

The SDG Accord

The University and College Sector's Collective Response to the Global Goals



SDG Accord Case Study

Integration of SDGs in

- Institutional governance/strategic level
- SDGs in research
- SDGs in campus operations
- SDGs in curriculum development
- SDGs in student engagement activities
- SDGs into community activities
- SDGs at a whole-institution level

Focus on

- Goal 1 - No poverty
- Goal 2 - Zero hunger
- Goal 3 - Good health and wellbeing
- Goal 4 - Quality education
- Goal 5 - Gender equality
- Goal 6 - Clean water and sanitation
- Goal 7 - Affordable and clean energy
- Goal 8 - Decent work and economic growth
- Goal 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Goal 10 - Reduced inequalities
- Goal 11 - Sustainable cities and communities
- Goal 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- Goal 13 - Climate action
- Goal 14 - Life below water
- Goal 15 - Life on land
- Goal 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions
- Goal 17 - Partnerships for the goals

Summary:

In 2015, Mohawk College launched its flagship access initiative, City School, that brings high standards of educational excellence to socio-economically marginalized communities in Hamilton and surrounding regions. City School offers tuition-free college credit courses, micro-credentials and essential skills workshops through a combination of partner sites and two state-of-the-art mobile classrooms.

City School uses a proven four-phase programming model, delivering a robust suite of activities and services to address key skills gaps, learning readiness, wraparound life-stabilization supports, and career and sector awareness for demand-led occupations. Each of the four phases are built to support self-growth, flexibility in learning, inclusivity, and enriching experiences. Individuals can enter and exit City School programming at whichever phase(s) align best with their needs, interests, and goals.

To date, City School's innovative and scalable program delivery has fostered the successful transition of over 4,100 learners to further education and employment. This success is a

SDG Accord Case Study

result of partnerships with approximately 40 human-service agencies and over 150 business and industry employers.

City School has made a transformative impact on the lives of underserved and underrepresented individuals and families across the region, substantively realizing brighter futures and better employment prospects.

Learners who have gone through the program say "At a time when I was struggling emotionally and financially City School welcomed me in and provided a judgment free environment to learn a new skill. [...] I'm so grateful to have found this opportunity when I needed it most. It has given me new initiative and fresh perspective on what I am capable of. Thank you, City School."

Outline the 3 key benefits of integrating this theme:

- 1.** Flexible course formatting and diverse delivery sites and modalities (i.e., online, in-person and hybrid learning opportunities) fosters increased accessibility and engagement.
- 2.** Customized, industry-specific career exploration programming raises awareness, and in some cases demystifies, current and anticipated future in-demand sectors and roles.
- 3.** Inclusive recruitment and retention strategies ensures the participation of women, Indigenous peoples, Black and racialized persons, persons with disabilities, persons who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, and those experiencing long-term and intergenerational poverty

Outline the barriers or challenges encountered in integrating this theme and how you overcame these:

- 1.** Securing the funding to offer tuition free learning. This continues to be addressed through maintaining strong relationships with current partners and communities, and an institutional commitment to invest in what Mohawk believes in.
- 2.** The ability to offer wrap-around support to learners who each have their own unique needs, circumstances, and learning styles. This is addressed through a continuous effort to tap into the knowledge and expertise of local community leaders most familiar with supporting prospective or current learners.
- 3.** Implementing appropriate, barrier-free admissions processes that prioritize equity and diversity. This is addressed through strong collaboration with community partners and the creation of unique staff roles, each of whom can help inform, advise, and provide the right supports at the right time for the diverse needs of learners.

Please outline your conclusions and recommendations to others:

The greatest conclusion drawn from this case study is the importance of investing in what you believe in. City School brings Mohawk College's "Future Ready" motto to life by investing in the people who can and will fill gaps in the workforce, contributing to positive change in their communities. Together with community and industry partners, City School is

SDG Accord Case Study

able to address these challenging skill gaps through education and meaningful work opportunities for underserved and underrepresented groups.

The success of City School is a direct result of strength in numbers and the idea that everyone has a role to play in lifting up a community. The initiative is a demand-led program where employers, community organizations, educators, and learners all have a seat at the table. The flagship access program offers a prime example of what can be achieved on a larger scale if stakeholders continue to work together to mobilize the necessary supports and resources in building communities that are Future Ready.