

Impact

MADE

by McGill

The McGill Fund Annual Giving Report 2021



Message from the Faculty Advancement Board

The past eighteen months have been a challenging time for all of us, with the COVID-19 pandemic upending our lives in so many unforeseen ways. As we look to the year ahead, we thank you for helping the Faculty weather the storm. Our professors and students have demonstrated great resilience, pivoting to remote learning in Spring of 2020, continuing to conduct innovative research and work on design teams in a virtual space, thriving and even excelling in spite of the constraints.

We could not have achieved this without the generosity and involvement of our alumni, staff and friends. Despite the pandemic we came together as a community. Our leadership donors stepped up, allowing the Faculty to stay the course, and helping the many student and Faculty initiatives including scholarships, student advising and career services, and the Student Initiatives Fund (SIF) that the McGill Fund (previously known as the Annual Fund) supports.

This report acknowledges all of you, and gives you an idea of some of the great things we are accomplishing together, and how our community can enhance the education of the next generation. The student-founded group ELINE (Engaged Learning in Engineering) is a fine example of how with our help, students can take mastery of their own learning process.

2021 is a year of celebration for many reasons. It's our University's 200th Anniversary, marked by an ambitious \$2 Billion Bicentennial Campaign, and it is the 150th Anniversary of the first Engineering course offered at McGill (Mining). Since its inception, alumni and friends have been instrumental in helping the Faculty grow, evolve and further its mission to create "globally-minded design professionals equipped to solve problems that matter." As we look to the future with hopefulness, we also look forward to seeing you again in person. Feel free to reach out to any of us at any time, we'd love to hear from you. Thank you again for all that your generosity makes possible!

Screenshot of Faculty Advancement Board (FAB) members present at meeting with Dean Nicell in May 2021:

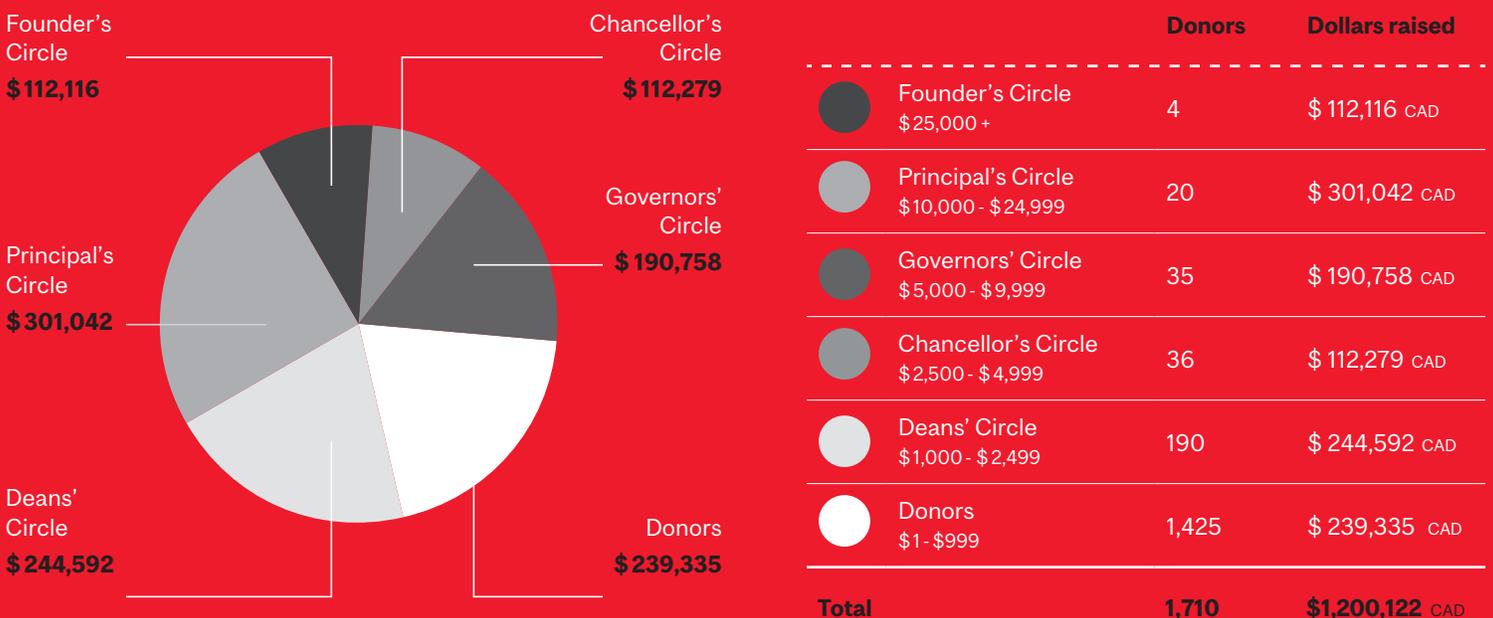
E. Bruce Allan, Frank Panarello, Jim A. Nicell, Fil Papich, Naser Partovi, Alexandra Conliffe, Côme A. Laguë, Robert Dewar, Mary-Jean Eastman, Marc Novakoff, Pasquale Di Pierro, Howard Stotland

📸 Screenshot: Cynthia Liu

Cover:

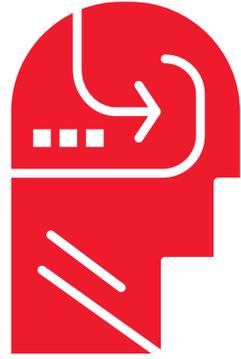
Aastha Goyal (B.Eng'22)

📸 Owen Egan



“A lot of doors have been opened thanks to everything being accessible online.”

—AASTHA GOYAL



Engaging Better Learning

Founded by an undergraduate student during the pandemic year, **ELINE (Engaged Learning in Engineering)** is a new student initiative helping students take mastery of their own learning.

Obstacles necessitate innovation and invention. The COVID-19 pandemic proved a very challenging time for students, obliging them to move to an entirely virtual learning environment. It has been a period of experimentation and adaptation with successes, failures, and opportunities for growth. As Chemical Engineering undergraduate student Aastha Goyal (B.Eng'22) explains, the global pandemic has “engendered a lot of inequality for students: accessibility to technology, reliable broadband internet, or even a space to study. But on the other side of things, a lot of doors have been opened thanks to everything being accessible online.” ELINE (Engaged Learning in Engineering), the Engineering Undergraduate Society committee dedicated to active learning that Aastha founded in 2020, could not have been created at a more propitious moment, when students are by necessity in a process of re-thinking their entire learning process.

Aastha Goyal summarizes ELINE's focus as: “What can students do for themselves, rather than what can teachers or the Faculty do. How can you change your mindset and better prepare yourself, so that your learning can take on a broader context outside of the classroom?” Aastha has noticed how easy it is for engineering undergraduates to fall into the trap of pursuing the professional designation as their primary goal, and in the process losing out on a deeper interest and more holistic comprehension of their role as future engineers in the world.

Despite being such a new organization, ELINE has wasted no time in pursuing its mission to promote a culture of engaged learning among students, organizing workshops, community events and a virtual conference, all in the midst of

a global pandemic. The idea for ELINE first came to Aastha as a Teaching Assistant for an Advanced Calculus course in 2019. Having already taken the class and excelled, as a TA Aastha was soon hit with a startling realization that students taking the course were coming to her for help with questions she didn't have the answers to. Aastha did what any engineering mind is trained to do: she looked for solutions.

A year later ELINE was born, nested within the Faculty's ELATE (Enhanced Learning and Teaching in Engineering) initiative, and supported by the Student Initiatives Fund (SIF). The initiative helps ELATE complete the circuit of communication between professors and students in the promotion of enhanced learning and community development. March 2021 saw ELINE's biggest project yet: its inaugural conference titled “Rediscovering Learning: Engineering New Perspectives,” which took place virtually on March 6th, 2021, drawing 76 attendees from every continent. Spearheaded by fellow Chemical Engineering undergraduate Gregory Brock (B.Eng'23), the well-received conference gave its participants the opportunity to interact with a roster of expert speakers covering a broad and comprehensive spectrum of pedagogy, leadership, self-mentoring, and scientific learning topics. “For me,” Aastha remarks, “the conference was really about what you need to know before going into engineering. I would have loved this conference as a first year engineering student as my first taste of McGill.” “I wanted this conference to remind students of why they chose engineering, why it's such a fantastic field, and why learning is such a privilege,” adds Gregory.

The return to in-person teaching in a pedagogical environment forever changed by the pandemic year will only further emphasize the need for ELINE's mission to help students gain more control over their education, becoming ever more self-aware learners in the process.

ELATE

Enhancing Learning and Teaching in Engineering (ELATE) is an initiative funded by generous alumni donations dedicated to broadening the scope of excellence in teaching within the Faculty, developing a culture of life-long learners. Bringing together teachers, students and staff to discuss their teaching experiences and share best practices, it focuses on new pedagogical approaches and enables active learning. “At the very beginning the mission was simple: create a faculty learning community,” says ELATE's Academic Lead, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Professor Lawrence Chen. “A lot of professors teach the way they were taught. None of us typically go through formal education on how to teach. But good teaching is not just the ability to deliver a very informative lecture by breaking down complex concepts and making them digestible to students: it's everything else that you create for the student.”



The ELINE Executive Committee, 2020-2021.
Aastha Goyal, Gregory Brock, Hashir Maqsood,
Shivam Aery, Julia Warren, Sarah Wylie, Luca Pallotta,
Nazeefa Huda

The Ability to Adapt



Evelyn Zhang and Èvane Amico

📷 Gretl Chan



Despite pandemic restrictions, two civil-engineering students are working to bring the benefits of green roofs to Canadian cities.

Last February, when Civil Engineering students Èvane Amico (B.Eng'23) and Evelyn Zhang (B.Eng'22) logged onto the first Canadian Engineering Competition (CEC) to take place online, they weren't sure what to expect. But after nearly a year of adapting to COVID-19-related changes at McGill, they were ready to face whatever surprises the remote format presented.

"When I shared my screen, the other participants almost disappeared: they were so tiny compared to our presentation slides," recalls Èvane. "It felt like just another rehearsal at home." Taking this in stride, the pair of students enumerated the many benefits of green roofs. These vegetation-covered roofing systems capture airborne pollutants, filter noxious gases, reduce urban heat-island effects, save energy through better insulation and provide a sense of connection to nature.

Èvane and Evelyn proceeded to tell their nearly invisible audience about a smart green roof they'd designed with Canadian regulations and climates in mind. "We realized that we don't have many advanced green roofs like those you can see all over the world and especially in Europe," says Èvane. "We wanted to find a way to adapt the technology to the Canadian situation."

Accounting for wide temperature variations and heavy Canadian-winter snowfall was crucial. So was creating something low-maintenance and relatively low-cost, since green roofs aren't always an easy sell in North America. "It's a new concept for a lot of people here, so that's a huge challenge," says Evelyn. "And the fact that green roofs can be costly often scares them away. We needed an approach that could get them on board."

Èvane and Evelyn's design consists of modules that can be easily fitted to roofs of different sizes. Each one retains stormwater, drains the excess automatically and—with the help of sensors and a live-time monitoring system—irrigates its plants with the level of moisture they need to thrive. "We wanted to make it as autonomous as possible," says Evelyn. "That's a selling point." The CEC's judges awarded their concept first place in the Innovative Design Category.

Reaching Out Remotely

This victory was the culmination of an unusual but rewarding year for Èvane and Evelyn, who had participated in two other contests in order to qualify for the CEC. One of them was the McGill Engineering Competition, which is supported by alumni donations to the Student Initiatives Fund (SIF). "That was a remote event, too," says Evelyn. "It definitely helped us to practice there before going on to the national level. Right now, the ability to adapt [to the virtual environment] is key."

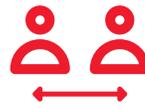
There are pros and cons to online events, according to Èvane and Evelyn. When it comes to networking, "doing a Zoom call is not the same as doing, say, a wine and cheese on campus," says Èvane. "Making connections is harder. At the same time, we now have access to a wider diversity of people from various places, because nobody has to arrange transportation: if you have a Wi-Fi connection, then you can attend the event."

Taking classes remotely has required flexibility as well. "There are technical procedures you have to study without actually doing them, because you don't have all the necessary material and equipment at home," says Èvane. "That was challenging, but it was also good to practice a new way to learn."

Once pandemic restrictions ease up, Èvane and Evelyn plan to implement a green roof on McGill's campus, so long as their team can secure enough funding. "We want to test our product," Evelyn explains, "because right now it's theoretical, but when you actually start building, you sometimes have to make a lot of changes."

Come what may, the two students have gained motivation from their project so far. "Having the chance to attend those competitions solidified my interest in the environment," says Èvane. "I'm really looking forward to bringing innovation and technology into civil engineering projects, to mitigate climate change and other environmental issues."

Overcoming Disparity



McGill Engineering graduate Joel Grant is part of a growing movement dedicated to developing Indigenous presence in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields.

Joel Grant, B.Eng'18, M.Eng'21, a twenty-eight year old member of the Alberta Métis Nation, has recently completed a master's in chemical engineering, studying the effects of plastics breaking down in aquatic environments. He has been a key player in McGill University's Indigenous student community, and an active member in McGill Students' Chapter of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES). AISES' primary goal is to increase Indigenous communities' exposure to STEM, in an effort to promote and encourage youth into entering the fields of healthcare, sciences, and engineering. Joel first joined the organization in 2017, became the group's president for the following two years, and remains deeply committed to its pursuits.

Following a personal and career path that has presented an amount of obstacles, Joel's determination is inspiring. A scarcity of Indigenous scientists, researchers, engineers, doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers has made networking more difficult for young Indigenous students. "It's a very complex problem," Joel admits. Unlike some of his friends and colleagues at McGill's First Peoples' House, Joel did not grow up on a reservation, instead hailing from Cochrane, Alberta, a small suburb of Calgary. Nevertheless, he has experienced his share of the systemic problems faced by Indigenous students in higher education. "A lot of it has to do with barriers of entry, and lack of opportunity," he says. Other than the very high required grade point average for entry into STEM programs like engineering, some of the required advanced science courses aren't offered in many Indigenous schools. When Joel began his undergraduate studies in materials engineering at McGill, he quickly realized he had already fallen behind. Many of his fellow students were coming out of IB

(International Baccalaureate) and advanced placement programs in high school. "I'd never even heard of that," he remarks, describing the experience as a major culture shock.

Leading by Example

There are many challenges emerging from socio-economic disparity affecting Indigenous populations, such as financial burdens. "A lot of us are parents who decided to go to school as mature students," he elaborates, "I have massive student loan, which is quite stressful, despite the access to funding that Indigenous students are granted, but I wouldn't have been able to attend university were it not for the scholarships and bursaries I've received" —many of which are funded thanks to the generosity of donors like you.

Over the course of the past five years, Joel and his colleagues at AISES have applied their skills, time, and resources to multiple projects, from volunteering at Montreal homeless shelters known for supporting Indigenous people, to supporting the Kahnawake Survival School's yearly science fair, while also acting as elementary and high school science mentors, and offering science e-tutoring for Indigenous students across Canada. He is also a senior camp counsellor and advisor for the Eagle Spirit Science Futures Camp, organized by the Health Professions Program (or HPP) and funded by McGill's Indigenous Affairs Office, offering a STEM-enriched program every summer for kids aged thirteen to seventeen.

This forward momentum reached a high point last year when, in recognition of their commitment to bettering Indigenous communities in Quebec, the McGill Chapter of AISES was awarded the Faculty of Engineering's donor-funded *Preston Phipps Equity and Diversity Award*, and in March 2021 Joel was also awarded a Pathy Foundation Fellowship for a project documenting Indigenous science activities on film. These are welcome recognitions for Joel and AISES to continue rising to the many challenges standing between them and success, yet much systemic work still remains to be done.



Joel Grant

E-IDEA



Faye Siluk
Jordan Dessertine

Engineering Inclusivity, Diversity and Equity Advancement (E-IDEA), is an initiative funded by generous alumni donations, for sustainable and transformative change. Lead Coordinator Faye Siluk (BEd'15) designs and facilitates projects that increase accessibility, inclusion, and a sense of purpose and belonging within the Faculty, such as course-based teamwork workshops for McGill students, and an outreach program with youth in local communities supporting entry pathways into STEM fields for populations historically excluded from higher education. E-IDEA's long-term vision is for elements of its Youth Action and Outreach program to be woven into Faculty courses over the next five years. "It's about inclusivity put into action," explains Siluk. "Only through reflection and action can we change the way we behave, asking 'Who is this work really serving? What does community engagement look like, sound like, and feel like? What do you need to be an active citizen, and feel like your voice matters?' To bring this to life, we have to ask lots of questions and spend a great deal of time listening."

The Mechanical Engineering Class of '71 has raised over \$160,000 toward two endowed SURE (Summer Undergraduate Research in Engineering) Awards for students in Mechanical Engineering.

The class's collective desire to mark its 50th Anniversary with a special gift went beyond expectations, bringing in more than three times the dollar amount the classmates initially set out to raise.

"It was originally going to be \$50,000 for 50 years," recalls Class President Steve Savidant, B.Eng.'71, M.B.A. '73, now Chair of the Board of Directors of Enerflex and a long-time energy sector executive. "We thought it would be nice if we left a marker that helped young people become engineers."

The 35 members of the 1971 Mechanical Engineering Class developed a bond that was forged in the challenges, camaraderie and hijinks of their five-year program. There were differential equations and questions about fluid dynamics, and the fear of becoming one of those students who had to drop out. There was also the early morning quiet of everyone studying together, with help from a classmate if you needed it. Then there were the weekly burgers, and fish

and chips at the Mansfield Tavern, the infamous beer-drinking contest and downhill tricycle race, and the daily ping-pong matches.

A half-century later, the remaining 31 class members are still in touch regularly and even have a Facebook page. Three members have passed, and one is still missing.

The class left an impression on several professors and, individually as professionals, on the industry, for their zeal and enthusiasm. They leave a legacy that will fund future engineers' summer research projects and provide valuable training for bright minds.

Steve jokes that his part in the fundraising involved writing members of the class "long-winded emails." He appears to have done much more than that, giving \$25,000 and a further \$15,000 in matching gifts to encourage his classmates to make pledges.

Steve credits Class Vice-President Paul Samborsky, B.Eng.'71, for the group's ability to stay in touch over the years and work together in such a momentous way for the 50th.

Paul is known as the class's "Sherlock Holmes," in the early days tracking down phone numbers and then, later, emails, and using those contacts to find leads on those who were still missing. The only class member he could not find was John Ssengendo-Ndugwa, B.Eng.'71. Ken Corbett, B.Eng.'71, suggested that he had wanted to go to Sweden after graduation since Uganda was in turmoil. Several search attempts and even reaching out to people with the same name led nowhere.

Building Community

Actively staying in touch has been the key to keeping the camaraderie alive. Paul organized reunions every five years, which recently turned into annual get-togethers, because the group felt that every five years was too long to wait to have fun and reminisce. Steve, who completed an M.B.A. in Management at McGill two years after graduating from Engineering, says he lost touch with his M.B.A. classmates, and believes the reason for that is not having someone like Paul. "Every class needs a Paul. He's been the glue."

Paul, who still works in the energy conservation sector for the City of Ottawa, now also teaches workshops in mindfulness. He is thrilled that the Mechanical Engineering Class of '71 managed to raise such a substantial amount for its 50th Anniversary gift. He was particularly moved that the daughter of classmate and friend Doug Buchanan, B.Eng.'71, who died in 2015, also donated to the fund in his memory. "Jennifer told me many times how wonderful it was to listen to her father talk about the people in his engineering class," says Paul, adding that Buchanan's stories likely influenced his daughter's choice of profession – engineering. Paul and Steve were both also impacted by a remarkable donation from Irene Armano, widow of Luigi Armano, B.Eng.'71.

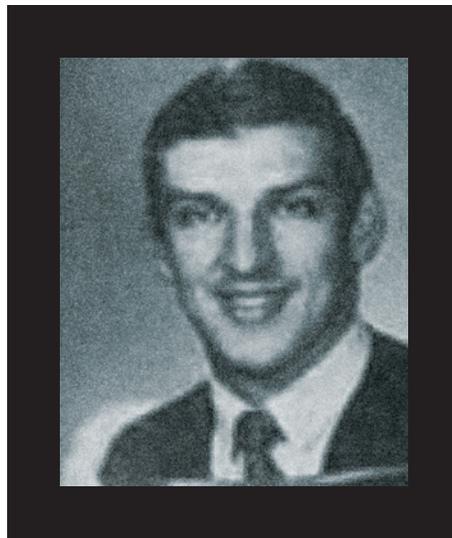
Steve says the changes in mechanical engineering over the last fifty years are evident in the McGill labs and classrooms he's had the opportunity to visit. He remembers working with drill presses and lathes. "Now it looks like a surgical suite in a hospital. Ours looked more like a garage or a tool shed."

Paul, whose parents were unable to afford tuition fees, resulting in his working summers to pay them off, is grateful that more students will have increased opportunities to learn and to have fun. Though the pandemic restrictions did not lift in time to meet as a class in 2021, the group plans to meet up in person at the end of September 2022 to share yet another laugh and talk about what the future holds for Mechanical Engineering.

If you are interested in organizing a reunion or initiating a reunion class gift, or would like more information about your upcoming class reunion, please contact Dr. Omri Bassewitch-Frenkel (omri.bassewitchfrenkel@mcgill.ca) or visit our updated Homecoming page (<https://www.mcgill.ca/engineering/alumni/homecoming>).

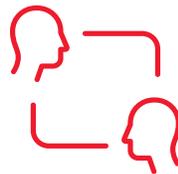


Steve Savidant
1971 McGill Yearbook



Paul Samborsky
1971 McGill Yearbook

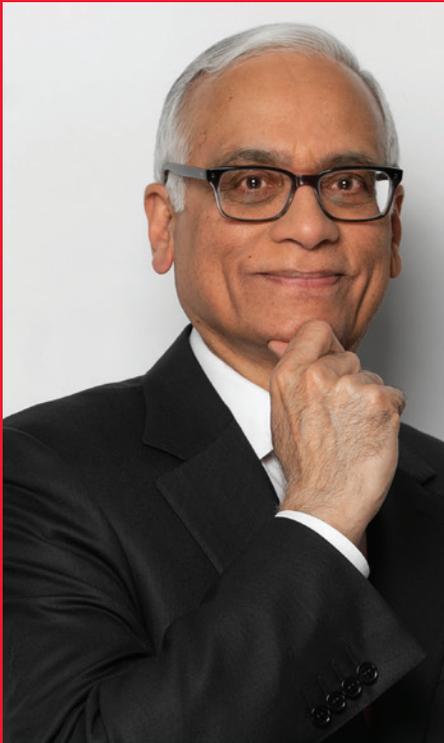
Staying Connected



"We thought it would be nice if we left a marker that helped young people become engineers."

—STEVE SAVIDANT, B.ENG.'71, M.B.A. '73

Launching the Faculty Legacy Fund



Ram Panda, Chair of the McGill Board of Governors
 Tzara Maud

“The past year has made all of us think on our mortality and what our legacy will be,”

says Ram Panda M.Eng'71, M.B.A.'77, who traveled in 1968 from Hyderabad in India to study electrical engineering, then went on to find success in IT as co-founder and President of Invera (now the global metal industry's leading software provider), not to mention putting down roots in Montreal, where he married and raised two daughters, also McGill alumnae. For Ram, giving back to the Faculty of Engineering has always been a matter of thinking and caring about the future. Ram is Chair of the McGill Board of Governors and one of the Faculty of Engineering's most dedicated champions. In the midst of the lockdown earlier this year, Ram reached out to us with a proposal that would allow the Faculty to recognize the generosity of our annual donors into perpetuity. With McGill's 200th Anniversary this year, and the recently launched 200 for 200 Legacy Challenge (see below), discussions with Ram resulted in the establishment of the Faculty Legacy Fund.

“The concept of the Faculty Legacy Fund at the Faculty of Engineering is making sure that I and others are able to perpetuate our annual giving for discretionary purposes that serve the Faculty's greatest needs beyond our lifetimes. I realized I'm not going to be around forever, and that I would like the Faculty to continue receiving my annual support into the future,” says Ram.

“I would also like future students to understand that alumni support and participation is behind the excellence of our university. Around 2,000 alumni contribute to the McGill Fund for Engineering every year providing much needed support for emerging priorities and student initiatives in particular. Without their generosity many of the non-academic services that are such an important part of the overall educational experience would not be possible. To help those individuals who wish to continue their support into perpetuity, I am establishing an endowment fund to be known as the Faculty Legacy Fund.

I invite them to grow the fund by simply including the Faculty in their estate plans and directing their bequests, of whatever size, towards this fund, which will last into perpetuity. The capital of the Faculty Legacy Fund will never be encroached upon and only the annual income from the fund will serve the Faculty.”

“My gift of \$125,000 to set up the Faculty Legacy Fund will ensure that the Faculty receives \$5,000 (Governor's Circle) from now on annually forever from me. I strongly believe that alumni of a certain age, who have always been supporters should ask ‘How do I make this in perpetuity?’ The best thing to do is to put it into the Faculty Legacy Fund.”

In addition, to establishing the Faculty Legacy Fund this year Ram signed up for the 200 for 200 Legacy Challenge, by making the Faculty of Engineering the beneficiary of his life insurance policy. “I am hoping for a spin-off effect from others,” says Ram, “And that the Faculty and its students will honor and remember the generosity of my fellow alumni into the future.”

A bequest of \$5,000, for example, directed to the Faculty Legacy Fund at the Faculty of Engineering could perpetuate your current annual gift of \$200. Please see the table to the right and contact us for more details at (<https://www.mcgill.ca/engineering/alumni/about-us/advancement-team>).

Create a Lasting Impact at the Faculty of Engineering.

The year 2021 marks McGill's Bicentennial. To celebrate, the University has launched the *200 for 200 Legacy Challenge*, which aims to secure at least 200 legacy gifts for McGill's 200th Anniversary. This year is also the 150th Anniversary of the first Engineering program offered at McGill. Consider joining the great philanthropic tradition which has enabled 200 years of research, discovery and learning at McGill by designating your bequest to the Faculty of Engineering's Faculty Legacy Fund. It's an opportunity to create a legacy that will endure for years to come, benefitting future generations of McGill's Engineering, Architecture and Urban Planning students. Learn more about the *200 for 200 Legacy Challenge* at (<https://giving.mcgill.ca/all-stories/200-200-legacy-challenge>).

If your annual gift totals:	You can sustain it with a bequest to the Faculty Legacy Fund in the amount of:
\$200	\$5,000
\$500	\$12,500
\$1,000 - \$2,499 Deans' Circle	\$25,000 - \$62,500
\$2,500 - \$4,999 Chancellor's Circle	\$62,500 - \$125,000
\$5,000 - \$9,999 Governors' Circle	\$125,000 - \$250,000
\$10,000 - \$24,999 Principal's Circle	\$250,000 - \$625,000
\$25,000 + Founder's Circle	\$625,000 +

For illustration purposes, endowed interests calculated at a rate of 4%

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“A good half
of the art of living
is resilience.”

—ALAIN DE BOTTON

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Tel: 514-398-1371
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