



**UNIVERSITY  
OF ALBERTA**

# **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2021-2022**



The University of Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous Peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit and many others whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.







## YOUR UNIVERSITY, OUR COMMUNITY

For more than 100 years, the University of Alberta, its campuses, labs, lecture halls and gathering spaces have nurtured generations of thinkers, innovators, change-makers and leaders—but the real magic happens in the community, where the power of partnerships is making a better world. Thanks to our vast array of community partners—from small business owners to tech startups to charitable and non-profit organizations to Indigenous elders and all orders of government—our students and researchers are collaborating and co-creating solutions to solve the problems of today and creating ideas that will have impacts well into the future.

We are guided by Henry Marshall Tory's promise to uplift the whole people. The University of Alberta is a place for information, discovery, lifelong learning, recreation, investment, economic diversification opportunities and community building. As a proud member of a diverse and vibrant community, locally and abroad, we fulfil that promise every time we answer a simple question: How can we help?

In this 2021-22 Report to the Community, we are delighted to share some of the answers to that question and give our thanks to you, our partners and our community, for working with us to make the impossible possible.



Welcome to the University of Alberta's 2021-22 Report to the Community. Our strength as a research and teaching institution—our ability to innovate and drive change and to deepen education and learning—is dependent on a vast network of partnerships and connections with communities near and far. The last two years have taught us all just how critical those connections are. Before COVID-19, no one imagined that we could go from learning of a new virus to the discovery and distribution of life-saving vaccines in less than a year. We can see now how much is possible when communities come together, focus our collective energies and share expertise and resources.

This Report to the Community is further demonstration of how this kind of community collaboration enhances and strengthens the well-being of communities. Our work is guided by our five-year community-engagement priorities: people and culture; sustainability; research and innovation; students; and community engagement. Our partners are diverse and they enrich our campus through their lived-experiences and expertise. They include a wide range of community partners who identify needs and issues requiring research assistance, corporate and industry partners who want to create change, and everyday citizens who simply want to help find solutions.

We are immensely proud of our collaborations and partnerships and the work we accomplish together. We are all stronger—more creative and effective—when we co-create and partner with the community for a better tomorrow.

Bill Flanagan  
President and Vice-Chancellor





The University of Alberta embarked on a consultation project almost three years ago to learn what community engagement means to our external stakeholders in the context of the institution's mandate of teaching, research and learning. We continue to build upon what we heard as we work towards fulfilling a three-year plan to address the recommendations made by the communities we serve. One such recommendation was reintroducing this Report to the Community to share stories about the opportunities these partnerships provide for our researchers and students, and the effects their work has on our external communities.

The portfolio I lead, External Relations, is immersed in engagement. We are storytellers. We engage with people and share their stories. These stories are rooted in research and innovation, in economic development and diversification advances, in discoveries such as COVID-19 vaccines, student achievements, and defining a sustainable future. Most importantly, we tell the stories of how the community and the university together nurture an ecosystem to create impacts.

Together with our partners, we can create and share beautiful stories of how we collectively bring strengths to the table and make lives better locally and globally. Together, we articulate what it means to be a change-maker, a community builder, a truth seeker, a problem solver, and what it takes to be a world shaper.

Thank you for the opportunity to share just a few of our stories with you.

Elan MacDonald  
Vice-President, External Relations

**Three colleges**  
with **13 faculties:**

Health Sciences

Natural and Applied  
Sciences

Social Sciences  
and Humanities

**3 stand-alone**  
**faculties**



**500+**  
graduate  
programs

**220+**  
undergraduate  
programs

**42,000+**  
students  
from **162**  
countries

**Fast  
Facts**

In 2013, university researchers set out to understand the tremendous impact that alumni have on their communities and the world.

**They found:**

**75% of grads** stayed in Alberta in the past decade

**151,488 alumni** live in the greater Edmonton area

**70,258 alumni-founded** organizations globally — one-third of which are non-profit or have a cultural, environmental, or social mission.

**1.5 million** jobs created

**1 in 5 Albertans** employed by an alumni-founded company

## Research and Innovation

Top five research university in Canada

91 research chairs

\$500M+ annual research funding (2019)

Nearly 133 active spinoff companies and 1 start up

# 41 National 3M Teaching Fellows



## The U of A is a globally recognized university known for:

Transforming ideas and discoveries into innovations for society, bringing jobs, opportunity and quality of life to the local region and beyond

Attracting talented students from more than 162 countries to the Edmonton region, thanks to our global status as a top 100 university

Graduating approximately 9,000 students a year, with more than 151,000 alumni living in Edmonton region today

Generating economic activity, with faculty and students founding almost 133 spinoffs and alumni founding companies that employ 1 in every 5 Albertans

## 1 Nobel Prize-winning researcher

Michael Houghton, who won the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for the discovery of the hepatitis C virus.

# 76 Rhodes Scholars

## Signature Areas of research and teaching

Energy systems

Intersections of Gender

Precision Health

Situated Knowledges: Indigenous Peoples and Place

AI4Society  
(Creating artificial intelligence for the public good)

# 79 U SPORTS National Athletic Titles

# People and Culture

## Research and programs that champion diversity

The U of A is a leader in learning about unique challenges faced by diverse socio-cultural, equity-deserving and underrepresented groups and then finding ways to improve their quality of life.

### Archeology as a tool to understanding Indigenous history



Métis archeologist Kisha Supernant is on a mission to reimagine her discipline. As director of the U of A's Institute of Prairie and Indigenous Archaeology, Supernant is showing the world how archeology can be conducted in the service of Indigenous Peoples to help them be the storytellers of their past. "Archeology's history is grounded in settler colonialism," she notes—non-Indigenous people studying Indigenous material and interpreting the history. That's what Supernant is determined to change. Whether finding unmarked graves at residential schools, tracking the migration of Dene nations, or piecing together the history and identity of Métis Peoples, the institute is committed to placing Indigenous ways of knowing at its core. It's a powerful way to support Indigenous rights. "It can help to reconnect Indigenous Peoples with lands and places that may have been lost due to colonial processes," Supernant says. "We can really celebrate this rich and vibrant history."

### Supporting healthy aging for Muslim seniors

Every few months, Jordana Salma from the Faculty of Nursing meets with Muslim seniors to talk about healthy aging. They ensure her research—supported by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grant—is community-driven and culturally sensitive; in return, Salma provides practical solutions for everyday stresses, like exercise programs and support groups. The assistant professor of nursing believes research is a two-way street. "It's not enough to explore what the issues are," says the Women and Children's Health Research Institute researcher. "We have to address them, and right away."

### An online space for LGBTQ2+ cancer patients

A new website called Queering Cancer has curated sensitive and relevant resources for LGBTQ2+ patients. The website was created by Amanda Bolderston, a U of A radiation therapy educator, and collaborators from Queen's University and the University of Fraser Valley, with federal funding through the Gender and Health Institute. It contains hundreds of patient stories and a searchable database, all tailored to the queer community. Bolderston is especially proud of its community forum, a safe space where people can connect and support each other.



## Supporting LGBTQ2SPIA+ radiation patients

A study of 214 radiation therapists conducted by a group of new graduates suggests many professionals want to learn how to adapt their behaviour when caring for LGBTQ2SPIA+ patients. Among the survey's results, it found about 70 per cent of respondents were unfamiliar with all terms referenced in the abbreviation, which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirit, pansexual, intersex, asexual, plus. "The end goal is to treat everyone equally, with the same respect and the same dignity," says Samie Ly, who conducted the study with Samantha Chan, Jordyn Mackie and Serena Wu. All were radiation therapy graduates in 2020; their study was published in January 2021 in the *Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences*.

## Assessing accessibility on Whyte Avenue

Is a shop really open for business if people with mobility limitations can't open the door? A Centre for Healthy Communities (School of Public Health) study, done in partnership with the City of Edmonton and its Accessibility Advisory Committee, assessed storefronts along a stretch of trendy Whyte Avenue. It found only four per cent of the doors met accessibility standards: that is, they were wide enough, didn't present a tripping hazard, had easy-to-grasp handles, and required minimal force to open. Nicole Glenn, a senior research associate with the school's Centre for Healthy Communities, says citizens should care about accessibility as a human right. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research, in partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada and Alberta Innovates, funded the project.

## Keeping Indigenous languages alive

The U of A is helping keep Indigenous languages alive to ensure future generations can connect with their cultural identity, thanks to a \$12-million grant from the BHP Foundation. The five-year project, called Supporting Indigenous Language Revitalization, will see researchers working alongside elders and Indigenous leaders to help their language preservation efforts while learning from their expertise.

## Improving Indigenous health care

The U of A and six northeastern Alberta First Nations have signed a unique memorandum of relational understanding aimed at improving the health of Indigenous people. The agreement with Tribal Chiefs Ventures Inc.—representing Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Cold Lake First Nations, Frog Lake First Nations, Heart Lake First Nation, Kehewin Cree Nation and Whitefish Lake First Nation No. 128—will see more First Nations youth recruited to train as health-care professionals, as well as increased educational emphasis about the health challenges faced by First Nations Peoples.

## Drama gives life lessons to underrepresented groups

Life can imitate art but a U of A theatre project is using art to make life better. Guided by researchers Jason Chinn and Amanda Bergen, drama becomes a tool for underrepresented community groups—such as Black, Indigenous and people of colour, seniors or people experiencing disability—to improvise solutions to real-world problems. The pair was awarded a two-month residency at the Yorath House Artist Studio, a partnership between the Edmonton Arts Council, the City of Edmonton and the City Arts Centre. Says Chinn: "It's an excellent way to combine our resources and think of strategies."

## Veteran-friendly campus

In the First World War, the U of A set up a Khaki University for troops overseas. The U of A is again leading the charge to help veterans transition into civilian life. The two-year Veteran-Friendly Campus, backed by the U of A's Heroes in Mind, Advocacy and Research Consortium (HiMARC), received an Alberta government grant to help it design ways to support the unique academic, social and mental health needs of veterans, then share those findings with post-secondary institutions across the province.

# Research and innovation

## Innovating for a healthier population and stronger economy

When the pandemic began revealing health-care gaps, the U of A was ready, with projects like SARS-CoV-2 tracking in municipal sewage or robotics-based physiotherapy for remote communities. But the U of A's world-renowned researchers and business incubators are also working to solve the health needs of the future.



## Breakthrough in hepatitis C vaccine research

A vaccine to protect against hepatitis C virus (HCV) could be in use within five years, says Michael Houghton, Nobel laureate, U of A virologist and director of the Li Ka Shing Applied Virology Institute. Researchers are developing an adjuvanted recombinant vaccine that is expected to help prevent HCV infection, a milestone sought by Houghton since discovering the virus in 1989. Each year, up to two million people are diagnosed with an HCV infection, with about 400,000 dying. Treatment is effective but expensive, and Houghton says a vaccine is the only way to turn the tide. The

achievement is possible, thanks to new information about HCV immunity and new technology developed for COVID-19 vaccines. Houghton says clinical trials of the vaccine could start in 2022, followed by human efficacy trials starting in 2023. "If safety and efficacy are proven, rollout of the vaccine to the high-risk population could begin in 2026-27." Houghton was awarded the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine along with Harvey J. Alter and Charles M. Rice for the discovery of HCV in 1989.

## Health Innovation Hub

The U of A's Health Innovation Hub has big plans for innovators and entrepreneurs working toward better human health outcomes. It aims to grow to 50-plus member companies, leveraging university resources by offering access to workspaces, training resources, marketing, mentorship and connections to peers and advisers.

## Supporting the tech ecosystem

The end of TEC Edmonton is also the start of an evolving partnership between the U of A and the City of Edmonton to support regional innovation. Since 2006, TEC helped launch numerous commercial ventures, many of which grew into strong Edmonton startups. The recent creation of Innovate Edmonton, the new independent innovation entity supporting innovators in all sectors, expands the U of A and City of Edmonton partnership beyond technology innovation to a direction that incorporates social and cultural innovation while continuing to drive economic diversification.

## Pharmaceutical manufacturing partnership

The U of A will help close a critical gap in Canada's drug manufacturing capacity. The Canadian Critical Drug Initiative (CCDI), a partnership between U of A researchers and Edmonton non-profit Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation, will build a bio-manufacturing facility to produce small-molecule drugs, which represent the majority of medications. CCDI will also speed the process of getting life-saving drugs from university labs to the marketplace.

## COVID wastewater monitoring

Every time a toilet flushes, Alberta researchers get information about how much COVID-19 is in a community. Wastewater monitoring for SARS-CoV-2 has become a valuable public health tool, with its results consistently mirroring community infection rates. Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services, partners in the project, use the wastewater data in making public health decisions, says U of A co-lead Xiaoli Lilly Pang. The Pan-

Alberta Network for Wastewater-based SARS-CoV-2 Monitoring program has U of A researchers tracking wastewater from 15 municipalities, while the University of Calgary tracks sewage from 10 cities and towns.

## Creating fair transit for all

A U of A study urges Canadian cities to learn the travel habits of female transit users to build services that are fair to all genders. The 18-city study, carried out in partnership with Polytechnique Montreal and consultant Leading Mobility, noted most transit users are female but policy-makers haven't taken time to find out what they need. The authors say current interest in gender equity issues could help speed improvements once municipalities have collected data about female ridership. Funding partners include Infrastructure Canada and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

## National Overdose Response Service

In its first nine months, volunteers from the National Overdose Response Service (NORS) made sure 2,492 people weren't alone while using opioids. During 31 of those calls, volunteers called 911 to avoid a potentially fatal overdose. Invented by U of A researcher Monty Ghosh and launched in partnership with Grenfell Ministries and Brave Technology Co-op, NORS is using a \$2-million Health Canada grant to expand the service to reach people who lack access to harm reduction resources.

## Tele-Rehab in rural Alberta

Rural physiotherapy patients can get relief without leaving their community, thanks to a high-tech U of A project that connects them and their doctors with rehabilitation specialists in Edmonton. Tele-Rehab 2.0, part of the U of A's SMART Network, created in the Rehabilitation Robotics Lab with numerous funding partners\*, uses equipment ranging from infrared video goggles that diagnose balance issues to a telepresence robot that studies patient expressions during an assessment.

\* Funding partners: Alberta Innovates through the Pfizer-Alberta Collaboration in Health grant; Employment and Social Development Canada through the United Way COVID-19 Emergency Community Support Fund; Alberta Health Services' Bone and Joint Health Strategic Clinical Network; and the Rural Health Professions Action Plan



# Sustainability

## Greener futures through cutting-edge technology and research rooted in respect

University researchers are increasingly looking to the past to protect our world's future. Indigenous knowledge, ways and traditions are at the heart of a worldwide biodiversity research project based at the U of A. Elsewhere, the work to create sustainable practices is stretching from forests to farms, while new energy technologies are showing powerful potential.



### The Ārramāt Project: How biodiversity losses impact Indigenous Peoples

"If the land is not healthy, how can we be?" That question, posed by a Whapmagoostui Cree elder, is at the heart of an international research project studying losses of wildlife and habitat and the resulting impact on Indigenous Peoples. The six-year Ārramāt Project, which received \$24 million from the federal government's New Frontiers in Research Fund, spans 24 countries and includes 150 Indigenous organizations and governments, plus researchers from 35 post-secondary institutions. Its 140 place-based research projects will look for practical solutions to issues like strengthening Indigenous food systems or re-

establishing healthy relationships with wild species. From the collapse of cod stocks to B.C. forest fires to the degradation of fresh water, "there's no end of examples where our non-Indigenous systems of resource management are flawed," says Brenda Parlee, lead co-principal investigator, a non-Indigenous scholar and professor in the U of A's Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences. Project research will analyze how these losses impact health and well-being. As well, Parlee adds, it will "highlight pathways forward that are socially and ecologically sustainable."

## Adopting chickens to support research

A U of A poultry-breeding program gives Albertans a chance to adopt a chicken, have the eggs and learn about poultry research. The Adopt-a-Heritage Chicken program supports the Poultry Research Centre's efforts to protect the genetic lines of ten heritage breeds. Adopters get naming rights and a supply of free-range eggs—but the chicken stays in the coop.

### U of A ranks high in sustainability

When it comes to making life better on Earth, the U of A is a world leader. It placed 64th in the Times High Education Impact Ranking, which rates universities on 17 sustainable development goals. The U of A's best score, in the Life on Land category, acknowledged its work protecting and restoring natural habitats.

## Food sustainability in Camrose

An Augustana community-service learning project has helped members of the Food Artisans of Camrose County onto greener pastures. Thanks to the students taking professor Greg King's Applications in Sustainability course, a family farm started a newsletter highlighting its eco-friendly practices, a pork-processing operation is looking at renewable energy options and a food producer is using less plastic packaging. Best of all, the students are learning about their ability to be agents of change.

## New forestry chair will promote sustainable growth

With forests under growing pressure from wildfires, insects and development, a new research chair at the U of A will help foresters understand how Alberta's aspen, spruce and lodgepole pine forests will grow in the future. Robert Froese will hold the first Endowed Chair in Forest Growth & Yield, funded by a \$4-million endowment from multiple players\* in Alberta's forestry industry. The findings will help companies make better harvesting decisions while educating the next generation of forestry professionals.

\*Endowment funders: Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta; Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries; Canadian Forest Products; Mercer International; Millar Western Forest Products; Norbord Inc.; Northland Forest Products; Vanderwell Contractors; West Fraser Mills; and Weyerhaeuser Co.

## Boost for biojet fuel research

Biofuel research is taking off at the U of A with a project to create jet fuel from biowaste, thanks to a \$2.89-million boost from Natural Resources Canada and multiple other funders and supporters.\* Researcher David Bressler from the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences has worked for two decades on technology to convert fats and oils into hydrocarbons. But his latest work—converting products like restaurant grease and rendering tallow into low-emission biojet fuel—could propel the aviation industry and Alberta's agricultural sector into a more sustainable future.

\*Other funders and supporters: Alberta Innovates; Forge Hydrocarbons; Edmonton International Airport; CanmetENERGY; Western Economic Diversification Canada; and University of Alberta Future Energy Systems

## Developing green hydrogen

A U of A researcher has developed a technique to make hydrogen that is green, cost-effective and a potential game-changer for Alberta's bitumen upgraders. Erin Bobicki's process uses microwaves to heat methane, creating hydrogen and solid carbon. The technology, which uses significantly less electricity than other methods, is used by the startup Aurora Hydrogen, which she co-founded. Bobicki says early results show "a lower greenhouse gas footprint than any other form of hydrogen production in most jurisdictions."

### A top green employer

The U of A is once again in the top 100 in the Canada's Greenest Employers competition—yet again. The 13th consecutive appearance on the annual list is unmatched by any other Canadian post-secondary institution.

# Student community and outreach

## Students today, change-makers tomorrow

Students are the heart of the University of Alberta. Students and society are both winners when the U of A strikes up partnerships in the community. Work experience and leadership opportunities provide valuable services, while community-supported scholarships and internships can be powerful forces toward social change.

### Providing real-world experience to pharmacy students

Work placements provide pharmacy students with real-world experience. U of A student Mina Nagib says the atmosphere was electric the day COVID-19 vaccines became available at the pharmacy where



he was on a work placement. “It was a celebrated event — a major milestone,” recalls Nagib. It was an equally big deal for Nagib and other fourth-year pharmacy students who were lucky enough to help administer the shots. Pharmacy students learn to administer intramuscular and subcutaneous injections in their third year of studies. During on-the-job work placements in their final year, they provide clients with flu shots and other vaccinations under the close supervision of a pharmacist preceptor. “This represents an opportunity for our students to participate in a much-needed public health activity that will save lives,” says Ann Thompson, assistant dean of experiential education for pharmacy students. “They get authentic, real-world experience to prepare them for the practice environment they are about to enter.”

### The Period Pantry

Inside a brightly decorated cabinet outside the 109th Street Remedy Café are menstrual products, free to anyone who needs them. The Period Pantry — created by student Annie Wachowich with support from Remedy, All Cycles Edmonton and the YWCA — is one way to preserve the dignity of people experiencing poverty. Its success has the Peter Lougheed Leadership College scholar already planning to expand. “This is just one step toward eliminating poverty in Edmonton, but one that’s a substantial relief for those who menstruate and are in financial need.”

### Building the digital economy

Thousands of Alberta small businesses are moving into the digital world, thanks to a free service delivered by U of A commerce students. The Digital Economy Program (DEP), created with partners Business Link and Digital Main Street and funding from the Alberta government, helps businesses build an e-commerce platform, create a social media plan or even design a website. “You need a digital platform,” says program leader Heather Thomson, executive director of the U of A’s Centre for Cities and Communities. “We can’t do everything but it’s enough to get them going.”



## Peter Anto Johnson, Community Leader Award winner

Medical student Peter Anto Johnson is a natural leader who looks for opportunities to make a difference. He started a volunteer group to encourage healthy habits among preschoolers and was one of the many contributors to a book called e-Mental Health: Progress, Challenge and Change, which looks at mental health and technology. On receiving the U of A's Community Leader Award, Johnson noted that he was fortunate to receive help when he needed it and hopes to pay it forward.

## Experiential Learning in Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship Program

A new U of A internship program is giving Black students the tools to pursue their career goals while teaching them to care for themselves. In addition to summer jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields, the Experiential Learning in Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship (ELITE) Program for Black Youth provides entrepreneurial skills development and wellness coaching. "It's definitely something I haven't had before: mentors who understand the specific nuances of the Black experience in a professional sense," says student and program participant Tinashe Muzah. ELITE was made possible through funding partnerships from RBC Foundation, Future Skills Centre and the Government of Canada.

## Scholarship promotes racial justice

U of A law students are eligible for a new scholarship that supports future lawyers who will fight racial injustice. The Scotiabank Program for Law Students is a \$30,000 scholarship that will be awarded to three U of A law students who self-identify as Black, Indigenous or persons of colour – one award in each of three years – and who have demonstrated a commitment to supporting equity-denied groups. The U of A is among the six universities in Canada that can apply for this unique scholarship.

## Community mental health clinic

At a U of A mental health clinic, community members receive affordable counselling from psychology students who are getting vital on-the-job experience. The students are graduate students in child psychology and counselling psychology programs, who are supported by faculty and professional mentors. They'll soon be on the front lines of the post-pandemic recovery, says Clinical Services co-director Rebecca Hudson Breen. "We are facing a mental health emergency, and increasing the number of counsellors and mental health providers is vital." The North Campus clinic reopened for limited in-person appointments in September 2021.

## Speech pathology for Alberta's francophone youth

Thanks to a specialized U of A course in francophone speech pathology, graduate Emilie Lefebvre is helping francophone children in southern Alberta overcome their speech-related challenges. Lefebvre built on her French-language roots, earning a certificate in francophone practice for speech-language pathologists, offered jointly by the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine and Campus Saint-Jean. Says Lefebvre: "It's really rewarding when you see a child be heard and understood and be able to express what they want."

## For Girls By Girls

For Girls By Girls (FBGB) is a drop-in recreation program for girls aged 9-15 held weekly at Edmonton's Terwillegar Recreation Centre, with each session led by the University of Alberta Pandas student-athletes. The program was created to provide young girls the opportunity to participate in sport skills in a positive, safe, inclusive and welcoming environment with like-minded girls. Pandas student-athletes lead a variety of sport-specific activities, games and learnings, with the goal to help build confidence and encourage the participants' to pursue sport and recreation. The program partnership is made possible through funding from the Government of Canada Parks and Recreation Association, with program instruction led by the City of Edmonton staff and Pandas student-athletes.

# Community Engagement

## Helping communities build bright futures

From learning opportunities for youngsters to innovative strategies to end poverty to brainstorming for better rural internet access, the U of A is making a difference where you live

### An online success: U School goes digital



COVID-19 forced U School to go virtual but it was still a genuine hit as organizers found unique ways to give its grade-school participants a peek into university life – and some much-needed distraction from pandemic realities. Thanks to technology and innovation, students still went on campus tours, participated in science experiments and heard presentations on topics ranging from dental hygiene to the Canadian Constitution. New additions this year included physical education and wellness activities. “We want them to know that there’s this exciting place when they graduate high school,” says U School organizer Michaela Mann. “We’re trying to offer hope for the future.” More than 6,000 Alberta children – including 200 current U of A students – have participated in U School since its 2009 launch by the U of A senate. There is no cost to participating schools, with the program supported by donors, sponsors and fundraisers.

### Supporting inclusive economies to help end poverty

Creating an inclusive economy that supports socially considerate hiring will help end poverty – and getting there is everyone’s business, says a U of A researcher. EndPovertyEdmonton has adopted recommendations of a research paper by Maria Mayan, professor in the School of Public Health and associate director of the Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families. The research and subsequent paper urge organizations to be innovative to create good jobs for a broader range of people. Mayan also hopes U of A graduates will take up the charge in their workplaces. “We have great young thinkers within our university who want to make a difference in the world.”

### APPLE Schools supporting childhood development

What started as a U of A pilot project has grown into an award-winning, school-based health initiative that helps children in vulnerable communities learn to make healthy choices. APPLE Schools started in 2007 in the School of Public Health with professor Paul Veugelers’ research. The donor-funded program documents outcomes such as higher rates of physical activity and lowered risks of obesity. “Every day, we are reaching thousands of children,” Veugelers says. “And it’s something to feel good about, that we launch kids into a healthier future.” The program is currently delivered in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.

### **COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP (CUP) FOR THE STUDY OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES:**

CUP applies university research to community services, strategic learning and evidence-informed programs and policies that promote the well-being of Edmonton's children and their families, including the EndPovertyEdmonton initiative.

The City of Edmonton is one of CUP's long-term funding partners.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING (CSL):**

Every year, 1,500 students from across campus work with more than 180 community partners, including multiple City of Edmonton units. Since it was founded

in 2004, CSL has seen a 900 per cent increase in student enrolment and a fourfold increase in community partners.

### **MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNITY**

**ENGAGEMENT:** Students in this interdisciplinary, thesis-based degree program have worked with numerous community partners on a range of pressing social issues, such as reducing inequality, improving food security during the COVID-19 pandemic community climate change preparedness. They also had the opportunity to engage with organizations such as EndPovertyEdmonton.

## **Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program**

The power of mentorship is shining in an after-school program for Indigenous youth, where its teen volunteers are finding new purpose, new leadership skills and brighter futures. These promising outcomes from the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program (IYMP) garnered a \$1.5-million grant to study the program's social return on investment, consult with young people about their aspirations. The grant will allow Kate Storey, U of A associate professor and researcher in the School of Public Health and long-time program leader, the opportunity to co-create a new high school course. IYMP is made possible with partnership support from the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation through the Women and Children's Health Research Institute, among other supporters.\*

\*Other supporters include the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Public Health Agency of Canada, Diabetes Action Canada, Diabetes Canada, PolicyWise for Children & Families, Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, the Government of Alberta, Canadian Tire Jumpstart and the LEAP-Pecaut Centre for Social Impact

## **West African exchange program builds diverse leaders**

The U of A along with three West African universities has created a unique exchange program to build diverse leaders for the future. On the Path of Social Responsibility and Global Leadership is a bilingual program for doctoral researchers, post-doctoral fellows and early-career academics from the U of A and universities in Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. "It will help scholars in the choices they make," says project lead Philomina

Okeke-Ihejirika, a Faculty of Arts professor. "They can use their knowledge to make society better." This program was made possible through a grant from the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship (QES) Advanced Scholars West Africa program.

## **Supporting rural Alberta through broadband expansion**

U of A digital experts, who call the internet "the electricity of the 21st century," are working to get better broadband into rural Alberta, brainstorming policy, processes and possibilities with the Alberta Rural Connectivity Coalition. Arts faculty professor Rob McMahon and education professor Michael McNally helped found the coalition in collaboration with not-for-profit organization Cybera. The coalition's work will focus on communities where poor-quality internet service affects everything from running businesses to online learning.

## **DiscoverE supports STEM in Canadian youth**

It started as a U of A summer camp and almost three decades later, DiscoverE is going strong, opening young minds to the possibilities of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Now a year-round program, DiscoverE has reached about 500,000 youngsters throughout Western Canada. It received the 2021 Community Leader award for bridging the university's commitment to learning, discovery and citizenship with the community.



The Community Engagement Consultation Plan outlines three years of initiatives and activities for the University of Alberta to address community engagement. The first year allowed the U of A to put some foundational elements in place as initiatives are created and implemented. The following seven initiatives are in active implementation and will continue to evolve as the university begins the planning and implementation of Year 2 activities.

THEMES	YEAR 1 GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Improve Accessibility	Campus Wayfinding Improvements	The university is addressing the issues to manage accessibility and wayfinding improvements in Year 1. These improvements include plans to install an electronic map navigator to be piloted in the new University Commons (renovated Dentistry Pharmacy building), the gathering hub of North Campus. Plans for this exciting wayfinding initiative are underway to assist all members of the community as they plan their routes while on campus. Further work will continue to address information about the university, its history, key contacts and the sense of belonging to the institution.	Ongoing
Support and Strengthen Outreach	University of Alberta External Community Engagement Advisory Committee	A diverse and dynamic Community Engagement Advisory Committee composed of external community members was launched in the fall of 2021 and is slated to meet quarterly. This committee is already actively providing community-centric advice on how to best implement key aspects of the Community Engagement Consultation Plan ( <a href="http://uab.ca/ce">uab.ca/ce</a> ). The committee is providing perspectives and ideas on how to best foster, communicate and celebrate community engagement.	Launched October 2021 and meetings are ongoing
	Campus Community Engagement Network	The first internal Campus Community Engagement Network was successfully created in fall 2021 and intends to meet two to four times a year. The network gathers internal university colleagues to share best practices and undertake peer learning and support. It also bolsters ongoing community engagement efforts and excitement for new collaborations that will provide benefits to our community partners.	Launched in November 2021 and meetings are ongoing

THEMES	YEAR 1 GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Respond to Community Needs	Community Roundtables	Preparations for a series of community roundtables that will bring together community leaders, experts, policy-makers and practitioners with U of A leadership are underway. The roundtables are designed to generate new ideas and open pathways for community-university collaboration. The first roundtable is planned for the Fall 2022.	Slated for October 2022
Improve Communication	Report to the Community	Back by popular demand, the University of Alberta Report to the Community document returns with plans to annually share stories and successes relating to community engagement. The 2021-22 Report to the Community is slated for launch in Fall 2022.	Target release in September 2022
	Redesign of the Community Relations Website	The Office of Government and Community Relations redesigned its website to more effectively share community engagement links, stories and updates. The website will also reflect recent changes to the University of Alberta brand story: Leading With Purpose. The initial community engagement website ( <a href="http://uab.ca/ce">uab.ca/ce</a> ) to house the Community Engagement Consultation Plan was launched in winter 2021.	Launched in February 2021
	Story Portal	A story portal was launched in winter 2021 with the new Community Relations website. The portal consists of community engagement stories sourced from Folio and faculties. The portal has become a valuable resource to find community-engaged research, experiential learning and outreach stories. The story portal also acts as a means to communicate community-university engagement activities and impact.	Launched in February 2021



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