



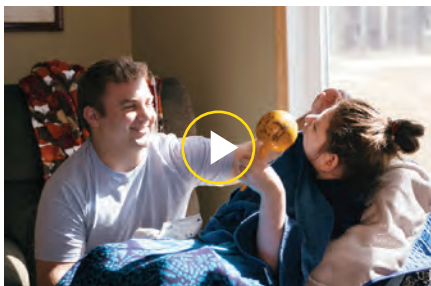
2019  
Donor Impact  
REPORT

*a better*  
**future**  
**unfolds**  
*because of you*

→ *you* are one of **17,775** donors who gave to the University of Alberta in 2018-19\*

When you gave to the U of A, you became part of a community of donors dedicated to a better future. A future inspired by your individual story and the positive change you want to see in the world. You realized long-term change comes from giving to students who become leaders, ideas that become solutions, and research that deepens understanding and saves lives. A better future is unfolding now, because of you.

*thank you*



Get to know our featured donors at [uab.ca/thanks](https://uab.ca/thanks).

*On the cover: Everett and Fletcher race toward their grandmother, U of A donor Val Blanch*

\*This report highlights donor impact from the University of Alberta's 2019 fiscal year: April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

*together,* you gave **\$167.8 M**  
to create a better future

\$82M

*research* <

You advanced research and discovery,  
and helped attract talented faculty.

\$41M

*programs* <

You enhanced teaching, experiential learning  
and student research opportunities.

\$39M

*student awards* <

You reduced financial barriers for students  
and helped them achieve their potential.

\$6M

*facilities* <

You transformed campus through new  
and enhanced buildings, labs, libraries  
and learning spaces.



*After living with diabetes for 29 years, Colin Blanch (with son Fletcher, above) may soon be able to avoid continually monitoring his blood glucose levels, thanks to donor-funded research at the U of A.*



*Val and Morley Blanch give to research in hope of a diabetes cure — whether for their son Colin, for their grandchildren who may be at risk, or for someone else in the same situation.*

**4,721**  
donors supported  
the U of A each  
year for the past  
5 years



# → vital steps

## Research brings answers for next generation

Val and Morley Blanch remember getting the devastating news. Their seven-year-old son, Colin, had been unwell for days. Answers came with an intense stay in an Edmonton hospital: Colin had diabetes. Life would never be the same.

Young Colin had to learn how to monitor and adjust his blood sugar levels. Val had to learn the nutritional content of everything she put on the table. “We learned to live on the edge,” says Morley, recalling the unpredictability of Colin’s blood sugar “lows.”

But Colin never let his diabetes restrict his experiences, despite his parents’ apprehensions. The day a 17-year-old Colin left for a year-long student exchange program in Australia, Val looked at Morley and wondered, “What have we done?”

As Colin, ’06 BCom, determined to live his life, his parents determined to help researchers find a cure. Ten years ago, Val, ’73 BA, ’78 BCom, and Morley, ’73 BSc, ’81 MAg, created a fellowship at the U of A’s Alberta Diabetes Institute to fund one graduate student trainee in diabetes research each year. These students work with the world-leading team that developed Canada’s first islet cell transplant process, known as the Edmonton Protocol.

The Blanches support students because they are the researchers of tomorrow. “If we really want a cure, we need investment in people, equipment and resources,” says Peter Light, research chair and director of the institute. “Val and Morley’s gift is vital to this goal.”

Since Colin was diagnosed in 1990, huge strides have been made at the U of A toward understanding, monitoring and controlling Type 1 diabetes. Colin is now an adult with a family of his own, including two little boys who may be at greater risk of developing diabetes. Val and Morley remain hopeful for a cure.

“

Donating to research is our way of trying to have a larger impact,” says Morley. “That’s what drives us.”

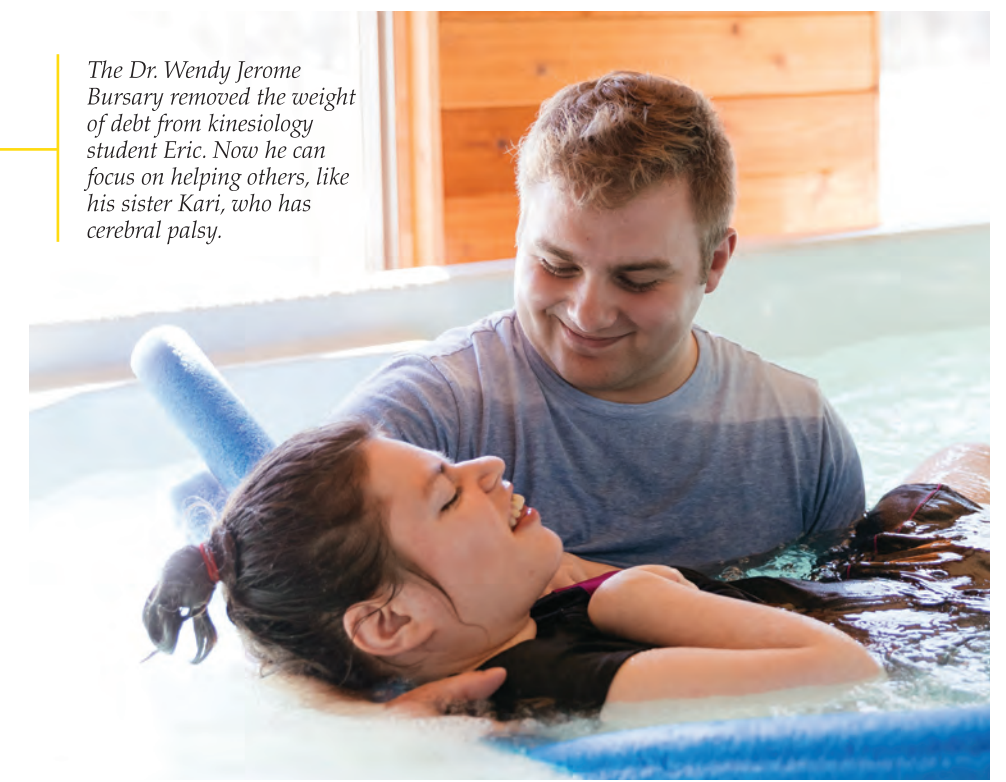


Third-year student and Peter Lougheed Leadership College Scholar Kayla Gulka created one of the mental health resource videos funded by Brian and Cecile Silzer.



# your generosity creates a better future

The Dr. Wendy Jerome Bursary removed the weight of debt from kinesiology student Eric. Now he can focus on helping others, like his sister Kari, who has cerebral palsy.



## peace of minds

Donors want students to know they're not alone

Catherine Silzer died by suicide in August 2015, at the age of 37. "She hit a place where she couldn't find her way," says her father, Brian Silzer. "We were aware of some of her personal challenges but we couldn't recognize the depth of the pain she was feeling."

Today Brian, '69 BSc, '71 Dip[Ed], '78 MEd, and Cecile Silzer, '71 BEd, '91 MLIS, want to help lighten the load other students are carrying. The couple's generous support of four U of A mental health initiatives gives more students access to services when they need it most. One of those initiatives is a series of student-made videos that highlight mental health challenges and campus resources for students, faculty and staff.

Education student Kayla Gulka helped produce the videos. The Silzers' story touched her personally because she faced similar struggles to Catherine. A car accident in her second year of university brought Kayla's existing anxiety to a breaking point. She was afraid to leave her house and withdrew from social interaction.

"I didn't want people to know how bad it was, so I dug myself into isolation," Kayla says. "The Silzers' gift brings light to so many students on campus. I want students to watch my video and know that they aren't alone, that it's OK to struggle, and that there's a whole campus and community here to look after them."

Helping students is a familiar and cherished role for Brian, who served as U of A registrar for close to 20 years. He and Cecile see their gift as an extension of his longtime work in support of student success.

"The goal of these programs is to help students rebound, so they have the motivation to go and seek help," says Cecile. "I like to think that if Catherine were at university now, all of these things would help her."



U of A grad Catherine Silzer, '03 BA, '06 BPE, died by suicide three and a half years ago. Her parents want to make sure students with similar struggles get the help they need.

3,067

undergraduate students were helped by a donor-funded bursary or scholarship in 2017/18\*

10,242 donors are U of A alumni



Financial aid and encouragement helped turn Wendy Jerome's life around. Now she wants to do the same for U of A students in need.

2,136 donors are current or former U of A faculty and staff

16,789

students benefited from donor-funded mental health services this year

## active kindness

Donor lifts up students in need

Wendy Jerome, '58 BPE, was a painfully shy teenager. Then one day a teacher convinced her to try out for her high school's cheerleading squad. She made the team and soon became head cheerleader.

Wendy went on to become an Olympic-level coach and pioneering sports psychologist — success she attributes to a network of supportive mentors. "I was lucky to have people who cared about me when I had no self-esteem and no support at home," she says.

One of her mentors was a U of A dean who encouraged her to apply for a bursary that allowed her to finish university. After graduating from the U of A, she returned to her high school to thank the teachers and principal who inspired her. "One teacher said to me, 'Do the same for someone else.'" And so she did, by setting up a bursary to help U of A students facing financial barriers.

"I want to help that student who's having a tough time trying to make ends meet," Wendy explains. "That student who is like me, who may go and do the same for somebody else in the future."

Thanks to Wendy's bursary, which is awarded to one kinesiology student each year, third-year student Eric has been able to focus less on financial stress and more on helping others.

Eric came to the U of A to study adapted physical activity, with the dream of one day helping people like his sister, who has cerebral palsy, lead a fulfilling, active life — no matter what their impairments might be. But paying the bills hasn't been easy.

"Getting a bursary was a huge relief," says Eric. "I have so much gratitude for what Wendy has done. It really hits you when that generosity impacts you directly."

## the brains and the bees

Student team creates a buzz thanks to donors

Inspired by the global movement #SaveTheBees, a team of U of A students has engineered a probiotic that targets a deadly infection in honeybees. APIS, short for antifungal porphyrin-based intervention system, can help ward off *Nosema ceranae*, a parasite infecting bees around the world and contributing to the death of bee populations.

The student team presented their discovery at the 2018 International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) Competition in Boston, where they won first prize for Best Food and Nutrition Project. But they wouldn't have made it to the competition without the generosity of 32 donors, who helped cover the team's travel costs. The students' innovation couldn't have come at a better time, since the previous treatment for *Nosema ceranae* was no longer available.



Ethan Agena, a third-year engineering student, is one of the student team members working to bring the APIS probiotic to market with the help of Alberta beekeepers, who are eager to start field trials.

4,189 donors gave for the first time this year



731 research projects funded by donors this year

"The students' cause — to fight a disease that's hurting the bee population — is a simple thing that has a huge impact down the road. It makes me feel inspired and sincerely happy to see these kids solve real-world problems."

Winna Marie Francisco, one of 32 donors to the project

\*The most recent data available of undergraduate financial supports administered by the Office of the Registrar.



“*your  
generosity  
creates  
opportunity*”

I see it every day. Because of you, more students have extraordinary learning experiences and our researchers have greater capacity to tackle complex problems. Your support changes lives and advances discovery — now and in the future. Thank you!”

*David H. Turpin  
President and Vice-Chancellor,  
University of Alberta*



Office of Advancement  
1-888-799-9899 | [uab.ca/thanks](https://uab.ca/thanks)

**University of Alberta**  
**Office of Advancement**  
3-501 Enterprise Square  
10230 Jasper Avenue NW  
Edmonton AB T5J 4P6  
Canada