How Volunteering Shapes Carleton's Engineering Community

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Engineering is a service profession—where technology and innovation can be applied for the betterment of society. It goes hand in hand with volunteering, because both are integral to building and strengthening community.

This is the raison d'être of the Adrian D.C. Chan Award for Volunteer and Community Service: to recognize one or two full-time engineering students in the Faculty of Engineering and Design (FED) who give back in community engagement and volunteering.

This year, two engineering students with equally impressive track records received the award.

"One of the challenges that we face is selecting a single award recipient amongst the incredible applicants," says Carleton Systems and Computer Engineering Prof. Adrian Chan. "Dana and Darwin are wonderful exemplars who have a strong record of contribution, including the variety of contributions, long history of being active, and the depth and level of care they provide."

Professor Adrian D. C. Chan, Carleton University

Community Engagement

When he was 15, Darwin Jull started to volunteer with the Ottawa paramedic service, and he was especially impressed by the medical devices that had profound impacts on people's health. He realized he wanted to design these devices that could save people's lives.

> "Every high school student should consider volunteering," says Jull, a first-year Master of Applied Science student in Biomedical Engineering. "Because it's a way to start engaging with their community, to find out what's important to them, and even help develop their careers."

As an undergraduate biomedical engineering student, Jull became a first-year representative for the Biomedical Engineering Society and joined CU InSpace. He would later become team lead of the avionics team and helped mentor younger club members. In 2023, he joined the planning team for EngFrosh, the program's orientation week and an important part of the Carleton engineering student community.

"That's what I enjoy about volunteering, it allows you to engage with your community," says Jull. "But not only that, volunteering allows you to improve the lives of others."

Darwin Jull, Master of Biomedical Engineering student

Jull is currently developing a system to support patient engagement in cardiovascular rehabilitation programs. He hopes to continue his work as a researcher and help develop new person-focused medical solutions. "What really interests me is the community element to being in medicine, where I can engage with people who need my help."

Honouring Voluntarism in Engineering

Dana Sayed Ahmed is a fifth-year Bachelor of Aerospace Engineering student from Cairo, Egypt. She joined the program in Fall 2020 as an online student. In her third year, she and her sister Logain, who studies Biomedical and Electrical Engineering, moved to Ottawa.

To get more involved with the community, Ahmed threw herself into volunteering. She joined clubs like CU InSpace and the Carleton Mechanical and Aerospace Society, and she was part of the planning committees for the 2023-2024 Carleton Engiqueers Canada National Conference. Today, she sits on the CUSA clubs oversight committee, advocating for improved supports and more available space for the various clubs in the FED.

> "Whatever the challenge, Dana has consistently risen to the occasion and pushed the community toward a brighter future," said Owen Short, former EngFrosh Director 2022-2023.

Once she graduates, Ahmed hopes to work in the space sector. "I really love space, and I am very much interested in repurposing satellites to help in the climate crisis or to do something in sustainable aviation."

Advocating for Change

One kind of volunteering became a passion project for her: working toward the prevention of sexual violence and supporting the survivors of sexual violence.

"I saw a lack of support for survivors of sexual violence," says Ahmed, "and I started educating myself about consent education, harassment prevention and bystander intervention."

She has worked to expand safe spaces and create academic accommodations for survivors, and to improve consent education across campus.

Ahmed worked with Equity and Inclusive Communities to create training for Frosh volunteers and residence fellows, and she brought forward recommendations to the university's Sexual Violence Policy review process. She is now one of two students who sit one Carleton's Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Committee.

> "Becoming civically engaged can enrich your life," says Jull, "but it's also important for your community that you volunteer, because they need your help."

Dana Sayed Ahmed, Aerospace Engineering student

This is the key to volunteering: it is critical to community.