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38-23307-422

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Grads Jalene and Matt Anderson-Baron co-founded Future Fields to develop a better way to produce proteins critical for developing life-saving new therapies. Story on page 33
Photo by John Ulan

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The Measure of Our Success
The story of a university is about its people. A new survey shows our grads are shaping their communities all over the world in economic, social and cultural spheres. We'd like to introduce you to a few of them.



Notice the new look? Stay tuned for more changes in the next issue.



ON THE COVER

This issue features so many grads that we couldn't settle on one to represent them all. So we printed five different covers. Which one did you receive?

Alumni for Life

WHEN I GRADUATED with my first degree, I was matched with **Lynn Hamilton, KC, '84 BA(Spec), '88 MBA, '89 LLB**, through the alumni mentorship program. Lynn is an entrepreneur and owner of a portfolio of companies ranging from aerial wildfire control to commercial real estate—and she was a game-changer for me.

When we connected, Lynn was passionate about mentorship. We got along, and I learned so much from her. She suggested I pursue an MBA.

I remember my first thoughts. “I have a business degree. I don’t need an MBA. Why would I go back to school already?” But Lynn saw an MBA as the next step toward my goal to work in sustainability, so I listened.

It was the best decision I ever made.

I went on to learn that a career—and life in general—is not linear. You may have to go up, down and around to get to where you need to go.

I had to write a statement of intent to get into my MBA program, and it said, “Upon graduation, I want to work in sustainability or be the CEO of a not-for-profit.” Clearly articulating my career goals allows me to select the right opportunities, and led me to a career I love.

Fast forward a decade or so after I met Lynn, and I am scheduling chats with my own mentee. **Phoebe Woo Banson, '19 BA**, reaches out when she’s making decisions about her career or volunteer opportunities. She’s doing additional training, and I’ve connected her to people in my industry along the way.

She’s eager, and she is prepared with every last question she wants to ask. So I share with her what I’ve learned—from Lynn, my career, my alumni association presidency and the whole U of A community.

The recent Alumni Impact Report revealed that 86 per cent of U of A grads have spent time volunteering over the last year and 50 per cent are actively engaged in mentoring activities. Volunteering with the Alumni Association has expanded my connection to the U of A. I join more than 1,300 other grads who enthusiastically give the gift of their time each year.

The longer I’m out of school, the more I realize that the full value of my degree continues to be fulfilled in the years since. I was a student for a short period, but I am an alumna for life.

As a mentor, my role is not to tell someone what to do. It’s to say, “Let’s think about where you want to go, how you’re going to get there and what tools you can use to do it.”

The U of A gives us the tools, the networks and the confidence to pursue our personal and professional goals.

In the pages of this issue you’ll find grads like you who have made an impact—big and small, loudly and quietly, for one person and for many. It’s powerful and inspiring to see that wherever we go, there are probably U of A grads nearby, and we’re all rooting for each other.



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Marcey Andrews

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John Ulan

Copy Editors/Fact Checkers

Therese Kehler, Joyce Byrne

Proofreader

Joyce Byrne

Digital Imaging Specialist

David Vasicek

CONTACT US

Email (Comments/Letters/Class Notes):
newtrail@ualberta.ca

Mail: Office of External Relations, Strategic Communications, University of Alberta, Third Floor, Enterprise Square, 10230 Jasper Ave., Edmonton, AB T5J 4P6

Instagram & X: @UAlbertaAlumni

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Address Updates: 780-492-3471;
1-866-492-7516 or alumrec@ualberta.ca

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ISSN: 0824-8125 Copyright 2024
Publications Mail Agreement
No. 40112326

If undeliverable in Canada, return to:
Office of External Relations, Strategic Communications
University of Alberta, Third Floor,
Enterprise Square, 10230 Jasper Ave.
Edmonton, AB T5J 4P6

Printed in Canada

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notes

WHAT'S NEW AND NOTEWORTHY



Illustrative Experiences

Through art, youth shed light on the effect of communication changes after concussion

WORKING WITH YOUNG CLIENTS RECOVERING FROM CONCUSSION, speech-language pathologist **Jessica Harasym**, '03 BSc(Spec), '05 MSLP, '23 PhD, noticed they had developed workarounds for resulting communication barriers. "Clients would often bring drawings or journals when words fell short," she says. This spurred her to research how young people navigate changes following concussion. Realizing there was very little existing literature on the topic, she made this the focus of her PhD. Through her clients, Harasym found that although communication changes left them feeling uncertain, isolated and alone, they adapted to the challenges and wanted to share their experiences to help others. "I hope that my work can begin to identify, challenge and reframe misunderstandings about concussion and communication so youth feel understood and supported." —JENNIFER FITZGERALD

HEALTH CARE

Hospitalizations and Death Linked to Income Inequality

Researchers analyzed records of 27.6 million Canadians over 13 years to reveal trend

INCOME INEQUALITY HAS A tangible impact on Canadians' mental and physical well-being, according to public health researchers **Claire Benny**, '23 PhD, and associate professor Roman Pabayo.

Through a data analysis, the team found that the worsening gap between rich and poor Canadians has a statistical association with all-cause and preventable hospitalizations. The research team pored over 13 years' worth of data covering 27.6 million working-age Canadians living in 286 census districts, drawing on

the 2006 Canadian census, the 2007/2008 Canadian Community Health Survey and hospital discharge records from 2007-2018.

The team found that almost 200,000 Canadians had experienced "hospitalizations of despair," which refer to hospitalizations caused by drug overdoses, alcohol-related liver diseases and suicide attempts. As inequality worsened in the different census districts, these hospitalizations increased by 38 per cent. Overdoses increased by 51 per cent.



"The greater the gap, the greater the likelihood of experiencing a hospitalization due to despair," says Pabayo, principal investigator and Health and Canada Research Chair in Social and Health Inequities.

The results stayed consistent even when they controlled for factors like mean income, ethnicity or education.

"In communities with high income inequality, it's really hard to feel a sense of connection with your neighbours," says Benny, who is now a postdoctoral fellow with Public Health Ontario.

"You might feel like it's hard to relate or maybe you don't trust those around you, and it works both ways, whether you're a high income earner or a lower income earner. It's a level of uncertainty and disconnect within the space where you spend the majority of your time."

Investing in mental health services and improving services for people who use drugs are critical steps to address the impact of severe income gaps on public health, says the team.

"We want to intervene before it's too late."

—GILLIAN RUTHERFORD

STUDENT RESEARCH

LIFT, STRAIN, FATIGUE, REPEAT

Musculoskeletal disorders affect around one in five people worldwide, and one of their primary causes is unsafe movement in jobs like materials handling. Mechanical engineering master's student Karla Beltrán spotted why people slip into unsafe movement techniques firsthand. As part of her study measuring muscle fatigue, she

equipped her participants with sensors and tracked how they fared lifting boxes with and without breaks. Soon, she saw how fatigue affected their movements.

"Maybe for the first 10 minutes you bend your knees, do the recommended squat," says Beltrán. "But eventually, when you get tired, you compensate by slouching or maybe not doing a full squat."

Beltrán says that musculoskeletal injuries cost Canadian workplaces billions of dollars, but micro-breaks can help employees continue working safely. Just one minute of rest every 10 minutes makes a difference.

"Taking small breaks during a work shift can significantly reduce muscle fatigue and potentially reduce its consequent risk of work-related musculoskeletal disorders without negatively affecting productivity." —GEOFF MCMASTER

For more on these and other great U of A research stories, visit folio.ca.

NUMBERS

20

Number of years the Fyrefly Institute for Gender and Sexual Diversity has been supporting the 2SLGBTQ+ community and its allies. Originally the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services, the institute works with community organizations to provide services including crisis intervention, mental health supports and education

QUOTED

"It's about understanding how climate change impacts our health now in complex, intricate and maybe surprising ways we might not have thought of."

▼ Sherilee Harper, public health professor and head of the U of A's new Climate Change and Health Hub



WILY WEEVILS Augustana biology professor Tom Terzin fulfilled his childhood dream of discovering a new species when he spotted an unusual weevil among beetle samples collected from the Philippines' Northern Negros National Park in 2016 and 2017. Even more exciting, the sample also contained a weevil that used to live in the rainforest's now-deforested lowlands and hadn't been seen for 100 years. "Somehow this species has managed to survive in higher altitudes of over 1,000 metres. In the world of insects, it's almost like discovering a dodo bird." —BEV BETKOWSKI

EXPERT ADVICE

HOW TO CREATE A BEE-FRIENDLY GARDEN

When you think of bees, the fuzzy, golden honeybee probably pops to mind. But Alberta has about 370 bee species buzzing about, says Olav Rueppell, a professor in the U of A Department of Biological

Sciences who studies honeybee biology and health. He says while honeybees are tended by beekeepers for their honey, native bees could use a helping hand. "A lot of native bees are actually much more vulnerable than honeybees, and are intrinsically valuable because they represent biodiversity that is native to Alberta." Here's how you can help them out. —ADRIANNA MACPHERSON

INCLUDE PERENNIALS

Bees won't have a lot of time to gather nectar and pollen if everything in your garden blooms simultaneously.

"Ideally you'd have something that blooms at different times of the year, especially with perennials," says Rueppell.

EMBRACE VARIETY

Some bee species are happy to visit just about any type of flower, while others seek out specific plants. Rueppell suggests planting a wide variety of plants in your yard and sticking to native species where possible.

AVOID PESTICIDES

Even bee-friendly pesticides can negatively affect bees' behaviour and physiology, says Rueppell. It's best to avoid using pesticides of any kind as much as you can to help support the well-being of your pollinator friends.

BE NATURAL

To help welcome ground-dwelling bees, Rueppell recommends letting some areas of your backyard stay natural. "A lot of bees rely on dead plant material," he says. "If we clean our yards too thoroughly, we deprive these species of nesting materials."

Footnotes

A brief look at what's new at the U

New Funding for Pandemic Prep

The U of A has been named one of five research hubs that will help Canada get ready for the next infectious disease pandemic. Nearly \$100 million in new federal research grants, announced in May, will support researchers' efforts to find and make new vaccines, diagnostic tests and treatments against a wide range of threats.

MOOC Focuses on Black Canadians

A new U of A microcourse called Black Canadians tells lesser-known stories of this group of people. The course covers Black history, contributions and experiences, as well as the legacy of systemic racism and unconscious racial bias in Canadian institutions. The massive open online course is one of 35 U of A MOOCs available, free to the public, through Coursera.

New Indigenous Language Resource

A new, comprehensive guide, called *Towards Indigenous Language Revitalization: An Informative Resource*, provides educators and language lovers with an overview of Indigenous languages and their connection to cultural, social and historical contexts, as well as education strategies and recommendations. Download the resource for free from www.SILR.ca.



NUTRITION AND PEDIATRICS

Guide Demystifies Gluten-Free Eating for Kids

It's hard to get kids eating well, and harder still when you throw in a dietary challenge

FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH CELIAC DISEASE, gluten damages the intestinal lining, keeping them from absorbing the nutrients they need. Switching to a gluten-free diet is a key part of managing the condition.

But cutting out gluten can be challenging enough for an independent adult. How can families help a child make the shift?

U of A nutrition researcher **Diana Mager**, '89 MSc, pediatrics professor Justine Turner and their colleagues rose to this challenge. The team has published a 40-page guide to gluten-free eating, tailored to children, young people and their families. The visually appealing content helps make it accessible to everyone, from younger children eating snacks with their friends to teens shopping for groceries.

"We wanted to develop a comprehensive resource for families on how to start building a gluten-free diet, to take off some of the burden of worrying about whether their child is eating healthy," says Mager, a registered dietitian and professor in the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences and the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry.

"It's a pivotal period of growth and development. In particular, children who remain undiagnosed into adulthood often experience poor bone health at very early ages, which places them at long-term risk for bone fracture."

The guide also helps families navigate challenges or misconceptions that might come up while transitioning to a gluten-free diet. For instance, it debunks the myth that only wheat contains gluten and provides tips that help children and young people get important nutrients. Additionally, it provides a plate model that shows the proportions of different foods that make up a healthy meal.

Mager sees it as a useful part of parents' tool kits.

"It helps parents come up with new ideas to make gluten-free meals tasty, fun and not the same things over and over again." —BEV BETKOWSKI

MATERIAL INNOVATION

Carbon Fibre at Half the Cost, 70% Lower Emissions

Carbon fibre is a popular material for good reason. Its high strength, stiffness, low density and high corrosion resistance make it superior to a wide range of materials that are used in electric vehicles, consumer products and more.

Production costs have put carbon fibre out of reach for many industries, but U of A

engineering researcher Weixing Chen has found a way to produce carbon fibre at half the cost. Chen discovered carbon fibre can be pulled from bitumen feedstock by heating and softening it at high temperatures. Because the process uses a raw material rather than expensive synthetic precursors, it cuts costs and simultaneously reduces emissions by 70 per cent.

The research is promising enough that Chen has received funding from Alberta Innovates and Emissions Reduction Alberta to scale up production to 5,000 tonnes of carbon fibre a year by the early 2030s. —GEOFF MCMASTER

NUMBERS

955

The tally of students hosted by the ALES Mini-Internship Program since it began in 2016. The donor-supported program helps undergrad students gain real-world experience in agriculture, food sciences and environment and conservation sciences, often hosted by U of A alumni

RURAL MEDICINE

Partnership Promises Rural and Regional Doctors

A new partnership between the U of A and Northwestern Polytechnic will bring more doctors to rural, regional and Indigenous communities in Alberta. Based in Grande Prairie and Lethbridge, with \$224.8 million in funding from the provincial government, the two new Rural Medical Education Program Training Centres will allow medical students and family medicine residents to take their training closer to their communities. The program aims to alleviate the rural doctor shortage of the past several years. Enrolment starts in 2025, and the centres will accept undergraduate medical students as well as general practice and international medical graduate residents.

QUOTED

"We saw, in some cases, a 10,000-fold reduction in the amount of virus produced in a test tube, and when we went into a mouse model, the drugs prevented severe weight loss and the mice recovered much quicker."

▼ Virologist Tom Hobman on a U of A study that identified a class of antivirals that works against broad range of RNA viruses, including SARS-CoV-2



EDUCATION

How to Collaborate With AI in Art

WITH THE EMERGENCE OF SIMPLE IMAGE GENERATING AI TOOLS, it's natural to worry they could interfere with young people's creativity. But there could be benefits to taking a considered approach to bringing AI into the classroom, says artist and U of A education professor Patti Pente.

Algorithms permeate almost every facet of young people's lives, from Google searches to the algorithms that select their music and TikTok videos—influencing the choices they make and the way they see the world. Creating art is one way to disrupt that invisible influence, or at least help students more fully understand what algorithms do “behind the scenes,” she says.

Here are three ideas she offers for the classroom.

Present It as a Collaborator

Pente recommends making generative AI a part of artmaking instead of outsourcing the entire creative process to it. For instance, a student could write a story, provide a part of it to an image generating AI and then use its output as inspiration for creating art of their own.

Build in Lessons Around Algorithms and Ethics

By letting students experiment with AI, teachers can introduce discussions about the mechanics and ethics behind the technology. Pente suggests exploring topics like the intersection between AI

and copyright, how algorithms work and how bias might affect the image generating process.

Render the Invisible Visible

Pente notes that it's easy to become complacent about technology. “We tend to get so used to using it that we stop thinking about the way it works.” Introducing AI in the classroom helps students view the technology more critically instead of seeing it as a day-to-day norm. In turn, says Pente, this can help them better understand the technology's impact on their own lives.

—GEOFF MCMASTER

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Learning doesn't end when you accept your degree. We are all lifelong learners, whether we pursue lessons in a class or a lecture hall—or these lessons pursue us. **Curtis Gillespie**, '85 BA(Spec), reflects on the continuing opportunities for education that life throws our way, sometimes when we least expect them.



Winning Actually Isn't Everything

GROWING UP WITH FIVE SIBLINGS MADE ME COMPETITIVE. LATER, I DISCOVERED A DARK SIDE TO COMPETITION

“**W**inning isn't everything, it's the only thing.” Vince Lombardi, the iconic coach of the 1960s Green Bay Packers, made that saying famous, and it was the mantra I grew up with, though I didn't play football and had no idea who Lombardi was. I was, however, the oldest of six kids, five of us boys. We lived in a bungalow in northwest Calgary that was so cramped I didn't have a bedroom to myself until I moved to Edmonton for university. The four oldest, all boys, were produced in a four-year window. We were about the same size and of equal athletic ability. These factors coalesced to create a ruthless Serengeti-like ecosystem where every day was a blunt fight for survival. If you weren't a predatory lion, you were a dopey wildebeest about to become a meal. I lost the tip of my middle right finger in those years, and sometimes I imagine it happened during dinner once, when I got too close to the plate of a hungry brother.

In some ways, itemizing what we competed over on this pitiless savannah—some would call it a house—doesn't warrant detailing, because if it had a physical, emotional, moral, existential, philosophical or comical element to it, we competed over it. Food, sports, clothes, jibes, insults, fights, laundry, bathroom time, phone time (there was just one landline in the house), TV channels, the best TV chair, the front seat in the car, the back seat in the car, the middle seat in the car, the radio in the car, driving the car. All that on top of the succession of contests that played out 24/7 on our basement pool table, our ping pong table (a piece of plywood on top of the pool table), our hockey rink (the basement floor by the washer and dryer), our basketball court (a hoop dangling from the garage), our golf course (four holes laid out around the yard played with a duct tape ball), our mountain bike route (the alley), our bobsled run (the hill behind the neighbourhood), and in the various games of poker, chess, checkers, Risk, Monopoly, hearts, cribbage and Scrabble. Perhaps most formative was the relentless race to score verbal points. Serving up the quickest and sharpest retort earned double points if the wisecrack made either parent laugh.

In case it's not clear by now, our house was a wee bit competitive. Calling it sibling rivalry is like calling Taylor Swift a singer. It doesn't quite do it justice. Competitiveness was omnipresent, ubiquitous, all-encompassing. I loved the cut and thrust of it and, to this day, when I'm back with my brothers (our sister was exempt) we still value a good insult. I spent years trying to convince my wife, Cathy, and then our two children, that this verbal jousting was my love language, an effort that mercifully yielded under the force of their amiability and good nature.

I suppose I grew up thinking “Serengeti mode” was natural. I mean, you can't criticize a lion for biting things. It's what lions do. When a brother displayed a millisecond of weakness, you pounced first and asked questions



by Curtis Gillespie

later—or never. It wasn't until I began to mature, what, three, four years ago, that I began to realize competitiveness has a dark side. Writers like Somerset Maugham, Iris Murdoch and Gore Vidal have written versions of, "It is not enough to succeed. To be truly happy, one's friends have to also fail." Now *that* sentiment is competitive.

Multiple elements contributed to my shift in thinking. The first was probably that I began to underperform in athletic events. I couldn't handle it when someone piled on the aggressiveness, and I couldn't figure out why. My perception of myself as an athlete was that I could remain calm and handle whatever was thrown my way. But as time wore on I began to realize that there was a point to which I liked competition. Past that point, my success and enjoyment suffered. I just found it unpleasant.

My insight around the corrosiveness of the competitive instinct is thanks also to officiating squash at the highest levels. The truth is stark: people are not their best selves when the competitive juices are flowing like a raging current instead of a steady stream. I have seen too many professional athletes come completely unhinged when their desire to win spirals out of control.

And it's not just the pros. Last December, I happened to be officiating at one of the bigger junior tournaments, a vital stepping stone for players hoping to ascend to the collegiate and professional ranks. It's a setting for all kinds of intensity, pressure, competitiveness, poor sportsmanship, rampant hunger for victory, gamesmanship, illegal tactics and general bad behaviour.

And that's just the parents.

One moment stands out. A 12-year-old girl was on the verge of winning a match in the consolation quarterfinal, which meant it wasn't particularly important, since neither she nor her opponent could finish in the top 16. The girl in question had played well and was up 10-4 in the fifth game. She was serving and only needed one more point to win, but she hit her serve out. No big deal. She still had five match balls. But then she hit

another shot out, her opponent hit a winner, then another. Suddenly, from 10-4 it was now 10-8 in less than a minute. She looked to her coach and parents, close to tears. Her opponent served and the young girl completely whiffed it. She turned around, stared at her coach and ... stopped breathing.

She seemed on the verge of a panic attack. She walked toward the door, opened it, and was about to leave the court out of sheer emotional overload. I put my hands out. "No, no!" I said. "I know you're struggling, but you have to stay on court. If you come off court, you could forfeit the match. Just try to finish!"

I think we were all holding our breath over what might happen next. She took a deep swallow and closed the door. She trudged over to wait for her opponent's serve, at which point her opponent promptly hit it out! Unexpectedly, the panicky girl won 11-9 in the fifth game.

Everyone heaved a collective sigh of relief as both girls came off court. I went over to where the young girl was sitting with her coach and parents. "I'm sorry if that sounded harsh," I said, "I didn't want you to accidentally forfeit the match. I'm sure it was hard to get back on that court—good for you that you managed it."

A highly stressful situation for a young athlete had resulted in no major tears and perhaps some insight into "sticking with it." Crisis averted.

Or so I thought. About 10 minutes later, the father of the young girl who had lost the match asked me if I had a moment. I expected him to offer some kind of observation on how stressful these moments can be for young athletes. Nope.

"Why didn't you disqualify that girl?" he said sharply.

"What do you mean?" I said. "Who?"

"That girl my daughter was playing should have been disqualified! You were standing right there. My daughter should have been awarded that match."

I stood dazed and confused. I told him I saw a young athlete about to have a panic attack, not someone trying to gain a competitive advantage, and that I

advised her to remain on court to finish the match.

"She stepped out of the court," he said rudely. "I have it on video."

I happened to look over toward a row of chairs near the courts. His daughter was sitting with a friend giggling about something. If she was devastated, she was doing a good job of hiding it. I turned back to the father.

"I'm sorry you feel that way," I said. "But that's not how I saw it." I turned and left.

I admit it made me wonder what it would be like to grow up in a house where competitiveness crosses over into anti-social behaviour. Winning must matter at some level, because we value the ability of athletes to perform when the pressure is high. But, on the other hand, that's not real pressure. Real pressure is working in the human services, dealing with a person who is struggling and looking for a lifeline.

And yet we keep score. For what reason? It's probably related to something I learned, for better or worse, decades ago in the basement of our tiny house in northwest Calgary: People like to win and it usually doesn't matter what it's about.

Luckily, I enjoy the company of my siblings today. Maybe it's because we got all that competitiveness out of our systems early, I don't know. But I know that I feel differently about competition now than I did then.

There are times when it feels good to win. But it's damaging to want victory too much. Competitiveness is useful in small doses, but when it surges out of control, it's more a drug than a vitamin. Maybe we'd all be better off if we focused more on genuine wins—connection, empathy, usefulness. Let that be our challenge. In fact, how about this? I bet I can be more empathetic than you!

Oh, OK, wait ... ■

Curtis Gillespie has written five books and earned seven National Magazine Awards. His New Trail article "A Hard Walk" won gold for best article in 2018 from CASE, an international post-secondary association.

Some of our grads are at the centre of experiences others only read about. Their perspectives bring us closer to the story. *Lianne Mantla-Look, '12 BScN, talks about nursing and taboos around mental health.*



by Lianne Mantla-Look

The Possibility for Change

A COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSE LOOKS TO AN ELDER FOR HELP TALKING ABOUT TOUGH MENTAL HEALTH CARE SUBJECTS

The topics of mental health and suicide were never discussed when I was growing up in my small First Nations community, Behchokǫ, N.W.T., west of Yellowknife. I knew these topics were considered taboo. But as an adult and a community and public health nurse, I wanted to know why mental health was so difficult to speak about, at a time when too many of our youth are dying by suicide. I recently posed this question to an Elder from my community, and the answer proved to be enlightening and heartbreaking. But it opened the possibility for change.

Tłıchǫ, our ancestral region, covers about 40,000 square kilometres north of Great Slave Lake. There are about 3,000 people living in four communities here. Throughout my childhood, I don't recall an adult ever openly talking about suicide or mental health. If someone was known to have a mental illness, we kids were warned not to go near that person.

If a death occurred in my region that wasn't accidental or expected, nothing was said beyond, "So-and-so was found dead, it's so sad." No one ever *said* suicide.

Even today, despite mental health issues being covered in mainstream media, the stigma remains in my region. Some people don't seek counselling. Young adults often internalize the message, "Just deal with it," even when they reveal they're depressed. Where counselling services in small communities are available, people are reluctant to go due to a lack of anonymity.

Can you imagine any other public health crisis being treated this way? For context, my home community had four deaths by suicide in the span of three months in 2022.

My mom worked as a language and culture coordinator until she retired recently. Once, before she went to a sharing circle to discuss strategies addressing mental health issues, she asked me to define "mental health" to translate it to Tłıchǫ Elders. It got me thinking that it's hard to have discussions about mental health when some community members can't even say, "suicide." How are we supposed to help anyone?

That's why I had the conversation with a community Elder: I wanted to understand why the topics of mental health and suicide are stigmatized. At first, the Elder skirted the topic, speaking about it in a round-about way. I asked why it was common in our region to call someone "crazy" rather than say they have a mental illness. I asked her what kind of example we set for young people and how we're supposed to support them when we can't even talk about the problem. So the Elder offered her explanation.

Fear and shame, she said, are why the older generation avoids the subject. She said in the 1950s and '60s, when a person died by suicide, the surviving family would attempt to hide the cause of death. They were afraid of being blamed, afraid of getting in trouble. They were ashamed that they had family who suffered from mental illness. They were ashamed about the circumstances that led to the suicide and of how that person might

have led their life. Sometimes gossip can label a person for life.

Related to this, mental illness was once lumped together with developmental delay. And a developmental delay meant that a young person could be taken from their family. The Elder I spoke to recalled knowing a child who was developmentally delayed. His family, due to lack of education and resources, was unable to care for him. At age eight or nine, the Elder said, he was "taken by the missionaries" to a residential care facility. He came home to visit once the following summer and then never again. The Elder surmised that he died in care, or was sent to a facility in southern Canada. Families, she explained, were afraid to risk losing loved ones this way, so they didn't talk about either developmental delays or mental health problems.

Things are changing. I'm an Indigenous nurse and, to do my job effectively and safely, I speak openly with patients about things some people consider taboo. When I'm taking a person's medical history, I ask about everything. I ask about menstruation, reproduction and sexual health. If a person is admitted for suicidal ideation, I ask if they have a plan. For someone from a small community, I've learned to

get comfortable asking hard questions.

Health-care providers need to talk about mental health care and community support when cultural considerations make the conversation difficult. We need to lose the stigma. I don't have

all the answers, but I think it's a good start to normalize conversations about mental health and suicide. Fortunately, some Elders in my community, like the one I spoke to, are starting to agree. We support our community when we open the conversation. ■

"I wanted to understand why the topics of mental health problems and suicide are stigmatized, so I had a conversation with an Elder from my community."

Lianne Mantla-Look is the first person from the Tłıchǫ region of the Northwest Territories to become a registered nurse. She lives and works in Yellowknife.

thesis

DIVING DEEP INTO ONE IDEA



Feed and Nourish

The first is to satisfy an immediate need, the second is to care for something in its entirety

“TO FEED” MEANS THE PROVISION OF SUSTENANCE, IN A PHYSICAL sense. But “to nourish” means sustaining all parts of us. For humans, that might mean developing our well-being, which could include healthy food, spiritual development and a good education. But what nourishes one person isn’t always the same for someone else. When you start looking into it further, feeding one system might mean harming another. ■



It's In Your Head

Are you feeding your chronic pain?

I EXPERIENCED MY FIRST migraine in preschool. It was my turn to be “student of the day,” which involved wearing a special sash and delivering the day’s show-and-tell—but I barely made it to lunchtime. When my mom picked me up, I told her, in tears, that a “circle” on my forehead was hurting me. Thus began a barrage of appointments, headache journals and the eventual diagnosis: chronic migraine.

More than 20 years and numerous treatments later, I’ve found a medication that works well if I take it at the first hint of an oncoming migraine. This should be simple. I’m a veteran migraineur, after all. Alas, I have trouble noticing a headache’s onset.

So, when I found a TedX talk by **Casey Berglund**, ’11 BSc(Nutr/Fd), something clicked. Berglund is an author and founder of Worthy and Well—a company offering business coaching centred on the mind-body connection. In her talk, she addresses two broad categories of sensation: expansion and contraction.

She explains that we experience expansion when

we do things we enjoy. Expansion, she says, feels weightless and easy. It feels like growth. But contraction happens when we do things we dislike, require healing or hit a growth edge. Contraction feels heavy and difficult. It makes us feel small. Our natural reaction to feelings of contraction is to get rid of them quickly. I can relate.

Every migraine is a kind of loss. As a kid, a migraine meant I couldn’t finish my favourite TV cartoon or stay over at a friend’s house. As an adult, a migraine can mean I’m stuck in a hotel on a vacation, or I fail to fully engage with work or friends. So I’ve spent a lifetime pouring my energy into *not* feeling a migraine—into not listening to my body—so that life could go on. Of course I can’t tell when a migraine is starting.

Berglund suggests that surrendering to the sensation of contraction—not ignoring it—better informs your next steps. Her talk gave me a new perspective on migraines, about what it means to nourish my body by paying more attention to it, rather

than feeding my chronic pain by ignoring it.

Hepatologist and U of A professor, **Puneeta Tandon**, ’07 MSc, addresses chronic illness holistically. While her expertise is liver disease, her research addresses the importance of “the whole person.” She and her team created Empower, a free 12-week program for people with chronic conditions that offers online videos by medical experts, coaching and classes in meditation, tai chi and yoga, and tips on coping skills such as pacing, sleep hygiene and self-compassion.

Tandon explains that chronic illness disrupts life, causing stress, and stress feeds illness. She says there’s a lack of professional resources to manage those parts of chronic illness, and Empower fills that gap. “Empower is the best of the East and the West. People learn from these evidence-based strategies,” says Tandon. “Studies have seen significant reductions in stress, depression and anxiety, and improvements in fatigue.”

Right now, she’s running a clinical trial of the program that includes participants with conditions from digestive diseases to the side effects of cancer treatments. Participants report the value of practices they’ve learned in managing pain and stress.

Those practices bring to mind my early migraine years: my mom telling me that crying makes it worse, to try to calm down. But I was a kid, and in moments of severe pain, all I could comprehend was that it was *too much*. So I cried and panicked. In Berglund’s parlance, I reacted to pain with fear and rejection. Instead of working through it, as Tandon might prescribe, I pushed it away and, in doing so, fed it.

So recently, I’ve been

working on some rewiring: trying to take my body’s cues seriously. That rewiring is called neuroplasticity—the ability of the brain to form and reorganize synaptic connections, especially in response to learning or following injury.

Eleanor Stein, ’84 BMedSci, ’87 MD, a retired medical doctor and psychiatrist, knows the power of the brain. She has lived with myalgic encephalomyelitis, chronic fatigue syndrome and environmental sensitivities. “As a child and teen, I was healthy and active, but I always suspected something was off,” says Stein. “I got dizzy and motion sick often, and I couldn’t do aerobic exercise to save my life. I needed more sleep than my friends.” Her symptoms worsened until she found out about neuroplasticity, which played a part in her recovery.

“In 2014, I desperately wanted to take a trip and had no idea how I’d manage with all the chemicals and fragrances I’d be exposed to,” says Stein. “I registered for a neuroplasticity-based program, followed the instructions, and was able to increase my exposure without symptoms.”

While Stein had already spent decades pacing her activities, improving sleep and finding the right diet, adding daily neuroplasticity practices, such as active redirection, changed her experience with chemical sensitivities and chronic pain significantly.

“To rewire the brain, you have to change how you think, feel and act,” says Stein. “This takes advantage of the first law of neuroplasticity: ‘what fires together, wires together.’ If you start consistently firing neurons in ways you

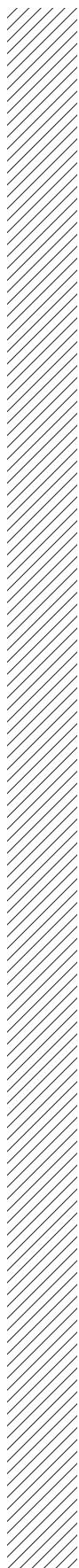
There's no magic bullet but I welcome any gain. Today, I'm better at documenting and acknowledging migraine triggers.

want to gain strength, by reacting differently to your pain signals, the brain can learn that those signals aren't dangerous. This calms the nervous system so new learning can take place."

Knowing this, she changed the language she used when talking about chronic illness. She emphasized "the power of lifestyle choices like diet, pacing, sleep regimens and mindset," and after experiencing its success, she created science-based, customized programs and resources for other people with chronic pain.

"Patients who'd plateaued for years began to improve," Stein says. They reported fewer crashes, less pain and an improved mood.

While there's no magic bullet, I welcome any gain. Today, I'm better at documenting and acknowledging triggers—a practice I left in adolescence as a riddle I'd never solve. Anxiety and excitement are up there (no surprise to this former preschool "person of the day") along with unusual triggers, like wind! I've taken steps, including medication, to manage anxiety and improve sleep. My lists, trials and errors, and mind-body attentiveness may always be works in progress, but I'm learning. There's value in feeling negative sensations such as pain and stress. They help us better understand ourselves so we can better nourish ourselves. —KALYNA HENNIG EPP



WHAT FEEDS WILDFIRE AROUND THE CLOCK?

Nighttime used to be a respite

WESTERN CANADA IS CHARACTERIZED BY FIRE, and dry vegetation is its feedstock. Normally, the cool humidity of nighttime would tamp the appetite of the flames somewhat.

But the last several years have changed that pattern, and fires can now feed and burn around the clock. "The night might not save us," says Kaiwei Luo, a PhD student in the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences.

Luo's study, published in the journal *Nature*, indicates overnight fires are challenging conventional fire management practices. "I think it is important to bring this emerging phenomenon to the public to let them know," he says.

In recent years, studies and first-hand accounts have shown that an unknown environmental change is enabling wildfires

to surpass this natural barrier and burn more powerfully at night.

"Originally, I had thought that since nights are warming faster than days, higher temperatures and the associated lower relative humidity at night would lead to more overnight fires," says wildfire expert Mike Flannigan, U of A professor emeritus and researcher with Thompson Rivers University.

To test this hypothesis, Luo led a team that examined 23,557 fires in North America between 2017 and 2020, using a combination of satellite and terrestrial data to analyze the burn cycle and identify overnight burning events.

They found that although warming is weakening the check that nighttime once put on fires, the main driver of recent overnight burns in large fires was an increase in accumulated fuel dryness, which led to consecutive overnight burns that in some cases lasted weeks.

In other words, prolonged dry conditions were creating bone-dry fuel for hungry fires.

Luo says understanding this new wildfire reality could facilitate early detection and improved fire management. "The presence of daytime drought conditions could act as a predictor of overnight burning events the following night," he says. It may change the way fire management services respond to fires and how they allocate resources.

—MICHAEL BROWN

Bubble, Fizz and Gurgle

Fermentation nourishes the gut and the planet

FERMENTATION ISN'T JUST FOR beer or sourdough. Research is honing in on how best to choose new bacterial cultures to dish up to food manufacturers for fermenting new plant-based products. A framework that pulls together criteria for food scientists to consider has been developed by a team of international researchers, led by Michael Gänzle, a professor in the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences. The information will ultimately help feed a growing demand for a wider range of fermented foods.

Produced through beneficial activity of microbes like bacteria, moulds and yeasts, fermentation is growing in popularity and gaining recognition for its potential benefits, says Gänzle, a food microbiologist. "Fermented foods offer a promising solution for their potential ability to benefit human health, and to leave a smaller environmental footprint than animal-based food production."

He explains that a plant-based diet requires fewer resources than one with a lot of animal protein. His work recently contributed to tools for picking new starter cultures to meet demand generated by a revival in sourdough fermentation for industrial-scale bread production, but there's also a hunger for expanding the menu, he notes.

"In recent years, the food and brewing industries have shown interest in using the process to create new non-alcoholic beverages and foods that are minimally processed, healthier and plant-based," Gänzle says.

To figure out how to make the best selection of bacterial cultures, researchers reviewed scientific studies. They included descriptions of different organisms in traditional food fermentations with genomic analyses of metabolic traits that could be used in starter cultures for new foods. The framework will help the food industry keep pace with consumer demand, Gänzle says. His research, "Starter Culture Development and Innovation for Novel Fermented Foods," was published in *Annual Reviews in Food Science and Technology*. —BEV BETKOWSKI



What's Eating the Bees?

It's time to get to know their pests a little better

THE VARROA MITE knows nothing of humans and their voracious appetites for legumes, canola, vegetables and more. It knows nothing of the creatures that we eat and the crops that we feed to them. But it knows honeybees, and it finds their hemolymph (arthropod blood) delicious. For a short period in its development, Varroa also feasts on the layer of the bee's fat just under the exoskeleton.

In fact, the mite's main appetites imperil its food source, and that fact has us humans nervous. The Varroa mite contributes to annual losses of up to 40 per cent of bee colonies in Canada.

Olav Rueppell of the Department of Biological Sciences, with researchers at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Beijing, decided to examine what Varroa mites were doing to bee pupae inside the hive's

wax cells, where both the bees and mites are at their reproductive stage. Getting that relationship right is crucial for coming up with control measures to eradicate the mite.

"It is important to understand the biology of this interaction between the honeybee host and the mite," says Rueppell, especially because both are arthropods. "They're so closely related it's hard to kill one without killing or harming the other."



Rueppell and his team at the U of A focus on finding control measures for the Varroa and other pests of honeybees by developing pesticides and boosting the bees' natural defences.

Rueppell says the biggest threats to honeybee health are commonly summarized as “the four Ps,” — pesticides, poor nutrition, pathogens and parasites. The Varroa mite is considered the most common parasite, listed as the top cause of mortality in six provinces in a 2020 survey by the Canadian Association for Professional Apiculturists. “Bees pollinate a lot of our food supply and commercial crops,” Rueppell says. “Their impact in Canada is worth more than \$7 billion each year.” —GEOFF MCMASTER

Cystic Fibrosis Patients Get Their Fill

The disease also affects the digestive system, but new treatments are changing lives

CYSTIC FIBROSIS PATIENTS

have a defective protein that changes the way chloride ions move in and out of their cells. The hereditary condition creates a thick, gummy mucus best known to affect the lungs, leading to chronic, repeated infection and early death.

But cystic fibrosis (CF) is not strictly a lung disease. The same defective protein gums up the works elsewhere in the body, including the pancreas in the gastrointestinal tract, which can prevent proper absorption of food. As a result,

people with the disease are in danger of malnourishment and they need as many as two times more calories than other people. Doctors typically recommend a high-fat diet. But a breakthrough—which earned a Breakthrough Prize—is changing that, and the majority of people with the disease stand to benefit.

U of A grad **Fred Van Goor**, '91 BSc, '97 PhD, had a research interest in ion channels that led to a job at Vertex Pharmaceuticals, where he developed the drug Trikafta

as part of a treatment regimen that addresses the function of the defective protein. It has dramatically improved—and lengthened by *decades*—the lives of CF patients. Until recently, all people with CF spent a lot of time sick and exhausted, and had a median lifespan of 57 years.

Now, more than 90 per cent of CF patients can benefit from Trikafta and most of them can expect a near-normal lifespan in relative good health if they start the regimen in childhood. Breathing easier, these people are now also properly digesting food and getting its full nutrients.

For revolutionizing the treatment of cystic fibrosis, Van Goor (with Sabine Hadida and Paul Negulescu) won the 2024 Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences, worth \$3 million. —MIFI PURVIS, '93 BA

Two Minds Meet

IN 2003, FACULTY OF ARTS PROFESSOR

Geoffrey Rockwell published a book called *Defining Dialogue: From Socrates to the Internet*, looking at how dialogue as a philosophical technique has gone in and out of ordinary use as a way to feed intellectual curiosity, persuasion and conversation. Since then, developments in AI have invited dialogue, in the socratic sense, to the head of the table again.

Last year, Rockwell wrote a piece for *The Conversation* called “Chatbots Can Help us Rediscover the Rich History of Dialogue.” In it, he’s hopeful about the role of large language models to aid intellectual inquiry. This isn’t a surprise if you use this kind of AI, such as ChatGPT, as a way to crack the nut of an idea that has been rolling around in your head for a while. It’s like having a tireless, well-read bestie who’s always up for spitballing ideas or playing devil’s advocate. And compared to screeching into the internet, lobbing ideas around with ChatGPT, without judgment, is downright pleasant. Here are some of Rockwell’s observations from *The Conversation*.

Why dialogue? “There is a long tradition in philosophy of thinking through difficult

topics with dialogue,” Rockwell writes. “Dialogue is a paradigm for teaching, inquiry, and a genre of writing that can represent enlightened conversation.” This paradigm can bear fruit even when your interlocutor is a large language model.

But it’s not real: True, you are not engaging in dialogue with a real person, but you are really engaging in dialogue, in a way you mightn’t otherwise. “Make a virtue of the availability of these chattering machines,” Rockwell writes. The dialectical exchange stimulates curiosity, an *amuse bouche* for the brain.

Spitball! Rockwell encourages his students to use different chatbots for dialogues. “That raises questions about what a dialogue is supposed to do and how it can be used to convey ideas.”

Call on a persona: Rockwell suggests using a service such as Character.AI, on which he created an ethics professor, with whom to have a dialogue. Continue to read deeply, but your textbook can’t talk things over with you.

Beware hallucinations: Users shouldn’t trust everything the AI professor says. “Everything the characters say is made up.” Awareness of a language model’s foibles allows you to approach a dialogue with the mindset of a skeptic. —MIFI PURVIS, '93 BA

FEEDING THE CROP THAT NOURISHES US

An important oilseed crop eats its veggies

BY SIFTING THROUGH THE GENES OF BROCCOLI, cauliflower, cabbage and kale, plant scientist Habibur Rahman and his team plan to pinpoint the best ones for breeding new lines of canola to produce hybrid cultivars with higher seed yield.

“This work is taking us to the next level of improved genetic diversity that will make hybrid canola stronger,” says Rahman, a professor in the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences.

Production of the oilseed crop contributes \$29.9 billion per year to the Canadian economy and is an important global export, totalling \$14.4 billion a year. Canadian farmers, mainly in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, harvest about 20 million tonnes of canola annually, with hybrid cultivars accounting for more than 95 per cent of the crop grown in Canada.

Broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and kale are varieties of a species known as *Brassica oleracea*. Determining which genes among them spur higher seed yield will help scientists fortify that crucial trait in hybrid canola.

The food-grade oil crushed from canola seeds is the crop’s most valuable product, Rahman notes. More seed means more oil.

Working with Bayer Crop Science, Rahman and his team will develop new canola lines to create hundreds of hybrids to test in field trials across the Prairies for seed yield and other traits. “It takes many years to develop superior hybrid canola cultivars, but the genetic research we’re doing is important to maintaining the profitability of this crop at the farm level.” —BEV BETKOWSKI

Who Feeds Alberta’s Farms?

Migrant labour is a hidden workforce

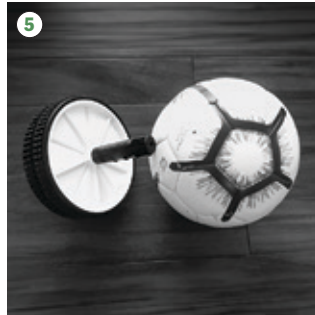
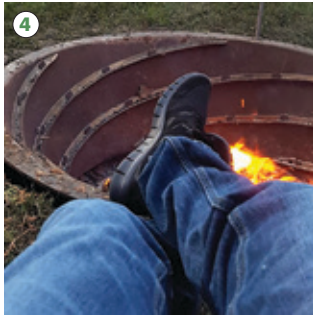
THE NEXT TIME YOU BUY A locally grown cucumber or a jar of Alberta honey, try to picture the people who produced it for you. The first person that comes to mind may not be a migrant farm worker from Mexico, but Alberta agricultural operations are increasingly dependent on such seasonal labour.

Canadian farms employ 60,000 temporary foreign farm workers, according to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, representing almost one-quarter of those working in agriculture jobs in Canada. According to Statistics Canada, four-fifths come from just three countries: Mexico, Guatemala and Jamaica.

“There’s a lack of awareness of how much Canada is depending on migrant labour for agriculture, especially for vegetable field crops, greenhouses and honey production,” says professor Mary Beckie, director of the School of Public Health’s Community Engagement Graduate Program. “They’ve become a major part of our workforce, but remain hidden.”

Maricruz Barba Gonzalez, ’23 MPH, is working to give voice to this population. In “From the Voices of Mexican Seasonal Farm Workers in Alberta” — her master’s





thesis for the School of Public Health—she reports on her interviews with nine Mexican men.

Barba Gonzalez says a number of factors contribute to the workers' sense of isolation.

Long work hours, language barriers and a lack of access to personal transportation mean the workers have little contact with people in the local communities and must rely on their employers for access to health care and culturally appropriate food sources. They have no access to permanent residency because each work permit is less than a year long.

"They told me, 'Even though we spend half our lives here in Canada, without help from employers we

cannot access services such as English classes or getting a driver's licence,' which would entrench them in Canadian communities," says Barba Gonzalez.

Part of Barba Gonzalez' guided interview process involved photovoice, a research method in which subjects provide a photograph and then describe its meaning in their lives. One participant provided a shot of the trailer where he is housed, which he calls a "trailer"—a combination of the word "trailer" and "casa," which means home in Spanish. Another showed a photo of tire tracks in deep snow, describing himself as a "husky dog" who pulls carts around.

Barba Gonzalez approached more than

100 workers for interviews, but only nine agreed. The others were reluctant to be seen as complaining. Each worker is evaluated at the end of the growing season, to see if they'll be allowed back into the country the following year, which tends to encourage compliance, the researchers say.

"I would like Canadians to be aware that people from Mexico are making it possible for us to have food on our tables," Barba Gonzalez says. "When we measure it through only an economic lens, then the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program is a good program, but when you measure well-being, you can see it's a really complex topic with many layers."

—GILLIAN RUTHERFORD

1 MYWORK The participant says that the photo represents his daily labour and the pride he takes in his work, a contribution to Canada and the world. Each tree, he says, represents a world in itself.

2 LIKE AN ALASKAN DOG One man is fascinated by the snow, a new experience for him each time he encounters it in Canada. He likens his efforts in the snow to pulling carts, playful yet challenging.

3 WHERE I LIVE One man describes living in a trailer, uncommon in Mexico. He also contrasts the larger, more colourful homes in Mexico with his smaller trailer accommodation in Canada.

4 THE GATHERING This man's employer organizes regular barbecues for the workers and some of the employer's friends. The Canadians make an effort to communicate, and the employer's caring attitude makes the workers committed to their work. The man was motivated to bring his family to visit.

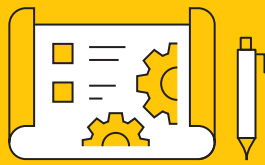
5 MYHOBBIES One man considers his limited leisure options at the farm. His primary hobby is exercising due to the ample space and remote location. Physical activity is his sole recreational outlet.

6 THE TRUCK This participant compares his work vehicles in Mexico to those in Canada, where he learned to drive a truck, an essential tool for his work. He is now saving to buy a similar vehicle for use in Mexico.

7 THE PEOPLE I LIVE WITH The participant highlights the importance of his coworkers for their understanding and companionship, even though constant togetherness can be exhausting. This image represents his support system.

8 WHERE I RUN This picture encapsulates one man's entire Canadian experience, working and spending free time on the same plot of land. This dual use of the space is important to him.

9 ON MY WAY TO WORK This worker says the view on his daily commute keeps him focused on positive memories of working on the farm in Canada, an image he cherishes and shares with his family.



KNOWLEDGE CREATORS

Alumni contribute through research and innovation

213,000

new products, processes and services



COMPANY FOUNDERS

Alumni-founded companies generate annual revenues of

\$250B

\$247B

annual revenue of for-profit companies

\$3B

annual revenue of non-profit companies



THE IMPACT

BUSINESS BACKERS

Alumni invested

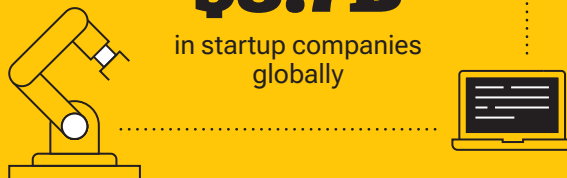
\$12.1B

in established businesses in Alberta



\$8.7B

in startup companies globally



JOB GENERATORS

Alumni-founded companies support

922,000

jobs worldwide, including

560,000

in Alberta

That's more than 22% of the province's workforce.



ALBERTA BOOSTERS

Alumni-founded companies in Alberta contribute

\$136.4B*

to the economy



**equal to the percentage of GDP generated by Alberta's top three industries: oil and gas, real estate and manufacturing.*

Alumni have founded **MORE THAN 75,000** profit and non-profit companies

71% of grads work in Alberta

SKILLED WORKERS

employment rate for U of A grads

97%

58%

work in education, health, social, scientific and professional jobs

REPORT

A U of A education has a big effect on grads' lives. And you make a remarkable impact on the world



KEEN CONTRIBUTORS

U of A grads give of their time and money above national averages.



Grads make annual charitable donations of

\$979M



86% of grads volunteer in a year



50% of grads share their knowledge by mentoring

It might be the quintessential U of A story

Two University of Alberta grads. Married. One an arts grad, one a science grad; four U of A degrees between them. And a moment over a Timmies coffee where it was the social scientist who suggested to her husband a game-changing solution that would be the impetus for their cellular agriculture company.

There is a lot of green and gold woven into the DNA of Future Fields, co-founded by **Jalene Anderson-Baron**, '12 BA, '16 MA, and her husband, **Matt**, '13 BSc, '19 PhD (more on page 33). It's that interweaving that is the most U of A part of the story. Individually, our grads are remarkable—but bring them together and the impact is amplified across the globe.

A newly released survey by professional services firm Ernst & Young quantifies that impact in economic, cultural and social spheres. We knew our grads were impressive, but the numbers wowed even us. A few standouts:

- ▶ U of A grads contribute \$250 billion to the global economy every year—roughly the equivalent of the GDP of New Zealand.
- ▶ Alumni have founded more than 75,000 companies and employ 922,000 people worldwide.
- ▶ Together, grads have invested \$8.7 billion in 59,000 startups and \$12.1 billion in 122,000 established businesses varying from health care to arts and entertainment.

- ▶ 86 per cent of U of A grads had volunteered in the previous 12 months.
- ▶ Alumni gave a collective \$979 million in charitable donations over the year.

This issue of *New Trail* celebrates these numbers and the people behind them. We share stories of grads who are making a difference in their communities and around the world. And we know there are many more of you out there.

Cancer. Food security. Jobs. The economy. Support for the arts. Reconciliation. These are some of the big, unwieldy problems of our time. The grads on these pages are taking on these

challenges. And they are finding solutions.

The collective impact of grads is especially strong in Alberta: 71 per cent work for province-based organizations. Alumni-founded companies employ 560,000 grads in the province—more than 22 per cent of the province's workforce.

Alumni-founded firms also contribute \$136.4 billion to the Albertan economy. That's equal to 41 per cent of the provincial GDP. Amazing, given the province's top three industries combined—oil and gas, real estate and manufacturing—make up 41.3 per cent of the total GDP.

Beyond Alberta, companies founded by alumni contribute \$64.6 billion to the rest of Canada and \$48.8 billion to the rest of the world.

But the impact of U of A grads goes far beyond jobs and the economy. The survey found 65 per cent are committed to careers that make substantial

contributions to the social and economic welfare of the public. Plus half of all U of A alumni are actively engaged in mentoring activities.

Mentorship, on both sides of the equation, is a recurring theme in this issue.

On page 2, **Ashton Rudanec**, '12 BCom, '16 MBA, president of the U of A Alumni Association, calls her experience in the alumni mentorship program a game-changer for her career.

Michel Sadelain, '89 PhD, who was recently awarded two of the biggest honours in the scientific community, points to the important role that U of A mentors like **Lorne Tyrrell**, '64 BSc, '68 MD, played in his life and career (page 25).

Nizar Somji, '85 MEng, was so appreciative of his mentors that he built mentorship into his own practices (page 26). And those who attended the YouthWrite program run by **Gail Sidonie Šobat**, '83 BEd, '91 MA—many of whom also went on to become U of A alumni—credit her with lessons that go well beyond the craft of writing (page 36).

Right now, there are more than 300,000 U of A grads around the world, each making an impact in their community. And every year another 9,000 or so students become part of the alumni community. Each one is ready to make a tangible difference in the world—improving the quality of life for all.

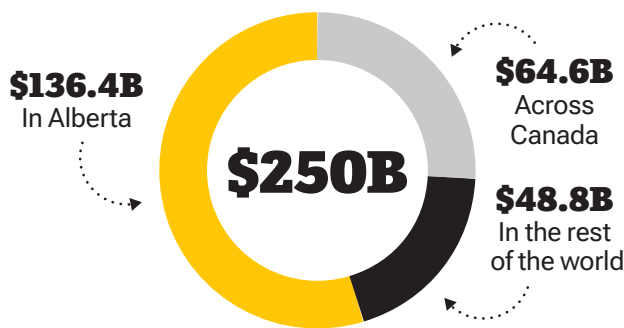
As the U of A prepares to grow its student population from 40,000 to 60,000 over the next decade, the potential for future alumni impact is unlimited.

"It's one of the many reasons I'm so proud to be part of this community," says Rudanec. "I truly believe that, when we work together, we have the capacity to shape the world." —LISA COOK

BUSINESS BACKERS
Alumni invested in

122,000 established businesses + **59,000** startups

FUELLING THE ECONOMY
Alumni-founded companies generate annual revenues of



Figures are scaled estimates of responses to an email survey sent in September 2023 to approximately 202,325 grads, with a response rate of 2.5%. Demographic information was used to weight responses to ensure the validity of the results.



Using AI to Ensure a Safe Water Supply

Martha White

'08 BSc(Hons), '10 MSc, '15 PhD

➤ With access to safe water under threat worldwide, RL Core Technologies is working to improve water treatment, using artificial intelligence for maximum impact.

CEO and co-founder Martha White explains that the technology uses a data-driven AI approach called reinforcement learning (RL) to optimize water treatment and other industrial control systems so they can adapt in real time, reducing costs and energy use. The technology was developed in the U of A's Reinforcement Learning and Artificial Intelligence Lab

by White and her partner and company co-founder, Adam White, '06 MSc, '15 PhD.

The U of A's new Innovation Fund is banking on RL Core's success and chose the venture as its first investment in October 2023. In addition to moving its AI-enhanced water treatment technology into the marketplace, the company plans to expand its AI approach to other applications, such as manufacturing and heating and cooling systems, says White, an associate professor in the Faculty of Science and Canada CIFAR AI Chair through Amii, the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute.

"Founding the company was the next step to bring reinforcement learning to the real world, especially for the specific application of drinking water treatment, to truly impact the lives of people," says White.

"We're going for something ambitious that can have a very high impact." —BEV BETKOWSKI

Building Peace as a Former Child Soldier

Alfred Orono Orono

'00 BA(Crim), '03 LLB

➤ Alfred Orono Orono's childhood was first shattered at the age of eight.

Growing up in Uganda under the dictator Idi Amin, he lost relatives to politically driven killings and disappearances. He was forced to watch three live firing squads. His father's murder was unspeakably gruesome.

In 1979, when the Tanzanian People's Defence Force invaded Uganda to liberate it, Orono joined their army. He was 11 years old.

Wielding a gun and a gift for speaking multiple languages and dialects, he patrolled, gathered information and interpreted. "My experiences as a child soldier could have destroyed me," Orono told the United Nations' podcast *Awake At Night* in 2022. "But instead (they) fuelled a passion for championing human rights."

Since May 2023, Orono has been head of the field office of the UN Mission in South Sudan in Upper Nile State. The mission works to



protect civilians and build durable peace in a country still rocked by violence and human rights abuses after a civil war. Before that, Orono was the chief of child protection services in South Sudan, aiding children who've suffered violence, abuse and exploitation, and getting child soldiers released and re-integrated in their communities.

Orono draws on the extraordinary resilience he displayed as a child and also as a teenaged student after he left the army.

With his life in danger for supporting the Uganda People's Congress, he fled to Kenya and was moved to Ethiopia and South Sudan, where he was imprisoned, tortured and

starved. Escaping to Kenya, he worked at a UN site. There, supporters recommended him for a scholarship to the University of Alberta, via the World University Service of Canada Student Refugee Program. After earning a degree in criminology and law, he worked as a prosecutor in Canada's Department of Justice for two years, then left to join the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for the next eight.

That heart-wrenching challenge and his subsequent work in South Sudan make up for the fact that "I never got a chance to prosecute him (Idi Amin)," Orono says. It's his way of righting a ruined childhood. —HELEN METELLA

Banking on Clean Beauty

Karina Birch

'99 BCom

KARINA BIRCH WAS FRESH OUT OF THE U OF A when she and her husband bought a tiny, home-based soap-making business in 2000. The pair has grown Rocky Mountain Soap Co. to 12 stores and 150 retail partners across Canada, plus a booming online business. Their natural soaps, skin care and hair care products—all manufactured and packaged in Canmore, Alta.—pull in more than \$24 million a year.

"In the early days, we had enormous challenges formulating 'natural' before many people were doing it," Birch said in a 2022 company video. "Nowadays, I look back with just an enormous sense of pride and honour that we stuck it out."

With the clean beauty market forecast to grow by more than 16 per cent in the next decade, Rocky Mountain Soap is poised for more expansion, with plans to double in size by 2028.

"We want to build a sustainable, enduring business: steady, managed growth with a social purpose," Birch says, noting the company has a goal to donate a million dollars over the next five years.

While growth is the goal, it won't change the ethos behind the brand. Birch says connecting to nature and preserving the environment remain top personal and business priorities. —KERRY POWELL

LEFT PHOTO BY ISAAC BILLYJUNMISS; RIGHT PHOTO BY JOHN ULAN



Advancing Cancer Treatment

Michel Sadelain

'89 PhD

> This year, Michel Sadelain was honoured with both the Canada Gairdner International Award and the 2024 Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences. These awards recognize scientists who are advancing medicine's understanding of human biology and developing new disease treatments.

Behind these awards is his groundbreaking work in CD19-CAR T-cell therapy.

Sadelain (far left) demonstrated that T-cells – a type of white blood cell that helps the immune system – can be engineered to acquire the ability to recognize and destroy cancer cells. These refurbished T-cells, which he calls a “living drug,” are made by extracting a cancer patient's T-cells and inserting synthetic antigen receptors into them, and then reinfusing them into the patient. The technique has led to significant advancements in leukemia and lymphoma therapies.

Sadelain's journey from a U of A lab to the forefront of cancer immunotherapy began more than 30 years ago, guided by mentors like **Lorne Tyrrell**, '64 BSc, '68 MD (near left), and others; now Sadelain is the director of the Center for Cell Engineering at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

He maintains strong ties to Edmonton, where his family and academic roots lie. He continues to support local research endeavours, including projects led by **Michael Chu**, '08 BSc(MedSci), '09 MD, at the U of A.

Sadelain's accolades underscore the transformative impact of his work on gene therapy and cancer treatment. They also recognize the importance of education and mentorship in shaping future breakthroughs.

—MICHAEL BROWN AND SHELBY SOKE



Playing with Food, Seriously

Linda Ho

'04 BSc, '06 BSc(Nutr/FoodSc), '09 MSc, '16 PhD

"She's the brain you talk to if you have an idea for a new food product. ... She is a key piece of the formula for others who are inventing," says **Cynthia Strawson**, '05 BA, '13 MSc, of the Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences.

The "she" is Linda Ho, manager and lead food scientist of the Centre for Culinary Innovation with NAIT Applied Research. We asked Ho a bit about her work.

"I manage a team of food scientists and culinary-trained researchers. We merge the culinary arts and food science to produce commercially viable products and help small to medium enterprises scale up their processes."

"I start off my weeks with a meeting with what I call my dream team: a food scientist, a certified culinary scientist and culinary students. We chat about their ideas and how to create what they want to create. For our team, it's never a 'no,' but a 'how.' Then I meet industry partners and producer groups that have technologies they want to expand, problems they need to solve or questions on how to increase demand for their products."

"On the best days, I get to taste and provide insights about what the team has dreamed up. And sometimes they let me play in the kitchen."



Building Business and Community

Nizar Somji

'85 MEng

ENGINEERING GRAD AND U OF A chancellor-elect Nizar Somji leads the Jaffer Group of Companies as founder and CEO. During his career, he has founded multiple successful businesses, including Matrikon Inc., a leader in industrial automation, which he grew from a one-person venture to a global company operating on five continents. The Jaffer Group has invested more than \$130 million in Alberta's economy, through ventures in construction, information technology, realty, hospitality, petroleum and property management. He shares a few things he's learned about good leadership.

Surround yourself with good people: Somji says it's important for a leader to understand that, no matter how hard you work, you can't do it all or manage every decision. A leader's job is "to inspire, motivate and hold the team accountable while giving them the autonomy to be creative and achieve what they want to achieve."

Build up your community:

"The world tells us to focus on ourselves and forget the people around us," says Somji. "But when I started my first company, I would have problems or questions and I could call on my friends, and we'd help each other. That concept of building up your community is integral to success." This belief shows in his decision to return to the U of A as chancellor. "I always felt I was going to come back to serve the community that helped me get where I am today."

Invest in others' success:

Somji credits Sirish Shah and Grant Fisher, professors emeriti of the Faculty of Engineering, as his most influential mentors. When he arrived in Canada, they took the time to hear his story and connect him with a teaching assistantship that allowed him to stay, study and grow roots.

"They recognized my talent and my value," says Somji. "They were important to my transformation." They're also the



reason he has built mentorship into his own practices. “I think my biggest impact has been on the people who have worked for me or with me,” he says. “I look at their successes, wherever they’ve landed, and I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to guide and shape them.”

Know your limits: “As a leader, you need to know what you can’t do,” says Somji. “And hire people to complement you, as opposed to hiring people that look like you and sound like you and think like you.” It’s important to know when you aren’t the right person to provide leadership and step aside, he says. “That’s when the magic happens.”

Don’t worry about the results: “Make your decisions with the intent to create, to build, to develop and to serve. If you continue to work hard in that way, you don’t have to worry about the results,” he says. “Success will take care of itself.”
—KALYNA HENNIG EPP

Decolonizing Theatre

Reneltha Arluk

'05 BFA

➤ Reneltha Arluk is Inuvialuk, Gwich'in, Denesuline and Cree from Fort Smith, N.W.T. She is recognized for her contributions to decolonizing theatre as an actor and director. Her identity as a multidisciplinary artist has been shaped by her experiences being raised on the trapline by her grandparents until she went to school.

On the Stage

In 2005, Arluk was the first Indigenous woman and first Inuk to graduate from the U of A's bachelor of fine arts in acting program. She established her theatre company, Akpik Theatre, in 2008; it has since developed and produced a dozen works. In 2016, Arluk's rendition of Colleen Murphy's *The Breathing Hole* at the Stratford Festival was recognized with an award for artistic direction.

Off the Stage

She supported the National Arts Centre's decolonization efforts by helping to create its Indigenous theatre section. She guided the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival in establishing its director of Indigenous strategic engagement position. Arluk works at the National Gallery of Canada under Indigenous Ways and Decolonization. —SANDRINE CAMMINGA



25%



17%



16%



8%



4%

Educational services

Health care and social assistance

Professional, scientific and technical services

Public administration

Finance and insurance

TOP 5 EMPLOYMENT FIELDS

A large proportion of grads work in knowledge-based and service industries



Creating Healthier Schools

Kate Storey

'07 PhD

AFTER LEADING NUMEROUS STUDIES on what it takes to create a healthy school community, Kate Storey and her team established the essential conditions for comprehensive school health—transforming the culture of schools, promoting healthy behaviours for students and improving academic outcomes. These conditions, set out in 2016, have since been adopted into Canadian policy and practice as the Canadian Healthy School Standards.

Storey leads the U of A research lab called Settings-based Intervention Research through Changes in Lifestyles & Environments, referred to as SIRCLE.

“Facilitating a healthy lifestyle is much more than telling people: eat

healthy, be active, stop smoking, get enough sleep, or be mindful. We need to create a culture of wellness for kids, their families and communities, and that requires systems-level change,” says Storey, an associate professor in the U of A School of Public Health.

Speaking about one of SIRCLE’s programs, Storey adds: “When a school principal said that the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program is ‘the heartbeat of what reconciliation should be,’ I have never been more certain this is the future we need for our children and youth.”

In 2023, the CIHR’s Institute of Population and Public Health awarded Storey the Trailblazer Award in recognition of her exceptional contributions through leadership, mentorship, innovation and impact. She was also named one of Canada’s Most Powerful Women: Top 100, which recognizes women who make a transformational difference in their fields. Oh, and in 2022, she ran down Mount Everest to raise funds for the Stollery Children’s Hospital Foundation.

—SHIRLEY WILFONG-PRITCHARD



Shining a Light on Black History

Andrew Gersham Parker

'08 BA, '14 BEd

“Ex-pro basketball player and excellent teacher” is a handy shorthand to describe Andrew Gersham Parker, but it barely covers how energetically he empowers students and citizens with those talents.

In the Classroom

As a phys-ed and social studies teacher at Ross Sheppard High School in Edmonton, Parker is proud of the school’s strong Black Student Alliance. He co-founded the Black Teachers Association of Alberta. And he ensures Black history gets memorable emphasis in the classroom — colouring lessons with archival film and audio, teaching the history of protest movements and discussing injustices such as homophobia and Islamophobia. “It’s important that my students know how to deconstruct society, to think critically,” he told *New Trail* in 2020. “Because critical thinking — for some people it will save their life.”

On the Court

A former Golden Bear who played professionally in Europe, the Americas and with the Edmonton Energy, Parker founded the Pride of Northside Tournament, a community outreach streetball weekend, and Edmonton’s AGP Flight School, which helps students of all ages develop basketball and life skills. He also fits in motivational speaking, scouting and individual coaching of players.

—HELEN METELLA



Cultivating Connections

Danni Okemaw

'22 BA (NativeStu)

➤ Danni Okemaw remembers playing outside with her cousins when her mom asked her to come in and watch the television.

It was 2008 and Stephen Harper, then prime minister of Canada, was apologizing publicly on behalf of the Canadian government for its role in Indian residential schools—the first step for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to begin its work.

Okemaw remembers being confused about what the government apology meant for her and her community. That was the beginning of her efforts to connect with her history.

During her undergraduate studies in the U of A Faculty of Native Studies, she volunteered as a student facilitator in the Indigenous Language Club, an Indigenous- and student-led group in which students help each other learn Cree, Ojibway

and other Indigenous languages.

“In language club, we are participating in *wâhkôhtowin*—we are practising kinship—while engaging in our language,” says Okemaw, who will start a master’s program at the U of A in the fall. “That’s the spirit of language and who we are.”

She has also pursued her goal of becoming fluent in her mother’s and father’s languages, Anishinaabemowin (a dialect from the Berens River First Nation in Manitoba) and Swampy Cree (a dialect from God’s River First Nation in Manitoba), respectively, as well as in Plains Cree, one language in Treaty 6 territory on which the U of A sits.

She is also incorporating her love for language and learning with her passion for dance. (She spent years training in ballet, contemporary and hip-hop.) Okemaw co-leads an Edmonton-based dance program, *Nimihitôtân*, which means “let’s dance” in Cree. Since 2021, more than 100 students from seven to 70 years old have taken lessons in fancy shawl, jingle dress, powwow, hip-hop, contemporary and more. “My dream is to create a dance program that is taught solely in Indigenous languages,” she says. “I’ll be counting down, introducing a step, giving corrections that way. That has never been done before.” —KALYNA HENNIG EPP



Making Us Look

Omayra Issa

'14 BA

> A person has to be phenomenally accomplished and actively working for a more inclusive and sustainable future—all before age 40—to be named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum. Omayra Issa joined that group in April 2024 for her effect on Canadian journalism and public discourse.

Thirst for Knowledge

Raised in Niger and Saskatchewan, Issa speaks five languages and has a degree in economics and English from the U of A. In 2022-2023 she was a Southam Fellow at Massey College/University of Toronto.

Doing the Work

Recently added to the news anchor team at the Cable Public Affairs Channel, she established herself as a journalist with Radio-Canada in Saskatoon, covering the Humboldt Broncos bus crash, the killing of Cree man Colten Boushie and the trial of his shooter, Gerald Stanley. As a national

Leading Change in the Energy Industry

Donovan Nielsen

'02 BSc(MechEng)

AS A STUDENT, Donovan Nielsen didn't seek co-op internships in the oil and gas sector because he doubted there were opportunities to do innovative, interesting work in the field. As the co-founder and president of Scovan Inc., he has proved himself wrong.

Scovan is an engineering, procurement, fabrication and construction firm based in Calgary that specializes in reducing the environmental impact of its projects for the energy industry.

Among its inventive products is HipVap, a technology for extracting heavy oil that eliminates fresh water consumption and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Another is Orsil, which manages, on-site, the waste streams of steam-assisted gravity drainage, the steam injection process used widely in Alberta's oilsands.

Scovan has a facility in Ponoka, Alta., that manufactures equipment and trials

new technologies for sustainable energy practices, including those of small startups that want to test their products. The company employs more than 380 people in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Committed to the concept of environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards, Scovan practises lean manufacturing to reduce its own energy consumption and carbon footprint. It supports diversity and inclusion by hiring from and contributing to local Indigenous communities and by hosting an annual forum celebrating female leaders across local industries.

reporter for CBC News, she covered some of the most urgent issues facing the world today.

Highlighting Black History

Issa co-created and co-produced CBC's *Black on the Prairies*, a groundbreaking, interactive online project chronicling 200 years of overlooked Black history in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The project won several awards, drew international attention and led to changes in education policies in Saskatchewan.

Making It Matter

By speaking eloquently about hate and the harassment of journalists, as well as about inclusion and diversity in newsrooms, Issa is a sought-after speaker who has facilitated conversations with heads of state and community leaders, including at the African Union. —HELEN METELLA

“Our purpose is to play a meaningful role in the future of energy. This includes supporting the communities we work in,” says Nielsen.

He and his wife, **Joanne Nielsen**, '02 BEd, support capstone projects in the Faculty of Engineering as well as the U of A's U School, which brings students from socially vulnerable, Indigenous and rural communities to campus to inspire their interest in post-secondary education.

—HELEN METELLA

Bringing Ideas to Life

A few of the many U of A grads who are creating new patents, processes and products



Tom Jones

'07 BSc(ElecEng), '19 PhD

If you've ever wondered who is working to make our cellphones and wireless infrastructure faster and more efficient, meet Tom Jones.

During his joint postdoctoral fellowship at the U of A and Purdue University, Jones and colleagues from both institutions developed a light-activated switch that can increase the bandwidth — the capacity to transmit data over a network in a specific amount of time — of mobile devices and other communications equipment. It does so by controlling microwaves at high frequencies, high powers and high speeds.

The component, which has been submitted for patent protection, has already attracted funding from the Canadian Department of National Defence and Brass Fund One so it can be commercialized through his firm, Jones Microwave Inc.

Jones, who is now a senior research associate at Purdue and an adjunct professor at the U of A, was awarded the 2023 Douglas R. Colton Medal for Research Excellence from the research accelerator CMC Microsystems and a \$250,000 Innovation Catalyst Grant through the provincial government and the U of A.

—HELEN METELLA



Lynn McMullen

'80 BSc(HomeEc), '88 MSc, '94 PhD

While researching food safety and quality with a focus on meat, Lynn McMullen made a landmark discovery with colleague Michael Stiles that reduced the risk of Listeria growing on processed meats such as hot dogs.

In 1998, the two, now both professor emeriti, co-founded the U of A spinoff company CanBioInc Inc. to commercialize that breakthrough. The lactic acid bacterium and its antimicrobial metabolites are able to kill Listeria on the surface of processed meats. The product is marketed by Griffith Foods to meat processing companies around the world.

McMullen was also co-founder of the U of A's Agri-Food Discovery Place, a research and training facility on South Campus, where she oversaw the Meat Safety and Processing Research Unit. The unit allows researchers to safely work with pathogens in food to develop novel methods to reduce the risk of foodborne illness for consumers.

—HELEN METELLA



Lawrence Woo

'20 PharmD

Nathan Nguyen

'19 BSc

Medi-Scribe Solutions Inc. was born of the frustration that Lawrence Woo was experiencing with the copious paperwork that hindered his clinical duties as a new pharmacist. Partnering with Nathan Nguyen (above right) and pharmacy student Jonathan Chan, they developed a prototype, initially focused on medication renewals. Despite early setbacks, they garnered support from programs like Alberta Catalyzer and earned recognition as ASTech Award finalists. In 2023, they launched the full version of the app, which reduces documentation time and streamlines prescribing; numerous Alberta pharmacies now use the subscription-based tool. Users report the app's positive effect on workflow, allowing them to operate at their full scope and spend more time providing clinical services to patients. “We feel like we're really making an impact in the lives of pharmacists and patients are getting better care,” Woo says.

—CAITLIN CRAWSHAW,
'05 BA(HONS)

Striving for Equal Access to Drugs

Moréniké Qláòşebìkan

'09 BSc(Pharm)

> A self-proclaimed “serial entrepreneur, troublemaker and maker of things,” Moréniké Qláòşebìkan is committed to increasing equity across the globe with innovative health solutions.

Since university, Qláòşebìkan has used her skills and training to understand where gaps in care exist for marginalized groups, and what actions she can take to fill them. In 2018, she travelled to several African countries to meet with diplomats, drug distributors and other groups to get a better grasp of the structural problems these populations face.

Her research revealed supply chain issues causing people in many countries to wait months to receive drugs, which are unregulated and sometimes counterfeit. After returning from Africa, Qláòşebìkan assembled a team of experts to devise an alternative to how drugs are made and distributed: Kemet Pharmaceuticals was born. Her plans included building small-footprint facilities that could digitize drug manufacturing to resolve supply chain issues.

But after more than 45 rejections from investors, banks, funders and various solicited funding sources, Qláòşebìkan decided to start smaller. Today, Kemet Pharmaceuticals runs a compounding lab in Edmonton that allows customizations of commercially available drugs.

Kemet focuses on creating personalized solutions for healing. “We’re all different. Our future is understanding that and equitably building ways to make medications that serve us,” says Qláòşebìkan. The dream is to scale up the business to open similar compounding labs in Africa. “If anything in the world should be custom-suited to each person, it should be our health care.” (See Class Note on page 48.)

—MADISEN GEE, '21 BA





Thinking Tiny to Go Big

Jalene & Matt Anderson-Baron

'12 BA, '16 MA | '13 BSc, '19 PhD

➤ It all started over coffee and a Timbit. Matt and Jalene Anderson-Baron, husband and wife co-founders of Future Fields, were standing in line at Tim Hortons discussing the challenges facing the cellular agriculture industry. At the time, their startup was still in its infancy.

“We had a name and an idea,” says Matt, who was finishing his PhD while Jalene worked at the university. They spent evenings and weekends bootstrapping the concept, driven by excitement for the potential of cellular agriculture, a method of producing animal products—think meat, dairy or therapeutic proteins such as insulin—directly from cells. While promising, existing technologies had limitations that would quickly constrain the field.

That’s when Jalene, despite her background in social sciences rather than biology, made a game-changing suggestion: what if they used fruit flies? She knew Matt worked with *Drosophila* during his PhD and thought they could offer a solution. “It was just sort of an offhand question,” Jalene recalls. “But that was the very spark of the idea.”

Fast forward to today, and Edmonton-based Future Fields is harnessing fruit flies as mini-bioreactors to manufacture recombinant proteins—proteins made from DNA sequences in the fruit fly that have been engineered to produce proteins of interest for life sciences, medical research and preclinical applications. The company’s approach circumvents the expensive, complex and difficult-to-scale steel tank bioreactors relied upon for the past 50 years to grow microbes like *E. coli* and yeast for use in therapeutic products.

“The fruit fly itself is the bioreactor,” explains Matt. “We can take the gene, integrate it into the genome of the fruit fly, grow those fruit flies at large scale with very simple inputs and infrastructure, and then extract and purify that protein out of the insect.”

Fruit flies offer several key advantages as protein factories: simple rearing setups, inexpensive feed and a mere 11-day journey from egg to adult.

Most advantageous: as a multicellular organism with various specialized cell types, fruit flies open up possibilities to produce complex proteins that can’t be made with legacy systems. Since more than 40 per cent of newly approved therapeutics are biologically derived, this has major applications: from basic research to preclinical development of protein-based medicines.

Future Fields is constructing an expanded production facility to increase capacity and meet rigorous quality control standards required for medical products used in research and clinical trials. With 34 employees (70 per cent of them U of A grads) and \$18 million raised to date—and an upcoming \$10-to-\$15 million financing round—the company’s commercial traction is taking flight.

All of which adds up to a future where it will be cheaper and faster to manufacture the proteins critical for developing life-saving new therapies.

—DANIEL OBERHAUS

INVENTORS AND CREATORS

Grads play a vital role in fostering innovation locally and around the world



546,000

published peer-reviewed publications



247,000

sales of literary, educational, design or artistic work



213,000

products, processes and services created by alumni



30,000

patents of a new product or method

JOBS GENERATORS

Number of jobs created by alumni-founded companies

922,000

560,000
in Alberta

220,000
across Canada

141,000
in the rest of the world



Breaking New Ground

Bill Cheliak

'80 MSc(Forest), '83 PhD

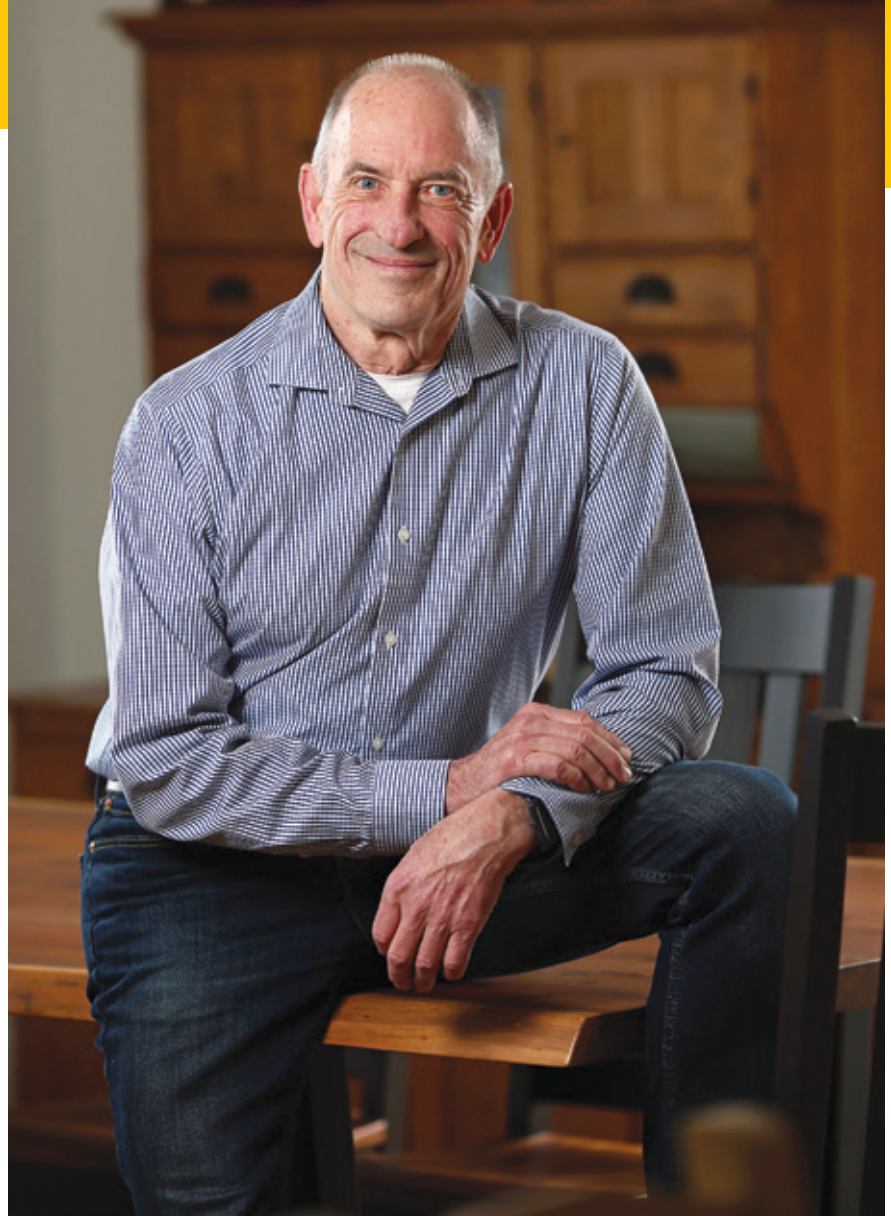
➤ Bill Cheliak is a serial entrepreneur with more than 25 years of experience in the field of health and life sciences.

A geneticist by trade, he was the first PhD to graduate from the U of A's forestry program in the early 1980s. As one member of a small cohort of students, Cheliak remembers his graduate experience as a pivotal time in his life.

"I was able to pick and choose courses that fed interests I had, and that gave me a grounding in a lot of different areas," he says. Working with colleagues in fields like business, mathematics, genetics and animal science laid the foundation for his success as an entrepreneur.

Early in his career, Cheliak's work centred on the use of DNA and conventional vaccines to support the health of fish in the aquaculture industry. "It really formed the basis for our current modern aquaculture industry."

In the years since, he has helped establish a wide array of biotechnology companies in fields ranging from



pharmaceutical development to oncology and neurology as well as genetics. He is particularly proud of the work he contributed to identifying genetic markers for autoimmune diseases like Crohn's. The discovery of a major genetic defect linked to the disease allowed for the development of a monoclonal antibody therapy that could help treat autoimmune conditions.

Cheliak's current efforts centre on Meridius Bio Corporation, a startup in the field of regenerative medicine. The company has developed a form of nanotechnology — known as the Active Immuno-Modulated Enhanced Regeneration (AIMER) Nanotherapeutic Platform — that helps wounds heal faster and without scar tissue. Cheliak says the technology could eventually help patients heal from more invasive procedures, such as ischemic heart repair after a heart attack.

"It really has a major application to repair broken hearts, so to speak," he says with a smile. "It could help people post-heart attack because it regenerates completely normal tissues."

Cheliak notes that his proudest achievements go beyond the boardroom or laboratory. As an active volunteer and mentor, he notes that finding and surrounding himself with the right people has been the most important factor in all the roles he has taken on.

"Being able to have a chance to work with people in all different levels and different types of roles has been a really important part of my life." —LISA CATTERRAL

Leaning into Leadership

Verna Yiu

'84 BMedSc, '86 MD

- > I had dreamed of becoming a pediatrician since I was 12. I pursued this quest through high school, undergraduate studies and medical school until, finally, I could apply for pediatric residency positions. I was ready, I was qualified — and I wasn't even offered an interview. Every single position went to a man.

While much has changed since then, gender equality remains elusive, particularly in executive leadership roles. During my career, including more than two decades in executive roles, I have learned four core lessons.

Be Visible

When I applied for those pediatric residency positions, I wasn't even seen as a possibility. While I went on to realize my dream of becoming a pediatrician — and have since held many leadership roles, from assistant dean to my current role as provost and vice-president, academic — I learned something important. I needed to be more visible. As an introvert, I needed to force myself to stand out. It wasn't easy, but doing so is essential so people will remember you later when opportunities arise.

Embrace Recognition

When the position of assistant dean of student affairs in the U of A's Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry became available, I barely glanced at the opportunity. I was a young Asian woman — not a typical profile of those who had historically held the role. Then, someone tapped me on the shoulder and asked me to consider the position. That changed the way I saw myself. Not only did I get the position, but I loved the role. This advice goes both ways. Support a colleague with a tap on the shoulder — and if someone does that for you, embrace the recognition of your abilities.

Own Your Competence

Owning our competence isn't boastful; it's acknowledging what we're good at and what we can bring to a position. When I learned that I would be the assistant dean of student affairs, I immediately thanked the dean, noting: "How lucky am I?" I've never forgotten his response: "Good people make their own luck." From then on, I no longer considered luck part of the reason for a promotion. My successes come from hard work and being good at what I do.

Don't Hold Yourself Back

Finally, recognise your potential. Do not restrict your goals or aspirations. Be open to opportunities that will expand your skill set and help you grow professionally. That includes taking on interim roles. My two key executive positions — U of A provost and vice-president, academic, and president and CEO for Alberta Health Services — began as interim roles. I was also interim dean of the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry in 2011, the first female and first person from a visible minority to hold that position.

Take opportunities when they arise. It takes courage and can be risky — but I have never regretted those decisions. —VERNA YIU

Verna Yiu is Provost and Vice-President (Academic) at the U of A. This column has been condensed from a version published in Times Higher Education's Campus platform.





Advancing Treatment for Cystic Fibrosis

Fred Van Goor

'91 BSc, '97 PhD

➤ For most of Fred Van Goor's bachelor of science degree, he never wavered from his mission of following in his father's footsteps and attending medical school.

"That's what brought me to the University of Alberta in the first place," remembers Van Goor, originally from Calgary. But a summer job at the tail end of that degree, studying growth and reproduction in goldfish in former U of A professor John Chang's "hardcore" zoology lab, took Van Goor's medical dreams in a different direction: research.

Now vice-president and head of cystic fibrosis research for Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Van Goor and his colleagues are developing drug combinations to enhance and ultimately save the lives of thousands of people with cystic fibrosis, a life-limiting inherited disease that leads to severe damage to the lungs, pancreas and other organs.

Vertex's most recently approved medicine for cystic fibrosis is projected to help people live into their 80s, compared to 38 years previously.

His work earned him and two colleagues the \$3-million Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences.

"I took my love of science and the love of figuring out the unknown, and turned that into using science to transform the lives of people with serious unmet medical need. I just think that's the coolest job in the world."

—MICHAEL BROWN WITH FILES FROM
CAITLIN CRAWSHAW, '05 BA(HONS)

Helping Young People Find Their Voices

Gail Sidonie Šobat

'83 BEd, '91 MA

AS A YOUNG ADULT, Gail Sidonie Šobat set her sights on acting. When she auditioned for university acting programs across the country and wasn't accepted, she was crestfallen.

Undeterred, she devised a new plan: earn an education degree and teach K-12 while honing her acting in her spare time. It worked. Within a few years, Šobat was acting professionally. But something didn't feel quite right.

"I missed teaching," she says. "I thought, 'Clearly, I am meant to work with kids.'" The backup plan became a passion and has remained a constant throughout her eclectic career of performing arts (acting and singing), writing (she has published 12 books) and public speaking (as far afield as Turkey, Qatar and Vietnam).

But nothing has tested the limits of Šobat's creativity and tenacity like YouthWrite. The arts organization, which grew out of a summer writing camp operated by the Writers' Guild of Alberta, offers writing camps, workshops and events for young people. She began by co-ordinating the camp in 1996 and ended up in 2010 running it as an independent organization.

In the early years, she and her partner had to use their own money to help fund the camp, but the non-profit venture eventually became sustainable. Now YouthWrite offers programming throughout the year in fiction and poetry as well as comics, social media, online role-playing and other forms of new media. It also spawned the Spoken Word Youth Choir, a spoken word troupe that performs individually and as a group for charitable and educational events.



21,672

Alumni-founded companies that prioritize cultural, environmental or social missions



15,803

Alumni-founded non-profit companies driven by a commitment to creating a positive societal impact



“

YouthWrite was a space where I felt safe to leave my comfort zone and discover different parts of myself.”

Yemariam Abebayehu,
'23 BA

Studying for a master's in psychology and education in Neuchâtel, Switzerland

“

YouthWrite gave me the spark and the tools and the nurturing environment to write and to live boldly. (And I met my wife there.)”

Peter Takach,
'12 BA, '14 BEd

Teacher, librarian and writer in B.C.

“

At a time when I was questioning my worth, YouthWrite taught me my voice was important and valued.”

Lauren Seal, '13 BA
Former poet laureate of St. Albert, Alta., whose debut YA novel-in-verse, *Light Enough to Float*, publishes this year

“

The things I learned and the people I met at Youthwrite helped me write my book, even years after attending. ... As I write this, I'm in Montreal visiting old camp friends. Another friend is now my editor.”

Emily Devereux
Glass artist and author of *Death's Emissary*

Šobat says over the years running the camp she has witnessed changes in the young people who attend, the effects of major social change and technologies like smartphones.

“But at their hearts, young people are still their wonderful, complicated selves — wanting to be seen, listened to, given a voice. That's what we do at YouthWrite.”

She says writing and other forms of creativity offer children a way to make sense of the rapidly changing world around them, while getting to know their own hearts and minds.

“Youth can feel powerless,” she says. “We give them a voice. We invite them to raise it, share it and publish it, because they are the change-makers.” —**CAITLIN CRAWSHAW,** '05 BA(HONS)



Advocating for Vulnerable Communities

Sumantra "Monty" Ghosh

'16 PostgradCert(MedEd)

➤ By admiring something the rest of us often ignore, the resilience of marginalized people, Monty Ghosh is improving their lives and our society.

"There's so much struggle they have to go through, like their mental health and their substance abuse concerns and justice concerns, and lack of housing and their alienation from their families," Ghosh told *The Gateway* in 2021. "Watching them drives inspiration for me."

Ghosh is an internist, disaster medicine and addiction specialist involved in research, policymaking and advocacy for vulnerable

communities. He works at the University of Alberta Hospital, the Foothills and Rockyview hospitals and teaches at the U of A and University of Calgary.

He helped establish and co-lead Alberta's Rapid Access Addiction Medicine program, which allows people to detoxify at home. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he set up screening programs and isolation spaces for unhoused people in downtown Calgary and helped coordinate Alberta Health Service's provincewide Shelter Outbreak Taskforce. In 2020, he launched a national hotline in partnership with an organization in Ontario that opioid users can call when they are using alone, to avoid overdoses.

The Canadian Medical Association recognized Ghosh's initiative and commitment with a 2021 CMA Award for Young Leaders and the Medical Post Awards honoured him with its 2023 Making a Difference Award for work in urban areas. —HELEN METELLA



Advancing AI Literacy

Cam Linke

'07 BCom, '21 MSc

Does this sound familiar? "I know that AI will soon be mega-important for my work and my life, but it's scary and I have no idea how to understand it."

Cam Linke frequently hears that sentiment from business leaders, educators and others. As CEO of Amii, the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute, he and his team are busy banishing the fears and filling the knowledge gap.

AI is on the verge of being the prime driver of business success, says Linke. It will play a significant role in tackling the globe's top challenges, from climate change to food security to energy reforms, he says.

"If you're an executive, an entrepreneur, a business leader, this is the most important time to figure out this technology," he told Amii's Upper Bound AI conference in May 2023.

Before stepping in in 2019 to lead Amii, one of three Canadian hubs dedicated to making Canada a world leader in the AI industry, Linke co-founded Startup Edmonton and formed Flightpath Ventures, an early-stage fund.

Since Linke took the helm, Amii has secured more than \$110 million in government funding, tripled the number of Amii's AI researchers and increased industry partnerships tenfold. "Lots of change brings lots of opportunity," he says.

—HELEN METELLA

trails

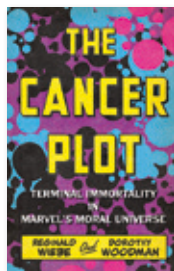
WHERE YOU'VE BEEN AND WHERE YOU'RE GOING



Volunteers Dana Siwakowski and Paul Farquhar dig up potatoes to sell at the U of A's Green & Gold Community Garden. Run by volunteers, including alumni, the garden is open to the public during twice-weekly markets in the summer and fall. All proceeds support the Tubahumurize Association in Rwanda. Learn more at greengoldgarden.com.

PHOTO BY JOHN ULAN

Books



Here are the latest books published by U of A alumni, including a history of shopping, a practical guide for proofreading and a look at cancer in Marvel comics.

Compiled by *Stephanie Bailey*, '10 BA(Hons)

▼
PSYCHOLOGY
All Sky, Mirror Ocean: A Healing Manifesto
by **Brad Necyk**, '06 BCom, '11 BFA, '14 MFA, '19 PhD, *University of Alberta Press*

Visual artist Necyk seeks to uncover new stories about trauma and recovery by exploring his own history with mental illness alongside other groups dealing with grief and loss.

▼
SOCIAL SCIENCE
Big Mall: Shopping for Meaning
by **Kate Black**, '16 BA, *Coach House Books*

Blending a history of shopping with a coming-of-age story at West Edmonton Mall, *Big Mall* investigates how malls have become the ultimate symbol of late-capitalist dread and hope.

▼
ESSAYS
Civilization for Morons: A Personal Journey
by **D. Evan Bedford**, '90 BSc(Forest), self-published

A collection of personal essays about deliberative democracy as a strategy to navigate complex challenges such as climate change.

▼
SPORTS
Out of the Blue: CFL 2015-2022
by **Frank Cosentino**, '69 MA, '73 PhD, self-published

A former Canadian Football League player and intercollegiate football coach,

Cosentino recounts the challenges and highlights of the CFL in the years preceding and during the pandemic.

▼
MEMOIR
Across England with a Project Manager: A Journey into Retirement
by **Peter Teasdale**, '72 BA, '73 LLB, self-published

As Teasdale and his wife walk 300 kilometres across England, they draw on project management principles to plan, execute and evaluate their transition from work to retirement.

▼
EDUCATION
Last But Not Least: A Guide to Proofreading Text
by **Leslie Vermeer**, '90 BA(Hons), '97 MA, '03 MEd, '12 PhD, *Brush Education*

Both a reference book and workbook, *Last But Not Least* goes beyond the basics of punctuation and grammar to provide insights into how to think and work like a proofreader.

▼
FICTION
Yes, Miss Thompson
by **Amy Boyes (Esler)**, '10 MMus, *Now or Never*

Based on her great-grandmother's life story, Boyes tells the tale of Marjory Thompson, a hard-working high school principal in 1930s Manitoba who makes one catastrophic decision that will haunt her family for generations.

▼
MEMOIR
Traversing the Global Village: Reflections on a Life of Travel, Volume II
by **Edward Porper**, '11 MA, self-published

Porper reflects on the diversity of people, places and cultures he has encountered over a lifetime of travel.

▼
SOCIAL SCIENCE
The Cancer Plot: Terminal Immortality in Marvel's Moral Universe
by **Reginald Wiebe**, '15 PhD, and **Dorothy Woodman**, '78 BA(Hons), '04 MA, '12 PhD, *University of Alberta Press*

Drawing on comics studies and medical humanities, the co-authors investigate the presence of cancer in Marvel comics in four case studies: Captain Marvel, Spider-Man, Thor and Deadpool.

▼
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE
The Adventures of Kaboose, the Rocky Mountain Bear
by **William Richard Harris**, '10 BEd, and **Kyra Dumoulin**, self-published

Co-written with Harris' granddaughter, this children's book is the first in a series designed to motivate young readers to appreciate nature and pursue outdoor adventures with friends and family.

▼
EDUCATION
Embrace Industry 4.0! Architect Your Way Out of the Jungle
by **Gail Petersen**, '69 BSc(Hons), *Reliabilityweb.com*

This book provides a practical guide to help leaders and

organizations integrate advanced technologies, like artificial intelligence and big data, into their operations.

▼
MEMOIR
Apples on a Windowsill
by **Shawna Lemay**, '95 BA(Hons), '05 MA, *Palimpsest Press*

A series of personal essays that explore the craft of writing, the ups and downs of being married to a painter, and living a life in pursuit of art and beauty.

▼
SELF-HELP
She Recovers Every Day: Meditations for Women
by **Dawn Nickel**, '96 BA, '98 MA, '05 PhD, *Hazelden Publishing*

As a survivor of intimate partner violence, cancer and substance use disorder, Nickel provides daily meditations for other women looking to explore and embark on their healing journeys.

▼
POETRY
Antecedent
by **Juleta Severson-Baker**, '94 BA(Hons), *Frontenac House*

This collection explores how sorrow and growth entwine in the human condition through poems that touch on everything from fish guts to the lipstick section of London Drugs.

Tell us about your recent publication. Email a write-up with a high-resolution cover image to newtrail@ualberta.ca. Or mail your write-up and book to New Trail Books at the mailing address on page 4. We cannot guarantee all submitted write-ups will be included on this list. Inclusion does not denote endorsement by New Trail.



Justin Tetrault teaches the Introduction to Indigenous Studies course at Augustana Campus.

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT...

DECOLONIZING CANADA'S PRISON SYSTEM

Justin Tetrault, a criminology professor at Augustana Campus, interviewed more than 600 incarcerated people about their experiences in the prison system. Here's what he learned

By *Madisen Gee*, '21 BA

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE STATISTICALLY OVERREPRESENTED IN Canadian prisons by about nine times. **Justin Tetrault**, '21 PhD, assistant professor, is researching how incarcerated Indigenous Peoples experience "Indigenized" prison programs—cultural programs that take various forms, including classroom learning, religious ceremonies, peer mentorship and informal support groups. Here are a few of his takeaways.

1 HISTORICAL ROOTS

We can explain the higher rates of incarcerated Indigenous Peoples by looking at Canada's history of colonialism, Tetrault says. "Historical and contemporary policies have compounded to create the problems we face today." The residential school system and the Sixties Scoop contributed to the separation of Indigenous children from their culture and families, he says. "Tough on crime" policies have also further

criminalized people struggling with poverty and drug use, who are disproportionately Indigenous.

2 RECONCILIATION IN ACTION

Critics view cultural programming as 'ethnic favouritism' and argue that it promotes cultural genocide. Tetrault argues that the reality is more complex. "There is a stark difference between what Canada's academics are saying about programming and what Indigenous-led reports are saying."

Tetrault uses the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's report and that of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls as his guides to start conversations about decolonization. These reports seek to adapt and improve existing programs to give Indigenous groups more autonomy over justice and healing processes. With those aims in mind, Tetrault argues that the cultural

supports are urgently needed, and research should centre Indigenous advocacy, especially the knowledge, needs and interests of system-involved people.

3 HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

Tetrault wants people to see cultural supports as an Indigenous rights issue, not just a programming problem. The study's interviewees described inconsistent or no access to the programming as the main barrier. Other barriers mentioned included racist staff members and security restrictions. He found that this limited access affected incarcerated people's ability to manage their colonial traumas which negatively affected their mental health.

4 BORN OF RESISTANCE

Many critics reject the idea that decolonization can happen inside deeply colonial institutions such as prisons. Consequently, critics dismiss cultural programming as Canada's latest colonial project. But history shows that "Indigenous groups fought for these initiatives for over half a century," Tetrault says. "Decolonization always happens in colonial spaces."

5 A STARTING POINT

Cultural programming is a good place to start, says Tetrault. But he doesn't think that's where it should end. There is no single, simple solution to the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in prisons. Any decolonial movement must prioritize addressing the urgent needs of imprisoned people, Tetrault says. "Change will happen through listening, acting and collaborating." ■

We'd love to hear what you're doing. Tell us about your new baby or your new job. Celebrate a personal accomplishment or a volunteer activity or share your favourite campus memories. Submit a class note at uab.ca/classnotes or email newtrail@ualberta.ca. Notes will be edited for length, clarity and style.

Compiled by Stephanie Bailey, '10 BA(Hons)

Class Notes

1940s

'48 **Richard MacDonald**, BSc, '52 MD, was a Royal Canadian Infantry Corps veteran, one of many who came to the U of A as a student in 1946. He wrote in to share where life has taken him:

"Looking back on my years at the U of A, they still hold some of my fondest memories. Sadly, I believe I may be the last of my medical class of '52. I'd hoped to make my 70th medical school reunion in 2022 but COVID-19 prevented that possibility.

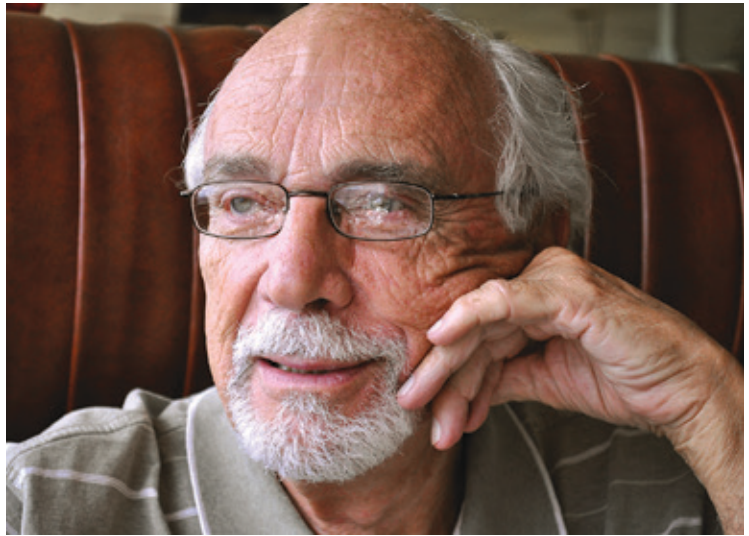
After graduating, I served in Canada and Germany in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps from 1951 to 1958.

I continued to work in the reserve army as commanding officer while I established a general practice in Calgary. The practice boomed along with the post-war expansion of the city, but I always tried to be home for family dinners with my wife, Myque, and six children. I eventually took a job as the medical director at

a large insurance company in California to avoid burnout. The work was so uninspiring that I soon found myself back in general practice. We've been in California ever since.

Since 1993, I've volunteered with dying with dignity societies in the U.S. and Canada as well as with the World Federation of Right to Die Societies, advocating for the establishment of laws permitting medical aid in dying. Providing support and information and being at many bedside at the time of a chosen death has been a most rewarding end to practising medicine. It has been satisfying to see that Canada has established a national law that is most responsive to the needs

Richard MacDonald



of patients when death approaches."

1950s

'58 **Joyce Perrin**, Dip(Nu), '59 BScN, recently published her book *Ants in My Pants: One Woman's Unexpected Adventures Across Seven Continents*, sharing stories

from her 23 years of travelling to 156 countries and 31 territories. She wrote in to tell us a bit more about the adventures that inspired the book:

"Leaving Canada at age 57, I put my treasurers in storage until I returned 23 years later. I started by taking on jobs in health care in Saudi Arabia and soon ventured further afield. Highlights include being circled by a tiger shark in the Red Sea, looking for gorillas in the jungles of Uganda, travelling across Russia, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and co-founding the Panama Hospice and Respite Foundation.

As one of the first Canadian female hospital CEOs, I gave back my health-care expertise by working in Saudi Arabia, then later for the World Health Organization and the United Nations Development Program. I also volunteered for the International Executive Service Corps.

Writing the book upon my return to Canada at 80 years old was another adventure as I dealt with a string of bad luck, including a battle with breast cancer, a broken right arm, a hip replacement, loss



DID YOU KNOW?

In 1930, five farm buildings were put on wheels and rolled from the North Campus (where the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium is today) to South Campus. These included the horse barn, which was moved again in 2010 to its current location near the Green & Gold Community Garden.



◀ Mary-Anne Neal (left)

as the volunteer project director of the Dene Hero publication project, which aims to increase literacy skills and cultural pride. The collaborative project published four books in four years and won the Arctic Inspiration Prize for innovation in 2017.

Semi-retired, Neal teaches environmental justice and supervises graduate students in the Global Leadership program at Royal Roads University in Victoria. She continues to volunteer overseas in the Global South and in northern Canada for Catalyzt+, a Canadian economic development organization dedicated to strengthening local communities. She was recently honoured by Leadership Victoria with an award for contributions to lifelong learning.

of eyesight in my right eye, a cataract operation on my left eye and a pelvic fracture. But during this same time, I returned to university to earn a graduate diploma in creative writing. Now, at age 87, I am out there sharing my stories with the world and love hearing from my readers.

I wrote my book to inspire others to follow their passion regardless of how long it takes, and it gives me joy in touching lives, one person at a time.”

her connection with Dene culture, starting in 1971 when she spent a summer living with a small Dene community in Colville Lake, N.W.T., north of the Arctic Circle. Today, Neal works



▲ Mary Moreau

'73 **John Baty**, Dip(Ed), received the 2020 Brian Casey Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Student Debating Federation (CSDF) in recognition of his 50-year career in debate. Among many roles, he served as president of the CSDF twice and as executive director of the Alberta Debate and Speech Association (ADSA) for a decade. Through his educating, lobbying and fundraising efforts, he helped establish the debate community in Alberta, expanding the provincial program to include 207 schools.

Baty has received numerous awards, including an Alberta Achievement Award from the Government of Alberta for outstanding performance in debate in 1989 and a civic recognition award from the City of Medicine Hat for organizing the World Schools Debating Championships in Medicine Hat in 1993. He also has awards given in his name, including the ADSA's John Baty Award for the adult or association that makes an outstanding contribution to debate, and the CSDF's John Baty Award for the top provincial debating team in Canada.

'79 **Mary Moreau**, LLB, '19 LLD (Honorary), has been appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada. After studying law at the U of A, she practised criminal, constitutional and family law in Edmonton. She litigated landmark cases that established the right to a criminal jury trial in French in Alberta and affirmed the right of francophone Albertans to manage and control their own schools.



'76 **Mary-Anne Neal (Gillese)**, BEd, recently received the non-fiction prize from the Sunshine Coast Writers and Editors Society for her memoir *Under the Midnight Sun: Journey with the Sahtu Dene*. The book details



Community-First Chancellor

Peggy Garritty, '71 BA(Hons), '75 BA, ends her four-year term as the U of A's 22nd chancellor in June 2024. Garritty made community connection a priority during her tenure and is known for her award-winning podcast *Bridging Connections* and Chancellor's Forums where she hosted panels delving into issues including houselessness, food security and AI. "I see my role as a bridging role, helping to make the connection between the university and the community as tight as possible," she said when she stepped into the position. She says that the U of A is a special place to her, as it formed and informed who she is, the career she has pursued and the values she holds of lifelong learning and serving her community.



▲ The Class of '73 celebrated its 50th anniversary in October in Victoria.

Moreau was appointed as a justice of the Court of King's Bench of Alberta in 1994, as a deputy judge of the Supreme Court of Yukon in 1996 and as a deputy judge of the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories in 2005. She made history in 2017 when she became the first woman appointed to lead the Alberta Court of King's Bench. She received an honorary doctor of laws degree from the U of A in 2019 in recognition of her exemplary service to Alberta.

'71 **Doug Wray**, BSc(Ag), was recently awarded the Environmental Stewardship Award by the Canadian Cattle Association. Doug and his wife, Linda, own and operate Wray Ranch, located near Irricana, Alta., in partnership with their nephew **Tim Wray**, '01 BSc(Ag), and his wife, Joanne. They are recognized for their focus on sustainable practices to enhance soil health and reduce erosion. The Wray family is known for their leadership in the forage industry, which produces the plants consumed by livestock. Forage is the backbone of the ruminant and horse industries in the country. Doug was a founding member of the Alberta Forage Industry Network and represented Alberta through the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association, receiving the latter's Leadership Award in 2016.

'73 **Bev Dobbyn (Payne)**, BScN, wrote in on behalf of her graduating class to share a recap of their reunion last year:

"The University of Alberta Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduates of 1973

met in Victoria, B.C., to celebrate our 50th reunion in 2023. The reunion was full of smiles, laughter and exuberant chatter as we shared old pictures and reminisced about the last 50 years. It was very special when five classmates, who were unable to attend in person, joined one evening by Zoom.

We've tried to bring together the 29 nurses from our graduating class every five years since graduation in various locations in Alberta and British Columbia. Planning has already begun for our next reunion to occur in 2026, as we're not getting any younger!"

'78 **Don Russell**, BCom, retired after 39 years as an Albertan public servant, most recently as an access and privacy adviser with Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis. He and his wife, Bonnie, are enjoying spending more time with their family and delighting in the pleasure of their four little grandchildren.



'81 **John Geiger**, BA(Spec), was awarded the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts medal, the organization's highest honour, in October 2023. The medal is awarded to those who have made outstanding contributions to the social, financial or professional status of visual artists and designers. Past recipients include visual artist Emily Carr and members of the Group of Seven. Geiger was recognized for his leadership as president and CEO of Canadian Geographic Enterprises and as the CEO of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society for more than a decade. One of his major contributions in the latter role was helping



From left to right: Royal Canadian Academy of Arts president Robert Tombs, John Geiger, artist Chris Cran, Chief Wilson Bearhead and Charlene Bearhead, following presentation of the RCA Medal.



CELEBRATE

Class Reunions

Wondering if your class is hosting a reunion this year? Contact the Class Reunion Organizer Program in the Office of Alumni Relations at org@ualberta.ca.

1960s

1969 / NURSING

The nursing Class of 1969 will celebrate its 55th reunion in Edmonton on Sept. 18-19, 2024, with the option to attend the university's homecoming on Sept. 20, 2024. For more information, please contact **Joyce Tobo**, '69 Dip(Nu), '70 BScN, at joyce.tobo@gmail.com.

on Sept. 13-14, 2024. They will be hosting a casual drinks and snacks event at the law school on Sept. 13 and a dinner at the Fairmont Hotel Macdonald on Sept. 14. Partners and spouses are welcome at both events. For more information, please contact **Doris Wilson**, '79 LLB, at doriswilson79reunion@gmail.com.

1970s

1974 / LAW

The law Class of 1974 will celebrate its 50th reunion on May 24-25, 2024, in Edmonton. For more information, please contact **Andy Sims**, '71 BA, '74 LLB, at andsims@simgroup.com.

1979 / MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

The mechanical engineering Class of 1979 will celebrate its 45th reunion in Calgary on April 12-14, 2024. For more information, please contact **Ken Coburn**, '79 BSc(MechEng), at coburnk@telusplanet.net or 403-616-5092.

1974 / CIVIL ENGINEERING

The civil engineering Class of 1974 is celebrating its 50th reunion in Edmonton at U of A Days on Sept. 20-23, 2024. For more information, reach out to Bohdan "Bob" Bahniuk, '74 BSc(CivEng), at bohdanbahniuk@yahoo.ca.

1978 / NURSING

Are you part of the nursing Class of February 1978? Planning for a 50th reunion has started! Submit your updated contact information to stay in the loop or get involved by emailing either **Sheryle Nicolson**, '78 Dip(Nu), '04 BScN, at shernico@hotmail.com or **Hayven Dzus**, '78 Dip(Nu), '98 BScN, '02 MN, at hayvenyvonne@shaw.ca.

1979 / LAW

The law Class of 1979 will celebrate its 45th reunion

▶ trails class notes

to conceive the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada* in 2018, a four-volume set that shares the experiences, perspectives and histories of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. In addition, Geiger oversaw the opening of 50 Sussex Drive in Ottawa as Canada's Centre for Geography and Exploration.

'82 **Barbara Mah**, BSc, '84 BCom, took on the role of artistic director at the Walterdale Theatre for its 66th and 67th seasons earlier this year. With her prominent background in creative arts in Alberta and a 30-year career teaching dance, Mah is joining the Walterdale Theatre with extensive experience and knowledge of the arts community.

'85 **Valerie Henitiuk**, BA, '88 MA, '00 MA, '05 PhD, recently published an article about the challenges related to the translation of Indigenous languages titled "Tangled Lines: what might it mean to take Indigenous languages seriously?" It was

co-written with research partner Marc-Antoine Mahieu and published in *Translation Studies* recently. Previously, the co-writers have collaborated on critical and general interest editions of the work of Markoosie Patsauq, an Inuk writer from Inukjuak, Que. Henitiuk is a professor emerita at Concordia University of Edmonton and former director of the British Centre for Literary Translation, as well as former editor of *Translation Studies*.



'91 **Myrna Bittner**, BA, '93 MBA, and **Dean Bittner**, '88 BEd, co-founded the Edmonton-based tech company RUNWITHIT Synthetics, which uses machine

Myrna and Dean Bittner



learning and vast datasets to produce "synthetic cities." These model cities simulate various scenarios—from testing evacuation plans

to predicting the impact of greenbelt preservation—to help utility operators and planners make informed decisions. Digital twin modelling technology is projected to save cities around the world nearly \$280 billion by 2030. As a certified Indigenous business, the company won the ASTech Innovation of the Year award in 2023, and the 2021 United Nations Industrial Development Organization global call competition in the category of decarbonizing growing urban environments.

'91 **Howie Draper**, BPE, '13 MA, has taken a leave of absence as coach of Pandas hockey at the U of A to coach for the New York franchise in the new Professional Women's Hockey League, which debuted in fall 2023. Draper has coached U of A women's hockey for 26 years, leading the team to eight national



▲ Howie Draper

titles and 667 victories. Darren Bilawchuk has been named acting head coach of the Pandas. He has been an assistant coach with the program since 2014.

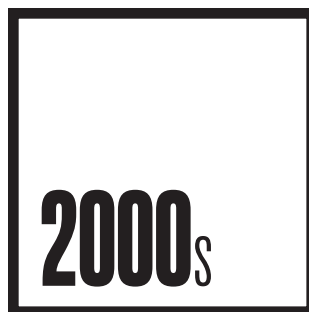
'95 **Suzette Mayr**, MA, was recently named one of the finalists for the 2023 Governor General's Literary Awards in the fiction category. The prizes, administered by the Canada Council for the Arts, are awarded across seven English-speaking categories. Her novel *The Sleeping Car Porter* previously won the 2022 Scotiabank Giller Prize. Mayr teaches creative writing at the University of Calgary and sits on the jury for the 2024 CBC Short Story Prize.

'95 **Michelle Helstein**, BA, '03 PhD, was appointed provost and vice-president, academic at the University

of Lethbridge in September 2023. Helstein began her ULethbridge academic career in 2003, advocating for sport as a subject worthy of academic study. "Since then, she has explored questions related to representations of female athletes, the complex intersection of public and private-sector funding within Canadian sport, and most recently, perspectives of labour within the concussion crisis in sport," according to the University of Lethbridge's UNews. She was most recently the university's interim deputy provost.

'99 **Jolene Ali**, BSc(Nutr/Food), '05 Mag, '05 MBA, and **Jim Gibbon**, '85 BSc, '87 BA, '06 MBA, co-owners of Gummy Nutrition Lab, an Alberta-based nutraceutical manufacturer, recently launched a new creatine

supplement product called Creatine Kicks. The sugar-free gummies provide an alternative option to conventional creatine powders and pills. Advocates of Canadian manufacturing, Ali and Gibbon founded the company in 2019 and employ U of A grads including **Gloria Yap**, '23 BSc(Nutr/Food), **Korey Kobyłka**, '23 BSc(Nutr/Food), and **Martin Bendico**, '23 BCom.



'02 **Rolf Boon**, PhD, recently retired after a 34-year career as a composer and

post-secondary educator and administrator. During his career, he composed more than 80 works across diverse genres and media, from instrumental and choral to orchestral and electroacoustic. Notable contributions include composing the music for the 1995 Canada Winter Games and acting as a music editor for many films. Boon served as the music department chair at the University of Lethbridge and received an award in recognition of his excellence in teaching from the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association. As an administrator, he was instrumental in developing the ULethbridge's digital audio arts program as well as the interactive digital design program at Northwestern Polytechnic. He says his

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UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

ALUMNI



Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane



PhD supervisor **Margaret Haughey**, '72 MEd, '76 PhD, was an important influence in leadership and policy studies: "I'm grateful for her mentorship, which contributed greatly to my many academic and artistic successes."

'02 **Nicole Janssen**, BCom, received a lifetime achievement award at the Women in AI awards ceremony in October 2023. Janssen was recognized for her work as co-founder and co-CEO of AltaML, which designs AI-powered solutions for businesses. Women in AI is a global network of female experts in the artificial intelligence space, working

toward gender-inclusive AI that benefits a global society.

'09 **Moréniké Oláòşebikan**, BSc(Pharm), CEO of Edmonton-based pharmatech firm Kemet Group, recently launched *kemet.care*, an online platform that connects patients who require custom

medications with pharmacies that can serve them. The service is designed to meet the unique medication needs of individuals by offering tailored dosages and formulations as well as access to hard-to-find medications. The platform serves Alberta residents, with plans to scale across Canada, the U.S. and Africa. Oláòşebikan founded Kemet Group in 2021 to transform the way that medications are produced to address global health inequities. She received a U of A Alumni Horizon Award in 2023 for her innovative work as a pharmacist, business owner and non-profit founder.

A lifelong powwow dancer, Pheasant-Neganigwane is the author of the award-winning book *Powwow: A Celebration Through Song and Dance*, which examines powwow's history and thriving culture. She is completing a PhD at the University of Alberta in educational policy studies/ Indigenous Peoples education and is an assistant professor at Mount Royal University on Treaty 7 territory.

2020s

'20 **Alex Poznikoff**, BA(RecSpoTourism), joined the Montreal franchise for the inaugural season of the Professional Women's Hockey League. Poznikoff played for the U of A Pandas hockey team, where she scored 125 points in 125 games and was named USports Player of the Year in 2019. After graduating, she joined the Professional Women's Hockey Players Association, the precursor to the PWHL, which aims to provide a sustainable women's league with pay and benefits. ■

2010s

'13 **Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane**, MEd, was inducted into the Canadian Dance Hall of Fame in 2023. As an Anishinaabe of the Three Fires Confederacy from the Wiikwemkoong First Nation on Ontario's Manitoulin Island, she is the first traditional powwow dancer to receive this honour.

Order of Canada Honours

Four alumni were honoured by the Order of Canada in December 2023: **Wilton "Willie" Littlechild**, '67 BPE, '75 MA, '76 LLB, '07 LLB (Honorary), was promoted to a companion within the Order of Canada for his lifelong dedication and contributions to reconciliation in Canada; **Jodi Abbott**, '93 MEd, '96 PhD, was appointed a member of the Order of Canada for her leadership in Alberta's health-care system and dedication to nurturing the next generation of athletes; **Luciano Francescutti**, '85 PhD, '87 MD, was appointed a member of the Order of Canada for his leadership in emergency and preventive medicine, and his advocacy for vulnerable populations and equity in health care; **John Olthuis**, '61 BA, '64 LLB, was appointed a member of the Order of Canada for his mentorship of a new generation of Indigenous lawyers.

Brotherly Love

STUDYING, LEARNING AND GROWING UP ALONGSIDE YOUR PEERS MAKES FOR LIFELONG CONNECTIONS AND PURPOSE

By **Ashley O'Kurley**, '97 BA, as told to Lewis Kelly

Fraternities and sororities have been active on University of Alberta campuses for nearly 100 years. In that time they've connected countless students with their peers and with a sense of purpose that goes beyond themselves. One such former student is Ashley O'Kurley. This is his experience of the Phi Gamma Delta (FJI) fraternity as told to Lewis Kelly.

I GREW UP IN A SMALL ALBERTA TOWN called Bruderheim until I went to the U of A in 1988—mostly to play football.

My uncle is a member of Phi Gamma Delta, and when he heard I was looking for somewhere to stay, he took me by the fraternity house. It had opened in 1985, so it was pretty new at the time, but I was just looking for a place to live, I had no ambition to join anything, as football took a lot of my time and energy.

I quickly discovered the fraternity was a place I actually wanted to be. There was a sense of community and connection in that house that fascinated me.

Part of it was the chance to be around men from my generation who inspired me. I was an only child until I was nine. Finding some big brothers really mattered to me.

One of my most profound memories was when an older fraternity brother named Gordon Elliott drove up from Calgary to visit us. He had graduated from UBC in 1955, and he stepped away from his busy life and made the trip to Edmonton just to spend four hours with a bunch of men 40 years younger than he was. Why?

I still remember the look in his eyes. I could see how much the fraternity meant to him—and how much it could mean to me.

Now I've seen that cross-generational connection from the other side. I'm still very involved, having helped to start a chapter in Miami while I was getting my master's degree in the early 2000s. When I'm with a bunch of fraternity brothers in their 20s, I can hear their naiveté, but also their energy, optimism and understanding. They have insights into how the world has changed that I do not. That sense of intergenerational community is hard to describe. Not many people have close friends who are decades apart in age.

Another part of the fraternity's appeal was intellectual. I wasn't the best student at first. Being around others who were—that was a gut punch for me. I'm not sure I would have graduated if not for the brothers in the fraternity guiding me, encouraging me and sometimes just kicking me in the butt to get my work done.

The ideals explored in the fraternity impacted my life in many ways. I remember sitting in our house at the U of A as a 19-year-old, in this dimly lit room with 50 guys, hearing people recite poetic phrases about love and truth. The connection the fraternity has to ancient wisdom captivated me.

Fraternities put Greek letters at the centre of their identities because the philosophy that animated the beginnings of what we know today as liberal democracy took root in ancient Greece.

"I remember how we would remind each other at our weekly meetings to be 'part of the upward march of humanity.' These communal commitments to better citizenship grabbed hold of my heart and inspired my mind."

I remember how we would remind each other at our weekly meetings to be "part of the upward march of humanity." These communal commitments to better citizenship grabbed hold of my heart and inspired my mind.

What difference did the fraternity make to my time at university? I don't know how to answer that question. It's like asking, "Who would you be if you were someone else?"

I met my wife because of my fraternity's support of the U of A opening its first sexual assault centre. I met **Dave Hancock**, '75 BA, '79 LLB, '15 LLD (Honorary), too—he gave me my first job after graduation. Even the artist who gave me my fraternity tattoo is a Phi Gamma Delta brother.

At the U of A, what we call the "Greek experience" of a fraternity or sorority is among the best it can be. But it's at such a small scale. In the U.S., there are about 123 fraternities and sororities with nine million total members. In Canada, Greek letter organizations are few and far between.

I hope that changes someday. ■



Ashley O'Kurley is a financial planner, lifetime sports enthusiast, husband and father of two. He remains a committed fraternity member and volunteer.



IN THE NEWS

Fashion Meets Tech

One of Edmonton's newest fashion brands comes from the mind of **Emma Doolin**, '16 BSc, '21 PhD, after her detours into neuroscience and a tech startup. Galleriadele, founded in 2022, offers "edgy, luxury wardrobe staples." Doolin's background in science and technology is apparent in the NFC tags on her clothing, which contain microchips that say when and where the item was made, offer styling tips and tell the story behind the piece. While local support has been good, Doolin is currently seeking out other fashion hot spots like New York City while she grows her brand's awareness and product line. —TAPROOT EDMONTON

DID YOU KNOW?

In September 1984, coin-free photocopying was introduced with the Copicard, offering a reduced rate at certain campus copiers of just six cents per page.



Top-of-the-Line Alumni

Nineteen alumni named on *Edify's* Top 40 Under 40 list in 2023:

Andrew Knack, '06 BCom, for his leadership as Ward Nakota Isga councillor for the City of Edmonton

Charles Wong, '10 BSc, for his work as CEO of CarePros, a disability and children's services agency

Constance Scarlett, '06 BA, for advocating for science education as president and CEO of Edmonton's Telus World of Science

Heather Thomson, '07 BSc, for bolstering Alberta's small businesses as executive director for the U of A's Centre for Cities and Communities

Janis Irwin, '06 BEd, for her work toward ending the homelessness crisis as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Jeffrey Behrens, '10 BA, for supporting students with military backgrounds in his role as a navigator with the U of A's new Military and Veteran Friendly Campus program

Keenan Pascal, '08 BCom, for fostering entrepreneurship in emerging industries as CEO of Token Naturals

Laura Sinclair, '09 BEd, for uplifting underrepresented groups in aviation as COO and CFO of Elevate Aviation

Leigh Newton, '20 MBA, for launching a food manufacturing business during the pandemic as co-founder of Homestyle Selections

Lianna Makuch, '13 BFA(Drama), for writing plays about Ukraine as a theatre artist with Pyretic Productions

Mark Anderson, '10 BSc, for supporting business development in Edmonton as the vice-president of CBRE Canada

Paige Reeves, '17 MSc, for advocating for people with disabilities as senior leader of research and social innovation at Skills Society's Action Lab

Sanja Kostov, '06 BSc(Hon), '11 MD, for improving labour and delivery care as a family physician and primary care obstetrician

Sheliza Kluge, '06 BCom, for her community-building work as senior legal counsel at Enbridge

Steven Knight, '14 BCom, for empowering home improvement entrepreneurs as the owner of Mosaic Home Services

Stewart Fraser, '06 BCom, for mentoring emerging urban planners through his work with the Commercial Real Estate Development Association

Tarek Fathelbab, '11 MSc, for supporting newcomers in Edmonton as team lead with the city's immigration and multicultural relations department

Trent Daley, '20 BA, for advocating for Edmonton's most vulnerable populations as the operations manager with the Islamic Family and Social Services Association

Youssra Badr, '06 BA, '08 BEd, '12 MEd, for training educators to discuss anti-racism in the classroom as the diversity consultant with Edmonton Public Schools



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

STARTING YOUR BUSINESS

Five tips to keep you focused

By Madisen Gee, '21 BA

Entrepreneurship can be daunting, no matter how long you've been doing it. Just ask self-proclaimed "serial entrepreneur" **Luke Butterworth**, '20 MBA, the entrepreneur-in-residence for eHUB, the U of A's entrepreneurship centre. He helped found three companies while completing his MBA and has since co-founded EPIC, a hospitality and events company where he is chief of operations. He joined eHUB director, **Peter Keith**, '19 BCom, '20 MBA, at an Alumni Association event to bust some myths about entrepreneurship and help you hone your focus.

Anyone can apply

You don't have to be 22 and just out of school to be an entrepreneur. Age and experience are often an asset, says Butterworth. Keith agrees. He says you're likely more prepared to change and adapt when you're older—to "shape the world rather than trying to find the solution that everyone else says is the solution."

Big isn't always better

Butterworth highlights the importance of thinking about what you want to achieve by owning a business to ensure it will fit your lifestyle. Whether you want to found a startup with the potential to scale into a billion-dollar company with hundreds of employees or you want the freedom

to be your own boss, there are plenty of opportunities. "Entrepreneurs pour their hearts and souls into things, and need to do that for the right reasons."

Know what you have to offer

No one likes to be on the receiving end of a limp sales pitch, so remember that what you're offering is an opportunity. Showcase your enthusiasm and point of view. How can you ease a pain point for a client? What excites you about your solution? Telling your story in a way that builds genuine human connection will help people believe in your ideas.

Is it building value for you?

In the age of the internet, there's no shortage of get-rich-quick schemes. Being an online retailer can be a legitimate way to build a business, Butterworth says, but it's important to be diligent about how the business is structured. Ask yourself if you own any part of the process or intellectual property. "If somebody wanted to acquire your business tomorrow, could you sell it? Is there anything to sell?"

Finding the million-dollar idea

There is no "million-dollar idea." Whatever you come up with requires intentional work to create something of real value, says Butterworth. Chances are slim that you'll come up with a fully synthesized idea right off the top. He says to start by seeking feedback from others. Feedback is crucial to be able to hone your concept based on the real world. Would-be entrepreneurs are often protective of their ideas, but there's a difference between protecting an idea and being a barrier to your own success because you won't work with others. ■

The Alumni Association notes with sorrow the passing of the following graduates (based on information received between November 2023 and February 2024).

In Memoriam

1940s

'48 Doris Elaine Jewitt (Carver), BSc(HEc), in December 2023

'48 Winifred Jean Smart, Dip(Nu), in November 2023

1950s

'50 Donald Leslie Campbell, BCom, '63 BEd, in October 2023

'50 Lucy Vera Mutual (Olekshy), BSc, in December 2023

'50 Margaret Stella Roski, Dip(Ed), in March 2023

'50 Raymond Spencer Tharp, BCom, '53 LLB, in January 2024

'51 William Dennis Engels, BSc, '56 MD, in November 2023

'51 John Steele Graham, BSc, '55 MD, in February 2024

'52 Howard David Bagley, BSc(PetEng), '55 MSc, in January 2024

'52 Russell Leon Krausert, BSc, in September 2023

'52 Frederick Norris Pinnell, BCom, in November 2023

'52 Florence Thelma Morton (Thurston), Dip(Ed), in September 2023

'53 Evelyn Mary Francis (Attewell), Dip(Ed), in August 2022

'53 Gertrude Elizabeth Grieve (Byrtus), BEd, in October 2023

'53 Marion Sylvia Hanna, Dip(Ed), in November 2023

'53 Geraldine Leah Mayer, Dip(Ed), in June 2023

'53 Olga Marie McIvor (Fonkalsrud), Dip(Nu), in November 2024

'53 Henry "Hank" Manuel Publicover, BSc, '63 BSc(ChemEng), in November 2023

'54 Douglas Hamilton Church, BSc(PetEng), in January 2024

'54 Elizabeth A. Halvorsen (Chychul), Dip(Ed), '79 Dip(Ed), in November 2023

'54 Stella May Hart, Dip(Nu), in 2023

'54 Donald Harry Hugh Kelly, BSc(ElecEng), '56 MSc, in January 2024

'54 Jim Kristian Nielsen, Dip(Ed), '56 BEd, '62 MEd, in October 2023

'54 Charles Donald Sawyer, BSc(Ag), '62 MSc, in September 2023

'54 William Melvin Tasky, BSc, '56 DDS, in December 2023

'55 Irene E. Hardwicke, Dip(PHNU), in June 2023

'55 Patricia Ann Laurin, Dip(Nu), in June 2023

'55 Viola Beryl Trithart Harris (Lundberg), Dip(Ed), in April 2023

'56 Ronald Anderson Steven Brown, BSc(ChemEng), '63 PhD, in October 2023

'56 Betty Jean Buchanan (Robertson), BCom, in October 2023

'56 Evelyn Noreen Fedewich, Dip(Nu), in November 2023

'56 Gertrude Elizabeth Fellner, Dip(Ed), '63 BEd, in September 2023

'56 Rita Elsie Graves (Ziehran), BScN, in December 2023

'56 Mona Elizabeth McLennan (McLaughlin), Dip(RM), in November 2023

'56 Charles Ronald Steele, BCom, in October 2023

'56 Patricia Joan Wishart (Low), Dip(Ed), '57 BEd, in February 2024

'57 Geraldine Ann Anderson, Dip(Nu), in November 2023

'57 Thomas Edward Bourne, BSc(CivEng), in October 2023

'57 Arnold Martin Enger, BPE, '68 MA, in December 2023

'57 Michiel "Mike" Rudolf Leenders, BSc(MiningEng), in November 2023

'57 Shirley Ann MacArthur (Mohler), Dip(Nu), '59 Dip(Nu), in October 2023

'57 Gary Russel McDonagh, BSc(CivEng), '72 DDS, in September 2023

'57 James Miles Plecash, DDS, '74 MSc, in February 2024

'57 Margarette Isabell Sheppy, Dip(PHNU), '67 BScN, '71 MEd, in December 2023

'58 Shirley I. Deneka (Platt), MD, in February 2024

'58 James Albert Doherty, BSc(ElecEng), in October 2023

'58 Esther Alice Halstein, BA, in August 2023

'58 David Keith Johnson, BCom, in October 2023

'59 Eugene Gerald Brailsford, BA, '62 MA, in November 2023

'59 Rita Karen Burton, Dip(Nu), in November 2023

'59 Joan Mildred Dawes, Dip(Nu), '62 Dip(Nu), in August 2023

'59 Bernard A. Donnellan, MSc, in February 2024

'59 Phillex Donald Dowhaniuk, BSc, '61 BEd, '62 BEd, in December 2023

'59 Lawrence Miller McKnight, BSc(Ag), '61 MSc, in January 2024

'59 John Guenther Schulz, BSc(ChemEng), in December 2023

1960s

'60 Bruce Eldon Cooper, BSc(CivEng), in November 2023

'60 Eugene George Kolotyluk, BSc(Pharm), in January 2024

'60 Kimball Kam Lun Mah, BSc(CivEng), in August 2023

'60 Alfred Francis McLean, BPE, '65 BEd, in December 2023

'60 Ralph John Russell, BSc(PetEng), in November 2023

'60 Steve Sachaschik, BA, in January 2024

'60 Donald Alfred Tannas, BA, in November 2023

'61 Michael Robert Colin Angel, BA, in September 2023

'61 Vivian Celestine Kwan (Dong), Dip(RM), '78 BSc(PT), in August 2023

'61 Dennis Earl George Maschmeyer, BSc(ChemEng), in January 2024

'61 Robert "Bob" Mitchell, BCom, '73 LLB, in April 2023

'61 Walter Henry Sussel, DDS, in November 2023

'62 Harm Cornelius Hulleman, BEd, '71 MA, in October 2023

'62 John Martin King, BSc(Ag), in August 2023

'62 Harold James Pawluk, BSc(ElecEng), in September 2023

'62 Isobel Celia Ricker (Scarth), BEd, in July 2023

'62 Norbert "Norm" Walter Schmidtke, BSc(CivEng), '67 MSc, in December 2023

'62 James Westvick Thorsell, BSc, '09 LL.D (Honorary), in August 2023

'63 William "Bill" Patrick Catalano, DDS, in February 2024

'63 James Dunsmoor, BSc(ElecEng), '67 MSc, in June 2023

'63 Harvey Earl McLachlan, BSc(Ag), in September 2023

'63 Lawrence Wayne Olesen, BA, '64 LLB, in December 2023

'63 Margo Wyley (Niewchas), BPE, in November 2023

'63 Eugene Kenneth Yaremko, BSc(CivEng), '66 MSc, in November 2023

'64 Frances Jayne Ford (Porteous), BA, in November 2023

'64 John Dale Hodges, BA, in December 2023

'64 Kenneth Gordon Sinclair, BCom, in May 2023

'65 Mary Anastasia Grant, MEd, '72 PhD, '83 PostgradDip, in May 2023

'65 Lois Jean Murphy, BSc(Pharm), in July 2023

'65 William Petrunik, BSc, '67 BEd, in October 2023

'65 Kathryn Joyce Thompson, BA, in January 2024

'66 David Joseph Bale, MEd, '78 PhD, in June 2023

'66 Colleen Karen Black, Dip(Nu), '73 BScN, '84 PostgradDip, in December 2023

'66 Richard Alan Daly, BEd, '71 MEd, in October 2023

'66 Roy Victor Ferguson, BA, '72 PhD, in October 2023

'66 Maureen Catherine Harper (Harrison), Dip(Nu), '67 BScN, in October 2023

'66 Howard Allan Meger, BEd, in December 2023

'66 Kiyooki Okawa, BSc(Pharm), in November 2023

'66 Nathaniel Westlund Rutter, PhD, in November 2023

'67 Marion Louise Buhler, BSc, in December 2023

'67 Julia Katherine Cartledge (Karapinka), Dip(Ed), in May 2023

'67 William John Elliott, BSc, in October 2023

'67 Lorna Christine Jackson (Bonner), BA, in November 2023

'67 Patricia Mary MacKay, BSc, '76 Dip(Ed), in October 2023

'67 **Abdul Majeed Mustapha**, MSc, in December 2023

'67 **Dmetro Rosiewich**, BEd, '75 Dip(Ed), '78 MEd, in March 2023

'68 **Jeanette Marguerite Bailey (Darch)**, BSc(Pharm), in December 2023

'68 **James Campbell Finlay**, MSc, in December 2023

'68 **Martin Iftody**, BEd, '69 Dip(Ed), '70 Dip(Ed), in December 2023

'68 **Earle Lundberg**, BA, in July 2023

'68 **Ian Lymburn Meikle**, LLB, in August 2023

'68 **Shirley Anne Michaels (Meakins)**, BEd, '72 MEd, in September 2023

'68 **Verna Geraldine Ottley**, BEd, in October 2023

'68 **Alexandra Polujan**, BFA, in April 2023

'68 **Graham Edwin Price**, BA, in January 2024

'68 **Ronald Victor Rudkowsky**, BEd, in December 2023

'69 **Jay Anthony Danforth**, BSc, '71 MD, in November 2023

'69 **Karen Gail McManus**, BLS, in December 2023

'69 **Ronald Vernon Peterson**, BEd, in April 2023

1970s

'70 **Roger Warburton Ashworth**, BA, '75 MA, '81 BSc, in November 2023

'70 **Michael John Dea**, BEd, in November 2023

'70 **Mary Cholach**, BEd, in January 2024

'70 **Lorne Edward Hasinoff**, MSc, in April 2023

'70 **Joseph Allen Leu**, PhD, in January 2024

'70 **Patrick John McAllister**, BA, '73 LLB, in November 2023

'70 **Barbara Jean Rice**, BEd, '92 PhD, in June 2023

'70 **William M. Wahl**, BEd, in January 2024

'71 **Victor John Galay**, PhD, in October 2023

'71 **Norman Russell Hess**, LLB, in July 2023

'71 **Margaret Elaine Lee Livingstone**, BFA, '73 MFA, in November 2023

'71 **Lorna Annette Offet (Hnatyshyn)**, BEd, in June 2023

'71 **Laurene Fay Turnquist**, Dip(Nu), in August 2023

'72 **Timothy Otto Bilou**, BEd, '80 MEd, in December 2023

'72 **Emily Josephine Korz**, BEd, in October 2023

'72 **George Robert Monner**, BSc(Ag), in January 2024

'72 **Judith Anne MacKendrick**, BA, in January 2024

'72 **Barrie Robert Pelland**, BSc(Med), '74 MD, in October 2023

'72 **Patrick Lawrence Pierce**, DDS, in September 2023

'72 **Giampaolo Paul Sassano**, PhD, in May 2023

'72 **Myrna Christine Patricia Sharek (Rude)**, BEd, '86 Dip(Ed), in January 2024

'73 **Terence Philip Cheesman**, BA, '75 Dip(Ed), in January 2024

'73 **Martin Edward Handlon**, BPE, in November 2023

'73 **Ingrid Mary Robin**, BEd, '77 Dip(Ed), in December 2023

'73 **Terrance Angelo Valeriotte**, BPE, '80 MA, in November 2023

'73 **Bradford Raymond Vetsch**, BSc(ChemEng), in December 2023

'73 **Elizabeth Anne Vetsch (Crockett)**, BSc(Med), '75 MD, in December 2023

'74 **Elvira Edeltraud Mueller**, BEd, in October 2023

'74 **William John Schloegl**, BA, in October 2023

'74 **Jessie "Anne Marie" Stewart (Weir)**, BEd, in September 2023

'75 **Terence Cooke**, BEd, '81 MEd, in October 2023

'75 **Ruth Cornelia Henderson (Janzen)**, Dip(Nu), in December 2023

'76 **Michael John Dawe**, BA, in December 2023

'76 **Linda Germaine Nash (Powell)**, BScN, in November 2023

'76 **Kenneth James "Ken" Nelson**, BA(Spec), '92 MA, in August 2023

'76 **David Paul Palsat**, BSc(CivEng), '86 MSc, in December 2023

'79 **Joan McGregor**, Dip(RM), '80 BSc(OT), in 2023

'79 **Larry W. McLaughlin**, PhD, in November 2023

'79 **Raymond Gerard McNamara**, BSc(Spec), '81 MBA, in August 2023

'79 **Glen John Pruden**, BSc(MechEng), in November 2023

'79 **Larry Stephen Rosell**, BEd, in November 2023

1980s

'80 **Clark Gordon Peter Beatty**, BEd, in December 2023

'80 **Georgina Mary Bone**, PhD, in January 2024

'80 **Iris Elisabeth Campbell**, BScN(Hons), '85 MN, in October 2023

'80 **Jean Florence Yuill**, BEd, '90 Dip(Ed), in August 2023

'81 **Vernon John Charter**, BA(Hons), '84 BMus, '88 MMus, in September 2023

'82 **Betty Joan Hardin**, BEd, in December 2023

'83 **Jean Forest**, LLD (Honorary), in January 2024

'84 **Martin Anthony Mazurek**, BEd, in January 2024

'84 **Katherine Anne Sicotte**, BFA, '05 MFA, in December 2023

'85 **Clifford Dean Mol**, BSc(Hons), '93 PhD, in October 2023

'85 **Noreen Reimer**, BA(Spec), in November 2023

'86 **Frederick John Hurley**, BA(Spec), '89 BEd, in June 2023

'86 **Helena Mary Moore**, MEd, in November 2023

'87 **Henry George Doyle**, BA, '91 BEd, in September 2023

'87 **Bradley Curtis Lien**, BSc(Dent), '89 DDS, in December 2023

'87 **Robert Gordon Miller**, BSc, in October 2023

'87 **Violet Alvina Selby (Gardiner)**, BA, in January 2024

'88 **Kathleen Mary Dettman**, BEd, in November 2023

'89 **Sekeena L. Gavagan**, BA(Spec), in November 2023

1990s

'90 **Jeffrey Donald Bulat**, BPE, in December 2023

'90 **Christopher Lorne Frey**, BA, in January 2024

'91 **Patricia Clark (Holden)**, BEd, in October 2023

'91 **Brian George Harper**, BEd, in December 2023

'91 **Mona Lynne Matheson**, BA, '93 MEd, in January 2024

'92 **Judith Lee Willey**, BScN(Hons), '95 MN, in October 2023

'94 **Richard Steven Brown**, MSc, in November 2023

'94 **Nancy Carol Horn**, BEd, in September 2023

'95 **Christine Ellen Jellett**, MEd, in May 2023

2000s

'00 **Jason Harvey Peterson**, BSc(Spec), '00 BA, in July 2023

'05 **Peter Kule**, LLD (Honorary), in December 2023

2010s

'10 **Rebecca Peggy Fitzgerald**, BEd, in November 2023

'10 **Tyler Andrew James Wilson**, BSc(CivEng), in November 2023

'11 **Patricia Ann Miller**, MN, in January 2024

'12 **Kent V. Rondeau**, MEd, in December 2023

'12 **Benjamin Michael Sir**, BA, in April 2023

'14 **Norman Kar-Hon Koo**, BCom, in July 2023

'17 **Jonathan Eric Klimow**, BA, '22 BEd, in December 2023

If you've lost a loved one who was a University of Alberta grad, contact alumni records at alumrec@ualberta.ca, 780-492-3471 or 1-866-492-7516.

thehub

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SPEAKER'S CORNER

HOPE IN MOTION

By Anna Schmidt

Fresh out of her physical therapy degree, **Margaret McNeely**, '86 BSc(PT), '02 MSc, '07 PhD, accepted a job in an area of treatment she'd never heard of—cancer recovery. Over the next decade, she witnessed chemotherapy patients rebuild strength, women with breast cancer regain use of their shoulders and those with throat cancer learn to speak after surgery. "We were doing really good work," says McNeely. "But there wasn't research evidence to support that."

She set out to fill that gap, returning to the U of A for a master's in rehabilitation sciences and a PhD in exercise oncology. Today McNeely is the director of the university's Cancer Rehabilitation Clinic—a working physical therapy centre that doubles as her research lab.

TAILORED TREATMENT

Unlike therapy for many other diseases, which helps patients to feel better, cancer treatments initially make patients feel worse, taking an immense physical and mental toll, explains McNeely.

This means physical therapists have a major role



to play in supporting patients to feel empowered in their bodies again. "At first, there is a strong focus on the disease itself, on treating or curing the cancer. My focus is on the person and how they live their life."

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

While therapy is individualized to each patient and their goals, McNeely always anchors recovery in general fitness. This method is driven by her research, where she discovered that cancer patients recover best when therapy addresses both the compromised parts of the body and overall strength.

PURPOSEFUL PROGRESSION

For many patients, the early days of physical therapy can be frustrating as they come face-to-face with their body's limitations. That's why McNeely and her team typically engage

patients in a 12-week program, ensuring each person starts at a realistic point and feels they can stick with therapy.

MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY

Beyond the physical role of therapy, one of the keys to recovery is the opportunity to connect with other patients. That's why McNeely set up the clinic as an open space where patients can exercise, chat and heal alongside each other.

"A patient will see somebody who's further along and say, 'Wow, if only I could do what they're doing.' Then that person replies, 'I was where you are,'" says McNeely. "It's that hope that comes through."

McNeely is one of many speakers to share expertise at alumni events. Visit uabgrad.ca/OnDemand for more content.

DON'T MISS OUT ON ...

LIBRARY PERKS

Need some me-time? Grads can use the university libraries to read, research and recline—and an alumni ONECard (get yours at HUB Mall) lets you borrow up to 30 items at once. If you'd rather stay home, register at uab.ca/library for free off-campus access to an online suite of databases.



LIVING ROOM LESSONS

Maybe your knowledge of quantum science is rooted in films like *Interstellar* or *Ant-Man*. But quantum is the next frontier of tech here in the real world. Joseph Maciejko, an associate professor and acting director of Quantum Horizons Alberta, is exploring the tiniest building blocks of our world to discover realities about the universe that we have yet to imagine. Watch the webinar and other free offerings with U of A experts at uabgrad.ca/OnDemand.



"I think we're headed towards a world where farming animals produces some food, plant-based protein produces some food, cell-based protein produces some food, and the products that we consume are probably combinations of all of those things. That diversity creates resilience and creates a more secure food system."

▼
Isha Datar, '09 BSc, talks about feeding the world with lab-grown meat on a podcast episode of *Influence* with Damian Bradfield.

81

The number of presidents the U of A Alumni Association has had since its inception in 1915

228

The number of U of A researchers featured at alumni events in the past year



Be Social



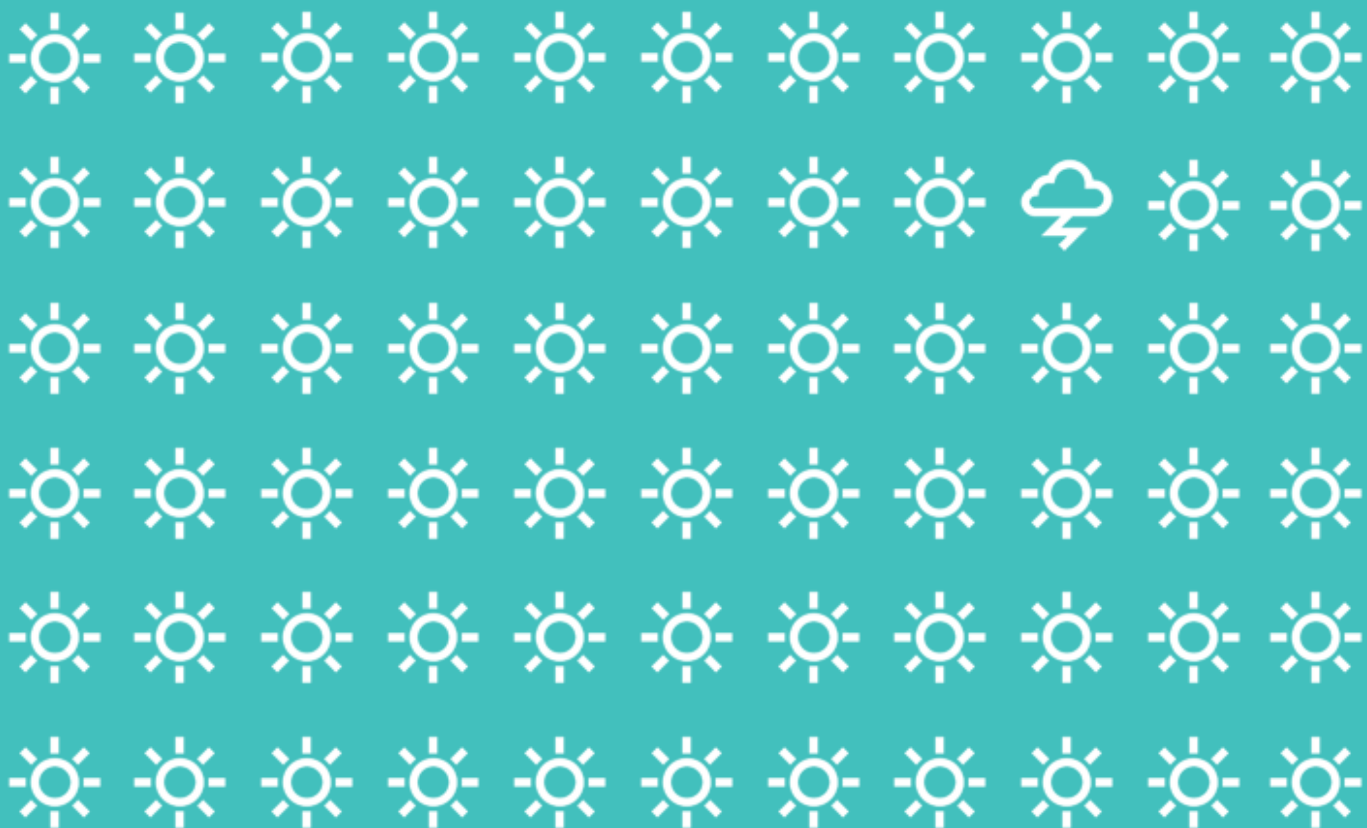
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smalltalk



More Than Memories

➤➤ Big or small, we all have moments from our past that made a big impact on us. We asked grads what stuck with them from their days at the U of A, inside or outside the classroom, that still affects their lives today. Share your thoughts or read about others at facebook.com/UAlbertaAlumni.

I graduated with a bachelor of education specializing in social studies. In those days, the majority of courses for the degree were options, so I developed a love for Roman history and archeology. A few years later, I enrolled in Practical Methods in Classical Archeology taught by Alastair Small at San Giovanni di Ruoti. Years later, I took the grad course. Using the skills I learned in those courses, I spent many summers on digs in Israel, including Tel Rehov in the Jordan River Valley, Tel Zafit (Philistine Gath) and Tel Burna.

—Robert Yaro, '76 BEd



The librarians! I spent countless hours with the reference librarians picking up materials from very old, very obscure journals. It actually encouraged me to pursue a master of library and information studies so I could help people with their research.

—Natalie Shykoluk, '08 MA

Every course enriched me in a different way, but the classical music appreciation courses I took with Harold Wiens in the early 1980s continue to bring joy to my life every single day.

—Jaroslaw Jerry Iwanus, '83 BA(Spec), '86 MA

I was a mature student in the '80s, and I had to study twice as hard as the younger ones — especially with the grade curve! I persevered and graduated with a psych degree, had some interesting jobs and eventually worked as a probation officer for 30 years. University was one of the best things I ever did, and the U of A and its staff and faculty were amazing.

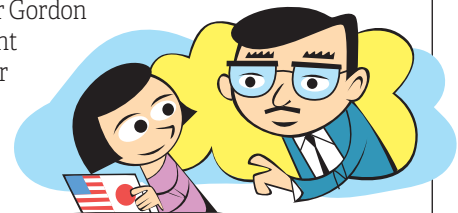
—Cindy Whitford, '88 BA

Tom Dust, '74 BSc, '79 BEd, a professor in education, taught me that you're truly learning when you start to realize how little you actually know. It's a gem of wisdom that has always stuck with me!

—Kirsten Clark, '04 BCom

In the late '80s, I took a night class for the last sociology course I needed to graduate. Professor Gordon Hirabayashi came out of retirement to teach it. He spent most classes telling stories of his fight for civil rights for interned Japanese people in the U.S., his court case and advocating for other minorities. I don't remember what the class was about but I remember those stories. I live in Los Angeles and was surprised to see his obituary in the *LA Times*. I showed it to my husband and told him Hirabayashi had been my professor. He did not believe me so I googled to prove it and found so much more information about Hirabayashi's life and how he ended up at the U of A. I am so grateful that I took that Wednesday evening class.

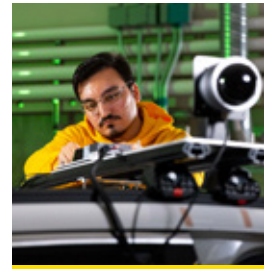
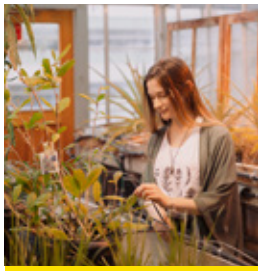
—Darlene Williams Kiyan, '90 BA





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“ I've set up my endowment already so I can enjoy it while I'm alive. It's supported by a bequest in my will and my registered retirement funds, and will hopefully one day pay for a student's entire four years at university.”

Pat Ryan,
U of A Grad and Legacy Donor



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