



Dr. Peter Bender dedicated more than five decades to John Abbott College, leaving an extraordinary legacy as an educator, mentor, coach, and community leader. Joining the College at its founding in 1971, he served the institution for 53 years and became one of its most respected and beloved members.

A psychology professor whose courses were often described as transformative, Peter challenged students to think critically while encouraging their personal growth and development. Generations of students remember him not only for what he taught, but for the confidence and curiosity he inspired. He also taught at McGill University and served as a visiting lecturer in Hawaii and England.

Born in Worcester, England, Peter immigrated to Canada as a child. He earned degrees in Education and Psychology from McGill University before completing a doctorate in psychology at Florida State University.

Peter's influence extended well beyond the classroom. From 1979 to 1991, he coached the John Abbott Islanders men's hockey team, mentoring student-athletes with the same dedication he brought to teaching. A respected sport psychologist, he worked with numerous national teams, including Water Polo Canada, and served on Canada's Olympic mission staff at the 1984 Los Angeles and 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

An accomplished athlete, Peter starred with the McGill Redmen football program, helping lead the team to the 1969 Ontario-Quebec championship and a Vanier Cup appearance. He was named Rookie of the Year in 1967 and was later inducted into the McGill Sports Hall of Fame.

Throughout his career, Peter played a key role in developing and strengthening the Psychology discipline at John Abbott College. In recognition of his exceptional contributions to teaching, scholarship, and College life, he was named Professor Emeritus in 2004.

Peter's greatest legacy lives in the thousands of students, athletes, colleagues, and friends whose lives he enriched. Few individuals have shaped the John Abbott experience as profoundly as Peter, whose influence continues to be felt across the College community. His wisdom, generosity, and unwavering commitment to helping others reach their potential made him a cherished member of the John Abbott family and an inspiration to generations.

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