

**munk school**  
OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS & PUBLIC POLICY

annual report 2024-2025

# Democracy in turbulent times



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**





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TIMOTHY SNYDER

Chair in Modern European History,  
Supported by the Temerty Endowment for Ukrainian Studies  
Director, Public History Lab  
Professor, Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy



## OUR FOUNDING DONORS

**A**mong the world's most generous philanthropists, the late Peter Munk (BASc 1952, Hon LLD 1995, Hon DSL 2004 TRIN) and his wife, Melanie Munk (Hon DSL 2004 TRIN), made a landmark \$35 million gift to establish the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy in 2010. At the time, it was the largest single gift from an individual in the University's history.

Together, the couple's gifts – which deeply reflect Peter Munk's legacy and passion for learning, knowledge sharing, debate and scholarship – now total \$51 million and have enabled the Munk School to become a world leader in global affairs.

The impact of these gifts has been profound. The Munk School convenes some of the most urgent conversations of our time, supports cutting-edge research and prepares students to make meaningful contributions in the world – in their careers and as highly engaged global citizens.

# MEETING THE MOMENT

**W**hat an extraordinary time to be at the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy as a student, faculty member, fellow, or member of the staff. If our visionary donors, Peter and Melanie Munk, had not endowed it 25 years ago, we would have to create it today. The Munk School has a unique seat at the intersection of geopolitics and geo-economics with the accelerating impact of advanced technologies. That intersection is allowing us to do new things in new ways with new partners as we face new risks and new opportunities.

Let me tell you about one of the many projects we are working on right now. As Canada's relationship with the United States changes, our faculty and fellows are joining together to think about how we will build a "sovereign" technology stack for Canada. Even five years ago, this kind of project would have been unthinkable. The interest in a sovereign stack reflects the converging impact of geopolitics – a United States led by a revolutionary president who is fundamentally reshaping the role of the state, the pursuit of scientific knowledge, and the way the economy works at home. It also reflects the impact of geo-economics – a United States that seeks to unilaterally reshape the global trading system and a China that is exercising the leverage it has through the choke points it controls in global supply chains. And it reflects the accelerating pace of advanced technologies that are reshaping our economies, our politics, our societies, and the ways we create and pursue knowledge. Our students across the Munk School are deeply engaged in projects that require them to unpack how these multiple convergences are changing Canada and the world and Canada in the world.

The extraordinary research and teaching that our faculty are doing on authoritarianism and on how we can strengthen democracies responds directly to these forces that are converging and amplifying in new ways. I encourage you all to read the brief articles that will introduce you to their original research. You will quickly see that their outstanding work extends



beyond explaining to developing agendas for action. These are complex and challenging problems but they are fundamental to our collective future.

In the wake of these seismic changes, the Munk School is building new partnerships around the world. We have a new partnership with the Harvard Kennedy School and a new double degree with the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University in New York. We are expanding our collaboration with Oxford University and with partners across Europe and Asia. Our students study for a semester at these partner universities and their students enrich the conversation at the Munk School.

We welcome you all to the Munk School, as we meet this moment. Join us in person or virtually as our faculty, students, and fellows work to understand global changes that have few parallels but enormous domestic and international consequences.



**JANICE STEIN**

University Professor  
Founding Director, Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy  
Belzberg Professor of Conflict Management

# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

THREE MUNK SCHOOL PROFESSORS REFLECT ON THE RISKS AND POSSIBILITIES OF AI'S  
INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA – AND PUBLIC OPINION – IN A TURBULENT WORLD

**A**t its core, students and professors come to the Munk School to study the intersection of power and politics. Never has that dynamic been so tangible in their lives, however, than with the devices that feed algorithms, data and artificial intelligence systems into their palms constantly – and deeply influence societal interactions with democratic institutions.

Two new undergraduate courses – Digital and Algorithmic Disruptions, co-taught by Professors Aaron Gluck-Thaler and Sverrir Steinsson, and a reading course on AI Security led by security expert and Adjunct Professor Bruce Schneier – are among the Munk School's newest offerings responding to student demand for insights and scholarship in this all-consuming area.

"Students have an intuitive sense that everything they do online is being tracked and siphoned," says Gluck-Thaler. "They are particularly curious about why and how this data collection has become so normalized."

The scholars come to the topics from a range of disciplines: Gluck-Thaler is a historian of science and technology, Steinsson studies institutional theory and Schneier is a renowned security technologist and cryptographer. Their classes move beyond the technologies themselves to questions of how global politics are influenced alongside innovation.

Steinsson situates the current moment in historical perspective. In the early era of the global Internet, there was widespread optimism that digital technologies would expand free speech, reduce reliance on traditional gatekeepers and empower people to expose injustice and coordinate collective action – all concepts believed to strengthen democratic participation. Today, the mood has shifted.

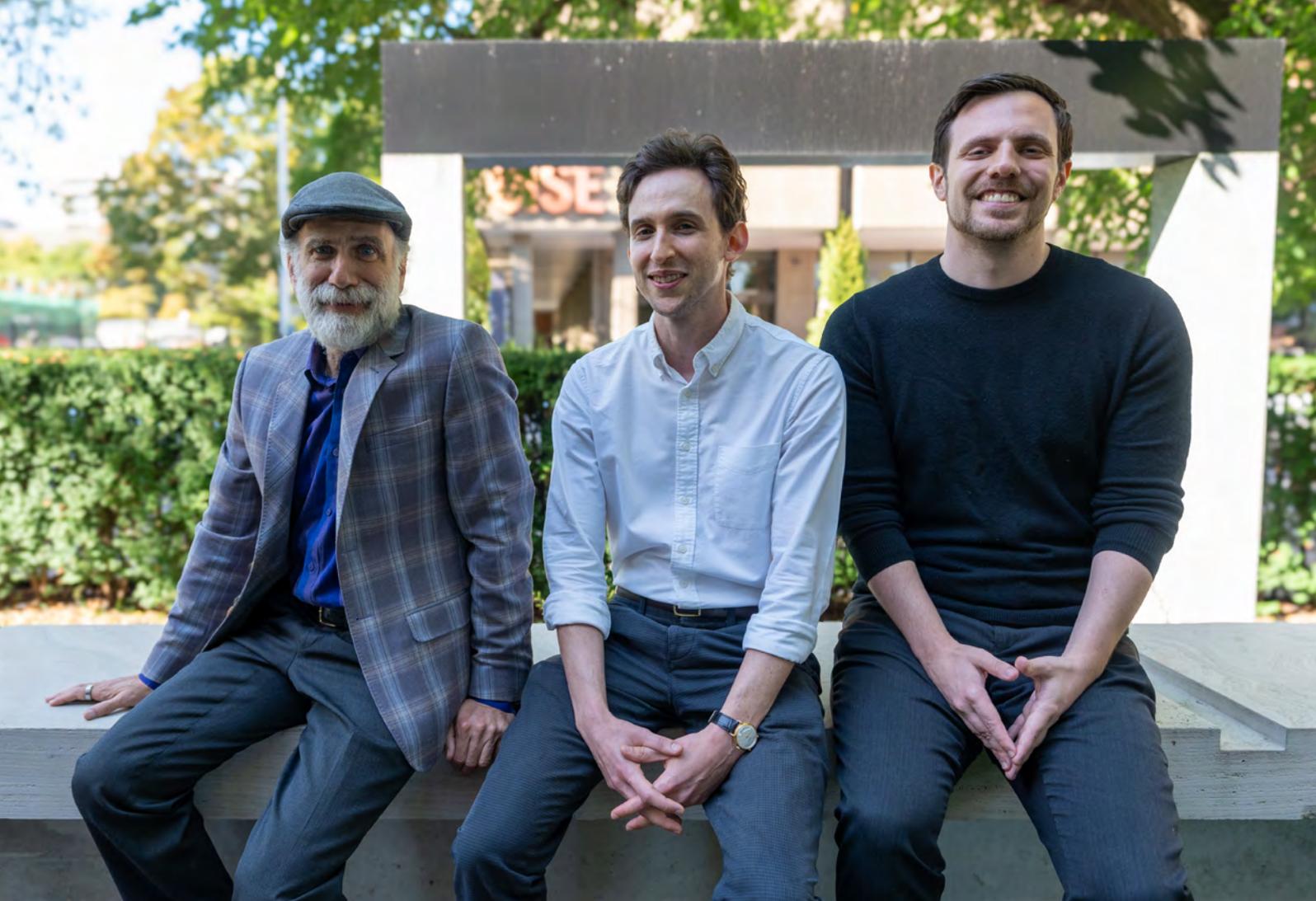
"We have become more aware of how digital technology can enable surveillance and censorship, potentially empowering authoritarians," Steinsson observes. Political conflict now revolves around shaping the rules and norms of the digital environment, with states, businesses and users competing for influence.

In Digital and Algorithmic Disruptions, the professors encourage students to question the assumptions and priorities that frame policy discussions on artificial intelligence and social media companies.

"A large part of the conversation around AI right now has goalposts defined by a few very influential corporate actors," Steinsson notes. They question common assumptions about technological and social change: "We are critical of the premise that more computing power, deregulation and data surveillance through AI will solve complex social problems – including those confronting democratic institutions."

The concept of whether technology is neutral arises often in the classroom: "How this technology will be used in the future depends on the values that have been and are currently being embedded within it – and the funding priorities that may keep beneficial uses at the margins," says Gluck-Thaler.

Bruce Schneier brings a technologist's lens, and likewise encourages students to question the neutrality of tech. He



Bruce Scheier, Adjunct Professor; Aaron Gluck-Thaler, Assistant Professor and Faculty Affiliate at The Citizen Lab; Sverrir Steinsson, Assistant Professor

also centres academic debate around the concept of trust. As a security professional, “My goal is to make systems trustworthy,” he explains, a principle he brings to academia by showing students where weaknesses lie. He outlines four priorities for democratic societies: reform the AI ecosystem to make it more equitable and less biased; resist harmful uses of AI through policy; responsibly deploy AI where it can improve outcomes; and recognize that AI tends to exacerbate existing problems rather than create them.

“I don’t think of it as AI threatening democracy,” Schneier stresses. “It is the people behind technologies, including

AI, who threaten democracy. They do it in a hundred different ways – one being the social media algorithms that prioritize engagement, rather than understanding or dialogue, with algorithms that prioritize rage. There are tools now that allow for more gerrymandering and better manipulation of elections.”

The movement for public AI infrastructure, he notes, could offer a positive path. France has launched a national model, and Singapore has developed Sea-Lion for Southeast Asian languages. However, he notes that Canada is behind those countries in the quest for public AI. “The costs of core models

are coming down, which is hopeful,” he adds, suggesting that a more plural ecosystem of AI may be possible.

The professors’ perspectives converge on a central insight: the values and governance structures embedded into technological developments are almost never apolitical. By equipping students to analyze the relationship between technology and democratic participation, the Munk School is preparing the next generation to confront and question the role powerful technologies play in shaping local and global politics.

# DEMOCRACY MEETS AI

From the desk of Darius Ornston

**D**emocracies are built on trust. My own work on the Nordic countries, for example, describes how interpersonal trust, and confidence in public institutions and information, enables the Nordic countries to solve collective action problems and invest in high-quality public goods. For this reason, trust features prominently in MUN150, a course on “successful societies” that I launched with Professor Brian Rathbun this fall.

Artificial intelligence threatens to undermine that trust in several ways. The easy manufacture and diffusion of misinformation threatens to erode public confidence in the media and one another. AI-generated content also makes it harder for politicians and civil servants to gauge public opinion.

While one could rely on AI to guide public decision making, and AI has the potential to improve the reach, efficiency and effectiveness of our public services, the lack of transparency and the bias that can be embedded in algorithmic solutions can fuel cynicism and distrust.

And productivity growth is no panacea. The mechanization of agriculture and the move to urban factories sparked rapid productivity growth in the early 20th century. It also fueled social and political unrest.

You might conclude that I favour significantly delaying or even blocking the diffusion of AI technology. I do believe that we need a clearly defined regulatory framework (and complementary measures like a robust welfare state) to mitigate these risks.

But my hunch is that the countries which respond most effectively to these challenges will lean into AI rather than suppressing it, in much the same way that the Nordic countries have succeeded by investing in new technology rather than inhibiting it.

This pragmatic approach recognizes that, particularly for small countries, sticking one’s head in the sand will not block the global development of new technology and it may leave them even more dependent on foreign expertise and firms.

But leaning into AI does not require ceding complete control to the private sector. My guess is that the Nordic countries will invest heavily in mass education, creating an AI-literate citizenry that is more aware of its limitations and better positioned to withstand disruptive economic shocks.



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DARIUS ORNSTON  
Professor and Director  
of Academic Life

Meanwhile, public sector experimentation creates opportunities to steer AI in a democratic or democracy-friendly direction. While it is fraught with risk, the relative transparency is more likely to illuminate the shortcomings of AI and, coupled with mass education, more likely to build consensus around any corrective interventions.

My experience studying the Nordic democracies over the last two and a half decades makes me very concerned about the corrosive impact of artificial intelligence. But it is precisely because I am worried about AI that I think small, liberal democracies need to lean into this technology by investing more heavily in education and experimentation.



MGA students visiting NATO Headquarters in Brussels

## ENGAGING WITH EUROPE ON ITS HOME TURF

More than a dozen MGA students travelled to Brussels in February 2025 to meet with representatives from the European Parliament, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other important bodies. The meetings were part of their coursework for Topics in Global Policy I: European Governance and Policy, taught by Adjunct Professor Sir Graham Watson, former Member of the European Parliament.

During the five-day experience, the students conducted interviews with officials to gain insights into policymaking that would help them write their final paper. The interviews focused on timely topics like the EU's evolving relationship with both the United States and Canada in a rapidly changing political and economic landscape.

A model of experiential learning, Topics in Global Policy I reflects the MGA program's real-world focus, which combines classroom theory with on-the-ground engagement to encourage practical thinking.

# REFLECTING ON THE MUNK SCHOOL'S FIRST-EVER INTERNATIONAL MPP FIELD COURSE

In February 2025, the Munk School's first-ever international field course for MPP's took 15 students to the streets of the British capital to answer a deceptively simple question: What policy lessons can we learn from other cities?

The group examined community-led housing models and their potential relevance for the housing sector back home. Their findings and experiences have been documented in a uniquely collaborative field report to which all of the students contributed.

Professor Gabriel Eidelman, who led the two-week course, says the report "blends travel reflection with policy analysis, offering fresh ideas for affordable housing and a powerful example of experiential education in action."

Called *Community Housing Lessons from London*, the 43-page document was released in May. The report was ultimately presented by the students to the City of Toronto's Housing Secretariat. The entire project was also co-designed with MPP alumni now working at both the City of Toronto and Greater London Authority.



Students touring community-led housing development in Lewisham, south London.



Students visiting the Greater London Assembly at London City Hall.

# THE FUTURE OF UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING IS HERE

**P**rofessor Nina Srinivasan Rathbun is a leading expert in international security. She's widely recognized for her research into multi-lateral nuclear non-proliferation and counterproliferation policies.

She's also the Munk School's Director of Undergraduate Programs and Student Experience.

Joining the Munk School during the 2024-2025 academic year, Srinivasan Rathbun says she was drawn by the opportunity to truly modernize undergraduate programming.

"I'm really excited about working to develop innovative ideas about the future of global affairs and public policy education in Canada," she says.

## Sharpening conversations on democracy in challenging times

Srinivasan Rathbun says she's especially excited about new courses designed to showcase the knowledge and expertise of faculty like Professor Timothy Snyder, the Munk School's Chair in Modern European History, and Professor Jason Stanley, the Bissell-Heyd-Associates Chair in American Studies.

Both professors joined the Munk School recently from Yale University, drawn to the School's focus on truth, democracy and intellectual leadership in the midst of political and economic turmoil south of the border.

"Timothy Snyder is one of the most engaging speakers I've ever heard; he brings a wealth of knowledge about history and democracy and connects it with the present in very meaningful ways," says Srinivasan Rathbun. "And Jason Stanley is a firecracker. He brings a philosophical perspective to power structures of language, changing the way we think about global issues and threats to democracy."

Both professors will be teaching new courses during the Winter 2026 term. Snyder will take the lead on Hitler and Stalin Today, a 100-level course, while Stanley will teach Understanding Global Controversies, a 200-level course.

## Igniting new perspectives through cross-disciplinary collaboration

Heading into the 2025-2026 academic year, Srinivasan Rathbun is already expanding opportunities for Munk School fellows to share their experiences with undergraduates, developing a peer mentorship program for undergrads and deepening opportunities for cross-disciplinary teaching and scholarship.

"Bringing in faculty members from different disciplines to co-teach one course – like the 100-level course Algorithmic and Digital Disruptions – allows students to explore diverse perspectives and ask more insightful questions," she says.



Nina Srinivasan Rathbun, Director, Undergraduate Programs and Student Experience; Professor, Teaching Stream  
Jason Stanley, Bissell-Heyd Associates Chair, American Studies; Professor, Department of Philosophy

She's also looking forward to introducing courses that are as diverse as the interests of Munk School students and faculty, pointing to offerings like Associate Professor Paola Salardi's Design for Social Change, Professor Marci Shore's Modernity and Its Discontents and Professor Manjari Chatterjee Miller's Peace, Conflict and Justice in the Indo-Pacific. All three courses will be offered during the Winter 2026 term.

And in her own classrooms, including the upcoming 200-level course Research Methods in Peace, Conflict and Justice, Srinivasan Rathbun plans to show how research connects to solving real problems in policy.



**LEARNING DOES NOT STOP WITH GRADUATION. WE NEED TO USE THIS TIME TO TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO INDEPENDENTLY EVALUATE AND PRODUCE KNOWLEDGE SO THEY CAN CONTINUE LEARNING FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES."**

**NINA SRINIVASAN RATHBUN**

Director, Undergraduate Programs and Student Experience;  
Professor, Teaching Stream

# AUTHORITARIANISM: WHAT'S OLD? WHAT'S NEW?



# FROM THE DESK OF TIMOTHY SNYDER

POLAND, SEPTEMBER 2025

**W**hat is old is inequality of wealth. What is new is the ability to disguise and hide that wealth, making it inaccessible to revolution. What is old are ideologies of power. What is new is the technological ability to shape the ideology around the person. What is old is the spectre of the end of the world. What is new is the pairing of tyrants with technologies that can, in fact, make the world uninhabitable. What is old is the deliberate promulgation of ignorance. What is new is the destruction of modern institutions – schools, universities, research academies, public media – that were designed to create a population capable of ruling itself. What is old is the use of an image of the other to justify repressive policies. What is new is the international cooperation of tyrants, who share consultants, techniques and memes. What is old is the sense that the centre cannot hold, the temptation of hopelessness. What is new is the knowledge that citizens can in fact defend themselves, on the battlefield as soldiers if need be (as in Ukraine), on the streets as protestors, as civil society, as voters. What must ever be new is democracy – it cannot be seen as a law of history, as the bequest of the middle class, as the result of capitalism. It is always a struggle for something that is not yet.



Timothy Snyder  
Chair in Modern European History,  
Supported by the Temerty Endowment  
for Ukrainian Studies  
Director, Public History Lab  
Professor, Munk School of Global Affairs  
& Public Policy

## FROM THE DESK OF JASON STANLEY

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 2025

**A**s the current moment shows (yet again), an entrenched culture of racism and xenophobia is the perfect fuel for fascism. Hitler begins *Mein Kampf* by decrying the wave of foreigners in Vienna, describing them as destroying the German nation. American fascism – the Jim Crow South – lasted considerably longer than German fascism. America became a democracy only with the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Since that time, American elections have standardly involved candidates in both parties appealing to racist dog-whistles to win elections (from Reagan’s “Welfare Queens” to Clinton’s “ending welfare as we know it”). Racism and xenophobia are long-standing weaknesses in American democracy, ones that are now, in American democracy’s youth, being exploited to murder it.

Racism and xenophobia are the outward expression of deep insecurity. They are politically extremely potent. Fascist movements seed the ground for the destruction of democracy by spreading unwarranted fear – about immigrant crime, about certain religions, certain races, certain sexual identities. Canada is a vibrant, wealthy and genuinely multi-racial, multi-religious, social democratic nation. And it is perhaps the world’s only one. But Canada is not immune from the forces toppling democracies everywhere. Canada’s culture of tolerance, diversity and mutual support gives its democracy resilience. They are our greatest defense in this time of global emergency.



Jason Stanley  
Bissell-Heyd-Associates Chair,  
American Studies  
Professor, Department of Philosophy

## FROM THE DESK OF LUCAN WAY

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 2025

**W**hat is new about authoritarianism is that economically developed, high income states have now become non-democratic. The field of comparative politics essentially began in the 1950s with Seymour Martin Lipset's observation – confirmed in literally hundreds of studies – that wealthy, urbanized and industrialized countries are more democratic than poor and rural ones. This correlation remains robust. According to the most recently available data, nearly all non-oil high income countries are democratic compared to just a quarter of poor countries. As Steven Levitsky and I argue, high levels of capitalist economic development – even in countries such as South Korea or Brazil with substantial income inequality – disperse resources across society. The spread of political and economic resources reduces citizens' dependence on the state and fosters a vast infrastructure of churches, labour unions, private foundations and non-profit organizations that make it harder for an autocrat to monopolize political power. In the United States, this countervailing power greatly exceeds anything available to oppositions in India, Russia, Turkey, Venezuela and other electoral authoritarian regimes.

And yet, the United States (in addition to high income Hungary) is now clearly authoritarian. With stunning speed, America under Trump has crossed the line into competitive authoritarianism, a system in which opposition parties compete in elections but governments engage in widespread authoritarian abuse. To an unprecedented degree, the administration has weaponized government agencies to intimidate the President's critics, including former Special Prosecutor Jack Smith, and United States Senator Adam Schiff. Censorship is now rampant: frivolous lawsuits and the politicization of the



Lucan Way  
Co-Director, Petro Jacyk Program  
for the Study of Ukraine  
Distinguished Professor of Democracy,  
Department of Political Science

Federal Communications Commission have led Paramount/CBS and Disney/ABC to cancel programming critical of the President. Unidentified masked agents have swept legal residents off streets across the United States with no due process. The list of abuses grows every day.

The central question for us all is how authoritarianism could have emerged in a context where the forces of democracy are so well organized and financed.



NASREEN BASHEER, MPP 2024

## LEARNING TO SHAPE DEMOCRACY

**N**asreen Basheer began the MPP program with a strong passion for humanitarian advocacy. An international student from India, she had refined her skills through her work with the Forum for Global Human Rights in Edinburgh. There, she co-led a landmark conference called Students for Change. The event focused on how universities could act as agents in supporting at-risk students amid geopolitical and humanitarian issues.

Nasreen applied that same passion, and the knowledge she gained through the MPP program, in her internship with the Ontario Ministry of Finance this past summer. During what she describes as “democracy in action,” she helped guide public consultations on whether and how the government should intervene to regulate preferred provider networks in the pharmacy sector, gathering feedback from stakeholders to inform policy decisions.

## EMPOWERING CHANGE THROUGH ADVOCACY

**F**rom the newsroom to the policy table, Katia Galati, a former journalist who has covered Indigenous and municipal issues and is now an MPP student at the Munk School, has always been passionate about amplifying voices often left unheard.

At the Munk School, her internship with the Haudenosaunee Development Institute marked a new chapter: moving from documenting systemic issues to working within policy frameworks to address them at their root. She strategized about the implications of Bill 5 and the Duty to Consult to create the Haudenosaunee Standards and Guidelines for consultant archaeologists, ensuring that development does not disturb burial sites or culturally significant areas. These guidelines will be presented to the Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism this fall.



KATIA GALATI, MPP 2026



ANASTASIIA ZVIR, MGA 2026

## ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHTS OF EVERY CHILD

In the corridors of UNICEF’s headquarters in New York, MGA student Anastasiia Zvir found herself in the centre of global advocacy. During her internship at UNICEF as a research fellow in the Public Partnerships division, she supported high-level events, including the G20 and G7, ensuring children’s voices were accounted for in political agendas and in donor-recipient relations. For Anastasiia, this work was transformative. After witnessing conflict in her own home country of Ukraine, she gained personal insight into the plight of children affected by conflict and the crucial role UNICEF plays in supporting them.

But it was a Munk School course taught by Associate Professor Paola Salardi, in which she explored the causes of conflict and socioeconomic development, that changed her “brain chemistry” and sparked a powerful desire to learn about the detrimental effects of conflict on children.

## GUIDING THE CASE FOR WOMEN’S JUSTICE

For Yasmin Rajwani, a current JD/MGA student, an internship at the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) in The Hague was a front-row seat to global justice in action. As a Gender and Law Intern in IDLO’s Research and Learning Department (The Hague/Rome), she contributed to research publications, reports on gender-based violence and analysis of discriminatory laws.

During her internship, she created a data presentation for the Case for Women’s Justice, a project that advocates for donor countries and policy stakeholders to invest in women’s human rights for years to come.



YASMIN RAJWANI, JURIS DOCTOR/MGA 2027

## AI AND THE GOVERNMENT: LEADING THE REVOLUTION

To propel AI adoption across our public service, the Munk School has partnered with the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) to launch the AI Accelerator. A new initiative to design and lead AI learning programs for senior public servants at the federal level, it empowers public servants with the knowledge and tools they need to implement AI projects in their respective departments.

The AI Accelerator began in January 2025 and connected federal senior public servants and a select group of Munk School master's students with AI and quantum computing firms. Participants engaged with some of Canada's top tech innovators and heard from 2024 Nobel Prize winner and University Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Hinton on the foundations of AI. The program expanded in the fall of 2025 with the introduction of the Ontario Public Service AI Leadership Lab for provincial senior public servants.



THE AI ACCELERATOR IS A FANTASTIC EXAMPLE OF HOW OUR UNIVERSITIES CAN PARTNER WITH GOVERNMENTS TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE IN REAL-TIME AND ADVANCE THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY IN OUR SOCIETIES."

JANICE STEIN

Munk School's Founding Director



2024 Nobel Prize winner Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Hinton delivered a talk on the foundations of AI



Founding Director Janice Stein and John Stackhouse, Senior Vice-President at RBC

## RBC REPORT: BRIDGING CANADA'S AI GAP

To better understand why Canadian businesses have been slow to embrace AI, the Munk School collaborated with the RBC Thought Leadership team to interview more than 20 senior leaders in business, public service and technology across Canada. Munk School students from both the MGA and MPP programs participated in the interviews and helped write case studies on each company.

The resulting report – *Bridging the Imagination Gap: How Canadian Companies Can Become Global Leaders in AI Adoption* – was launched at the Creative Destruction Lab's Super Session in June 2025. Key recommendations include quantifying the costs of both action and inaction; educating employees on the benefits of AI; investing in standardized, AI-compatible data governance; creating a budget reserved for AI exploration; and more.

The main message for Canadian CEOs? Dive in and see what you learn. There is a huge opportunity to increase efficiency across businesses and our public service – from healthcare to education to social services. All governments are looking to improve value and relevancy – and AI can get us there.

## WELCOMING VISITING STUDENTS FROM HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL



The Munk School has worked with Harvard Kennedy School (HKS), Harvard University's globally renowned school of public policy, to be able to welcome HKS graduate students. As visiting students, they can complete their HKS master's degree while having full access to the wide range of co-curricular and student life experiences available at the Munk School.

This arrangement makes U of T the first Canadian university to support Harvard during a volatile political period. By enabling HKS students to continue their education at the Munk School, these emerging leaders in public policy and global affairs can sustain academic momentum and gain access to unparalleled mentorship and learning opportunities.

I WANTED TO TAKE A MOMENT TO SINCERELY THANK THE HKS STAFF AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO TEAM FOR ALL THE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE YOU EXTENDED TO ME DURING LAST MONTH'S PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY."

HKS STUDENT

## THE WOLF SCHOLARS PROGRAM: PREPARING STUDENTS TO LEAD IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

A transformational partnership with the Wolf Cooper Foundation has powered the launch of The Wolf Scholars Program – a prestigious new scholarship initiative designed to develop Canada's next generation of thoughtful and ambitious leaders.

In September 2026, the program will welcome its first cohort of 16 undergraduates from across the Faculty of Arts & Science. Scholars will form a tight-knit community focused on developing critical thinking and leadership skills, fostering creativity, engaging in competitive internships and participating in international learning experiences.

They will also come together for exclusive seminars on leadership, ethics and problem solving, taught by Munk School faculty.

In addition to a rigorous academic experience, each student will receive a full tuition scholarship for all four years of their undergraduate education as well as a living stipend, ensuring they have the freedom to pursue their greatest potential.



EMILY JIN, MPP 2023

## TEACHING CANADIANS TO FLEX THEIR “OPINION MUSCLE”

For Emily Jin, MPP 2023 graduate, the program laid the foundation for a role in democratic innovation. As a public engagement consultant with MASS LBP, Emily engages Canadians in “everyday democracy” through democratic innovations such as citizens’ assemblies and interactive Democracy Fitness skill-building training.

Recently, she organized the first Canadian Youth Climate Assembly where 36 young Canadians aged 18 to 25 gathered to shape recommendations for Canada’s climate commitments, bringing their voices directly to the Parliament of Canada through the Senate’s Climate Solutions caucus.



JUST LIKE PHYSICAL FITNESS, DEMOCRACY THRIVES WHEN WE TRAIN REGULARLY.”

EMILY JIN  
MPP 2023

## MPP GRADUATE RISES THROUGH THE RANKS OF ELECTION STRATEGY

A 2016 MPP graduate, Guy Miscampbell is now a leading voice in political strategy, informing election campaigns, advising leaders and analyzing public opinion in the UK and Canada.

The MPP program turned his passion for politics into a successful career, arming him with skills and expertise in elections, quantitative analysis, cross-border policy and the ability to “speak the language” of both political and government officials.

Before taking on his current role as Director of J.L. Partners, a polling and strategy company in the UK, Guy worked as a special advisor to 10 Downing Street with the Department for Education, where he gained experience influencing British governments and political strategy. In 2021, he led a polling operation and battleground mapping for the Conservative Party of Canada’s federal election campaign.



GUY MISCAMBELL, MPP 2016



JEREMY BRUCE, MGA 2016

## FROM STUDENT LEADERSHIP TO GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

**W**hen Jeremy Bruce co-chaired the Munk School's graduate student conference on democracy, he had no idea a panelist would recruit him as a consultant in Ottawa, eventually launching his career in government.

Today, the 2016 MGA graduate is Director of Canada-US Relations at Global Affairs Canada. Working as the minister's point person on Arctic foreign policy, he helped launch a \$35 million initiative to appoint Canada's first Arctic ambassador in 15 years.

Jeremy says the Munk School's rigorous interdisciplinary academic training in economics, history and politics, along with practical skills left a lasting impact. "It taught me to be operational, not just analytical," he says.

## SHAPING THE GLOBAL FUTURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ONLINE

**F**or MGA alum Nikki Gladstone, a passion for human rights in the digital age sparked an interest in the intersection of technology and democracy. As the Director of RightsCon, the world's leading summit on human rights in the digital age, organized by Access Now, she brings together a global community of activists, tech companies, policymakers, business leaders, technologists, academics and the UN.

Classes with former Munk School Senior Fellow Carmen Cheung and Professor Ron Deibert gave her a strong understanding of the relationship between democracy and the digital space. Gladstone says her fellowships with the Digital Public



NIKKI GLADSTONE, MGA 2017

Square and the Innovation Policy Lab exposed her to how citizens take action online and how innovation can facilitate accessibility – both key to orchestrating global conversations on the future of technology and human rights.



NOAH RUDDER  
Bachelor of Arts, Trudeau Centre for  
Peace, Conflict and Justice, 2025

## FROM THE HALLS OF THE MUNK SCHOOL TO THE SPIRES OF OXFORD

**W**hen Noah Rudder heard he had won a 2025 Rhodes Scholarship, he was on stage playing Detective Poirot in *Murder on the Orient Express*. His character wrestled with morality and justice – themes that formed the backbone of Noah’s academic journey at the Munk School in the Peace, Conflict and Justice Studies undergraduate program and his passion for equity, housing and foreign policy.

During his program, Noah served as President of the Peace, Conflict and Justice Society, elevating student voices and advancing equity initiatives. He worked with senior leadership at Victoria College to implement the Scarborough Charter on campus to put its anti-racism principles into practice and was an active contributing member of the Munk School’s Anti-Black Racism Task Force, an initiative that advances Black inclusion in higher education.

This fall, he is attending Oxford University to pursue a Master of Public Policy, where he is among 11 Canadian student recipients and more than 100 young scholars from around the world.

## FROM THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: AN UNDERGRADUATE JOURNEY

**B**efore enrolling in the European Affairs minor at the Munk School, Ana Grace Rans Kolakovic had already walked the halls of the Parliament of Canada as a House of Commons page – an experience that would fire up a passion for global politics and international affairs. Her Munk School undergraduate classes inspired her to ask challenging questions about liberalism, autocracy and authoritarianism, and gave her a strong foundation for studying global issues and democracy. It was in a class led by Professor Robert Austin on Eastern and Southeastern Europe where discussions about conflict, post-conflict state-building and the fragility of democracy left a lasting impression.

Currently pursuing her Master’s of Public Administration, part of a dual degree program with the Munk School and the London School of Economics (LSE) which will see her embark in September on her Master’s of Global Affairs in Toronto, she hopes to continue studying democratic policy as she works toward a future career as a diplomat or civil servant.



ANA GRACE RANS KOLAKOVIC  
BA, Political Science, 2025



**[THE MUNK SCHOOL] REALLY  
OPENED MY EYES TO THE  
FRAGILITY OF DEMOCRACY,  
AND HOW HARD IT IS TO  
CREATE AND MAINTAIN  
A DEMOCRATIC STATE.”**

ANA GRACE RANS KOLAKOVIC  
BA, Political Science, 2025

## THE GLOBAL IDEAS INSTITUTE: WHERE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS THINK GLOBALLY

At the Munk School, university students aren't the only ones preparing to lead in global affairs and public policy. Through the School's Global Ideas Institute (GII), secondary students engage in immersive, hands-on learning. Working in teams, students collaborate with U of T student mentors, faculty and leading experts to address some of the most critical global challenges of our time.

In 2024-25, GII participants addressed a pressing issue: In an increasingly digital world, approximately 2.6 billion people remain offline. How can we bridge this digital divide and ensure equitable access to digital technologies, particularly in underserved communities and developing nations?

To explore answers to this question, 26 teams participated from across the GTA. Next year, the program will expand to 37 teams beyond the greater Toronto area.

### 2025 CARE CONFERENCE FUELS CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Last year, the Munk School joined forces with the University of British Columbia, the University of Guelph and Sciences Po, France to launch the Climate Adaptation, Resilience and Empowerment (CARE) Program.

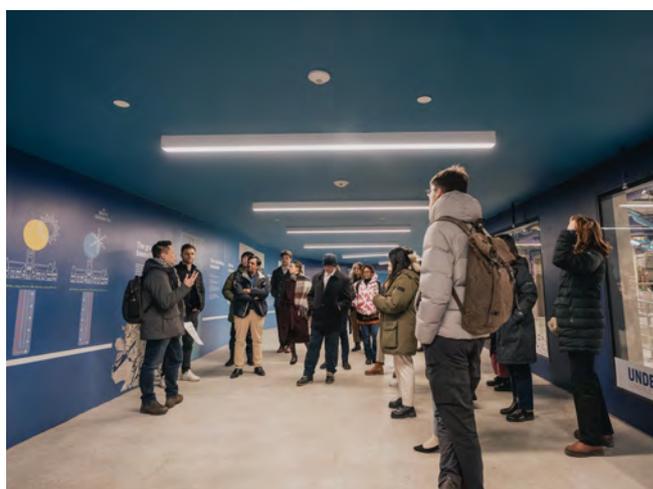
Made possible by a landmark gift of more than \$10 million from Fondation DRG and spear-headed by Sciences Po, CARE is a first-of-its-kind initiative that aims to drive cross-cultural graduate student training and faculty exchanges on the urgent issue of climate change.

In March 2025, the Munk School hosted the inaugural CARE Conference. Bringing together more than 100 students, faculty and leaders, including representatives from all four CARE partners, the event explored the theme "Integrated Approaches to Climate Change: Adaptation and Mitigation."

The 2026 CARE Conference is set to take place in Paris. Ultimately, the partners hope to welcome more post-secondary institutions to the initiative with a goal to engage thousands of students in the next five years.



2025 CARE Conference participants



CARE Conference participants touring U of T's Landmark Project



CANADA IS NOT IMMUNE  
FROM THE FORCES TOPPLING  
DEMOCRACIES EVERYWHERE.

CANADA'S CULTURE OF  
TOLERANCE, DIVERSITY AND  
MUTUAL SUPPORT GIVES ITS  
DEMOCRACY RESILIENCE.  
THEY ARE OUR GREATEST  
DEFENSE IN THIS TIME  
OF GLOBAL EMERGENCY.

JASON STANLEY

Bissell-Heyd Associates Chair, American Studies  
Professor, Department of Philosophy



## EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S GLOBAL LEADERS

### **YOUR IMPACT, OUR FUTURE**

As we reflect on the past year, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have supported the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy.

Your generosity has empowered our students, faculty and researchers to address the complex global issues that define our time. The impact of your contributions is felt in every classroom discussion, research breakthrough and community partnership.

As we look ahead, we invite you to continue supporting the Munk School's mission to nurture the next generation of global leaders. Together, we can drive forward solutions that make a meaningful difference in the world.

**[munkschool.utoronto.ca/donate](https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/donate)**



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