

# DOUGHERTY FAMILY COLLEGE

## Newsletter



### DEAN'S CORNER

Dear Dougherty Family College Friends,

In Caldwell, New Jersey, Bobbi Wilson was racially profiled when she responded to the statewide campaign to eradicate spotted lanternflies, a highly invasive species. Bobbi mixed her own insect repellent with ingredients she found on TikTok and got to work saving the trees in her community. Bobbi is a 9-year-old Black girl whose neighbor reported her to the police department when he saw her spraying the trees, declaring that he was fearful of what “the little black woman” was up to. Fortunately, when the police approached Bobbi, her mother was nearby to intervene, and the encounter ended peacefully, but Bobbi’s family says this experience was very traumatic for her. Thankfully, the STEM community has embraced this budding young scientist. Even the Yale School for Public health has honored Bobbi and encouraged her to pursue her STEM dreams.

There are others like Bobbi Wilson, scholars from underrepresented communities with interests in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. We must cultivate these interests and provide the next generation of ethically responsible leaders with the foundation necessary to enter these fields. Although the need for STEM graduates continues to grow rapidly, STEM academic programs continue to lack racial representation. At the DFC, we are doing our part to address the disparities. We are excited to encourage the STEM dreams of our scholars, and because of a very generous grant from the 3M Foundation, we started the DFC STEM Preparation Program. The three major goals of the STEM Preparation Program are the following: (1) prepare scholars to successfully complete their calculus course, (2) provide opportunities for scholars to explore different careers in STEM fields, and (3) allow scholars to participate in a STEM summer research project. We created a DFC STEM club, and one of the field trips is featured in this newsletter. We will foster more interest in STEM by offering our new Associate of Arts degree with a Pre-STEM concentration in fall 2024.

When I think about Bobbi as an emerging and courageous young scientist, I think about our amazing DFC scholars who also have a strong interest in STEM careers. Our scholars like Bobbi need a community to uplift and support them. I am extremely grateful to the Heim family and all of you who serve as strong and committed community partners and provide ongoing support to our scholars as they prepare for STEM and other professional careers.

Although it is still winter, each day we increase our minutes of daylight, and that light signals renewed hope and energy. Our scholars are full of energy and excitement as they return for the spring semester. They remind us of our purpose as educators and the importance of our mission. We are called to do our part to eradicate educational inequities so our scholars may use their gifts and talents to address the world’s greatest needs.

Much Gratitude,

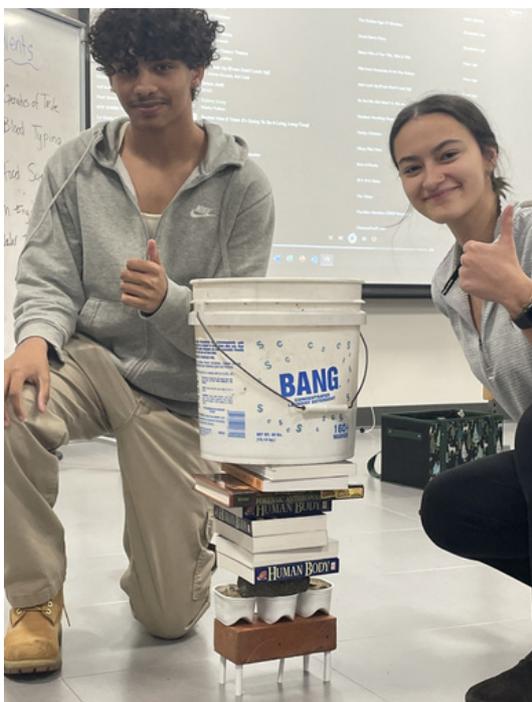
*Buffy Smith*

Dean and Frey Endowed Chair, Dougherty Family College

## New STEM Preparation Program and STEM Club

The Dougherty Family College STEM Preparation Program (sponsored by 3M Foundation) and the STEM club are facilitated by Professor Heather Isernhagen and the DFC STEM faculty. The STEM club provides scholars with an opportunity to participate in off-campus activities. On a recent field trip, scholars met with soil scientists at the University of Minnesota Soil Testing Laboratory and the Urban Forestry Outreach and Research Nursery. Scholars experienced how science is conducted in the laboratory and in urban environments.

DFC second-year scholar Koko Agbobby shared her reflections. “It was interesting to be in a real-life lab, see all their equipment, and learn how their research gets funded. It was great to see how involved they are with the community.” Scholars also explored many facets of natural history at the Bell Museum, from the origins of the universe to their backyard right here in Minnesota.



## Internship Partner

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This past summer, Cynthia Yang invested eight weeks of her summer break, inspiring North Minneapolis youth to explore the possibilities of STEM-based learning. When staff from Summit Academy OIC's youth division, the Northside STEM District, spoke at Yang's Dougherty Family College professional development class, she decided to take advantage of the summer internship opportunity. Throughout her time, Cynthia displayed flexibility and adaptability to different types of tasks and situations. Northside STEM appreciates her dedication to learning, positive attitude, and willingness to be a team player at various events.

Cynthia helped create engaging STEM experiences for youth aged K-8th grade. Aboard the Beast Mobile Innovation Lab, a mobile classroom on a double-decker bus, Yang engaged with students as they completed a series of modules and lessons focusing on circuits, drones, 3D printing, and more. She also assisted students with STEM activities at the monthly STEM Saturday events. Northside STEM seeks to empower DFC interns with these opportunities to hone their STEM knowledge, public speaking, and teaching skills. Together with Dougherty Family College, Northside STEM is committed to inspiring and preparing the leaders of today, tomorrow, and the future.

## New Community Board Member

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### Sophia Khan



Sophia Khan is a seasoned executive with over 20 years of experience in leading large-scale organizational change. She led strategies resulting in increased employee engagement, diverse talent development, career progression and cross-functional effectiveness through impactful results and centered collaboration, while managing financial and business responsibilities. She is a committed volunteer, mentor, executive coach, and advocate for human rights. Sophia lives in Minneapolis with her two children.

# Impact Driven Philanthropy

In September 2022, an anonymous donor started a match challenge campaign. Dougherty Family College (DFC) will receive \$10 million when it raises a matching \$10 million. By adding \$20 million to the Dougherty Family College endowment, we can provide scholarships for every DFC scholar – closing the education and prosperity gap for 300 scholars every year and changing the trajectory of future generations. Together, we can make this a reality. This matching gift is a rare opportunity to secure the future for a college that changes lives, families, and communities. Meeting our goal will ensure that DFC is forever a force for the common good.

To unlock the match, DFC must raise \$10 million by June 30, 2023.

- Pledges and estate gift commitments count toward the match if made by June 30.
- Gifts can support any area of DFC (such as scholarships, meals, laptops, textbooks, metro passes, program support, etc.), excluding capital expenditures.
- Also included are scholarships that allow DFC graduates to earn their bachelor's degree at St. Thomas.

Six years ago, Dougherty Family College made a promise to minimize the financial, academic, and social barriers for scholars...to earn their associate degree and provide them with a seamless pathway to their bachelor's degree. We need your help to guarantee that promise.

Please give [online](#) or connect with Emily Wingfield, [ewingfield@stthomas.edu](mailto:ewingfield@stthomas.edu) or call 256-762-6456 to discuss your gift.



## New DFC Alumni Board Members

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### Janette Mendoza



Human Resource Management (major)

Senior Graduating with Bachelor's Degree in May 2023

During Janette's time at DFC, one thing that helped her succeed was the support given to her. Scholars at DFC know they are cared for and have support to rely on when navigating college difficulties. She wants to be a part of the DFC advisory board to help DFC scholars succeed. She will use her experience at DFC and her perspective as an alum who transferred to the four-year campus to improve and enhance the experience of future scholars.

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### Aiesha Osman

Environmental Studies (major), Interfaith Leadership & Psychology (minor)

Senior Graduating with Bachelor's Degree in May 2023

DFC is a place close to Aiesha's heart, and she wants to give back to the community and positively advance the cause. During the 2020-2021 school year, she served on the DFC Student Advisory Board, and she learned from that experience that student input and feedback are essential when making future decisions. As a recent alum, she understands the mindset the students are in and wants to help advance the DFC mission.

