



UNIVERSITY OF  
TORONTO

**BRN** Black  
Research  
Network

# BRN Research Symposium

**April 14, 2025** / 8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

**Alumni Hall, Victoria University  
in the University of Toronto**

Sponsored by:



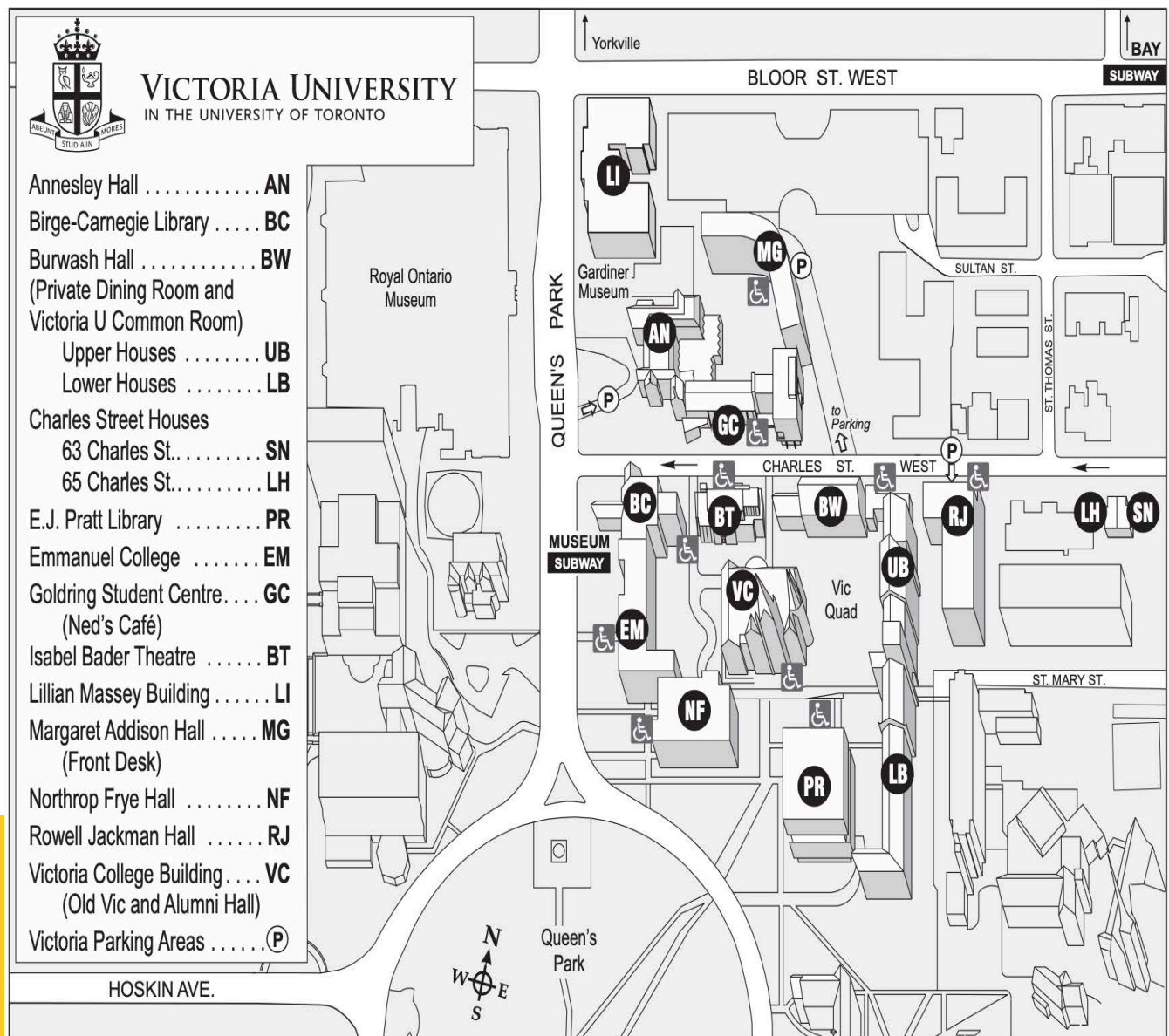
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

**B** Black at  
University of  
Toronto  
Mississauga

# Find the Venue

The BRN Research Symposium will take place at Alumni Hall at Victoria University in the University of Toronto. Alumni Hall is located in Victoria College, which is in the center of this historical campus.

Find it using the map below:



# Director's Message

It is an honour to welcome you to the inaugural BRN Research Symposium. This event provides an opportunity not only to learn from one another but to celebrate our achievements as scholars, researchers and innovators.

Part of the magic of the BRN is witnessing how our members bend academic silos to drive advancements across various fields. This symposium allows us to engage in meaningful discussions about the profound impact these efforts have in academia and beyond the walls of this institution.

In line with our mission to promote Black research excellence at the University of Toronto, this space aims to bring together researchers from all corners of the tri-campus to strengthen our connections.

Our event theme is **“Advancing Black Excellence through Research, Mentorship, and Community Impact.”** Throughout the day, you will find opportunities to network and participate in workshops that foster mentorship.

We will also be recognizing the next generation of scholars via our partnership with the U of T Black Graduate Students' Association.

I hope you find today inspiring. Personally, I am excited to see how the activities, keynotes and presenters will spark thoughtful conversations. I invite you to reach out to us to discuss how we can build on the insights gained from this symposium as we approach the BRN's fifth year.



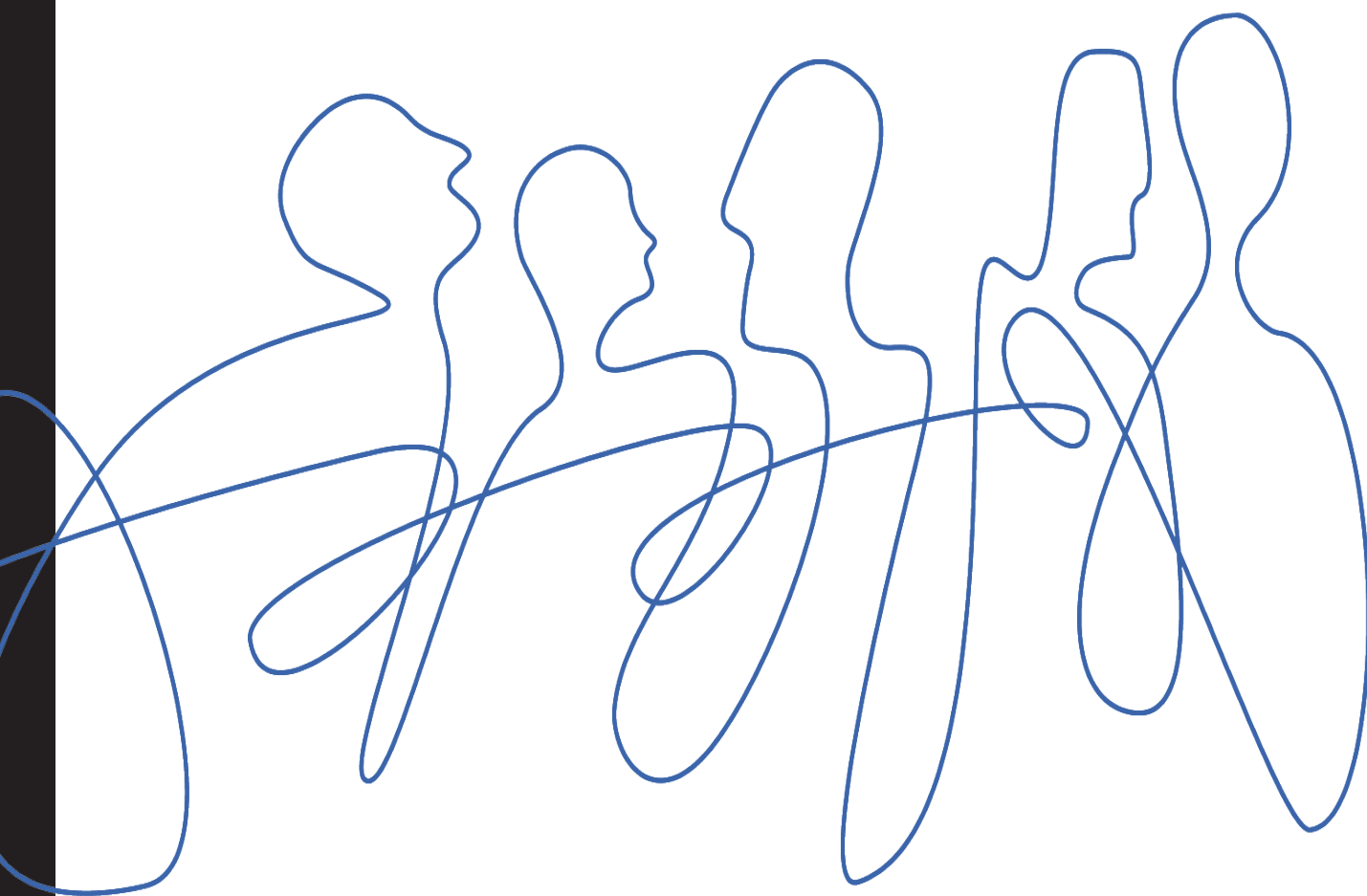
**Enid Montague**  
**BRN Director**

# Who We Are:

The Black Research Network (BRN) is a University of Toronto Institutional Strategic Initiative (ISI) launched October 2021. The mission of BRN is to promote Black excellence at University of Toronto and enhance the research capacity of Black scholars within the university and on the world stage.

## **The BRN is advancing this work with our promise to:**

- Increase the visibility of Black scholars' research accomplishments at U of T
- Sustain a cross-divisional, interdisciplinary network of Black scholars
- Facilitate robust research engagements across the University and internationally



# Symposium Program

<b>8:30 AM – 9:00 AM</b>	Registration and Breakfast	VCFOY1 (First Floor Foyer)
<b>9:00 AM – 9:15 AM</b>	Opening Remarks  Land Acknowledgement and Blessings: Aina - Nia Ayo'dele	Alumni Hall (VC 112)
<b>9:15 AM – 9:45 AM</b>	Keynote Address by Professor Jude Kong	
<b>9:45 AM – 10:15 AM</b>	Research Highlight: Professor Timothy Bryan (IGNITE Grant Recipient) and Professor Mireille Norris (Faculty Fellows Recipient)	
<b>10:15 AM - 10:30 AM</b>	Black Graduates Students Association Introduction	
<b>10:30 AM – 10:45 AM</b>	Coffee Break and Poster Viewing	VCFOY1 (First Floor Foyer)
<b>10:45 AM – 11:15 AM</b>	Keynote Address by Professor Notisha Massaquoi	Alumni Hall (VC 112)
<b>11:15 AM- 12:00 PM</b>	Research Sharing: Rocket Pitches	
<b>12:00 PM – 1:30 PM</b>	Mentor Networking Lunch	
<b>1:30 PM – 2:30 PM</b>	Collaborative Networking with Danielle Taschereau Mamers (Faculty and Postdoc Fellows)  Thriving in Academia Workshop for Graduate Students with Adrian Leckie	Alumni Hall (VC 112)  VC115
<b>2:30 PM – 3:45 PM</b>	Closing Remarks & Networking Reception	Alumni Hall (VC 112)  VCFOY1 (First Floor Foyer)



# Meet our Keynote Speakers



**Jude Kong** is an Assistant Professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. His principal research program focuses on developing and deploying innovative AI, mathematical and data science methodologies and technologies for decision-makers in communities, public health, government and industry.

Kong is a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Community-Oriented Artificial Intelligence & Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases.



**Notisha Massaquoi** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health and Society at U of T Scarborough (UTSC). Massaquoi is a community-based researcher utilizing mixed methods to interrogate anti-Black racism and highlight the experiences of Black communities navigating institutional structures and systems in Canada, with a primary focus on the social determinants of health.

She is the inaugural recipient of the Connaught Major Research Challenge for Black Researchers award.

# Today's Sessions

## **Collaborative Networking Faculty and Postdoc Fellows**

Facilitated by Danielle Taschereau Mamers, in this fast-paced networking session, participants will have the opportunity to connect with other BRN members through brief focused conversations about current and future research, with a focus on seeding collaborations and deepening relationships.

*Danielle Taschereau Mamers is the managing director of the Critical Digital Humanities Initiative at the University of Toronto.*

## **Thriving in Academia: Strategies for Black Graduate Student Success**

Facilitated by Adrian Leckie, this interactive workshop is intended to provide Black graduate students with practical strategies for overcoming the obstacles of academia and establishing a solid foundation for personal and professional success.

*Adrian Leckie is the program team lead of the Imani Program at the University of Toronto Scarborough.*

## **Mentorship Session**

Graduate students and early-career researchers have the chance to interact with distinguished faculty members at this special mentorship lunch. Participants will create relationships that support Black achievement in academia and beyond by gaining insights into research, career growth and community impact through meaningful conversations.

*Meet the mentors on the next page!*



# Meet your Mentors

## **Alissa Trotz**

Professor, Caribbean Studies, New College and Director, Women and Gender Studies, U of T (Black Research Network Steering Committee Member)

## **Ann Lopez**

Professor, Department of Leadership and Higher Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

## **Jewel Amoah**

Assistant Dean, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design

## **Kamari Clarke**

Distinguished Professor, Centre for Criminology & Sociolegal Studies and the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, Faculty of Law

## **Martin Kengo**

Manager, Black Initiatives, Office of the Vice-President and Principal, University of Toronto Mississauga

## **Maydianne Andrade**

Professor of Biological Sciences and former Vice-Dean, Faculty Affairs and Equity, U of T Scarborough (Black Research Network Steering Committee Member)

## **Melanie Kirby-Allen**

Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Temerty Faculty of Medicine

## **Mohammad Basheer**

Assistant Professor, Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering

## **Phillip Asare**

Assistant Professor, Institute for Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education and Practice, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering

## **Rhonda McEwen**

President and Vice-Chancellor, Victoria University and Professor, Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology, U of T Mississauga (Black Research Network Steering Committee Member)





# Poster Sessions

- Anuoluwapo Makinde, UTSC, Geography and Planning, **“Diasporic Imagination as Sound”**
- Dimpho Radebe, St. George, Department of Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry (Engineering Education Research), Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, **“Illuminating the Shadows of Engineering Education: A Black Queer Feminist Perspective”**
- Kalee-jo Kiluu-Ngila, St. George, Factor Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, **“Exploring the Link Between Parent Occupations and Autistic Traits in Typically-Developing Children”**
- Magdalee Brunache, St. George, Political Science, **“Theorizing the Role of Diaspora within Transnational Social Movements”**
- Mahalia Dixon, CAMH, Margaret and Wallace McCain Centre for Child, Youth and Family Mental Health Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), **“Culturally Responsive Care: Insights and Recommendations from Black Youth in Ontario”**
- Mercedes Forde-Sobers, St. George, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, **“The Black Joy Art Initiative: Exploring Black Mental Health Through Art and Storytelling”**
- Nazareth Tsegay, St. George, Institute Studies in Engineering Education & Practice, **“Understanding the Health Equity Data Landscape”**
- Rayshaun Whyte, UTM, University of Toronto Mississauga Library, **“Seeing in Colour: Building a Database to Illuminate Black Canadian Health Inequities”**
- Sahra Mohamud, St. George, OISE, Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning, **“Exploring Teachers’ Perceptions and Pedagogical Approaches towards Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students in Canadian K-8 Schools”**
- Sanjana Jones, St. George, Department of Public Health in Black Health, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, **“Building and Bridging Black Futures Beyond Birth in Brampton: Towards A ‘Black Woman-Person First’ Approach to Postpartum Mental Health”**
- Shernell Hines, St. George, Faculty of Arts & Science; Department of Psychology, **“What about your Friends: Examining cross-raced friendship formation with the Opportunity Hypothesis”**

# Our Sponsors

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Victoria University in the University of Toronto for their generous sponsorship of the BRN Research Symposium.



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IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

The BRN Research Symposium was also made possible by the gracious support of the Black Opportunities Fund, developed by Black at UTM.



**Join us as we promote Black research excellence: [brn.utoronto.ca](http://brn.utoronto.ca)**



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