

# Transitional Year Programme 2023-24

The Transitional Year Programme (TYP) is a full-time, eight-month access-to-University program for adults who do not have the formal qualifications for university admission. Established in 1970 and originally supporting Black and Indigenous communities, the program now welcomes all students facing barriers to higher education.

## A message from Director Lance T. McCready

I am pleased to provide this report on the University of Toronto's Transitional Year Programme (TYP) for 2023–2024. Thank you for partnering with us to support students in fulfilling the dream of pursuing a university education, no matter their background or circumstances. Your generosity has had a life-changing impact in helping numerous students successfully transition into university degree studies.

Firstly, I am thrilled to acknowledge that our program has achieved remarkable milestones this past year. Thanks to the dedication of our team and the support of our community, we were able to celebrate our 53<sup>rd</sup> year anniversary gala at Hart House, attended by over 200 alumni, students, staff, faculty, and other key stakeholders. The positive feedback on the gala reaffirms that our work is making a real difference, and I couldn't be prouder of what we've accomplished together.

We have also added a full-time Outreach Coordinator that helped us reach one of our highest application numbers in several years, with over 100 received. This role has been instrumental in building relationships with diverse communities we serve, while also understanding their needs, and empowering them to pursue higher education.

However, amid these successes, we were mourning the loss of some members of our community, including Dr. Keren Brathwaite, our beloved co-founder. In collaboration with Dr. Brathwaite's family, we held a Celebration of Life last September. The event's tributes showcased her dedication to breaking down barriers in education, championing the rights of every learner to receive an equitable, and high-quality education. Her passion and tireless work have inspired so many, and her legacy will continue to resonate in the hearts of those she touched, especially at TYP.

We also lost TYP alumna and longtime Indigenous Studies Seminar instructor, Dr. Safia Gahayr. Dr. Gahayr completed the TYP in 2024 and went on to pursue her undergraduate and graduate studies at U of T. She was a passionate and dedicated instructor and community activist who impacted many students and was a true ambassador of the program. In facing the pain of losing some of our most cherished instructors over the last few years, such as Dr. Roslyn Thomas and Dr. Horace Henriques, we found solace and joy in celebrating their lives and meaningful contributions to the program.

We are grateful to the donors who have come forward to support TYP and look forward to continuing to work together to open doors to even more students with diverse life experiences. Thank you again for your support.

## Lance T. McCready

Director, Transitional Year Programme



“We are proud of the strides we’ve made as a program and excited about the changes to come. As we move forward, we are committed to honoring the contributions of the many who came before us by continuing to build on the foundations they laid.”

## Believing anything is possible.

**Mohammadhadi Ghasemi**, a 2023-24 recipient of the Nancy And Frank Iacobucci TYP Education Award and the Beulah Davies TYP Education Award, aspired to attend university after immigrating to Canada. He discovered the Transitional Year Programme by chance and having successfully completed it, is now registered in his first year of an undergraduate program. His goal is to become a family physician, with a focus on finding solutions to current challenges ailing the Canadian healthcare system. He hopes for a future where no Canadian needs to worry about wait-times or access to a physician.



**“Everyone should believe that everything is possible... I had an 18-year gap between my high school diploma and starting the programme, but through hard-work and support from the great staff of the University, I passed my courses and registered for my first year of undergrad.”**

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## Dedicated to advocacy.

**Musa Kizindo**, a 2023-24 recipient of the Transitional Year Programme Education Award, TYP Faculty & Staff Education Award and Dr. Robert M. Bennett TYP Education Award, is a refugee from Uganda enrolled in his second year of the Transitional Year Programme. He next aspires to pursue an undergraduate degree at U of T, with a double major in sociology and critical studies in equity and solidarity, ultimately hoping to attend law school. His goal is to advocate for people facing barriers, including refugees, and he dreams of one day working with the United Nations.



**“As a student from another country, with no family, or anyone, to help me financially, this award has been so beneficial to me in my journey with the TYP.”**

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## Devoted to making change.

**Cheyenne Hope Rattlesnake**, a 2023-24 recipient of the Bram Appel TYP Education Award and the University of Toronto Women’s Association TYP grant, is Kingfisher Clan, born in Alberta but residing in Toronto, and is also registered through the Ermineskin Band of Maskwacis. She is passionately devoted to making change for her people. Her natural curiosity in law and liberation drew her to the TYP program. While actively involved in her culture and community, she hopes to carve a professional career path focused on Indigenous Governance.



**“Thank you for encouraging the most and best out of me, I truly hope to make a positive impact in the world.”**

## Alumni Highlight: Floria Kangootui

A 2023-24 recipient of the Transitional Year Program Graduate Achievement Award, Floria Kangootui is currently completing her first year of study in the Master of Social Work (MSW) program at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work. A single mother who came to Canada 13 years ago as a refugee claimant from Namibia, Floria first heard about the Transitional Year Programme (TYP) in 2018 while completing academic upgrading. She applied and upon completion of the TYP was accepted into a U of T undergraduate program, majoring in critical studies in equity and solidarity and a double minor in Indigenous studies and African studies. In June 2023, she graduated with high distinction, and was admitted to the MSW program.

**"Through my own lived experience of not having anyone from my family that had gone to postsecondary, I hope to use my social work training to advocate for social justice and equity causes on behalf of marginalized and racialized communities."**



*Floria Kangootui, wearing traditional clothing from her homeland of Namibia.*

Floria's focus is on advocating for the rights of individuals diagnosed with mental illness and for women facing gender-based violence, both areas where racialized communities encounter challenges in accessing services and resources, including affordable housing. She aspires to work with these groups in her future practice and community advocacy, ensuring they get the same opportunities she did.

Outside her academic work, Floria has been an active member of the community. Last year, she served as an upper-year representative of the African Studies Course Union at U of T. She has also volunteered with Fife House and Africans in Partnership Against Aids (AAPA) and works with the Namibian community in encouraging others to go to school.

57

students enrolled  
for 2023-2024

68

merit awards and  
need-based grants

\$259,203

in total funding awarded

14

TYP alumni graduated from  
U of T degree programs

### For more information, please contact:

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