Ingenium Foundation Fondation

SPRING-SUMMER 2025
SUPPORTER UPDATE

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Building a Future of Possibility: The Impact of Your Generosity

As spring breathes new life into our communities, we're reminded of the power of renewal and growth. Across Canada, a sense of unity and pride is rising, as people come together to celebrate our identity and values. From coast to coast to coast, Canadians are flying the maple leaf with renewed spirit, reaffirming our commitment to inclusivity and innovation.

Your generosity is at the heart of this story. Thanks to your support, Ingenium's three museums and the Ingenium Centre continue to showcase Canadian ingenuity — sparking curiosity, fostering connections, and inspiring the next generation of innovators.

Because of you, families have made lasting memories, youth have explored new career paths, and visitors from all walks of life have found a sense of belonging. Your support removes barriers, delivers hands-on STEAM learning, and helps create more inclusive, welcoming spaces. Every initiative in this newsletter reflects your impact — building a brighter future grounded in curiosity, connection, and Canadian values.

Thank you for believing in the power of science, education, and innovation. Together, we're building a future full of possibility.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Empowering Communities: GoSTEAM's Effect in Action

For many at-risk youth in Ottawa, daily life is focused on survival—finding food, shelter, and stability. At Operation Come Home, a vital centre for young people facing homelessness and other barriers, the **GoSTEAM** program has opened new horizons. This hands-on initiative in science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) offers more than just experiments—it provides a spark of hope and a glimpse of what's possible beyond their current challenges.

Through activities like building eclipse glasses and experimenting with a Van de Graaff generator, **GoSTEAM** has captivated participants. These projects resonate because they're tangible and engaging, helping youth reconnect with curiosity and interests they had lost. "It reminds us there's more out there than what we're going through," shared one participant.

Before **GoSTEAM**, there was no structured science programming available at Operation Come Home. Now, the youth are reconnecting with interests and hobbies they had lost touch with, sparking new curiosity. Many have even started asking about future field trips to the Canada Science and Technology Museum—a testament to the lasting impact of the program.

For these young people, **GoSTEAM** is more than just a set of experiments; it's a reminder of their potential. The program shows them that they are capable of more than their circumstances, offering a sense of hope and a chance to look beyond their immediate challenges. As one staff member at Operation Come Home shared, "Without **GoSTEAM**, these youth wouldn't have access to science. It's opening doors to new possibilities."

With continued support,
GoSTEAM will keep transforming lives, one experiment at a time.

Interested in making a donation online? Scan this QR code with your phone to visit our online donation page at www.ingeniumfoundation.ca.

Breaking Barriers, Building Belonging: Accessibility at the Canada Science and Technology Museum

At the Canada Science and Technology Museum (CSTM), accessibility isn't just about meeting standards—it's about welcoming every visitor with open arms and showing them that they belong. It's about creating spaces where a child with sensory sensitivities can explore science at their own pace, where a caregiver can assist their loved one with dignity, and where a visitor can see their experiences reflected in the stories shared.

"Feeling welcome goes far beyond even floors and large fonts," Lisa Leblanc, Director General of CSTM explains. "It's about sharing stories that show people they belong here. That their experiences matter."

This vision is brought to life by listening—truly listening—to those who experience barriers. Ingenium consults individuals with disabilities and diverse communities to understand their needs. These conversations uncover challenges others might not even notice. For example, visitors to the Steam gallery shared how low locomotive cab entrances posed risks for tall individuals or those with vision impairments. A simple solution, like signage or soft materials, can make a big difference.

The museum's commitment extends beyond physical accessibility. Programs like **Mellow Mornings**, which offer sensory-reduced hours, and sensory guides help families plan visits with confidence. In a separate gender-neutral/universal washroom, a motorized lift provides dignity for caregivers and their loved ones. Every thoughtful touch reflects the museum's belief that accessibility is about more than access—it's about belonging.

This work is never done, and the museum embraces that reality. "We don't know what we don't know," Lisa admits, "but by continuing the conversation, we can keep removing barriers, one step at a time."

None of this would be possible without the generous support of donors like you. Funding from the Ingenium Foundation has allowed the museum to dive deeper—compensating individuals for their time, engaging experts, and implementing changes that create lasting impact.

As Lisa beautifully put it, "Making mistakes is okay. What matters is striving to be better than we were yesterday."

Thanks to your support, the Canada Science and Technology Museum is not just building a more accessible space—it's building a world where everyone sees themselves in science, feels like they belong, and knows their voice matters.

A Fellowship Uncovering Canada's Hidden Black Histories

The Black and African Canadian Scientific Innovation and Technological Fellowship is unlocking powerful, untold stories of Canada's past by supporting researchers like Samia Dumais, who have a passion for illuminating overlooked histories. From her days as a young student, she recognized a significant gap: where were the stories of Black Canadians?

Growing up as one of the only Black students in her elementary and high school, Samia felt a keen sense of invisibility—a reality that drove her to pursue a PhD focused on rediscovering the lives and contributions of Black Canadians, especially in Quebec.

Through the fellowship, Samia gained access to Ingenium's vast archives,

Samia Dumais

where she has been exploring Canada's railway history. While Black porters are often mentioned in historical accounts, their stories are rarely told in depth. Determined to go beyond surface-level narratives, **Samia has uncovered accounts of union activism and resilience—stories of Black workers who fought for their rights despite the biases of their time.** "These men were portrayed as devoted and content, but they were also advocates, activists, and pioneers of social change," she explains. Using periodicals, oral histories, and personal accounts, Samia has crafted a richer, more nuanced history that challenges outdated stereotypes.

More than academic discovery, Samia's work has a mission. **It's about giving Black communities—especially youth—a sense of belonging and pride in their heritage.** "The fellowship allows me to make these stories accessible, so Black youth can read them and see themselves in our history," she shares. The support of the Ingenium Foundation has not only empowered Samia to share these stories but also reinforced her mission to close gaps in Canada's historical narrative.

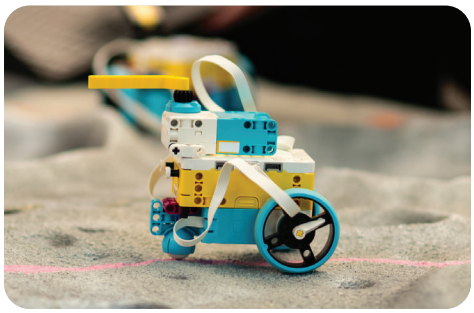
By shining a light on these powerful narratives, the **Black and African Canadian Scientific Innovation and Technological Fellowship** is working to ensure that history is inclusive and representative of all Canadians.

Samia's work brings these hidden stories to light, inspiring future generations to embrace their heritage with pride and connection.

Soaring to New Heights: Empowering Tomorrow's Aerospace Leaders

In May 2024, the Canada Aviation and Space Museum held its inaugural series of Aerospace Experiences and a Career Pathways Exploration Fair where they hosted more than 1,000 high school students and their teachers. The museum came alive with excitement, igniting curiosity, and expanding horizons as students engaged with professionals, explored innovative careers, and unlocked new possibilities.

Building on the success of this first event, the museum hosted a second experience in December 2024. More than 1,000 students and teachers attended the Career Pathways Exploration Fair, while over 500 students took part in hands-on mentorship sessions with 23 industry professionals. These students worked together to tackle real-world aerospace challenges, presenting their solutions to experts.



The impact of these experiences was profound. Students who struggled in traditional classrooms thrived in hands-on activities like building and coding lunar rovers, piloting drones, and participating in air navigation simulations. One boy, known for being disengaged at school, emerged as a natural leader, demonstrating problem-solving skills that surprised even his teachers.

For many, this was not only their first visit to the museum but also their first exposure to careers in aerospace.

A Ukrainian student, now part of the Cadets, was particularly moved, Facetiming his mother during his visit to share the excitement. "Meeting industry professionals made it feel real and achievable," he said. Another student, who had always been interested in aerospace, reflected, "This experience has helped me narrow down my career path in the sector and provided me with valuable skills that I can apply along the way."

These transformative experiences are made possible thanks to your generous support of the Ingenium Foundation. Your contributions empower students to discover their potential, open doors to life-changing opportunities, and shape the future of Canada's aerospace industry. Encouraged by the overwhelming success of these events, the Canada Aviation and Space Museum looks forward to continuing this program and exploring ways to expand its reach, ensuring even more students have access to these career-shaping experiences.

Together, we are inspiring the next generation of aerospace leaders. Thank you for helping make this possible.

Connecting Generations at the Farm: The Power of Growing Communities

When a group of diverse seniors from the Jewish Family Services of Ottawa and the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) and their families arrived at the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum last summer, excitement filled the air. For many, it was their first visit, and for one grandmother, it was a particularly proud moment. She had the opportunity to bring her daughter—born in Ottawa but never able to visit—and her young grandson to the museum. Together, they experienced the farm, with her grandson's eyes lighting up as he touched animals for the first time. The intergenerational connection blossomed as family and friends explored new experiences, but it was also the shared learning that made the day special.

This visit was made possible through donor support of the **Growing Communities** program, which provides free admission and transportation to equity-deserving groups, including newcomer and immigrant families. The program helps eliminate barriers like cost and accessibility, allowing participants to experience educational and cultural opportunities. For the seniors in this group, the museum offered a chance to reconnect with rural roots, learning how local crops like corn and canola are grown. In the demonstration kitchen, they watched as traditional recipes were prepared, sparking conversations about ingredients and memories of home. Children and grandparents eagerly engaged, with staff providing hands-on experiences like touching alpacas and participating in food demonstrations.

For many newcomers, the museum provided more than just a day out – it was a chance to feel a sense of belonging while gaining knowledge. Barriers like transportation and cost often keep families from these experiences, but the museum became a welcoming space where everyone could belong. Whether singing together in the gazebo or learning about sustainable farming, each person left with a deeper understanding of their environment.

Your continued support through the Ingenium Foundation makes moments like this possible. By removing financial barriers, you help families create lasting memories rooted in both learning and connection.

Thank you for nurturing these intergenerational bonds and making each visit a heartwarming reminder of the power of education and community.

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