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## Influential Women's group awards funding for VR at Seneca

By Julia Galt

The fear of public speaking is soon to become a much less formidable challenge for Seneca students.

The King Township Women of Influence Giving Circle came together for their 3rd annual meeting Nov. 26, awarding a \$10,000 donation towards the installation of an InStage Virtual Reality Tool at the college's King Campus. The event, which took place in Seneca's Magna Hall, involved a three hour deliberation and debate as the four competing projects pitched their ideas to the judges in an effort to secure the \$10,000 donation. Impact to students, benefits to the community, and total amount of affected individuals are all taken into account when deciding who will receive the grant.

The winning project, "Improving Public Speaking Skills Using VR", was presented by Sheila Bruce, Manager

for Career Development at Seneca; Imran Mouna, co-founder of InStage; and Chris Dudley, Director of Entrepreneurship at HELIX, Seneca's entrepreneurship incubator. By installing an InStage Virtual Reality Unit at King Campus, the project aims to develop and critically improve public speaking skills through the recreation of scenarios like presentations, panel interviews, and elevator pitches. Not only will this benefit all students looking to increase their public speaking skills, it also has particular benefit to those in community-facing programs such as nursing, social work, and policing. The grant will be put towards the installation and maintenance of the InStage VR Unit.

"It was an incredible opportunity to start this journey at HELIX, and now see this expand across Seneca after the success of having career services implement some of these programs at the Newnham Campus. It's exciting to see

now that King will have access to this, and hopefully soon Markham as well," said Mouna, referencing another Seneca campus that may soon benefit from the InStage technology.

"As a woman myself, I think it's an incredible opportunity to work with community champions to launch something at this campus that has clearly been a success at Newnham. I think The Giving Circle is a great initiative, a great project that these women are supporting here at this campus for the third year, and I'm really proud to be a part of it," Bruce stated.

The King Township Women of Influence Giving Circle is comprised of women across various backgrounds, careers, and experience, all with a special connection to the Township. Founded in 2016, the group holds regular meetings to discuss areas of change

and growth within Seneca's King Campus. Funds for the Giving Circle are raised through a yearly \$1,000 donation by each member.

"It always came down to where we would have the most impact to the broadest base of students, and also considering the community and the benefit from a community perspective," stated Daniela Gatti, District Vice President of GTA North Scotiabank, Toronto Region, and Giving Circle member. "It felt that our contribution was going to have the greatest impact to a greater number of students with that one particular project."

As has been done since their inaugural meeting in 2016, the King Township Women of Influence Giving Circle will meet a year later to see how their donation has made an impact to Seneca's community and students.

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A new Mayor Steve Pellegrini helped Sabrina and Sam Furfaro cut the ribbon at Nik Nak Nook.

## Nik Nak Nook has what you're looking for

By Mark Pavilons

A new Schomberg business has just what you need.

Nik Nak Nook opened its doors recently and the new store offers general merchandise and party supplies. They also offer a variety of gift items and seasonal merchandise.

The owners take pride in "making sure our guests have a great shopping experience, from the moment they walk into our store to the moment they leave. Our mission is to have our guests feel comfortable and have a seamless shopping experience."

Being locally owned and operated, the owners try their very best to try and cater to the needs of the community, and always try to source out products that a guest may be looking for and cannot find.

"Being local to the community, I felt there was a great need for a store like ours. Because we offer a variety of general merchandise, this makes it a lot easier for locals to find everyday essential items without having to drive to the next town."

"Everything in our store has been hand selected with pride. We also offer unique items (niknaks) that appeal to many. We have been told our store is a lot of fun and hope to continue to create this shopping experience for years to come."

The outlet is open Monday and Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Wednesday to Friday until 8 p.m.; Saturdays until 6 p.m. and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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