community Health Centre, she is one of the coordinators of a women-only drop-in basketball program. Asiya is going into her second year at York University, studying global health.

## Jeremy Layton

Ramer's Wood Co-operative



Jeremy is graduating this year from Markville Secondary School. He helped with fundraisers and joined the Anti-Bullying Club. He was a counsellor for three summers at the Willowgrove Glenbrook Day Camp, where he received an inclusion award for helping campers with mental and physical disabilities. Jeremy organizes games and teaches sports for the kids at his co-op and belongs to the Kids Committee. He will attend Centennial College for the recreation and leisure program.

## Nigeleen Nwakobi

Neill-Wycik Co-operative College



Nigeleen will be entering the fourth year of the industrial engineering program at Ryerson University. She has been involved with the university's engineering student society, organizing events for students to interact with professional engineers and founding the Equity Committee to support minority students in the program. Nigeleen also helped backstage at an Indigenous Theatre production, mounted by students of her high school, Notre Dame, that illuminated the untold stories of Indigenous women. The play was performed on Parliament Hill.

## Felicity Rugard

Windward Co-operative Homes



Felicity graduated last year from Blyth Academy Yorkville. She spent a grade 12 semester at the Ontario Science Centre Science School and also volunteered there, helping to lead school group programs. She was a ranger and junior leader with Girl Guides of Canada for three years, a role that included community service initiatives and planning camps and trips for younger girls. She also joined the team that publishes the Guides' national magazine. Felicity will begin studying integrated biomedical engineering at McMaster University in the fall.



The **Randy Padmore** Scholarship recognizes individuals who take an active role in mentoring young people.

Randy was among the first residents of the Alexandra Park community. While at Ryerson Public School and St. Christopher House, Randy became involved in sports such as basketball and lacrosse.

Randy spent years giving back to the neighbourhood that gave him so much. His dedication and work with the youth and families of the Atkinson Housing Co-op and the Alexandra Park neighbourhood helped to reshape a community in a way that only Randy could.

# Mark Goldblatt Leadership Scholarship Recipients

## Ishaq Ali

Atkinson Housing Co-operative



Ishaq is in his 3rd year of Business Technology Management at Ryerson University. He is currently a board member at his co-op. Ishaq has started a youth boxing program at Alexandra Park Community Centre. He is currently helping residents with job applications during COVID-19.

## Shawn Grey

Beverley Sullivan Housing Co-operative



Shawn Grey earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts, with Honours, in Visual Art from York University in June 2019. She graduated as a mature student, having returned to her studies after raising her family in Toronto. She co-founded the artists' Logie Place Community Garden, leads community-based arts projects with Red Pepper Spectacle Arts, and volunteers at her co-op. Combining lifelong interests in visual art and language, she is the Senior Art Editor of York's Journal of Arts & Literature, Existere. In September 2020, Shawn begins a Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art at York University

## Selsabil Rezig

Metta Housing Co-operative



Selsabil attends Ryerson University and majors in Biomedical Science. She is enrolled in a Project Management Certificate - The Community and Health Services Management Stream. She has earned her minor in Chemistry and hopes to continue researching her field. She has been on her co-op's board for 4 years and is currently the Staff Liaison. Additionally, she is on the CHFT board as the Vice-president. Selsabil has been dedicated to promoting diversity and equity in her co-op community and at her university by joining the Student Action Committee.

## Skye Tulay

Spruce Court Co-operative

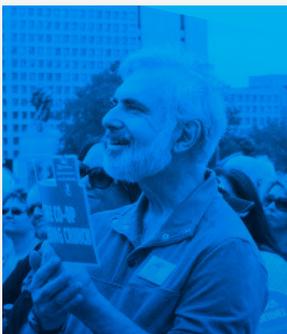


Sahra (Skye) graduated from a high school in Izmir, Turkey. They are going into their second year of double majoring in Ethics, Society, and Law and Women and Gender Studies, and minoring in Sociology at the University of Toronto. They have been a volunteer Outreach and Case Worker at the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto's Refugee Program from 2017 until 2019. This position included providing newcomer and predominantly LGBTQ+ refugees with informal counselling sessions, orientations, information sessions, and preparation for their hearings.

They have been a professional basketball player in Turkey, and they became the captain of their college's basketball team at the University of Toronto from 2018 to 2019. However, that had to come to an end as they have suffered from an injury.

Skye has also been a volunteer Education and Student Access Mentor at the Transitional Year Program (TYP) at the University of Toronto since 2019 and are currently continuing in this position. They also run weekly writing workshops for essay writing, assist students with their assignments and projects, and provide extensive feedback for their improvement. They work with Dr. Valin and Dr. McCready to ensure that all students' unique needs are met.

They have lived in the Spruce Court Co-op since 2018 and joined the Board at the first AGM. Since then, they have been joining monthly, and sometimes weekly/bi-weekly board meetings and trying to bring equity, social justice, and diversity perspectives to the discussions and decisions of the Board. In 2019, they have been elected as the Vice-President of the Board of Directors. They have been the main point of contact for members when needed and have taken the responsibility of writing and/or responding letters on behalf of the Board to the members. They are currently working with two more board members on updating the Spruce Court Co-op Bylaws.



The **Mark Goldblatt Leadership Scholarship** is open to any CHFT Diversity Scholarship winner who is a full time student in their second year and beyond and is a current director of a housing co-op or a sector organization board.

In the early 1970's, and when he was only 22, Mark was a co-founder of CHFT. Mark went on to become the executive director for CHF Canada and also worked at the Canadian Co-operative Association. He branched into other areas including co-op ventures for health care, car sharing and helped start the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Co-operative Development Program. He founded the Funeral Co-operative of Ottawa.

Mark passed away in 2015.

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Serving co-ops in Durham, Toronto and York Region.

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\* Indicates a CHFT Diversity Scholarship winner.



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The CHFT Diversity Scholarship is a joint project of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto and the CHFT Charitable Fund.