

2022-2023

# COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



**DHF** DIABETES  
**HOPE**  
FOUNDATION

*Celebrating 25 Years of Hope*



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# Message from DHF Founder & Chair

Dear Friends and Families;

It gives me great pleasure to present our 2022-2023 Community Impact Report. 25 years ago, my focus was to reach out directly to our youth and their families to give them hope for a healthier tomorrow. It all started with our signature Scholarship program and today, strength, hope, and success are a common thread which run seamlessly through our past and present programs.



I wish to take this opportunity to personally thank our Donors, Board of Directors, Scholarship Advisory Committee, Healthcare Partners and all our Alumni volunteers for their commitment to Diabetes Hope Foundation. Your dedication to helping DHF build the foundation for sustainable growth brings credibility and leverage to the reputation of Diabetes Hope Foundation's programs and resources for today's transitioning youth living with diabetes.

In addition to our Scholarship and our Hope Connects Mentorship and Transition programs, this year I am very proud to announce the launch of our new PEP Talks program (Parents Empowering Parents), sponsored by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

In 2023, our focus remained the same, only stronger! Our commitment to HOPE (Health, Opportunity, Power and Excellence) has enabled DHF to expand our programs and resources across Canada to help so many children and transitioning youth go "beyond their diabetes".

As we head into the next 25 years, this support will only grow stronger and it's all because of YOU!! Looking towards the future, we are excited about the possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead.

We are confident that with the continued support of the diabetes community, especially all our supporters, we can make an even greater impact on the lives of those affected by diabetes.

We invite you to have a look through our 2022-2023 report to see the impact that your support has made this year. Thank you all for believing in what we do and for helping to make a difference.

Hope Starts Here!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Pasternak". The script is fluid and cursive.

Barbara Pasternak, M.S.M.  
Founder and Chair





# About Diabetes Hope Foundation

## Vision

To be a leader in supporting youth with type 1 diabetes and their supporters in Canada through transition and beyond.

## Mission

We empower youth with type 1 diabetes and their supporters by providing financial, social, emotional, and informational support to transition to a healthier tomorrow.

Diabetes Hope Foundation (DHF) is a grassroots not-for-profit organization founded by its current chair, Barbara Pasternak, after two of her three sons were diagnosed with diabetes. Responding to the challenges transitioning youth face, DHF specializes in delivering unique and innovative programming to support youth and their families as they navigate the transition to both the adult health care system and post-secondary school. Since launching in 1999, DHF has awarded **900 scholarships** to students across Canada, and has provided transition programming to **over 6,000 youth and their families**.

After quickly pivoting to online programming during Covid-19, DHF has been able to extend our impact and connect youth and their families from all across Canada. DHF is excited to continue offering a hybrid program model, where the focus is always on offering free programs and resources to build a Community of Hope around Canadian youth living with type 1 diabetes, helping them transition to a healthier tomorrow.





# Celebrating 25 Years of Hope

On June, 2023, Diabetes Hope Foundation celebrated our 25th Anniversary. For the first time since the pandemic, an in-person Scholarship Ceremony was held to commemorate the event and welcome the 2023 Alumni to the DHF Community. DHF also announced a new funding partnership with the Aubrey and Marla Dan Foundation. With their support, DHF will be able to enhance our peer support programming over the next three years.

- DHF has Supported **over 6,000 families** of children and youth living with diabetes.
- Awarded **900 scholarships** across Canada.
- Partnered with over **70 Canadian pediatric diabetes healthcare centres**.
- Paired over **600 mentors and mentees** at **42 Canadian post-secondary institutions**.
- Supported over **300 families** in Canada through the Medical Assistance Program (MAP).
- Sponsored **over 600 at-risk children and youth** to attend Summer Sports Camps and At-Risk Youth Retreats.
- Developed a Transition Resource and Recipe Guide to support transitioning teens across the country. Recommended by the Ministry of Health's Ontario Pediatric Diabetes Network.
- Delivered **over 20 Parent & Teen Pre-Transition Workshops/Webinars** to support **585** transitioning teens and their families in Ontario
- Collaborated with **28 diabetes and mental health access centres**, and DHF Alumni, to develop our peer support model to support youth living with diabetes.
- Delivered **24 Wellness Wednesday Webinars** to provide support to the diabetes community during the COVID pandemic, reaching over **30,000 viewers**.
- Partnered with **7 campus diabetes clubs** to launch our annual *Don't Sugar Coat It* conference.

[View our 25th Anniversary Video on YouTube!](#) 



# Diabetes Hope Scholarship Program

The 2023 Scholarship Program marked a record year for DHF, with 146 completed applications from across Canada. With the generous support of our donors and community partners, **48 scholarships** were awarded to exemplary students nation-wide. In order to provide additional supports through the transition years, all scholarship winners are guaranteed a peer mentor through our HOPE Connects Program and each year, many pay it forward by volunteering as peer mentors, committee members and speakers at DHF events.



2023 Scholarship Recipients and Hope Connects Mentors

Over the summer of 2023, in recognition of the changing needs for youth with T1D in Canada, our Scholarship Program underwent a rigorous review, focused on increasing transparency, accountability and access. We are excited to be launching our NEW application for the 2024-25 academic year with a more streamlined application that balances both merit and need to support students across Canada.

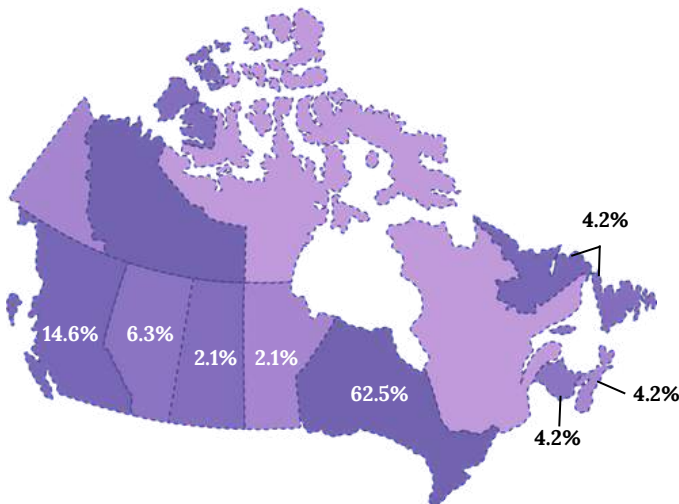
“

Scholarships like these are what makes the hard work I put into my Diabetes and studies worth it. It shows me that even through all of the ups and downs in my life there are still people who root and believe in me....the Diabetes Hope scholarship is a scholarship I will remember for the rest of my life as the scholarship that helped me follow my dream of becoming a veterinarian. And because of this scholarship, it will forever be cemented in my heart that even against any form of adversity, (even Diabetes) I can stay strong and prosper.

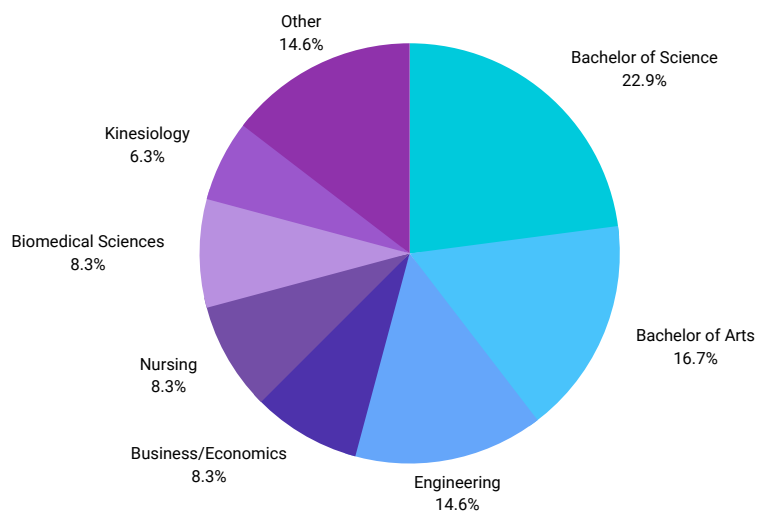
-Ugnius, 2023 Recipient

”

## 2023 Recipients by Province



## 2023 Recipients Areas of Study





# Congratulations to our 2023 Scholarship Recipients!



*Your belief in my abilities and providing me with this invaluable opportunity has instilled new found confidence within myself, not only in my academic and extracurricular achievements, but also the standard to which I have managed my diabetes going on seven years. This scholarship has caused me to look at the past seven years of my life and see what I have never seen before, hard work.*

*-Grace, 2023 Recipient*

*The scholarship will provide me with access to opportunities and allow me to network and connect with fellow scholarship awardees. Being given the opportunity to build a diverse network with fellow students, having to go through the same struggle as me and yet still striving to achieve great things despite it, will benefit me greatly in the future. These connections can lead to potential jobs and opportunities more importantly friendships that could last a lifetime.*

*-Ethan, 2023 Recipient*

# Hope Connects Peer Support Program

Recognizing the impact T1D has on students' mental health and well-being, DHF created the Hope Connects Program to support students as they balance their T1D during their transition to post-secondary school. Over the last year, the program has expanded to ensure students can access information and support through a variety of forums. The program also offers valuable leadership opportunities for DHF Alumni volunteers.

*It's going great with Heather, she really helps me with some of the things I struggle with, she's one of my biggest cheerleaders with my diabetes always telling me I can do things I have anxiety about doing (travelling with diabetes etc.) and she gives me tips on that sort of thing.*  
-2023 Mentee

## Youth Leadership Opportunities

The Hope Connects program could not exist without the phenomenal youth volunteers at DHF. Acting as mentors, committee members and panelists, scholarship recipients and community volunteers develop their leadership skills through giving back to the diabetes community. DHF is grateful for their time and partnership to ensure all students living with T1D have access to such impactful peer support!



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### Youth Volunteer Hours



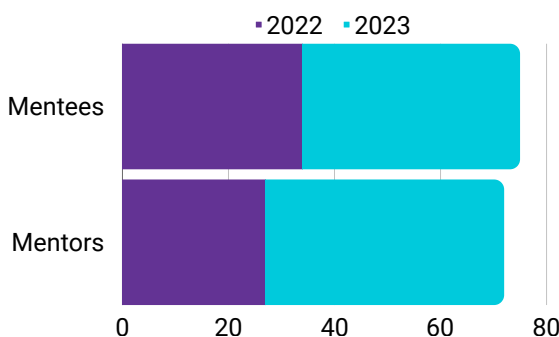
*It's actually going really well with my mentor, Tasfia, as we are able to connect a lot in many different ways. We have our meetings at the end of each month for about an hour or two and chats on messages during the month. She has been helping me a lot and we are able to connect in many ways to help manage the impacts of diabetes*  
-2023 Mentee

## One to One Peer Mentorship

In 2022, our peer mentorship program expanded, and is now offered to all Grade 12, first- and second-year students living with T1D across Canada. With over 50 active peer mentors, students can connect one on one with someone who 'gets it' and who will encourage and inspire them to achieve both their academic goals and better long-term health outcomes. All of our mentors complete six hours of training, and receive ongoing support from our Senior Mentors.

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### Youth Impacted





# Virtual Workshops

## Campus Diabetes Club Collaboration

In 2022, DHF staff and alumni worked to build partnerships with campus Diabetes Clubs across Ontario. Currently collaborating with **seven diabetes clubs**, DHF is focused on increasing awareness and knowledge about T1D and supporting students on their campuses. By hosting **three virtual workshops** over the school year, these collaborations focus on discussing the impact T1D has on students' mental health, as well as the value of social and emotional support. Attended by both students with T1D and their friends and classmates, the workshops reduce stigma around T1D, increase awareness about the importance of emotional and social support and help those living with diabetes feel heard, seen and connected.

## Transition Workshops

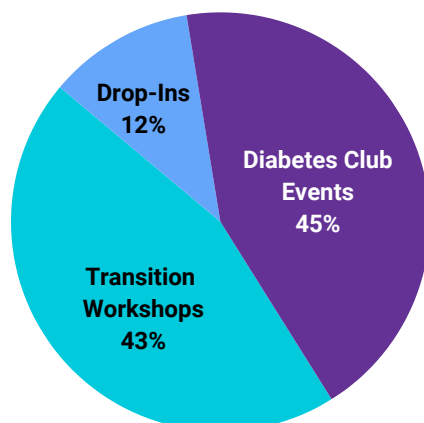
Building on the Wellness Wednesday Webinars, DHF delivered **four new transition workshops** to youth preparing for post-secondary school. Covering topics related to accommodations, navigating campus with T1D and student health insurance, our webinars featured current DHF youth panelists alongside both medical professionals and post-secondary campus representatives. These webinars are all available to access on the DHF YouTube channel.

## Monthly Drop-Ins

Recognizing the importance of youth with T1D having a safe space to connect and talk, DHF facilitated a number of drop-ins for our mentors and mentees over the course of 2022-2023. After receiving feedback about the impact these sessions had in reducing isolation and increasing confidence, DHF is excited to have the support of the Aubrey and Marla Dan Foundation to now offer monthly virtual drop-ins, providing students across Ontario with a safe space to talk about their experiences of managing T1D.

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Youth Impacted



### Webinar feedback: What did you learn from today's event?

- How difficult diabetes is and how strong everyone with diabetes are.
- The shared experiences we have and also how different each Diabetics journey is.
- That there are other people who go through the same thing as me!
- Being open about what you want help with, I feel like I'm still largely independent with my diabetes and take the load on myself when I should feel like I can lean on others for support sometimes as well.
- I learned that it's important to communicate with people with diabetes beforehand so that I can be educated on what signs to look out for and what I can do in the case that they may need my help.
- I learned about the stigma associated with having diabetes and ways to support those with diabetes.



# Online Resources

## Online Transition Guide

In the fall of 2022, DHF celebrated Diabetes Awareness Month with the launch of the NEW Online Transition Guide. The guide was developed by DHF alumni for secondary school students preparing to transition to adult diabetes care and post-secondary studies. Our online guide has been optimized for mobile viewing, including tablets and mobile devices, and is recommended by the Ministry of Health's Ontario Pediatric Diabetes Network.

The full-print companion 'Guide for Successful Transition to College & University' is available to download for free on our website. (2022/23: 162 downloads)

## Online Support Forums

DHF continues to support our alumni through our private Facebook Group, DHF Alumni Village. With **240 members**, engagement over the course of 2022-23 has **increased 38%**, becoming a space for both information and support to young adults living with T1D.

In the fall of 2023, DHF will be launching an online support forum for all post-secondary students living with T1D. **T1D Campus Connect** will be accessible both through DHF's website and on Discord, offering students a venue to share their challenges and successes around diabetes management at school and get support from others who understand.

## Social Media

With a focus on branding and targeted messaging, DHF has seen significant growth in our social media accounts, reaching a wider audience with transition-specific messaging for youth and their families.



**6,100  
Sessions**



**403  
Unique  
Users**



**46,900  
Reached**

# posts up 79%  
Views up 132%  
2,700 Followers



**124,600  
Reached**

# posts up 37%  
Views up 101%  
7,400 Followers



**64,000  
Page Views**  
(up 23%)





# New Funding Commitments



Recognizing the impact T1D has on students' mental health and well-being, DHF created the HOPE Connects Program to support students as they balance their T1D during their transition to post-secondary school. With a new funding commitment from long-time DHF supporters, the Aubrey and Marla Dan Foundation, part-time program facilitators have been hired to help expand our programming, ensuring students across Ontario can continue to access support in the way that works best for them.



Diabetes Hope Foundation recognizes that diabetes impacts parents and caregivers too, so in 2021 our 'Let's Talk About It Workshop' was piloted to provide a space for caregivers to come together and talk about the highs and lows of T1D. With the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, DHF has expanded this impactful program for caregivers in the Halton/Peel Regions. The new **PEP Talks Program** will give parents and caregivers of transition-aged youth with T1D in Halton/Peel Regions the opportunity to find a community of voices to collaborate with as they prepare for their child's transition from secondary to post-secondary education and from pediatric to adult diabetes care.

## HOPE Connects Program

TRANSITION RESOURCES FOR YOUTH WITH T1D

**1 ON 1 PEER SUPPORT**  
Get matched with a peer mentor who can give you tips on managing T1D on campus!

**MONTHLY DROP-INS**  
Join our youth-led virtual drop-ins to connect with other students and talk about life with T1D!

**DISCORD FORUM**  
T1D Campus Connect offers 24-hour support from fellow students living with T1D!

**ONLINE TRANSITION GUIDE**  
Info on over 190 Canadian schools, including accommodations, campus supports and student tips!

**TRANSITION WEBINARS**  
Get practical advice and info about post-secondary school and T1D management - available on YouTube!

**DIABETES HOPE FOUNDATION**  
Transition Resources for Canadian Youth with T1D

[www.diabeteshopefoundation.com](http://www.diabeteshopefoundation.com)

The HOPE Connects Program is funded by:

## PEP Talks

Parents Empowering Parents

A Transition Support Program for Parents and Caregivers of Youth Living with T1D

**About PEP Talks:**

**Who is PEP Talks for?**

- Parents and caregivers of transition aged youth with T1D living in the Halton/Peel Region.

**What does PEP Talks offer?**

- 4-part virtual workshop series with practical tips and information on how to prepare your children for the transition to post-secondary school and adult care.
- A supportive community of caregivers who understand the challenges of T1D.
- Online resources to guide your family through transition and beyond.

**Register for a PEP Talks virtual workshop today!**  
For more details, email [heather@diabeteshopefoundation.com](mailto:heather@diabeteshopefoundation.com)

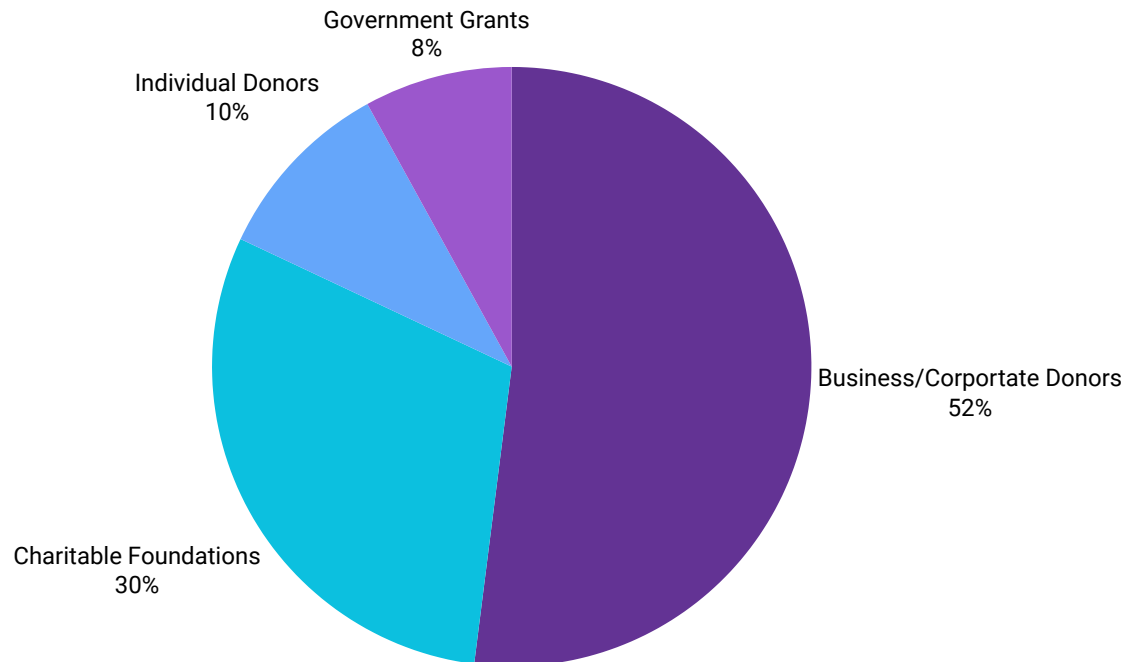
**DIABETES HOPE FOUNDATION**  
Transition Resources for Canadian Youth with T1D

[www.diabeteshopefoundation.com](http://www.diabeteshopefoundation.com)

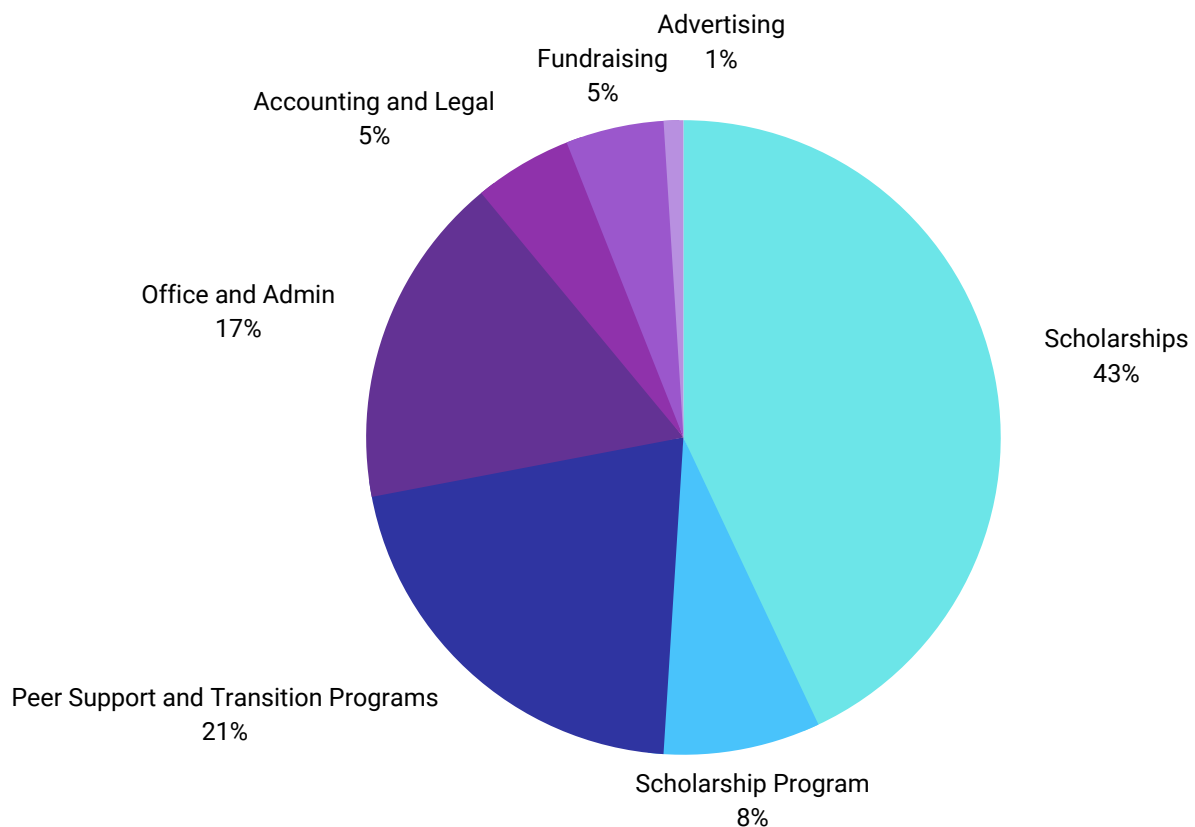
Generously funded by:

# Financial Breakdown

## 2022-2023 Revenue Streams



## 2022-2023 Operation Costs





# Our Donors

With the help of our committed donors, DHF continues to provide programs that help transitioning youth with diabetes access resources and support to help them live healthy and fulfilled lives.

## Corporate Donors



## Family Donors

Norman K. Atkins Memorial  
Bulldogs Friends & Family  
Canavan Family  
Jeremy & Judith Freedman Family Foundation  
Gerson & Hubley Family  
Laura Eileen Higginson Memorial  
Marlene Perkins Memorial  
Sigulim Family



# 2022-2023 Board of Directors

## EXECUTIVE

### FOUNDER AND CHAIR:

BARBARA PASTERNAK

Vice President, Fluid Hose & Coupling

### VICE CHAIR:

PETER ATKINS

Acting Platoon Chief, Toronto Fire Services

### SECRETARY:

JOSEPH FALCONERI

Partner, Falconeri Harris Rumble, LLP

## DIRECTORS

JOAN CANAVAN, Health Care Consultant

BOB EDWARDS, Director of Retail and Food Services,  
Humber River Hospital

JEREMY FREEDMAN, President, Chiefsrule Consulting Corporation

KIMBERLEY HANSON, Vice President, Hill + Knowlton Strategies

DR. AMISH PARIKH, Endocrinologist, Trillium Health Partners

JOE PASTERNAK, President, Fluid Hose & Coupling

DR. ANGELO SIMONE, Paediatric Endocrinologist, Trillium Health Partners

TED J. SUPELOV, Owner, Teamwork Management

DR. JULIO SZMUILOWICZ, Psychiatrist

## 2023 Scholarship Advisory Committee

**CHAIR:** DR. ANGELO SIMONE

### REVIEWERS:

Peter Atkins, Amanda Coschi, Karen Higginson, Alanna Landry, Alannah MacLean, Matthew Pacchione, Dr. Amish Parikh, Barbara Pasternak, Riona Petticrew, Ravjot Samra, Jessica Southall-Millward, Jen Spearen, Matthew Stein, Mikhail Stepanov, Mark Yacoub



2022-23 Board of Directors and Scholarship Advisory Committee

thank you



# Meet Our Team

## Management Team



**ANITA NARDELLA**  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



**HEATHER MILLER**  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



**KAREN HIGGINSON**  
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

## Programs Team



**HEATHER CADIGAN**  
PROGRAM FACILITAOR  
ONLINE SUPPORT LEAD



**ABBI CLOTH**  
PROGRAM FACILITATOR  
DROP-IN LEAD



**LISE ROULEAU**  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
PEP TALKS PROGRAM



**RAV SAMRA**  
PROGRAM FACILITATOR  
CAMPUS CLUBS LEAD



**SHAZMA SHARIF**  
SOCIAL MEDIA SPECIALIST

**82%**  
of the DHF team live  
with or have family  
who live with  
diabetes.

## Special Projects Team



**RAJITHA GUNASEELAN**  
TRANSITION GUIDE  
RESEARCHER



**VIVIAN LI**  
SCHOLARSHIP & ONLINE  
TRANSITION GUIDE LEAD



**CANDACE MILLER**  
FUND DEVELOPMENT &  
STRATEGIC PLANNING

# WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Diabetes Hope Foundation believes that youth with type 1 diabetes should be healthy and confident and have access to programs, resources and mental health support to help them thrive. Your donation to Diabetes Hope Foundation will make a significant impact in the lives of Canadian youth living with type 1 diabetes by ensuring DHF is able to continue delivering free, youth-led programming that empowers youth to thrive during their transition and beyond.

## Donate Today!



**DHF** DIABETES  
HOPE  
FOUNDATION

[www.diabeteshopefoundation.com](http://www.diabeteshopefoundation.com)



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