



**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



2023-24

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.



SHAPING LEADERS TO SHAPE A BETTER WORLD

The U of A has a mission to be a university with transformational powers. We are determined to understand the challenges that face our society and then — through critical thinking, innovative technology and sheer creativity — find ways to solve them.

The University of Alberta launched its institutional plan, SHAPE: A Strategic Plan of Impact in the fall 2023 and followed that with the release of the institutional research plan, Forward with Purpose. The plans align and place focus on people, innovation, impacts, and global research priorities that transcend all facets of society. Research priorities are focused on health and wellbeing, artificial intelligence, and energy and the environment, and nurtures areas of growth such as agriculture and food, Indigenous research and social transformations. In each of these focus areas, community connections, partnerships and societal impacts are at the core of those efforts.

Our faculty members include some of the world's brightest minds in established and emerging fields. Alongside experts in fields like medicine, artificial intelligence and climate change, we have researchers who are leading the way to understand problems faced by society's diverse populations — newcomers, Indigenous people, to 2SLGBTQ+ youth and more — and finding ways to remove those barriers.

And then there are our students, whose fresh eyes and insights constantly stimulate new ways

of thinking about old problems. Pushing the boundaries means breaking new ground — and you don't have to look far to see how that is playing out in our communities.

In our hospital emergency department, waiting times could get shorter thanks to an easy-to-use ultrasound device that is powered by artificial intelligence. In our downtowns, businesses that are still struggling from the COVID-19 pandemic will become a real-world learning opportunity for students at the Alberta School of Business. And municipalities in drought-stricken western provinces will be testing a new mapping tool that not only plots the likely routes that a wildfire might take into a community, it will also help identify the best escape routes in the event of an evacuation.

Everything we do is shaped by what the community needs and aligns with our commitments as articulated in SHAPE and Forward with Purpose. And with every new initiative, we are grateful for the community partners who help us make it happen.

In this 2023-24 Report to the Community, the University of Alberta is delighted to share what we've accomplished in the last year, and give our thanks to you, our partners and our community. When we work together, we expand the potential for our research, innovation and creative activities to solve our planet's toughest challenges.



Welcome to the University of Alberta's 2023-24 Report to the Community, which details some of the many important partnerships and community collaborations that have contributed to the university's success over the past year.

As one of the world's leading research-intensive universities, we are known for making a positive impact in our community and around the world. To do this – to support thriving communities, drive change, enrich arts and culture and make a difference in people's day-to-day lives – we rely on a vast network of partnerships and connections with communities in Alberta and around the world.

These connections are more important now than ever before. That's why we reaffirmed our commitment to deepening our engagement with community groups, industry, government, and First Nations and Indigenous Communities in our university strategic plan, *Shape*.

The stories included in this year's report demonstrate how much is possible when we come together as a diverse community and focus our collective expertise for the greater good.

We are so proud of what we've accomplished over the past year. We are all stronger and more effective when we lead with purpose and partner with the community for a better tomorrow.

Bill Flanagan
President and Vice-Chancellor



I am pleased to share the 2023-24 Community Engagement Report with you. This report is a way for the university, our community and our supporters to reflect on some of the many remarkable collaborations we've been a part of over the last year.

It is gratifying to see the many ways that the university makes a difference in the community and around the world. The stories outlined in this year's report are just a sampling of the positive impact that our students, researchers and community members have made.

At the University of Alberta, we engage with people and share their stories. The stories highlighted in this year's report show the amazing feats we can accomplish when the university and the community work together.

We are fortunate to have a diverse group of partners and collaborators who help us achieve our goal of leading with purpose and making our world a better place.

This past year saw the launch of *Shape*, the university's strategic plan. *Shape* will guide the U of A over the next decade and see our growth and impact reach new heights. The plan also reaffirms our commitment to strengthening our engagement with the community and continuing to cultivate deep and meaningful relationships within our community and around the world.

Thank you for the opportunity to share a few of these important stories with you.

Elan MacDonald
Vice-President, External Relations

Three colleges
with **13 faculties:**

Health Sciences

Natural and Applied Sciences

Social Sciences and Humanities

200+
undergraduate programs

4 stand-alone faculties

Campus St. Jean

Augustana Campus

Faculty of Native Studies

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

44,000+
students
from **156**
countries

Fast Facts

500+
graduate programs

Our Alumni:

More than **170,000 alumni** live in the Edmonton metropolitan area

71% of grads stayed in Alberta

70,000+ alumni-founded organizations globally

920,000+ jobs created worldwide

1 in 5 Albertans employed by an alumni-founded company

Generating **\$250B worldwide** and **\$136.4B in Alberta**

112 Canada Research Chairs

+4 Canada Excellence Research Chairs

\$620M+ annual research funding

130+ spinoff companies

41
National 3M Teaching Fellows

Top 4 research university in Canada and globally among the top 100 universities in the 2025 QS World University Rankings

6th in the world and **1st** in North America for work in sustainability (2024 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings)

1 Nobel Prize-winning researcher

Key areas of Global Excellence

Energy and Environment

Health and Well-being

Artificial Intelligence

Areas of leadership primed for further growth:

Indigenous research

Agriculture and food

Social Transformations

77
Rhodes Scholars

84
U SPORTS National Athletic Titles

People and Culture

The heart of our mission is people

People are at the heart of everything we do. Our faculty, students and alumni are the thinkers and doers behind virtual visits that bring joy to people with dementia, a school program that fixes painful dental issues of vulnerable children, and pivotal decisions that will influence the Constitution and shape all our lives.

Tech-powered care: Virtual visits create connections for people with dementia

Facilitated video calls enhance quality of life for care home residents

A U of A nursing faculty researcher has tapped into technology to combat loneliness and create a sense of togetherness for people living with dementia in care homes. Connecting Today, a program developed by assistant professor Hannah O'Rourke, is built around regular video calls between residents and loved ones. Care workers, who manage the technology and are trained in engagement techniques to guide conversation or other non-verbal activity, facilitate the calls. A study found the calls improved the quality of life for residents, with more than 90 per cent being alert and happy during the visits, while family members appreciated the effective approach to augment in-person visits. O'Rourke's next step is a multi-province clinical trial, with her ultimate goal to have

facilitated video calls become a standard offering in long-term care. "Social connectedness is just a human need," she says, "and people living with dementia are no different."



Bench strength of Canada's top court

Supreme Court Justice Mary Moreau's legal instincts honed at U of A

In the mid-1970s, a Faculté St. Jean philosophy professor taught the Honourable Mary Moreau to think of a problem as a prism, seeing "where the light is shining as you spin it." Now, as the newest Supreme Court of Canada justice, the franco-Albertan will draw on those critical analysis skills as she helps decide legal matters

of national importance. "Justice Moreau is well-known among faculty members, students and members of the legal community for her expansive knowledge of the law as well as her wisdom, fair-mindedness, compassion and commitment to justice in Canada," says Barbara Billingsley, dean of the Faculty of Law.

Dental program gives kids and their families a reason to smile

School Visit Program gives hands-on experience to future pediatric dentists

Nagging dental pain makes it hard for kids to smile, much less learn. But a School of Dentistry program resolves dental issues — at no cost — for hundreds of children from low-income, Indigenous and new-immigrant families. Through the School Visit Program, children learn about dental hygiene, get a dental exam and tooth issues fixed by U of A pediatric dentistry students.

Partners: Alberta Health Services, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton Catholic School Division, and the Edmonton Community Foundation

Saving the sounds of literature

U of A joins nationwide effort to digitize recordings of literary importance



The U of A has joined a nationwide effort to rescue thousands of audio recordings in order to recapture the sound of literary studies. SpokenWeb, a seven-year project involving 18 institutions in North America, will create searchable digital archives from cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes containing lectures, interviews, performances, oral histories and other creative artifacts.

Partner: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

Enhancing immigrant health with a taste of home

Researcher studies food insecurity through the eyes of new Canadians

Food insecurity tastes different to immigrants craving the flavours of home. Researcher Elizabeth Onyango, a School of Public Health assistant professor, researches avenues like community gardens to help immigrants acquire and afford traditional foods. "It is about exploring the impossibilities — and the possibility — of locally producing a variety of food and food products that address the needs of the diversifying Canadian population," she says.

Partners include: Canada First Research Excellence Fund, City of Edmonton, City of Calgary, Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative, Sinkunia Community Development Organization, Wilfrid Laurier University

University of Alberta Truth and Reconciliation Report to Community Dashboard

Reporting on TRC Actions

When the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action were issued in 2015, the University of Alberta committed to transparent reporting. This was reaffirmed in Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan 2022-27, which outlined the need to benchmark the U of A's progress in fulfilling these commitments. The report details what has been done thus far to respond to the post-secondary-specific Calls to Action and the broad range of aligned work happening in University of Alberta spaces. The ultimate goal of the dashboard is to continually evaluate if structures, programs and processes in Indigenous Initiatives and the TRC response are embedded into university operations.

The dashboard is part of a longer-term commitment to update on the Calls to Action in an ongoing way and report on the accountabilities outlined in Braiding. The calls also inform a number of new plans at the university, including the new strategic plan for the university, Shape: A Strategic Plan of Impact. View the dashboard at ualberta.ca/indigenous/trc/dashboard

Research and innovation

Harnessing research to make a difference

Our faculty, students and graduates are driven to make a difference in challenges of all sizes. This year, two alumni were among the winners of the world's richest prize for scientific achievement for their work creating life-changing treatments, while U of A donors helped create a network to give quantum scientists a sounding board as they work to create foundational building blocks that make new technology possible.

AI-powered ultrasound could shorten emergency department waits

Quick, accurate, easy-to-use device lets triage teams rule out arm fractures

One of every five people in an emergency department is waiting — sometimes for hours — to find out whether they've fractured a bone in their wrist, elbow or shoulder. But an AI-powered portable



ultrasound system could reduce waits and save money by quickly ruling out arm injuries that aren't fractures. The Ultrasound Arm Injury Detection tool, developed by assistant professor Abhilash Hareendranathan, uses artificial intelligence to ensure "lightly trained" frontline health-care workers can capture an accurate scan. This means a patient doesn't need to wait for a sonographer or radiologist to become available. "The novice user often gets a good scan but they don't know at what point to freeze the image, whereas in our system we automate that process," he says. Thanks to a \$748,500 grant from Alberta Innovates, the tool will be tested in the Stollery Children's Hospital emergency room and at an Edmonton medical imaging clinic.

Partner: Alberta Innovates

National effort to include Indigenous people in clinical trials

U of A Indigenous researchers leading initiative to build trust, best practices

U of A Indigenous researchers are leading a national initiative to bring First Nations, Métis and Inuit people into clinical trials, which evaluate the safety and effectiveness of new treatments. Historically, these trials have either excluded Indigenous people or selected them for unethical experiments. Over three years, the Accelerating Clinical Trials (ACT) Canada Consortium will meet with Indigenous leaders to develop best practices while dispelling a legacy of distrust.

Partner: Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Something to talk about for Alberta's quantum researchers

New donor-funded network creates new opportunity for collaboration



New technology is kind of like Lego — it can't be built without knowing how the pieces fit together. Now, Alberta's scientists working at the cutting edge of foundational quantum research are being supported through the Quantum Horizons Alberta network, a \$25-million, donor-funded initiative. Its focus on collaboration and theoretical science makes the network unique in Canada, says associate professor Joseph Maciejko. "We experiment with thought, and so we need to bounce ideas around."

Partners: University of Alberta, University of Calgary, University of Lethbridge; donor funding from Richard Bird, Joanne Cuthbertson, Patrick Daniel and Guy Turcotte

New master's programs will tackle rural healthcare needs

Government funding brings three rehab medicine programs to Augustana

Three Rehabilitation Medicine programs will be offered at Augustana to let rural students stay close to home while pursuing a career in rehabilitation medicine. Alberta government funding created satellite master's programs at the Camrose campus in speech-language pathology, occupational therapy and physical therapy. Rehabilitation Medicine dean Tammy Hopper says the option will appeal to students who want to work in rural Alberta, where there's a known shortage of physical, occupational and speech therapists.

Partner: Government of Alberta

U of A research packs an economic punch in Alberta

University's annual economic impact estimated at more than \$19B

The U of A's economic impact in Alberta was about \$19.4 billion in 2021-22, with much of that stemming from research and its impact on employment and productivity. President and vice-chancellor Bill Flanagan says the U of A's excellence in areas like artificial intelligence, energy and health "will help ensure the province remains at the forefront of the changing global economy for decades to come."

Survey: Women using cannabis to treat menopause symptoms

Women seek out the substance even though there's no evidence it works

The unproven use of cannabis to treat menopause symptoms highlights a big gap in menopause care, say U of A researchers. About 66 per cent of survey respondents had or were using cannabis for menopause-related issues like sleeping, mood and concentration. Pharmacy professor Nese Yuksel says there is little formal research on the topic, but plenty of chatter on the internet. "There should be more investigations moving forward from this data."

Partner: Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Treating wheat and barley grains with atmospheric cold plasma

U of A researchers have found an effective way to decontaminate wheat and barley grain tainted by mould, while also boosting seed germination. The process treats grains with atmospheric cold plasma to lower the levels of toxins caused by fungi that grow in warm and humid conditions and infect grain. Lead researcher Ehsan Feizollahi says this process "can provide the food processing and livestock feed industries with more effective, efficient ways to process grains that are safe for consumption." Related studies on the wider applications of atmospheric cold plasma are carried out through the U of A's Food Safety and Sustainability Engineering Research lab.

Sustainability

Solutions for a more sustainable world

Sustainability is the underlying theme of our mission to tackle the world's biggest challenges. The changing climate is forcing us to find new ways to deal with everything from creating energy and growing food to fighting wildfires and protecting precious water sources. By asking why, what and how, our researchers are making the U of A one of the top universities in the world in finding answers to sustainability issues.



University of Alberta ranks high in global sustainability efforts

Partnerships are key to U of A's ability to find solutions to worldwide challenges

Energy alternatives. Food insecurity. Housing shortages. University of Alberta initiatives addressing these challenges and more have helped move it upward on global lists that rank post-secondary institutions' efforts in tackling sustainability challenges facing our world. The U of A placed sixth in the world and first in Canada on the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings, which looks at research, stewardship, outreach and teaching that helps meet the UN's sustainable development goals. As well, the 2024 QS Sustainability Rankings ranked the U of A 28th globally and fifth among post-secondary institutions in Canada. Examples cited by the two lists include the university's work in industry, infrastructure, energy, agriculture, food security and human health. Part of the U of A's success comes from the partnerships it creates across faculties, within communities and internationally, says president and vice-chancellor Bill Flanagan, adding, "You can expect our contributions to have an even greater impact in the future."

Discovery promises greener future for pulp and paper industry

Mixing pulp biosolids with fertilizer redirects waste, lowers emissions and nourishes soil

The pulp and paper industry could help close the loop on its waste stream by turning biosolids into an organic fertilizer that's beneficial for soil and the climate. Leftover wood and fibres were mixed with conventional fertilizers on a northern Alberta tree plantation. Lead by forestry professor Scott Chang, researchers found levels of nitrous oxide emissions produced by the fertilizer were lower when biosolids were added.

Partners: Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc., the Biocap Canada Foundation. Researcher support came from a Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship, an NSERC Industrial Postgraduate Scholarship and an NSERC Collaborative Research Development grant



Helping farmers manage wetlands

Deemed an agricultural variable in farming, the disappearing resource is important for the climate

Farmers have a complicated relationship with wetlands — a boon in dry years and a potentially destructive nuisance in wet ones. John Pattison-Williams, an adjunct professor at Augustana Campus, is working to change that attitude. His research looks at the rate at which prairie wetlands are disappearing and their benefit to farmers and the climate. Invested in the land, "I personally understand the challenges," he says.

Partners: Environment and Climate Change Canada's Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund

New tool helps communities prepare for wildfire

Mapping vegetation, landscape patterns reveals potential wildfire pathways

Communities in western Canada will test a new U of A-developed tool that maps vegetation and landscape patterns to show potential wildfire pathways into communities. Once vulnerabilities are known, community leaders can take action, like clearing out fire fuel and planning evacuation routes. "It's giving the decision-makers one more piece of information they can use to plan for fire," says wildland fire professor Jen Beverly.

Partners: Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, National Research Council Canada

New catalyst could revolutionize water and energy

Breakthrough in hydrogen production also can purify dirty water

A new combination of powders makes dirty water drinkable while producing hydrogen fuel. The chemical reaction caused by the catalyst, comprising non-toxic, readily available powders, is a major advance in hydrogen production, says U of A researcher Robin Hamilton. "We take something dirty ... and generate hydrogen and electricity in a fuel cell. And it spits out water you can drink."

Carbon capture and sequestration from grazing management techniques

Alberta's rangeland could hold untapped potential to aid in carbon cycling and sequestration — and an interdisciplinary team of researchers are studying how to harness it. The ability of grasslands to sequester and cycle carbon is dependent on what is occurring in the soil, the plants that grow on it, the animals and their waste. All of this is measured by the team to better understand how grazing management affects agricultural communities and greenhouse gas emissions. Researchers will explore two grazing techniques — continuous grazing and adaptive multi-paddock grazing — with the second theory holding particular potential to improve carbon storage in grasslands to help in the fight against climate change.

Student community and outreach

Opening the door for students to lead change

The U of A creates hands-on opportunities for students to deal with important social issues in their communities. From finding ways to ensure Indigenous youth have equal opportunities in sports to cooking up a new elective for medical school, student impact resonates far beyond campus, shaping a brighter future for all.



Kinesiology grad levels playing field for Indigenous kids

Practicum evolved into a full-time job creating recreation opportunities for First Nation youth

Growing up in a First Nation community, Alyssa Ermineskin had parents who prioritized her participation in sports and recreation. But when she learned that not all families could surmount barriers like cost and transportation, Ermineskin set out to level the playing field. The recreation, sport and tourism student got her chance with a 14-week practicum at the Saddle Lake Cree First Nation, which grew into a full-time job after graduation. As its recreation assistant, she has found financial solutions for youth hockey players, launched a baseball league after a 30-year absence, and created a variety of programs for different ages and interests. Ermineskin is driven by her determination to ensure no children are left sitting on the sidelines, a phenomenon she saw too often growing up. "It's really personal," she says about working with Indigenous kids. "I want to make sure they're having the same opportunities as everybody else."

Partner: Saddle Lake Cree First Nation

Finding out what students need – and acting on it

Listening is at the heart of the U of A's new Student Experience Action Plan

With enrolment rising, the U of A is committed to seeking input from students to improve their experiences. The Student Experience Action Plan, developed through more than 100 engagement sessions involving over 10,000 students, is already addressing priority areas like increased access to mental health services, the course registration process and cleaning in public spaces. The one-of-a-kind initiative is "an action plan with relationship at its core," says deputy provost Melissa Padfield.

Elective gives med students a taste of food as medicine

Student-led course tests culinary medicine as a possible curriculum topic

U of A medical students have cooked up a first-in-Canada elective that teaches future physicians about culinary medicine. The six-module elective includes a lecture about nutrition-related topics followed by a cooking class. "A lot of the focus is on specific medications, what drugs can we give," says student co-lead Lauren Wong. If the elective is successful, she hopes it will become part of the curriculum for all medical students.

Partner: Edmonton Public Library

Sprinter on track for success as a community leader



Evan Essapa wants to improve mental wellness in the Black community

Sprinter Evan Essapa is getting noticed on and off the track. The fifth-year Golden Bear is pursuing his master's in counselling psychology with a focus on mental health disparities in the Black community. Alongside the demands of being a top-ranked athlete, Essapa makes time for academic research, community volunteering, and projects like an online listing of Black professionals. He recently received the U SPORTS Community Service Award.

Early warning system for blue-green algae in lakes

Student creates low-cost technology that senses a change in toxins

With global warming, Alberta's sparkling blue lakes are increasingly covered by blue-green algae blooms. Métis engineering student Jordan Eleniak has developed a low-cost microbial fuel cell that senses toxin-related voltage changes then transmits data so people can take precautions for themselves and their animals. Eleniak is part of the U of A's I-STEAM Pathways program, which offers hands-on research opportunities for Indigenous students in environmental fields.

Community Service-Learning

Community Service-Learning (CSL) collaborates with 150 community organizations and 1,500 students annually. In partnership with the Business + Higher Education Roundtable, CSL helped Aquatic Biosphere use student perspectives to achieve their goals. CMPUT 401 students created an augmented reality application, MARK 655 students contributed to the "Water We Doing?" podcast, and EDU 100 students conducted outreach. Aquatic Biosphere praises CSL students for providing hope to the organization. Chair of the Aquatic Biosphere Society, Paula Polman says "you will be surprised at what students can bring to the table."

Community Engagement

We're stronger together

Whether we're listening to our students or running programs in the community, the U of A places a high value on collaboration and partnerships. By instilling this value in our students, we are nurturing a new generation of leaders who will help shape and have a positive impact on communities in our province, across Canada and around the world.

A space for seniors and students to learn from each other

Sunshine Connected is a non-profit that grew out of a U of A student project

Students and seniors are developing warm relationships thanks to a non-profit that had its start as a U of A project. Sunshine Connected, created



by business student Samantha Gardner, was an inspired solution to two COVID-19 pandemic problems – the isolation of older adults and a lack of student volunteer opportunities. Using some creative intergenerational matchmaking, it launched Teach-n-Trade, a kind of pen-pal relationship where participants gained new skills while spending time with someone who shares their interests. A later program was launched to teach older adults about health literacy. Gardner says programs like Sunshine Connected can make a real impact as the senior demographic grows. “The older adults felt a sense of pride and fulfilment, being able to share their wisdom accumulated over so many years,” she says. “And the students, myself included, were really excited to learn and engage, because we obviously have things to share as well.”

Partners: Dunin-Deshpande Queen's Innovation Centre, Ontario's Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovation

Real-world challenges used to teach students about business

Creators of the Axford Impact Series say community engagement is key to a business education

Business students are being challenged to make a real-world impact with a program that challenges them to solve current problems. The Axford Impact Series, devised by alumni Eric Axford and associate dean Leo Wong, is a community-based program that teaches students about the complexities of the business environment. The program's first cohort is focused on helping businesses respond to the negative effects of the pandemic.

Partners: City of Edmonton, MNP



Student ideas shape \$250M University Commons' renovation

Campus competition reflects U of A's commitment to develop student leaders

Three spaces in the soon-to-be-opened University Commons were designed using ideas sourced from a student competition. The Dentistry/Pharmacy Building, built in 1922, is undergoing a \$250-million transformation, which will include a calming room, multifunction room and quiet study area for students. The contest has been praised as an example of the U of A's commitment to develop future leaders.

Progress towards an Integrated EDI Action Plan

The report *Stories from the Field* offered reflections on and snapshots of activities over the years 2019-2022 that continued to build on University of Alberta's commitment to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion across the institution. The report was released in July 2023 and celebrates our wins, and creates an opportunity for a refreshed strategy in the form of an action plan. The U of A began a consultation phase to capture a wide range of perspectives and insights toward a deeper understanding of the community's needs, aspirations and challenges. The university is developing an Integrated EDI Action Plan, aligned with SHAPE: A Strategic Plan of Impact, and oriented toward and guided by Braiding Past, Present, and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan.

Revolutionizing research with cloud computing

Amazon Web Services partnership lifts possibilities for innovation in artificial intelligence

A new U of A centre will be able to explore opportunities in artificial intelligence, thanks to a new partnership with Amazon Web Services. The powerful cloud computing technology means researchers, faculty and students at the Artificial Intelligence Discovery Place in downtown Edmonton “can innovate and do interesting things at the pace of the idea,” says associate dean of research Lawrence Richer.

Partner: Amazon Web Services

New micro-course makes Indigenous studies more accessible

Indigenous Peoples and Canada takes less than 10 hours to complete

A popular course about Indigenous historical and contemporary experiences has been repackaged to make it accessible to more people. Indigenous Peoples and Canada is an open, online micro-course that takes between eight and 10 hours to complete. Instructor Paul Gareau says it's a good tool for organizations to offer its workers, and is “useful for a vast majority of Canadians who don't have any Indigenous knowledge at all.”

Innovation Fund supports startups solving global challenges

The University of Alberta Innovation Fund, a wholly owned for profit subsidiary of the university, launched in October 2023, with a mission to invest in startups that solve global challenges in multiple sectors including artificial intelligence, health, energy and agriculture. Delivery of support programs and introductions to strategic networks for scale are at the heart of the fund's engagement community-building process. In 2023, the fund completed investments in the area of water management and will be making further investments in health, energy and agriculture in 2024.

Recognition in the Community

Community-University connections at their best

The U of A and its diverse communities are positively intertwined. The talents of scholars, administrators, faculty, students and community members collectively serve to enhance the lives of citizens, locally, nationally, and abroad. We celebrate the recipients of the 2023 Community Connections Awards and the 2024 Breakthrough Prize for Life Sciences.

Community connectors: Nathalie Kermaal, Monty Ghosh and Friends of the U of A Society honoured

2023 Community Connections Awards recipients



Community Connections Awards at event



Nathalie Kermaal,
Professor of Native Studies



Monty Ghosh,
Associate Professor of Medicine



Friends of the University of Alberta Society

Making the world a better place is accomplished one step at a time, and the Community Connections Awards recognizes efforts from the U of A community. Native Studies professor Nathalie Kermaal won the Community Scholar award for creating partnerships that have transformed Métis research, while doctor, researcher and associate professor Monty Ghosh was named Community Leader for his efforts

to help people with addictions. Friends of the University of Alberta Society won the Community Advocate Award for their 80 years of positive engagement, advocacy, and financial contributions to strengthen and support the university and the community connections.

U of A grads honoured for scientific excellence

Two alumni among this year's Breakthrough Prize winners

Two U of A grads are among the winners of 2024's Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences, the world's richest award for scientific achievement. Michel Sadelain (1989 PhD, immunology) was recognized for his discovery of cancer-fighting immunotherapy based on genetic engineering of a patient's own T cells, while Fredrick Van Goor (1996 PhD, biological sciences) won for developing the first effective medications to treat the underlying cause of cystic fibrosis.



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