

Alumni Gazette

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SPRING 2016

A NEW VENTURE

Janet Bannister, HBA'92,
continues to see opportunities
after Kijiji success



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Western boasts of a massive brain gain

Western recently welcomed three top minds on the brain to campus from their previous research homes at top British universities.

Tim Bussey and Lisa Saksida, an internationally renowned wife-and-husband team of cognitive neuroscientists, joined Western after collaborating on game-changing research for the past 15 years at the University of Cambridge. The pair specialize in understanding cognition – learning, memory, perception and attention – and developing and discovering new techniques for translating data acquired in pre-clinical trials to the clinic, where the findings can be used to better investigate what happens in the human brain when patients are suffering from neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

Bussey, named Western Research Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience, and Saksida were both appointed as professors in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry's Department of Physiology and Pharmacology. Also serving as core members of Western's Brain and Mind

Institute, they will continue to advance their unique touch-screen systems and any other future software designs at Robarts Research Institute and its Centre for Functional and Metabolic Mapping.

Jörn Diedrichsen joined Western from University College London, and plans to continue his work developing better treatments for strokes and spinal cord damage in humans.

In his new laboratory, based at Western's renowned Brain and Mind Institute, Diedrichsen will use robotics to study human movement to develop better treatments for strokes and spinal cord damage in humans.

Diedrichsen, Western Research Chair in Motor Control and Computational Neuroscience, was appointed a professor in the departments of Computer Science and Statistical and Actuarial Sciences. He investigates fine motor control, in part, by using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) at Western's Centre for Functional and Metabolic Mapping at Robarts Research Institute.



Left: Lisa Saksida and Tim Bussey;
Below: Jörn Diedrichsen (PHOTOS BY PAUL MAYNE)



Western’s Board of Governors appointed Hanny Hassan Chair of the Board for 2016. Joining Western’s Board in 2009, Hassan has served as Vice-Chair of the Board since 2014.

Hassan manages Alef Consulting Inc., an independent consulting engineering practice in London, Ont., following a long and successful career at Dillon Consulting. He also has a distinguished record of community service and is a frequent speaker and lecturer to schools, universities, church groups, service organizations and the business community. His publicly oriented energies and commitments have been focused on interfaith and multicultural issues and in 2011 he was named to the Order of Canada for his work.

Hassan’s other affiliations include

serving as co-chair of the National Muslim Christian Liaison Committee, and most recently serving as chair of the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee of Ontario.

Hassan has a Bachelor of Engineering Science from Western and a Master of Engineering from Dalhousie University.

The Board of Governors also appointed Paul Jenkins as Vice-Chair for 2016. Jenkins was elected to the Board as an alumni member in 2010. From 2003-10, Jenkins served as Senior Deputy Governor of the Bank of Canada and a member of its board of directors. In this position he was also the bank’s Chief Operating Officer. Jenkins received his BA in Economics from Western and MSc in Economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science in England.

Jarislowsky Gift

Western is poised to move to the forefront of central banking teaching and research in Canada, thanks to a recent generous donation from The Jarislowsky Foundation announced May 9.

The \$2-million endowed gift, to be matched by Western, will establish the Stephen A. Jarislowsky Chair in Central Banking in the Department of Economics at the Faculty of Social Science, with the aim to encourage excellence in teaching and research in areas essential to central bank policy and decision-making.

The Jarislowsky Foundation, based in Montreal, was founded by Canadian businessman and philanthropist Stephen Jarislowsky in 1991. Since then, it has established 29 chairs in Canada in a number of fields, including education, medicine and art.

“Our main aim and focus is excellence. We try to do things in areas which make people in our age think,” Jarislowsky said. “This chair was designed to make people think about central banking. Central bankers have achieved an enormous influence on the lives of all kinds of countries. I hope this chair will lead to better central bankers, better government and better handling of finance around the world. That is a big objective.”

Have you moved? We’d love to hear about it!



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Student Number			
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Street Address 2		Postal/Zip	
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Province/State		Email	

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Scotiabank gift fuels digital banking future



(PHOTO BY PAUL MAYNE)

In order to address the rapid change within its industry, a Canadian banking giant has invested in Western students with an eye toward “home-grown Canadian innovation.” In March, Brian Porter, Scotiabank President and CEO, announced \$3 million in funding to create the Scotiabank Digital Banking Lab at the Ivey Business School. The funding is part of a collaborative partnership between Scotiabank and Ivey, focused on digital banking, which will help generate thought leadership and develop future talent in the digital space.

PhD candidate wins CBC Short Story Prize

Weaving together the romance between a woman and her horse and the wonder and majesty of whales earned David Huebert the CBC Short Story Prize.

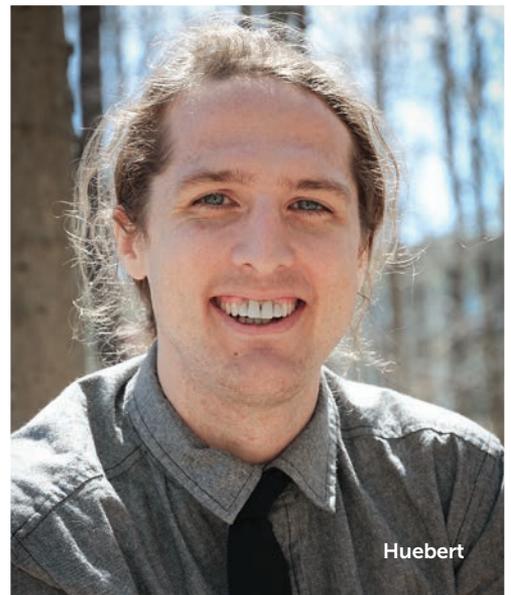
The English PhD candidate penned *Enigma*, a tale of a woman who is wrestling with ending the life of her beloved horse and the challenge of her partner, Serge, to understand and empathize with this heartfelt pain. The story is intertwined with references to a whale-watching excursion at Digby Neck on the Bay of Fundy, Nova Scotia.

Huebert’s story will be published in Air Canada’s *enRoute* magazine. He will receive a 10-day writing residency at The Banff Centre and \$6,000 from the Canada Council for the Arts.

“It’s crazy. I was overwhelmed and surprised and suspected it was a prank,” he joked. “I was obviously deliriously happy.”

Huebert wrote *Enigma* for the contest and based it on his personal experiences with horses, particularly his mother’s and sister’s love and relationship to the animals, as well as a personal adventure whale-watching.

Huebert joins company with some of Canada’s best writers who received CBC Literary Prizes and went on to receive national and international acclaim since the program began in 1979, such as Shauna Singh Baldwin, George Bowering, Camilla Gibb, Frances Itani, Michael Ondaatje, Leon Rooke, Carol Shields and Michael Winter.



Huebert

Leave an **Extraordinary Legacy**

“I am proud to be a donor to Western’s football program and am inspired by its tradition of excellence. I am forever thankful for my Western experience and hope that by including Western in my Will, I can help to create opportunities for generations of students to come.”

Robert Nash, BA’66
Western Mustang and Athletics Donor

Making a Bequest to Western through your Will

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The Bequests team is here to help with sample language for your Will and to discuss options.

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Western



PUTTING CRUNCH TO THE TEST

The Beltone Anechoic Chamber, housed at Western's National Centre for Audiology, supports a wide range of research projects requiring a highly controlled sound field environment, with fields such as Music, Audiology, Hearing Science and Engineering all making use of this facility. Well, you can now add tacos to that list. Taco Bell Canada took over the chamber to shoot a commercial for their new Cheetos Crunchwrap Slider, using the room's sophisticated and specialized material to minimize sound reflection and external noise. 'YouTube star' Dan James (TheDanocracy) starred in the commercial, which began airing across Canada in March. (PHOTO BY PAUL MAYNE)

UNIVERSITY, INDUSTRY GET GAME (DESIGN) ON

 Claudette Critchley, BSc'94, BEd'95, left, wouldn't call herself a gamer – an odd statement from the COO and co-founder of Big Blue Bubble, Canada's largest independent mobile gaming company. An influential name in the industry, Critchley is lending her experience and expertise to her alma mater to help define Western as a leading institution for studying game design.

Recently, Western was named among the top designations in the world to study and launch a career in game design, according to *The Princeton Review's* rankings of the best



graduate and undergraduate schools. The university placed No. 44 in the world among undergraduate programs and was one of only three Canadian schools and the only Ontario institution on the list.

Critchley, who sits on the Advisory Board for Computer Science, is influencing the future of Western's

game design curriculum so students receive the technical and professional skills needed to be the next new employee for Big Blue Bubble.

Of the people on the technology team at Big Blue Bubble, 80 per cent are Western graduates. This is not a coincidence, as the proximity to highly skilled and knowledgeable students allows the company to mine talent from its own backyard. All students who have completed internships at Big Blue Bubble have been offered full-time employment.

"We do what we can to future-proof our students. We don't just focus on a particular technology; we cover several different technologies and platforms so as soon as there is something new on the horizon, our students are able to go off and tackle that," said Mike Katchabaw, right, professor and Undergraduate Chair of Computer Science.

Setting a new standard for dynasties



When you talk sports dynasties, you think of the Chicago Bulls (six NBA titles in eight years), the New York Yankees (nine World Series titles in 16 years) or the UCLA Bruins (10 national championships in 12 years). But if you consider those dynasties, what do you call 33 consecutive Ontario University Athletics (OUA) men's squash titles?

With their most recent title earlier this year, the Western Mustangs now hold the OUA record for most consecutive championships in any sport, beating the long-standing 32-year-old record previously held by the University of Toronto swim team.

Legendary Western coach Jack Fairs, right, made the



trip at 92 to Niagara-on-the-Lake to cheer on the team he led for so many decades that. Today, Derek Moore, left, has the pleasure – and the pressure – of heading up the storied program. A squash pro at Good Life Fitness and co-owner of Of Courts sports store in London, Moore felt the weight of this record-breaking season.

“As soon as someone hears I’m the coach at Western, they instantly know those are huge shoes to fill,” Moore said. “He’s such a kind and

caring person. I don’t want to mimic him, because I’m my own person, but to try and be something like him would be amazing.”

The 1970s belonged to Western as the team reeled off nine straight OUA titles. After a three-year title dry spell, the Mustangs took the championship in 1983-84 and no other team has won the Harald Martin Trophy since. Western has won 43 times in the trophy’s 65-year existence.

University signs onto Paris Pledge

Western joined a global community of universities, businesses, cities and other groups in signing the Paris Pledge for Action, committing to doing its part to limit the global temperature rise to less than 2 degrees Celsius. The ambitious target was set at the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference in December.

“Our university has joined more than 1,000 signatories around the world in signing the Paris Pledge in support of immediate climate

change action. This pledge is a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, with a goal of meeting or surpassing the targets set at the recent COP21 (2015 Paris Climate Conference) conference,” Western President Amit Chakma said.

Western is already a leader in greenhouse gas reductions, having mitigated emissions by 12 per cent since 2009, he noted. “This has been achieved even as our campus



infrastructure and population continues to grow. This is a remarkable achievement,” he said.

There are 11 buildings on campus with, or in the process of achieving, LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, including LEED Gold-certified Claudette MacKay-Lassonde Pavillion, and McIntosh Gallery and Stevenson Hall/Lawson Hall, which are both LEED Silver certified buildings.

By Jason Winders, MES'10

Space Oddity

Western names written among the stars

You don't look up Peter Jedicke's phone number. You look up for it.

Asteroid (5899) Jedicke orbits the sun, somewhere out there, floating between Mars and Jupiter among tens of thousands of other ancient celestial pieces of real estate. Discovered on Jan. 9, 1986, the rock was later named for Jedicke, BA'76, MA'97 (Philosophy), brother Robert Jedicke, BA'84, of the Institute for Astronomy, University of Hawaii, and sister, June Jedicke-Zehr.

It has been a point of pride for the former president of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. So much so, Jedicke somehow convinced a Bell representative to change his phone number to his asteroid number.

"I have always had an interest in all the oddball parts of astronomy, little things that everyone overlooks," said Jedicke, a Fanshawe College professor since 1980. "The researchers, they don't have time for the little bits of fluff and fun that go on – the anecdotes, the stories, the human side of all that.

"But I have always made time for it; I have always looked after that."

Over the years, the Jedicke Brothers have been responsible for naming dozens of asteroids, including many named after famed Western scientists and sites.

Jedicke admits his effort is not unique. (In recent years, Physics & Astronomy's Paul Wiegert has spearheaded naming asteroids after mostly former and current professors in the department.) But for him, the name game ties directly into his passion for spreading the word.

"To me, this is all about outreach, about astronomy. It gives me a chance to talk to folks about this thing that I find so exciting," he said.

ASTEROIDS

Asteroids are rocky, airless worlds that orbit our sun, but are too small to be called planets. Tens of thousands of these minor planets are gathered in the main asteroid belt, a vast doughnut-shaped ring between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. Asteroids that pass close to Earth are called near-earth objects.



AMONG WESTERN'S CELESTIAL CONNECTIONS SO NAMED BY JEDICKE ARE:

Asteroid (11980) Ellis. Kerry Ellis, PhD'94, chief engineer on the international Leonid Storm monitoring project at the Meteor Physics Lab at Western.

Asteroid (12014) Bobhawkes. Robert Hawkes, PhD'79.

Asteroid (12050) Humechronyn. Hume Cronyn, namesake of the Hume Cronyn Memorial Observatory, which opened in 1940.

Asteroid (12125) Jamesjones. James Jones, a Physics and Astronomy professor.

Asteroid (12317) Madicampbell. Margaret Campbell, PhD'02, and Physics and Astronomy professor.

Asteroid (12343) Martinbeech. Martin Beech, PhD'93, formerly of the Meteor Physics Lab at Western.

Asteroid (12386) Nikolova. Simona Nikolova, PhD'06.

Asteroid (12397) Peterbrown. Peter Brown, MSc'94, PhD'99, Physics and Astronomy professor and Canada Research Chair in Meteor Astronomy.

Asteroid (12431) Webster. Alan Webster, Electrical and Computer Engineering professor.

Asteroid (12447) Yatescup. Yates Cup, OUA championship football trophy.

Asteroid (13693) Bondar. Roberta Bondar, MSc'71, Dsc'95, Canadian astronaut.

Asteroid (13700) Connors. Martin Connors, HBSc'77.

Asteroid (13806) Darmstrong. Dale Henry Armstrong, BA'85.

Asteroid (14026) Esquerdo. Gil Esquerdo, research assistant for Western's Near-Earth-Asteroid Physical Study project.

Asteroid (14060) Patersonewen. Paterson Ewen, artist in Visual Arts who had an interest in astronomy.

Asteroid (14065) Flegel. Mike Flegel, HBSc'82.

Asteroid (14092) Gaily. T. Dean Gaily, Physics professor.

Asteroid (14203) Hocking. Wayne Keith Hocking, Physics and Astronomy professor.

Asteroid (14274) Landstreet. John Darlington

Landstreet, Physics and Astronomy professor.

Asteroid (14619) Plotkin. Howard Plotkin, Philosophy professor.

Asteroid (14697) Ronsawyer. Ron Sawyer, BA'05.

Asteroid (14988) Tryggvason. Bjarni Tryggvason, DSC'98, Canadian astronaut.

Asteroid (14994) Uppenkamp. Wolfgang Uppenkamp, a Modern Languages and Literature exchange student in 1974-75.

Asteroid (15025) UWOntario. Western.

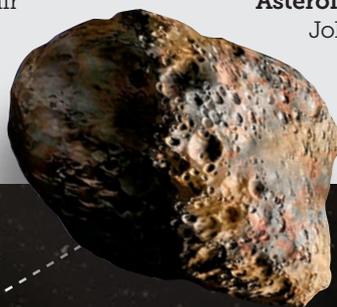
Asteroid (15846) Billfyfe. William Fyfe, former Science dean.

Asteroid (15849) Billharper. William Harper, Philosophy professor.

Asteroid (15887) Daveclark. David Clark, MSc'10.

Asteroid (15068) Wiegert. Paul Wiegert, Physics and Astronomy professor.

Asteroid (16192) Laird. Elizabeth Laird, former Physics professor and radar pioneer.





By Adela Talbot, BA'08, MA'11

Best in show

Richard Meen, MD'63, proves he is a breed apart



Richard Meen remembers it being a cursory introduction, yet one that perfectly fit his bill.

Decades ago, Meen, MD'63, visited New York City to deliver a lecture for a canine education program. A Toronto-based psychiatrist, he was president of the Canadian Kennel Club at the time. His counterpart at the American Kennel Club, among the world's most prestigious registries of purebred dogs, greeted Meen and wasted no words in introducing him to the class.

"I remember the introduction being very short. He got up and said, 'I want to introduce you to Dr. Richard Meen.

His father was a heavyweight boxing champion in the United Kingdom. And he is a psychiatrist – it's the perfect combination for a president of the Kennel Club,'" Meen remembered.

The introduction was enough, he noted. The world of canine affairs – from breeding to showing purebred dogs, activities supported by kennel clubs around the world – focuses not only on the physical finesse, but also on personality traits specific to each breed. It was a world Meen fell into during his time at Western.

"When I was at Western, I used to walk by a house that had two Afghan hounds in the back yard, and I told myself I would have an Afghan hound when I graduated. That was the first



PHOTO BY IAN CRYSLER

of the top award for the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. He previously judged at Westminster on four other occasions, including judging the Terrier Group in 2007.

"It's exciting. It was a great honour. It's probably the most prestigious dog show in the world. It's not the biggest, but dogs come from many different countries and people come to watch from around the world. About 3,000 entered. Different judges selected the last

"It's probably the most prestigious dog show in the world."



seven, and I got to decide which came closest to the breed standard. You're not judging dogs against each other; you're judging dogs against the breed standard, and the one that comes closest to the breed standard is the one you put up."

As top dog, Meen picked a 3-year-old German shorthaired pointer named CJ.

"Dogs have been a great counterbalance for psychiatry. It's a totally different kind of thinking and a different kind of behaviour," he said, adding his practice over the years largely revolved around working with vulnerable populations, street youth and individuals in the provincial justice system.

"Jeffrey Masson, a psychoanalyst trained in Toronto, trained in the 1960s when I was also doing training at the University of Toronto. He has written several books on animals, and one of his last books was about dogs. He talked about how dogs humanize people, not the other way around. And I agree with that," Meen said.

"I've been touting for years the important role of canines in our lives, that the reality is, we developed better because of dogs. We got out of the cave, they helped us hunt, helped us guard and protect," he continued.

"When you look at purebred dogs, each breed has a very specific purpose related to man's needs, and that's how they evolved. They've always improved the quality of our lives. I've always seen it as a great balance, and they're the only living history of man's journey on Earth." **WAG**

purebred dog I ever had," he said.

What started as an aesthetic interest, formed into a weekend hobby and, eventually, became an inextricable part of Meen's life. He developed an affection for various breeds, including the Russian wolf hound and the Skye terrier, among others. He started to breed dogs and got involved with the Canadian Kennel Club, eventually becoming president, working with international clubs.

"And now, as an old man, I judge," he laughed. "And I show dogs."

Not only does Meen judge, he was the judge at the 140th Annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show last February. He nabbed the top post at the event when he was selected to judge its top category, Best in Show. It was an appointment the American Kennel Club kept secret for about a year "in order to avoid whispering and influence peddling." It's all very hush-hush, very serious stuff, he explained.

Meen was the sixth foreign judge, and third Canadian, to make the selection



THE ADVENT OF ETHICAL ROBOTICS

By Jason Winders, MES'10

Alumna is helping shape the ‘humans behind the robots’

Ai mee van
Wynsberghe
brings a little
humanity to
cold, cold code.
The

University of Twente (Netherlands) Philosophy of Technology professor stands at the forefront of developing ethical standards for creators of the next generation of artificial intelligence that will live, work and play among us. She works in concert with academics, industry professionals, engineers, even sci-fi writers, to shape the “humans behind the robots.”

“We don’t want to stifle innovation – we think it is necessary, however, that we work together to pave the way for robotics to enter society in a responsible manner,” said van Wynsberghe, BSc’06 (Cell Biology), who along with Noel Sharkey, robotics professor at the University of Sheffield, created the Foundation for Responsible Robotics. “There is nothing to help guide researchers and developers, as well as help protect users. It is really a free-for-all at this point. It is kind of scary.”

As artificial intelligence becomes more common in operating rooms, personal vehicles, even children’s toys, van Wynsberghe and her group are exploring ways to tame a feral development environment. Their efforts come none too soon for a world on the brink of massive change.

“We are not talking about a science-fiction technology any more. We are not talking about in 20 years we are going to have this or that kind of robot,” she explained. “In the next 20 years, we are going to have very sophisticated robots in our homes, our shopping malls, greeting us as we enter stores. Already, we have the first prototypes of those robots. They are here now – we want to make sure the right questions are being asked before it is too late.”

While technology is still decades away from instilling ethical protocols directly into robots, everything behind the scenes is up for discussion – codes of ethics for engineers who design the robots, standards for companies to abide by in terms of materials and marketing, even ownership of the data collected by the robot living with you. The intimate details these machines gather from our lives, and the intimate spaces they find themselves in, make the job imperative.

“It is widely recognized that there will be negative side effects to the use of these robots. That doesn’t come as a surprise to anyone,” van Wynsberghe said. “What is surprising is that there is no money to study these issues, no pathway for collaboration between academics and companies. We found that surprising. It is not a good way of going about doing things”

Initially, the London native headed to Sheridan College to study Musical Theatre. But her time on the stage was fleeting. “As much as I loved it, and as much as I loved the energy and enthusiasm of that life, I wanted more intellectual stimulation,” she said.

That desire led her to study Cell Biology at Western with eyes on medical school. During her second year, she toured the newly opened Canadian Surgical Technologies & Advanced Robotics (CSTAR). At that moment, a connection was made.

Opened in 2000, CSTAR is the only Canadian training centre for the da Vinci Surgical System, and has produced a number of Canadian and world firsts in computer-assisted, minimally invasive and robotic surgery. Intrigued, van Wynsberghe joined CSTAR as one of its first research assistants.

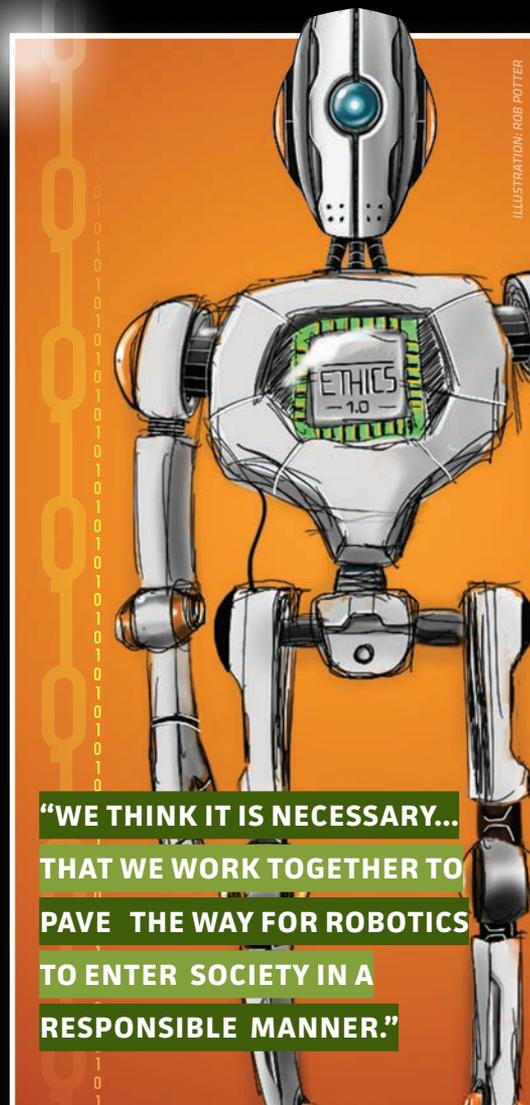
“They gave me a shot. And it was my first insight into robotics,” said van Wynsberghe, who continued her work there for three summers. “It was exciting to be there at the very beginning.”

She credits Surgery professor Dr. Christopher Schlachta, CSTAR Medical Director, with being the constant voice pushing her “to ask better questions and think deeper about why I was doing the research I was doing.”

That led her to question how a surgeon felt about using “this huge robot” in the surgical suite, and how a patient felt about allowing this technology in, she continued. Schlachta encouraged her to follow these ethical questions further. She did just that.

At the University of Twente, van Wynsberghe pursued her graduate work in applied ethics in the design and analysis of robots, especially as it relates to health care. She was among the world’s first researchers to explore the ethical issues surrounding surgical robots. Her PhD thesis, *Designing Care Robots with Care: Creating an Ethical Framework for the Future Design and Implementation of Care Robots*, was nominated for the Georges Giralt Award for Best PhD Thesis in Robotics in Europe.

She recently released her first book on the issue, *Healthcare Robots: Ethics, Design and Implementation*, and has published numerous peer-reviewed articles in academic journals. Last year, she was awarded an



**“WE THINK IT IS NECESSARY...
THAT WE WORK TOGETHER TO
PAVE THE WAY FOR ROBOTICS
TO ENTER SOCIETY IN A
RESPONSIBLE MANNER.”**

Innovational Research Incentives Scheme Veni Grant to study the ethical issues of service robots and was named one of the 400 most successful women in the Netherlands under 38.

“And it was all because of the conversations I had with Dr. Schlachta and the incredible, once-in-a-lifetime opportunities I had at CSTAR,” she said.

van Wynsberghe stressed her work is about raising public awareness of the issues surrounding artificial intelligence; the burden of demanding responsibility within the industry will be on the back of consumers who demand it.

“The technology is still at this early, early stage. That is the most exciting part about it,” she said. “If we can ask the right questions, and come up with even preliminary answers, we have a chance of shaping how the technology is going to benefit society. We would like to show that these considerations shouldn’t necessarily be a choice.” **WAG**

Heart

of a *revolutionary*

Alumna helps tell the story
of a Syrian civil war

By Jason Winders, MES'10

Mariam Hamou knows the numbers by heart. It is the names that haunt her.

"It is weird, but in war, all you hear about are the numbers – 200 people died in this, 13 people died in that. You know the numbers; you never know the names. And until you know the names, you cannot connect with the numbers."

Hamou, BA'96, MLIS'99, serves as the North American Public and Media Relations Director for the National Coalition of Syrian and Revolution and Opposition Forces. Based in Istanbul, Turkey, the organization is a collection of pro-democracy groups from both inside and outside Syria, widely supported by Western and Gulf governments. In her role, the London, Ont.-born Hamou connects with internal councils within Syria and international media outlets to get the message out.

"The important part of my work is getting across the stories of the normal, everyday people – the people facing all of this that the regime is doing, all of this that the regime has been doing throughout the revolution. I try to bring those stories across."

Born the daughter of a Lebanese mother, whose family goes five generations back in Canada, and a Syrian father, whose family still calls the Middle Eastern country home, Hamou and her activist-advocate heart have deep roots. Her father is politically active in Syria – the kind of active that draws attention. He had been imprisoned, even



tortured, under former Syrian president Hafez al-Assad, father of current Syrian president Bashar Hafez al-Assad. His visits to the country even today still draw official eyes.

Hamou's first visit to Syria as an adult did not come until she finished her undergraduate degree at Western. Once there, however, she fell in love with the people, the culture.

When pro-democracy protests erupted in March 2011, after the arrest and torture of teenagers who painted revolutionary slogans on a school wall, she stood ready to help.

"It wasn't even a protest at first. It was just words. Somebody wrote something on a wall. But you felt something was happening. And then I started getting messages from people in Syria saying 'It's started! It's started!' I was so excited we were going to do this. We were going to bring democracy to Syria. I was so full of hope and happiness.

"For my dad, this was personal. For me, this was personal."

As the revolution dawned, Hamou was working with London North Centre MP Glen Pearson, but when he lost to Conservative Susan Truppe in the 2011 Federal Election, Hamou was free to follow her heart. She reached out to her connections in the country. Pitching her political experience within a western democracy, she was recruited to do everything from government to media relations.

Admittedly, it was an uphill battle from the start.

"The pro-Assad groups were really good. They had the machine in place to get their message to the world. We had nothing. We were starting from scratch. We were starting from zero."

But the stories got out. Slowly. She found success in connecting with major international media, mainly "all these awesome American journalists," including working with New York Times best-selling authors Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan on their book, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*.

Inside the Army of Terror.

"We were quite successful with that. But it really didn't

change public policy," she said with obvious frustration in her voice. "There were so many things working against our message, our mission and what we were trying to do."

Her darkest hour came in August 2013.

That month, rockets containing the nerve agent sarin were fired into two opposition-controlled suburbs near Damascus, Syria. Investigators said the attack could only have been carried out by Syria's government, yet the Assad government blamed rebel forces. Hamou does not like to talk numbers without names, but the numbers were staggering and many of the names are still unknown. Death toll estimates range from 280-1,729 men, women and children. Media reports called it the deadliest chemical weapons attack since the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.

The attack was a direct violation of U.S. President Barack Obama's 'red line' issued in remarks to reporters a year prior to the attack.

"For me, this was personal."



"When the massacre happened, we had assurances from the Obama Administration. We had spoken with them. We asked, 'If Assad crosses the 'red line,' will Obama go after Assad?' They promised they would," she said.

The four or five days after the attack were a blur of phone calls, emails and waiting.

"And then, when they said they weren't going to do it, that's when I thought something was up. Something was going on bigger than us. There was nothing we could do. The revolution was still going to be a revolution, but we had to do it without outside help. It was going to have to be organic and from within the people. It has gotten really complicated since.

"I still look back on that day and wonder what happened."

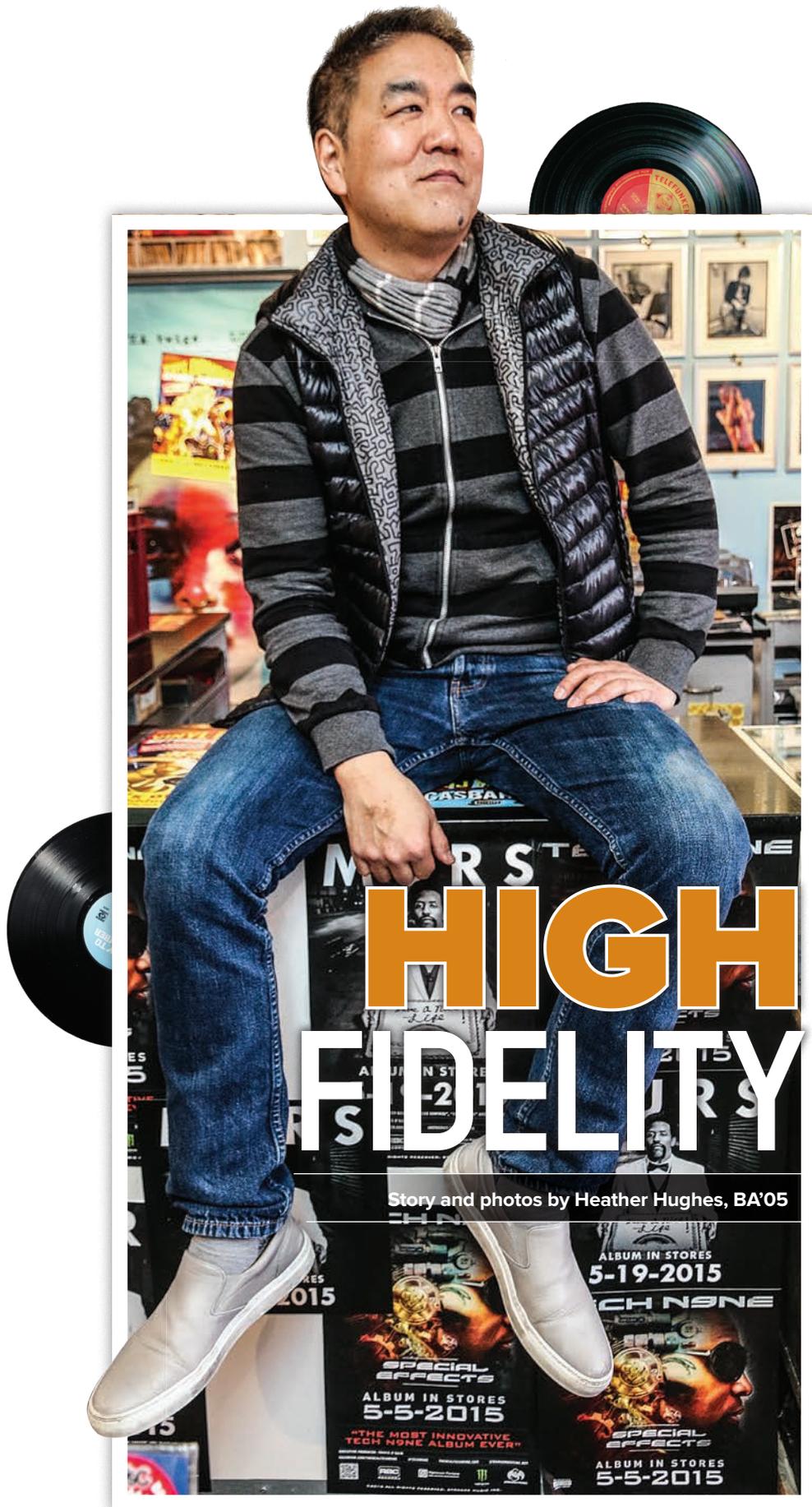
Everything has fallen to chaos since. More than 5 million people have fled the country. Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey have struggled to cope with one of the largest refugee exoduses in recent history. Even more refugees have sought safety in Europe. A further 6.5 million people have been displaced inside Syria.

The civil war has evolved significantly. After Obama refused to act, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces saw its influence on the ground erode. An opportunity had been missed.

Today, Hamou still works with the coalition connecting journalists with sources inside Syria, as well as doing think tank work to solve challenges facing the Syrian people. She also works with non-governmental organizations, including the United Nations, in providing relief to refugees.

When Canada welcomed more than 25,000 Syrian refugees, after the Liberal government rolled out its refugee resettlement in November 2015, Hamou helped resettle many of them in London. And while a worthwhile pursuit, she stresses the world cannot forget why these refugees exist.

"Everyone is so focused on refugees. But we aren't focused on why we have refugees. Everyone is worried about this – but they are not worried about what is causing this." **WAG**



Commitment to family, music, community keeps alumnus spinning

The weight of responsibility has never been lost on Mark Furukawa, BA'90 (English).

As a recent university graduate, Furukawa didn't have the money to seize an opportunity to open a Hamilton, Ont., location of the famed record store Dr. Disc. So, he turned to his parents for financial support. "They were happy to see me happy," he said. "They are very selfless people."

The amount Furukawa required was almost exactly the amount his parents had saved in the bank. The couple were interred during the Second World War in the Japanese internment camps in British Columbia. As part of the government redress, his parents were given \$21,000 each. Furukawa needed a \$40,000 investment.

"With a great deal of gratitude and even more of an impetus to succeed, I used the investment for the shop," he said. "I consider myself very lucky. It's different when you borrow from the bank – when it is 'blood money' from the Second World War, you have a lot more desire and a can't-fail mentality to keep going."

For the last quarter century, Furukawa has survived – and thrived – in an ever-changing industry by staying true to his love of music and his business roots in Hamilton.

Furukawa opened Dr. Disc in 1991 in a section of downtown that had a strong

patronage of university and college students. When many popular music stores took their spot in bustling malls, Furukawa took a chance on a storefront location near the corner of John Street North and York Boulevard/Wilson Street.

The Hamilton store was a franchise of the original Dr. Disc in London, Ont., where Furukawa worked during his undergraduate degree at Western. At that time, the young DJ was looking for a place to grow his collection. He was instantly captured by the “larger-than-life” personality of owner Syd Atlin, who was energized by the young people – many of them Western students – he employed.

As a self-described “Bart Simpson” of education, by taking the long road to completion, Furukawa enjoyed spending his days at Dr. Disc and learning the business. “Back then, you had to find the places that had the best

music. As a student with a limited budget, I had to find the best store with the best selection. If I could work there, it



“We are a conduit between local music and the listeners.”

was a bonus because I could get a discount.”

Building on his experience as a DJ at his high school dances, Furukawa worked the turntables at The Spoke and Rim Tavern and downtown clubs, and was an on-air host at CHRW Radio, later taking a spin as the assistant music director for the radio station.

The lessons he learned in the classrooms of English, Music, Film Studies and Art History, he said, directly apply to his business practices today and fostered a commitment to lifelong learning.

In spite of the struggling local economy, Dr. Disc’s cash



register rang in more than \$10,000 on its opening day. When Furukawa saw the community open up its wallets to support his vision, he knew “we are here to stay.”

After some lean years due to the rise of digital music downloads, Furukawa noticed the industry was starting to shift. A return to vinyl, for both nostalgia and a desire for analog sound, was breathing new life into a struggling industry.

“People thought that convenience was the only way people consume music,” he said. “What they missed out on is people like to collect things that have a history to them and a preciousness to them that digital formats can’t afford. Each record in my collection has a personal resonance for me. I can remember where I bought it, where I played it and who I listened to it with.”

The demographics of those buying record players had also changed and crosses the generational spectrum. Vinyl records bring back the social aspect of listening to music, Furukawa continued. The image of a person wearing headphones and listening to a private playlist doesn’t allow for the public enjoyment of music.

One day, he decided to clear out the clutter of concert T-shirts and memorabilia and go back to his roots, providing more room in his shop for selling new and used records, as well as providing space and visibility for new and upcoming local artists. The re-launch of the store signified another shift in the business, one that dovetailed a change happening in the City of Hamilton. The former Steeltown was moving out of the shadow of Toronto and recommitting itself to supporting local people and businesses.

“We are a conduit between local music and the listeners,” Furukawa said.

From promoting local concerts, to setting up a stage in the parking lot adjacent to the store for performances during the Supercrawl festival, Furukawa takes a grassroots approach to running his business and is quick to partner with those who share his philosophy, including throwing on his DJ headphones to run the turntable at a local restaurant.

From helping you to discover new musical talents to letting you know where to get a good cup of coffee, “Dr. Disc is a place where you can experience all things Hamilton,” he said. **WAG**

Athletic history resurfaces as century-old trophy unearthed

By Paul Mayne

Elizabeth Grasby had no idea why a worn and faded, two-foot tall Sterling silver trophy was still kicking around her office after almost 25 years. But she couldn't find it in herself to toss it.

"I'm not one to discard old files and records, which is probably why I didn't discard the trophy," said the Director of the Ivey Business School's Pre-Business Program. "If I know what something is, it's easier to throw it out. I didn't know what it was, and therefore, didn't throw it out. I looked at it and I thought, I better hang on to it."

While no one really knew who the cup belonged to, or why it was even there, it continued to tag along each time Grasby's area relocated – which, since 1993, has included two moves within the old Ivey Building, over to Somerville House, down to the Arthur and Sonia Labatt Health Sciences Building and, finally, about three years ago, a return trip to Somerville House.

With space and storage at a premium, Grasby knew the trophy couldn't hang around much longer and, still unwilling to toss it away, contacted the one person she felt would know if the wobbling trophy was a boon or a bust – Kinesiology professor emeritus Bob Barney.

"I knew right away the importance and the historical significance of it," Barney said.

At 100 years old, it is the oldest athletic trophy in Western's sport history, and perhaps the oldest



After the trophy kicked around from office to office, storage space to storage space for a quarter century, Elizabeth Grasby, Director of Ivey Business School's Pre-Business Program, unearthed what has since been determined to be the oldest athletic trophy in Western sports history. (PHOTO BY PAUL MAYNE)

athletic artifact of any kind in existence at the university. The inscription on the trophy reads: W.U.A.A. Inter-Faculty Hockey, Presented By The Board of Governors, 1916.

In February 1914, the first meeting of an amalgamation of the Arts and Meds Athletic Associations was held, and the Western University Athletic Association (WUAA) was born to promote, finance and control athletics and sport carried on under the head of the university. In 1916, the Board authorized and implemented an annual ice hockey championship cup. The record of 'Inter-Faculty Championship' competition in hockey begins in 1919-20.

The trophy was still making the rounds up until 1993-94, when the business school won the championship, and "those business guys kept it for themselves," he joked.

The trophy will be passed along to director of Sports and Recreation, Therese Quigley, who, after a little refurbishing, plans to display the newly found historic piece in the trophy case of Thompson Arena.

Pages from the past

Josephine (Ferguson) Timmerman, BA'84, recently uncovered the handwritten valedictorian speech her great-grandfather Dr. Robert Ferguson, MD 1890, delivered to his graduating medical school class more than 125 years ago.

Born July 5, 1855, Dr. Robert Ferguson was the son of Alexander and Elizabeth McLachlen Ferguson. He attended Owen Sound High School and Queen's University. He trained as a Presbyterian minister, but found that type of work was not his calling. He began teaching in Owen Sound, Woodstock and, later, London, where he began taking courses in medicine. He graduated with an MD from Western in 1890.

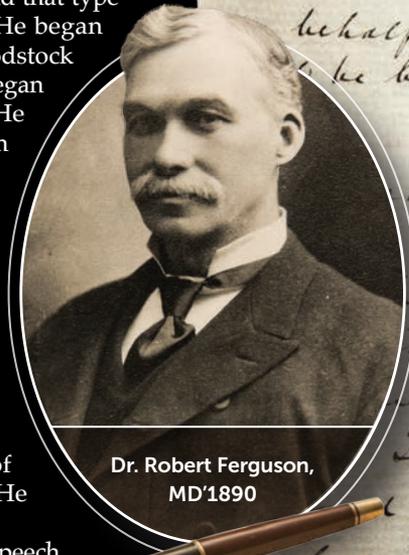
In 1896, he joined Western's Department of Therapeutics. He completed postgraduate work at Western Reserve University and New York Postgraduate School and returned to Western to focus his instruction in gynecology and obstetrics. In 1920, he was promoted to Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He died in 1927.

The eloquent, hand-written speech is a tribute to the soaring oration of the era. It is in near-perfect condition thanks to generations of family care. The 35-year-old Ferguson wrote, in part:

"Tonight we break the bonds that have united us for the past years. We have breathed the same atmosphere, striven manfully in the ranks, thought the same thoughts, gone in and out together, shared one another's laughter and one another's burdens – but here our paths diverge. ... Whatever the future may have in store for us, let us act our part consistently with the dignity and honour of our profession, as well as the claims of common humanity."

To read the full text, visit alumni.westernu.ca/alumni-gazette.

Timmerman's roots run deep at Western. Along with her paternal great-grandfather, both her father, Dr. Robert Ferguson, MD'31,



Dr. Robert Ferguson,
MD'1890



and paternal grandfather, Dr. John Irwin Ferguson, MD 1900, graduated from the university's medical school.

On her mother's side, her great-grandfather, the Rev. J.W.P. Smith, served as Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in London and Chaplin to Bishop Isaac Hellmuth. In the early 1870s, Smith assisted Hellmuth in raising money for a new university and even gave \$500 personally to the fund.

When Western opened its doors in 1878, Smith became Secretary of the Senate and Registrar. He was Bursar of Huron College from 1894 until his death in 1914.

By Jason Winders, MES'10

Building the perfect beast

Alex Paterson offers campaign insights from the digital edge



Alex Paterson never wanted to control the beast; he simply wanted to keep it fed. And as a member of the Liberal Party's digital campaign team during the 2015 Federal Election, he saw firsthand what that would take.

"You have all these people out there, all these people who want to support you and your campaign online. You need to give them tools to defend you, to work with you, to do just that," said Paterson, BA'08 (Media and Public Interest). "Your supporters are looking to you to provide them with stuff. Give it to them."

In Canadian politics, pundits of all political stripes saw the Liberal Party campaign, led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, as a triumph of new thinking in new media. It was no longer a matter of taking a traditional political campaign and cramming it into a new space, but using new tools to create new ways of campaigning and, perhaps more importantly, new ways of understanding a candidate.

"As opposed to packaging or focus-group testing a candidate, what we did was use digital tools particularly well to bring people to see who he really was, to get people used to who he was as a leader. We embraced who Justin is," Paterson said. "People are pretty shrewd online; people know they are being sold to in politics. But that doesn't make the job of selling a nefarious one."

"Instead of packaging a candidate to go and meet the people where they are, on social media and digital campaigning, you can bring people to where your leader is."

Inside the Liberal team, Paterson describes a nimble digital shop, focused on a well-defined plan, but also reactive to the ever-changing landscape of a political campaign by using a room full of not just traditional communications people, but graphic designers, video production



managers, and animators.

“You cannot run a campaign without a solid digital plan. It does not guarantee success if you have one, but it guarantees failure if you don’t have one.”

Paterson, who among numerous duties manned the campaign’s Facebook page during the debates, was recruited to the campaign from Training for Progress, a not-for-profit organization he co-founded that educated more than 100 progressive campaigners on campaigning in the 21st century. His message to them in class was the same on the campaign trail – a strong sense of ‘self.’

“If you know Justin, and his approach to people and to politics, there was no disconnect to his presence online. It was very much packaged around who he is,” Paterson said. “If you looked at other campaigns, they were swinging in the dark. What is going to stick – maybe if we go down this road, maybe if we try to make it more like this? I am not saying we didn’t make adjustments during our campaign, but it all started with a very strong sense of self and a strong voice online – and that will always matter.”

In 2008, then-U.S. Sen. Barack Obama and his team drafted a blueprint for campaigning in the age of social media. In 2012, that team improved on it. That changing landscape was just dawning when the Guelph, Ont.-raised Paterson was drawn to Western’s Media, Information and Technoculture program.

“I won’t pretend I didn’t think the program sounded cool and that’s what drew me to it,” he laughed. “But the more I thought about it, a long-view on where media was headed, the idea of locking myself into a one-dimensional journalism path became less appealing. When given a choice, there was Western, already thinking about media in every since of the term.”

Since Western, Alex has spent the last decade working in communications, campaigns and public policy. He jumped from his “dream job” as a CBC Newsworld producer to take on a job with Greenpeace, running the environmental activist agency’s communications on everything from the G-8 Summit in Toronto to Oil Sands tours for international media. He was drawn into the political arena while pursuing a master’s degree in Ottawa.

“This place has an inertia toward The Hill,” Paterson said.

Today, he serves as Director of Communications and Operations for Canada 2020, overseeing the organization’s communications, events, research and online initiatives.

“I get to work in that interesting grey area, that cool space between media and politics and policy and academia and business. We don’t really have a vibrant think tank culture in Canada,” Paterson said. “We are a rare bird, a spot for people who are progressively minded, to come and talk about issues that are facing Canada, not just today, but on a longer horizon.”

Most recently, he worked on events surrounding the first U.S. State Visit by a Canadian Prime Minister in almost two decades, looking to expand opportunities for Americans to engage with Canadians.

Although his work faces forward, he still values his past.

“I see elements of what I started out doing at Western every single day,” he said. “My path started at Western. I would not be doing what I am doing right now, living in that interesting area between politics and government and media, if not for the program I took there.” **WAG**



A new venture

Janet Bannister, HBA'92, continues to see opportunities after Kijiji success

By Angie Wiseman



If you've ever bought or sold something on Kijiji, you've experienced Janet Bannister's brainchild first-hand.

Bannister, HBA'92, founded Kijiji Canada, which has become the largest and most visited classified site in the country. She later led Kijiji Global, which included businesses in Europe, the United States and Asia. Her success with the company was unparalleled and, at the height of it, she walked away.

"I realized I wanted to be there for my son. I thought, 'Ugh I'm missing out.'"

While at the time a bold business move, every decision Bannister has made in her successful career has led her to where she is now – overseeing 10 start-up companies as a general partner at Real Ventures, a venture capital firm.

"What I've realized is, through my career, I've jumped back and forth from consulting to operating roles. While I love operating, I think it makes me a better business person, and I've had some success there, I actually prefer advising, consulting and mentoring."

The perfect mix for a venture capitalist.

And while it wasn't always clear where her career would take her, she knew the entrepreneurial spirit she had cultivated from a young age would serve her well.

(PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)



“Students get stressed out about should I do this, should I do that? The reality is, often it takes years. And people shift and change and you don’t really know until you get there. If you do something you love, and at the same time, you are learning and growing, you are in a better position than you were yesterday.”

Bannister’s keen sense of adventure and willingness to explore the world was born at Western with an exchange in her fourth year that later landed her a position at Proctor & Gamble in Brussels, Belgium. It was an opportunity to be immersed in a place with history and culture. It would not be her last international experience – it was just the beginning.

After spending four years at Proctor & Gamble, she took time off and went backpacking around southeast Asia for four months. She was offered a position with McKinsey & Company when she returned.

“I was single and young and wanted to work as much as I could on interesting projects and was happy to go anywhere.” With projects in the United States, Montreal, Vancouver, Ireland and Poland, Bannister explored parts of the world while building her business experience.

After a brief stint in Boston, she connected with Meg Whitman, then president and CEO of

eBay. Whitman convinced Bannister to move to Silicon Valley to work with her.

“It was really the heyday of eBay” she said. “When I joined there were 2,500 people worldwide and when I left there were 25,000. There was such huge growth. I felt very fortunate to have that experience.”

As a proud Canadian with a yearning to be back on native soil, Bannister asked to be moved back to Toronto so she could start a family with her husband. eBay was supportive of the move but required Bannister to take a lesser role as product director of eBay’s website. She wasn’t excited about the role but could see it might lead to bigger things.

“I THOUGHT MAYBE CLASSIFIEDS WOULD WORK BETTER WHERE YOU BUY ON LINE BUT YOU TRANSACT IN PERSON.”

When Bannister came back she noticed eBay was doing a great job of getting people to the website but their conversion (the ability to get those consumers to do something) was half of what it was in other countries. She tried to make changes to their approach but soon discovered it wasn’t going to close the gap.

“I realized this was a bigger problem. Canadians spend a ton of time online but they were very reluctant to purchase online.”

It was then she explored different models that might work in Canada. “I thought maybe classifieds would work better where you buy online but you transact in person.”

And that’s when Kijiji was born.

She recognized that while craigslist was going strong, it wasn’t going after the market aggressively. Bannister saw this an opportunity to do something more entrepreneurial and interesting. She convinced the executives at eBay



in Silicon Valley to let her launch Kijiji in Canada. Although eBay agreed, they didn’t want to put a lot of resources behind it.

While Bannister was getting product categories ready, executives in California were busy working on creating a name. And it wasn’t one Bannister liked immediately.

“They called and said, ‘We’ve got the name – it’s Kijiji. It means village in Swahili.’ I said ‘It’s what? How do you spell that?’ I wrote it down and couldn’t even read my own writing with all of the j’s and i’s. I thought, I don’t really care what it means, you’ve got to be able to spell it.”

But Bannister decided it wasn’t a battle worth fighting. “It is what it is. We will just have to live it with and make the best of it.



(PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)

In life you figure out what you can change and what you live with.”

After successfully launching in Montreal and Quebec in French, Bannister went on maternity leave. She came back six months later and the business in Quebec was doing so well she convinced eBay to roll it out across the rest of the country.

“We didn’t have much budget and my philosophy was to focus on a couple of different marketing levers and on the user experience and it went well, it really took off.”

With all her success in Canada, Bannister was promoted to head global Kijiji business. She tripled revenue in one year and launched the site in the United States,

Belgium, Switzerland and Austria.

Despite much success leading the international division of Kijiji and travelling the world, Bannister had a young son at home. She was missing too much of his life.

“I remember my husband said to me once, ‘What if you just quit?’ And I looked at him and said, ‘I can’t just quit.’ It felt like such a wimpy thing. ‘I don’t just quit,’ I told him. ‘I work.’ He said, ‘You’ve done amazing at this. Why don’t you take some time off to be with Andy (our son)?’

“It was just like being on a diet and someone giving me permission to eat a bowl of ice cream. I thought ‘I could

really do that?’”

The decision to walk away from her success with Kijiji became an easy one. “I thought if I really want to be a stay-at-home mom, now is the time to do this. I wanted to be there for my son. I wanted to drop him off and pick him up from school.”

From there, she started her own consulting business helping large companies develop their online strategies, working with Indigo, ING direct (Tangerine) and Starbucks. It was a way to do more of what she loved while allowing her to make her own hours.

After four years, she felt the entrepreneurial itch once again. “I wanted to get my hands dirty again in terms of entrepreneurship,” she said of her decision to join a start-up company called The Coveteur, an online fashion and commerce site.

Not long after, she heard from the owners of Real Ventures asking if she would be interested in becoming a partner. Surprisingly, she didn’t think she would ever be interested in venture capital but that quickly changed.

“I like the individual challenges. I like working with different industries and taking learning from one industry and applying it to another. But I really love entrepreneurship.”

Working at Real Ventures allows Bannister to marry her love of mentorship and entrepreneurship. She currently leads 10 investments and spends her time evaluating and sitting on the boards of her mobile- and Internet-based start-ups.

“I see myself doing this as long as I’m working. I can’t imagine doing anything else. It just really makes me happy. I feel as though I have found my true passion.” **WAG**



By David Silverberg

Taking the leap

Jason Soloway and his quest for a culinary community

It's now or never. That's what a little voice inside his head said to Jason Soloway, BA'95, MA'99, approaching his 40th birthday. It's now or never to move on from being a vice-president at New York's Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies and to dive headfirst into running restaurants, something Soloway wanted to accomplish before it was too late.

"I had kicked around the idea for a couple of years, and I wasn't sure how to make the leap," he said.

Soloway, at 44, decided to make the transition by

enrolling in New York's Institute for Culinary Education (ICE), focusing on culinary management. "I saw it as way to build relationships and strengthen my connections in the industry," he remembered. "And there was a sense of relief of not having this internal conversation anymore of will I, won't I. I just went for it."

Going for it has given Soloway the kind of success he was striving to achieve. He owns two restaurants in New York, Wallflower in the West Village and The Eddy in the East Village. While at ICE, he was a partner in a neighbourhood bar, called Mother's Ruin. To say Soloway is immensely busy with his 'restos' is an understatement.

Responsible for overseeing how each restaurant operates and markets itself, Soloway stressed the importance of consistency at his venues. "Especially for our kinds of places with regular customers, where

Soloway

(PHOTO BY PETER HURLEY)

we change menus and drinks at both places, we have to maintain a consistent quality level." And that comes down to hiring the best staff, he added.

"It's an alchemy of their resume, interview, references and observing them in action. If they pass the first three, I invite them in for a 'trial shift,' he said. He also tends to question applicants with 'What do you want to be when you grow up?'"

Soloway said, "If they respond, 'I want to own a restaurant one day' with a sparkle in their eye, and start to describe it in painstaking detail,



that tells me they have the fire in their belly and are a little mad. These are all qualities I consider desirable in the restaurant industry."

His restaurants have enjoyed favourable reviews from critics and on sites like Yelp and OpenTable but Soloway feels the shiniest glow of pride when industry folks keep coming back. "To get a nice following of chefs and cocktail industry insiders – that's when you know you're doing something right."

What Soloway hopes to create with his restaurants is making these spots feel like home. "There are millions of people in New York City," he said, "and despite all that, they are looking for a sense of belonging, of community. And bringing that community feeling to my restaurants comes from my days of doing something similar at Bronfman."

While managing the many branches of this charitable tree, Soloway said the work "wasn't chequebook philanthropy; we were looking for a social return on investment." In his 10 years there, Soloway understood the need for "people to buy in from different communities, and they got more involved when following their dollars."

It's not much different at Wallfower and The Eddy, Soloway noted. Patrons want top-notch customer service, they want to feel welcome. Those values are so ingrained at these restaurants that Soloway ensures the bar is front and centre in the space, and when customers first walk in, if the



"There are millions of people in New York City, and despite all that, they are looking for a sense of belonging, of community."

host and manager don't greet them, bartenders are asked to welcome them "to get the experience started on the right foot."

That community feeling goes back to his days at Western. Soloway was following the footsteps of his father, who graduated from Western with a law degree, and his sisters, aunt and several cousins who also graduated from the school. "I felt a strong connection to Western thanks to that history," he said.

Another aspect of London life also stuck with Soloway. "The craft beer movement was starting to take off (when I was at Western) and would usually be served in pubs with a warm, welcoming and homey environment. That sort of vibe always speaks to me and is something that I try to inculcate in my restaurants."

He remembered the overflowing passion of several teachers at Western, such as when he took classes with professor Madeline Lennon who taught him Western Literature. "She was a god in the arts world, and I

loved how much she appreciated the arts," Soloway said.

Looking ahead, Soloway would one day like to launch a restaurant in Toronto. "It's a far more frightening opportunity, but I want to be open to the idea," he said.

Soloway is looking forward to parenthood. His wife Lauren gave birth in March and Soloway welcomes the challenge. "I anticipate this will be much harder than running two restaurants in NYC. Bring it on." [WAG](#)

By Marcia Steyaert, BA'96 (King's)

Making Twitter fly

Alumnus helping
users make live
connections
to culture

(PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)

Between his first and second year at Western, Rory Capern, HBA'00, MBA'04, witnessed the "power of the web" for the first time.

"I saw this magical place erupting," he said of his Silicon Valley consulting stint in 1998. "I knew right away I wanted to be involved. I was absolutely smitten by the web really early on."

Since those days, Capern has often found himself on the ground floor. In 2011, he joined Google Canada – during "a time of meteoric growth" – as its head of partnerships. He was the company's 34th employee. They now have well over 300.

Two years later, Twitter Canada opened its offices in Toronto, and with his appointment as managing director earlier this year, Capern became just its 37th employee.

A builder by nature, and lover of small-team environments, Capern felt the Google-to-Twitter jump was the right move at the right time for him and, by "happy coincidence," for Twitter, as well.

As part of the global executive, Capern keeps a constant bridge between Canada and head offices in 36 cities on six continents, and communicates daily with senior management in the company's San Francisco, Calif., headquarters. He refers to Canada as an important innovation market for Twitter globally – both in terms of revenue generation and strategy.

"Canada is widely understood as an extremely fast-adopting market with a partner ecosystem for innovation and risk. We're willing to try things first – and faster – to get an edge. It's likely we're never going to be bigger than the United States in the context of revenue. So, the question becomes, how do we gain significance for the Canadian operation in the context of a global company headquartered out of the United States? We can be faster. And we have a more nimble market. We have a higher appetite to try new things. And we're all looking to build incremental value to our global organizations out of this country beyond revenue."

Capern steps into the lead role at Twitter Canada at an interesting time in terms of the future utility of the service. "It's a mature company, but one with tremendous upside to it still – it's really exciting." But it's also a challenging time for the iconic social media brand. Its user base – 320 million worldwide – isn't growing at the expected pace.

"We have this massive base of users who are extremely connected to the platform. They are very vocal. What we need to do now is define what Twitter is to a broader cross-section of the world to make it a bit more approachable and easier

to understand for a first-time user or for those returning to it after a long time away," Capern said. "When someone walks into Twitter, it's not always clear to them what they should do next."

Capern likens that experience, half-jokingly, to an existential crisis.

"What am I really interested in? Who do I want to follow? Those are sometimes hard questions. Our focus is on trying to make sure users are aware of the vast array of people and the nature of topics out there they can follow and the richness they can get. It's really about trying to articulate the power of Twitter as a public network."

"WHAT WE NEED TO DO NOW IS DEFINE WHAT TWITTER IS TO A BROADER CROSS-SECTION OF THE WORLD."

Capern's passion for the platform shows when talking about users who have been able to, as he says, "unlock the power of Twitter."

"I'm speaking to more and more users who describe their own use of Twitter in ways that are incredibly inspiring – community groups who are mobilizing, teachers who speak to their students' parents exclusively using Twitter, all kinds of different, fascinating use cases about public good. I don't think that's totally clear



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to everyone out there. Part of our job is just to describe and position this amazing platform to users. It's a live connection to culture."

With fellow Western grad Jordan Banks, BA'90, at the helm of Facebook Canada as Managing Director, is the rivalry real between the two platforms? Capern thinks of Twitter as an interest network and Facebook as a social one, and doesn't see it as a rivalry at all, but rather as "cooperation."

"There's a lot of positive momentum right now and we're all trying to make the Canadian web better. We have a much more collaborative environment and culture than what exists in many other countries. When the tide rises, all boats float."

As a third generation alumnus – his grandfather, mother, uncle and a cousin are all grads, as is wife Amy - Western has a deep resonance with Capern and his family, which includes his kids Max, 8, and Lauren, 9. And that's not to mention his network of friends.

"I'm still hanging out with dozens of people I met at Western. About 80 per cent of my social time is spent with Western friends, both through Ivey and Huron. We take annual

golf trips, and meet up in Toronto for lunch quite often. Western

represents a very special time in my life. I deepened myself as an individual and had a blast on a social level at the same time."

Capern fondly recalls Ivey Business School professor Ann Frost, who taught him Organizational Behaviour.

"I thought it was going to be the fluffiest course ever, but it wasn't. In fact, it was probably one of the most formative courses of all the ones I took there. Ann and I did a research paper together when I went back to do my MBA and her perspective on managing teams and how organizations are formed has become the bedrock for how I built my own career."

As an Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Ivey, Capern finds it reinvigorating and inspiring to connect with current Western students. "Every time I drive back down the 401, I'm reminded the economy is in good hands. We have a good batch of thinkers that are coming out of Ivey and Western who can carry it all." [WAG](#)



ILLUSTRATION: ROB POTTER

THE TWEET SPOT

According to Twitter Canada Managing Director Rory Capern, HBA'00, MBA'04, these Twitter users are getting it right:

@PGATOUR

"When I'm not able to watch the tour, I'm getting these amazing video clips at the exactly the right time. They're doing an excellent job of connecting people live."



@JohnTory

"As a Torontonian, I'm getting really important information from him and his account on key things that are happening in the city. For example, I didn't know it was Toronto's birthday until John Tory told me on Twitter! I'm connected live to our mayor and I'm getting important information I might not get otherwise."



@kanyewest

"He's very vocal on Twitter, and always creates interesting conversations around him. Almost every week there's something interesting happening with him. It's not necessarily always positive, but it's an exceptional use of the platform to communicate thoughts and ideas with millions of people at a time."



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LESSONS LEARNED FROM A LIFE ON DEADLINE



By Curtis Rush, BA'76

I have survived life as a deadline writer.

After 40 years in newspapers and magazines, my last day at the *Toronto Star* will be April 30. I am 63 and going out a little early. But it's time.

In my final days, I've been a sports deadline writer, covering the Maple Leafs, the Argonauts and the Toronto Rock of the National Lacrosse League. But I've also worked as a crime reporter, general assignment reporter and, on the other end, as an editor.

My nerves are a little frayed and my hands are a little gnarled from arthritis. But after writing and editing for four daily newspapers and one magazine, I'm proud to



NBA TOR 88 at LAL 81 NHL TOR 3 at BUF 2

say I've never missed a deadline.

This streak goes back to Western and any essay I turned in.

I hate being late for anything. I think it's in my DNA. Even if I meet a friend for drinks or dinner, I am always the first one to arrive. That's a trait that has served me well with the *Sarnia Observer*, *Edmonton Report* magazine, the *Toronto Sun* and the *Toronto Star*.

I suppose I just don't want to disappoint anyone. I don't like it when people are late for me.

I've always lived by the fact that if you miss deadlines, you'll soon be out of work.

It's no secret sports writers are the fastest writers in the business. I don't think you can teach speed writing. You have to learn it on the run.

When sports teams wrap up their games at close to 11 p.m., you have no choice but to write fast.



NLL TOR 5 at CHI 2 CFL TOR 28 at CGY 7

At the *Toronto Star*, our first sports deadline for the next day's Ontario edition is 11 p.m.

If you miss that, the editors will put in a filler story, and your name will be mud. They won't hold up the presses. The next deadline is at midnight for the Metro edition for customers closer to the city.

Over the years, deadlines have been pushed up. We used to have a final print deadline of 2:05 a.m. for West Coast games.

In this era of 24-hour news, deadlines are every minute for online media.

After a Maple Leaf morning skate, sports writers are constantly tweeting updates and firing out news flashes from inside the dressing room. There is a constant rush to be first, but I never wanted to sacrifice accuracy for speed.

Newspapers, of course, have hard deadlines and you are held accountable.

After each shift, editors write internal notes to the higher-ups explaining what pages were released and at what time.

That's why I get tense when the clock strikes 11. It gets worse at midnight. That's when I have to file my complete story with quotes from the coach and players.

Over the course of a game, you have to develop the knack for typing and watching at the same time. Stoppages in play are gold for writers. That's when you get your best work in.

My worst fear is getting the score wrong because I rushed. As a deadline writer, you must hurry but not rush. There's a difference.

It's tense on the other end too. I know.

I used to be a copy editor, and your job is to do a quick edit, slap a headline on and send it to the presses.

If you needed to go to the washroom, too bad. You should have gone earlier. No one goes to the washroom at 11 p.m. It's the quietest place in the newsroom.

After you file for 11 p.m., your stress isn't going down. It's going up.

On the way to the locker rooms, you must wade through thick crowds. There is no express elevator for the writers. Although it's against my nature, I've had to be a little aggressive to get around tipsy fans clogging my route. The coach's press conference is held right after he addresses his team. I can't afford to miss it.

The worst trek is at Montreal's Percival Molson Stadium, home of the Alouettes. The press box is hundreds of feet up and there is no elevator.

After I file my game story, I must quickly bound down the stadium steps, rain or snow, dodging empty beer cans and wobbly fans, cut across the field, do my interviews and clamber back up to the press box to refile.

I've learned, at 63, if you're not in shape, being a deadline writer is hard on the cardiovascular system.

I won't miss the rush. I think deadline writing is for young legs and quick hands. In both of those areas, my body is betraying me.

Relaxation will be a whole new skill to learn.

With a lot of practice, however, I'm hoping that when the clock strikes 11 p.m., I'll be either in bed or nodding off in front of the TV, with an empty beer can beside me.

Here's to the sweet taste of being a former deadline writer. [WAG](#)

Curtis Rush, 63, has been working as a newspaper deadline writer for 40 years, including the last 35 at the Toronto Star. He wrapped up his career at the end of April as a sports writer. Over his career, he has been both a copy editor and writer. He has never missed a deadline.

Leave your butterflies behind

By Jason Winders, MES'10



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(PHOTO: SPECIAL TO ALUMNI GAZETTE)

Sonja Salmon, ACS'92, has no interest in your butterflies. As a young Bay Street executive, Salmon traveled the world, living her life out of suitcases. Really, really ugly suitcases.

"I was always conscious of my personal brand. When I traveled, it was important to me to represent myself just as I would as if I were at home," she said. "But when it came to luggage, my options were either a man's bag or a man's bag where they changed the colour profile, threw some horrendous pattern on it and called it a women's line – 'Here, this butterfly version, this is what we have for women.' That was what was on the market."

She knew there had to be a better solution.

Born and raised in Mississauga, Salmon was the oldest of three girls. Marcia Salmon, MLIS'01, and Angela Salmon, ACS'01, both followed their older sister to Western, a place "where she knew she was supposed to be."

After earning an LLB, JD and MBA, and working in various corporate positions, Salmon used the skills she acquired in classrooms and boardrooms and applied them to overhead compartments.

Flying to the United Kingdom, to Hong Kong, to destinations around the world, she became aware of the challenges facing female travelers first hand.

"Here I was, spending time on what kind of trench coat or purse I wanted, and the luggage never fit in," she said. "It was consumer frustration with not being able to find something in the marketplace I felt should be there."

Inspiration struck while she prepared for yet another trip by zipping her shoes into a Ziploc bag. "That is when the shoe dropped. I thought, I can do this, I can do this better than anyone has done it up to this point," Salmon said. She wrote the first draft of a business plan in that hotel room.

Today, Salmon is the CEO and Founder of Ebby Rane, a global brand of luxury luggage and accessories designed to enhance the travel experience. Her collection is anchored around the Quartermaster, a nifty piece of stylish luggage that rolls like a "custom closet on wheels."

Launched in January 2014, Ebby Rane – named for her businessmen grandfathers Ebby Salmon and Clarence Rainford – has exploded. The company has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Travel & Leisure*, *Martha Stewart Weddings*, *Good Housekeeping* and *InStyle*.

With product lines expanding, and eyes turning to further growth in the United States, Salmon, who is married to L. Gregory Fletcher, BMus'88, BEd'93, continues to see opportunity.

"It has been a fun run so far," she said. "But we're excited about what the future holds." **WAG**



Western Alumni's 2016-17 Discover the World program offers travel opportunities for Western alumni and their friends and family, faculty, staff and friends of the University.

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ext. 85871 e. discovertheworld@uwo.ca

Western  **Alumni**

Alumni volunteers creating awareness, taking action



By John Eberhard, BA'66, LLB'69

We welcome spring on the hill and a campus community that prepares to celebrate the Class of 2016. It is a time to reflect and plan for renewal. Each of us, as Western graduates, has been fortunate to receive a world-class education. Our journey spawned deep friendships, created trusted networks and enabled us to gain valuable insights into our chosen vocations.

At times like this we can also look back to those who helped us – those who served as mentors, who offered sage advice or were able to open a door to begin a conversation that gave us a boost at a time when it was needed most. Sometimes the smallest act of kindness can mean so much.

There are multiple ways to support our alumni and student networks. Ways to volunteer in Alumni Association activities. Ways in which we can return a favour, connect with a fellow Mustang or be part of the alumni conversation. In recent months you have seen advertisements for our new Ten Thousand Coffees initiative. Our success has been visionary and we thank the more than 3,000 alumni who have registered and begun to participate.

Volunteerism is not about 'I' but rather about what you and I can do for someone else. For our Alma Mater. Each can make a difference.

We are grateful to the alumni who support a team or a student. We salute those who return to campus, speak to students in the classroom through an invitation from a

faculty member or coach. We recognize those who engage in quiet conversations with a prospective student and share stories of the Western experience. We thank those who give their time or treasure to ensure that the next generation has every chance to make their own difference.

Opportunities to participate in Association activities are available to you no matter where you call home. This is achieved through our extensive branch network, through digital learning opportunities and very soon through our new Twitter and Instagram accounts dedicated to Western Alumni and friends. Events are held in regions world-wide. We encourage you to become more involved. The unique vocational diversity of our Alumni membership provides us a special opportunity. It is that multiplicity which collectively poises members to unleash an enormous force for good. We continue to offer Western Serves community events and we are happy to assist you help your local community alongside other alumni volunteers.

The Alumni Association's Board of Directors recently hosted a series of round table events in nine cities. We met with alumni to listen and to improve our programs. We sought to strengthen our communications and deepen our impact. In the coming months we will present a renewed Strategic Plan to guide the next few years as we continue to inspire all alumni to share a lifelong commitment, pride and passion for Western.

This is my last time to hold the pen on the Voice of Alumni column. In June, we will welcome David Simmonds, BA'07, to the presidential role. We will also welcome two new directors to our Board of Directors. I am pleased to invite you to join us on campus on June 16 for our Annual General Meeting. It is the perfect opportunity to learn about the Association, meet the team and, of course, enjoy your beautiful campus.

I extend my sincere thanks to each and every Mustang who has created awareness and taken action to help strengthen our vibrant network.

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To learn more and view our events, visit alumni.westernu.ca/careermanagement

Western  Alumni

Connect with old friends and make some new ones at Western Alumni events happening in locations around the world. Many of our events are family friendly and offer a great opportunity to enjoy the company of fellow alumni. Our full events listing can be found at alumni.uwo.ca/connect/events

Join us for Walrus Talks. It's your destiny.

By Jason Winders, MES'10



Presented by Western Alumni, The Walrus Talks Destiny will explore human potential and how we become the people we are through opportunity, ambition and circumstance. The event is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, June 16, in the Paul Davenport Theatre, Talbot College. Tickets are \$20 (\$12 for students). The Walrus Talks is a national series of events produced by the charitable, non-profit Walrus Foundation as part of an educational mandate to provide forums for conversations on matters vital to Canadians. Each event offers lively, thoughtful, inspiring, riveting, smart, new thinking from scientists, writers, performers, scholars and leaders of business and the arts. This year's event brings some of Canada's most inspiring minds to share thought-provoking ideas exploring destiny in all its forms, including:

Elaine Overholt, B.Mus'75 , performance and vocal master;
Mark Daley, BSc'99 PhD'03, Associate Vice-president (Research), Western;
David Simmonds, BA'07, Vice-president (Public Affairs), McKesson Canada;
Kevin Newman, BA'81, anchor/correspondent, CTV News;
Ryan North, writer of Romeo and/or Juliet, To Be or Not To Be, and creator of Dinosaur Comics;
Karina LeBlanc, goalkeeper for Team Canada and UNICEF ambassador; and
Stephanie Duhaime BA'03, BESC'03, former charge d'affaires of Canada's diplomatic mission in Iraq.

Featured Events

- June 3** | Western Mustangs Football Golf Tournament 2016 (London, ON)
- June 3** | Rick McGhie Night in Toronto (Toronto, ON)
- June 11** | Western Alumni Serves - ReForest London (London, ON)
- June 16** | Alumni Association Annual General Meeting (London)
- June 19** | Alumni Day at African Lion Safari (Hamilton, ON)
- June 23** | QWB Rugby Regale (Toronto, ON)
- July 1** | President's Reception and Canada Day Celebration (London, England)
- Aug. 27** | Western Alumni Day at the Toronto Blue Jays (Toronto, ON)

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ALUMNI CLASS NOTES

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In Sydney, Australia, Western alumni gathered at the home of Chancellor Jack Cowin and Alumni Board Member Sharon Cowin for a regional consultation dinner on a rainy autumn evening in March. The Western grads fondly recalled their shared history at Western, and the night was filled with discussion about the university's future on a global stage. The Australian alumni included **Joe O'Keefe**, BA'09; **Patrick Fortune**, BSc'14, BEd'15; **Luther Poier**, BA'84; **Jack Cowin**, BA'64; **Sharon Cowin**, BA'64; **Joe Nagy**, BA'63; **Ian Davis**, MBA'87; **Jonathon Lerner**, BA'93; and **Catherine Greer**, MA'93.

1960s

64 Douglas Auld, BA'64 (Economics), has been reelected chair of the Wellington, Dufferin, Guelph, Board of Health.

65 John Braden, LLB'65, recently finished writing a non-fiction book, *Because the Future Matters: Let's Stop Letting Modern Economics and Our Energy Addiction Ruin Almost Everything!*.

65 Peter B. Forbes, BA'65 (Huron), has retired from his law practice in Brantford. He resides at Port Dover, Ont., with his wife, Martha Blume. He was recently made an Honorary Life Member of Loon Lake Hunting Club, after 47 consecutive years of hunting. He continues to serve as a Deputy Small Claims Court Judge.

66 Bob Howard, BA'66, MA'67, retired after 52 years of teaching French at the elementary, secondary and university levels both in France and Ontario. His mentor was



64 Gail Benjafield (Darroch), BA'64, and **John Benjafield**, MA'64, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary by driving two hours to London, having lunch at The Toddle Inn, a beer at The Ceeps, going to the site of their first date (in Arva) and staying overnight at the boutique hotel once known as Spencer Hall, Gail's first-year residence hall (now the Ivey Business School). They met at Western in 1962.



1965
Death of
Winston
Churchill



67 Anantha Konanur, MESC'67, and Gail Konanur, BA'78, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 28, 2015.

the late Dr. Dante Lenardon of King's University College. In the early 1960s, Bob worked with Lenardon teaching French to children in Grades 2-4 at Ryerson Public School in an experimental after-school program before French became part of the Ontario curriculum.

69 Reva Nelson, BA'69, had her third book published, *Hippie Chick Abroad*, a memoir of backpacking alone through Europe for the year after graduation. She has also retired from 20 years as a professional corporate seminar leader and speaker, and 10 years as a teacher-librarian with the Toronto District School Board. A former Gallery Theatre actress

in London, Nelson is now acting and writing plays again, with Alumnae Theatre in Toronto.

1970s

70 Don Hunter, BESC'70, was appointed chair of the Independent Review Committee of CIBC Mutual Funds.

76 Curtis Rush, Honours BA'76 (Journalism), retired from the *Toronto Star* on April 30. In his 35-year career at the *Star*, he took on editing and writing assignments from news to business to sports. Since 2013, he has been a sports writer. In all, he had a 40-year newspaper

career that included positions at the *Toronto Sun*, *Edmonton Journal* and *Sarnia Observer*.

1980

84 After working in the investment business for almost 30 years, including a year as the President of the CFA Society in Toronto, Jennifer Lynn Witterick, HBA'84, decided to walk away from the business. Her first novel, *My Mother's Secret*, became an international best-seller and is translated into nine languages. She has subsequently written other books and produced a CD with songs she wrote.

Recently, Witterick spotted a bird trapped in her parking lot and did not know how best to rescue to this bird. She ended up contacting an organization called Toronto Wildlife, which was able to capture the bird and release it again. So delighted with this outcome, she made a donation, but then decided to go one step further. She produced a show called, *Journey to Happiness*, about the search for what makes us happy, and then donated all the profits to Toronto Wildlife. The show played at the Winter Garden Theatre in Toronto.

86 Jennifer La Chapelle, MLIS'86, will serve as Vice-President/President Elect of the Ontario Public Library Association for 2016-17.

86 Andrew MacNair, BA'86, Regional Vice-President of RBC Royal Bank, Calgary, Alberta, was named Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Calgary Zoological Society in May 2015.

88 In January 2016, Elizabeth (Beth) Goldenberg, BA'88 (Science), LLB'91, opened The New Family Law

Centre in London, Ont.

88 Vincenzo and Amy Turner-Iannacci met at Saugeen-Maitland 30 years ago. Amy, BA'88 (Chemistry), went on to dental school in Ohio; Vince transferred to a school in the Oklahoma to finish his engineering degree in aeronautics. The couple dated for five years before marrying on March 9, 1991. They returned to campus during March Break Open House to "visit our old stomping grounds," including a "pop in" at Saugeen. "We cried, we laughed and we smiled. It was beyond a wonderful way to celebrate 25 years of partnership, friendship, dedication and love," Amy said. They couple wear matching bracelets, made from the laces of old baseball gloves, with the GPS coordinates for Saugeen-Maitland.

1990

90 Bruce Schouten, MBA'90, joined Coast Capital Savings, of Surrey, B.C., as its Chief Risk Officer in February. Schouten recently held senior positions at the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions and TD Bank, where he helped build, and lead for several years, the enterprise risk management function for the entire organization.



1988 'Together Forever', by Rick Astley reaches #1 on the *Billboard* Hot 100

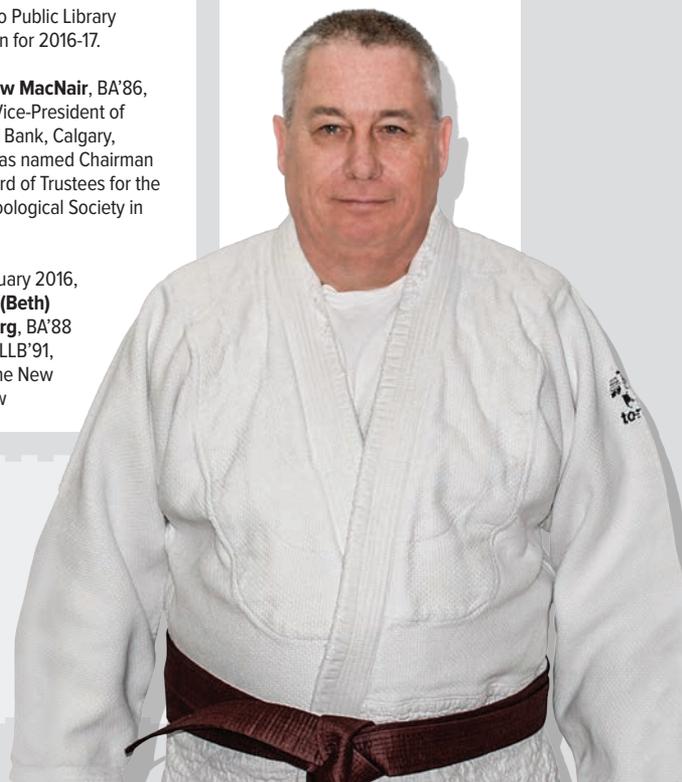


1990 Most complete skeleton of a T. Rex found in South Dakota



1969 Apollo 11 Moon landing

85 In December 2015, Mike Kennedy, MBA'85, participated in the Judo Ontario Christmas Training camp – "four of the toughest, most grueling days I have ever gone through in a good 40 years. ...What the hell is a guy like me, a man who turned 58 this past November, and someone who was never athletically talented even in the best of times, doing practicing a martial art like judo? At a time when most guys my age are spending the holiday season with a warm cup of coffee, reading the paper or watching TV, what am I doing in the middle of every morning of the last four days, drenched in sweat and gasping for breath? What do I have to prove? Why am I putting myself through this, especially at my age?" Kennedy was promoted to brown belt.



BORN TO BE BLUE



90 It's the rare occasions of the extraordinary that make the ordinary worthwhile for **Daniel Abboud**. "As a filmmaker – as a freelancer – it's very difficult to say 'no' to a project, because you have to pay the bills. Projects more often than not end up being pretty mediocre, nothing special. But the reason we do those mediocre, not-so-great projects that fill time is to survive until we get to do movies like *Born to Be Blue*," said Abboud, BA'90. For nearly two decades, Abboud has worked as a Toronto-based camera person, and as a Steadicam operator since 2007, lending his talents to commercials, some daily series, network gigs and feature films. In between projects, he persistently pestered Canadian cinematographer Steve Cousins, looking to partner on a project. Abboud pressed on until his resolve bore fruit. "I have harassed Steve over and over, for I don't know how many years – this time I guess it just paid off," Abboud said of his most recent project, *Born to Be Blue*, a 2015 Canadian drama film written and directed by Londoner Robert Budreau. *Born to Be Blue* tells the story of American jazz musician Chet Baker, who is portrayed by Ethan Hawke. The movie, shot in and around Sudbury, Ont., premiered during the Special Presentations section of the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival. It was released March 11.

91 After six years running the Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments (OBSI) in Toronto, **Douglas Melville**, MBA'91, moved with his family to Jersey in the Channel Islands to set up the Channel Islands Financial Ombudsman. He resolves disputes involving financial services provided in or from the Channel Islands of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark and also assists other countries to design their own financial consumer protection structures through the World Bank and the OECD.

92 **Kathy Denton**, PhD'92 (Psychology), was named among the *10 Most Influential Female Administrators at Metro Vancouver Public Universities*,

Colleges and Institutes, by *The Georgia Straight* magazine. Denton started working at Douglas College in 1993 as a faculty member. From there, she rose through the ranks to become chair of psychology, dean of humanities and social sciences and then vice-president academic and provost before being appointed president last year.

92 **Dr. Tom Freeman**, MCIsc'92, an alumnus and faculty member, recently published the 4th edition of the *Textbook of Family Medicine*.

93 **Dimitry Anastakis**, BA'93, was elected to the College of New Scholars Artists and Scientists of the Royal Society

84 **Chris Jackson**, BA'84, MDIV'87, received the Outstanding Law Clerk Award for 2015 from Maia Bent, President of the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association.



1991
First
website
published





02 Ervin Sejdić, BESC'02, PhD'08, was recently named among the winners of the U.S. Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, the country's highest honour for science and engineering professionals. Sejdić, an assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering and bioengineering at The University of Pittsburgh's Swanson School of Engineering, will receive the award at ceremony in Washington, D.C., this spring. "It is great honor for me, and especially a strong acknowledgement of my scientific work," Sejdić said. "I am extremely grateful to all my mentors, my colleagues and my students. Without them, I would not be able to achieve this award." Sejdić has co-authored more than 90 publications in the last five years. His research interests include biomedical signal processing, gait analysis, swallowing difficulties, advanced information systems in medicine, rehabilitation engineering, assistive technologies, and anticipatory medical devices.

of Canada. A professor of Canadian history at Trent University since 2004, Anastakis recently won the international Hagley Prize for the best book in business history for his 2014 book, *Autonomous State: The Struggle for a Canadian Car Industry from OPEC to Free Trade*. His most recent book is *Death in the Peaceable Kingdom: Canadian History since 1867 through Murder, Execution, Assassination and Suicide*.

93 After a round-the-world odyssey, **Jan-Oliver Schmidt**, BA'93, finally met 'The One' back in North America in Houston, Texas. Nicole Christine Brende and Schmidt were married in Gates Mills, Ohio, in October, 2015. They live in Houston.

2000

02 Jon Gordon, MA'02,

published *Unsustainable Oil: Facts, Counterfactuals and Fictions* (University of Alberta Press 2015), which makes the case for re-evaluating the theoretical, political and environmental issues around petroleum extraction using the lens of Alberta's bituminous sands.

03 Jan Wu, BSc'03, married Ingrid Wu on May 24, 2015.

04 Claire McCague, PhD'04, is celebrating the publication of humorous science fiction novel, *The Rosetta Man*, by EDGE-Lite Science Fiction.

05 Dr. Jennifer Hall, BSc'05, a lecturer in Early Years/Primary Numeracy at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, was recently awarded the Monash Student Association Outstanding Teaching Award for the Faculty of Education (2015). These annual awards, based on student nominations, recognize an exceptional educator in each faculty.



05 Corey Windover, BA'05, BEd'06, and **Shaleen Somji**, BA'06, wed in Toronto on Aug. 15, 2015, surrounded by their family and many Western friends.



1993
Dissolution of
Czechoslovakia



05 Andrea Brochu (Sweiger), BHSc'05, BScN'09, and Derek Brochu gave birth to their first children – a set of twins – named Oliver Grant and Sloan Alexandra on Oct. 20.

06 University of Ontario Institute of Technology professor **Janette Hughes**, PhD'06 (Education), was appointed Canada Research Chair, Technology in February. Hughes, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean (Research and Literacy Education), with the school's Faculty of Education, uses of emerging digital media and interactive tools that challenge traditional curricular and teaching/learning assumptions and practices.

09 Kathleen Sutherland, MEd'09, shares that big brother Joey and big sister Elizabeth are

excited to announce the birth of their little baby brother, John, on Dec. 5, 2015.

2010s

06 Priyanka Kumar, BA'06 (Health Sciences), a Wellness Coordinator working in Mississauga, had a baby boy, Xavier Crasto, on May 4, 2015.

10 Patrick Carnegie, BSc'10, welcomed son William Christopher Carnegie on Feb. 22 in Waterloo, Ont.

10 Catharine Eckersley, BA'10, and **Nathan Madigan**, BSc'11, announced their engagement on Dec. 21, 2015. Despite their time at Western overlapping from 2007-10, they did not meet until 2015 in Calgary. They instantly bonded over their purple pride when Nathan invited Catharine to attend a Rick McGhie Heads West alumni event. Nathan works for Alberta Transportation as an Infrastructure Engineer in Calgary; Catharine will be completing her Master of Occupational Therapy degree at the University



86 Anna Gray (Mavrogiannis), MA'86, PhD'90, was named an Officer into the Order of Merit of the Police Forces for her RCMP career in human resources, criminal intelligence and national security by David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, in May 2013.



2006
Pluto status changed to dwarf planet

of British Columbia this July. Over Christmas, Catharine and Nathan visited Western on a snowy afternoon. They are now proud to say they both were at Western at the same time, together. They plan to wed in Banff, Alberta, in March of 2017.

10 Omar Ha-Redeye, JD'10, was awarded the OBA Foundation Award on Nov. 9, 2015, for exceptional contributions to the legal system and public legal education. The senior recipient of the award was Hon. Justice Stephen Goudge.

10 Alper Ozdemir, EMBA'10, recently became the Vice-President, Central Services at Reliance Home Comfort.

10 Karen Yang, MBA'10, and her husband, Andrew Lee, welcomed their first child, Chloe Lee, on Dec. 5, 2015. Mom and baby share the same birthday.

11 Michael Goodman, HBA'11, and **Alexandra Boasie Goodman**, HBSc'10, were married on Aug. 28, 2015, in Toronto. The couple met at Western in early 2008.

13 Jonathon Hindley, BA'13, recently secured his first permanent full-time position after graduating. As the Corporate Customer Service Coordinator for the City of St. Thomas, he will be assisting with developing and implementing a new Customer Service Plan and a consolidated Corporate Customer Service location.

14 After graduating with a degree in Civil Engineering, **Ahmed Taha**, PhD'14, went back home and was assigned as the Chairman of the Civil Engineering Department at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia. He successfully completed one year in this assignment in September

12 When **Natalie Bonifacio**, BA'12, met her roommate's brother, **Stephen Arnold**, JD'12, we're guessing she didn't have the pages of the *Alumni Gazette* Class Notes section in mind right away. However, the couple started dating in fourth year, only to marry on Oct. 17, 2015, in Bolton, Ont. And here they are today on our pages. They now live in Owen Sound, where Stephen is a partner in a law firm and Natalie is an Educational Assistant.



03 Carolina Pineda, BA'03 (Anthropology/French), MA'05 (Anthropology), along with husband David recently had their first child, Luca Émile Ayala, on Oct. 8, 2015.

2015 and had his assignment renewed for another year.

14 Ashley Gillian, BA'14 (Brescia), and **Michael Schaefer**, along with new big brother Benjamin Schaefer, announced the birth of Connor Schaefer, born Nov. 20, 2015.

14 Steven Kelly, BA'14 (Kinesiology), and **Riley Hart**, BA'14 (English Literature and Language, Huron), BEd'15, were recently engaged on the campus where they met.



2010
SpaceX
launches
Dragon
capsule and
returns it
successfully
from low-
Earth orbit

The Final Say

With Lauren Pelley



The 'local hangout' sitcom trope always makes me chuckle. No one has time to hang out at the same bar every week, drinking the same beer, talking about the same things, laughing with the same people. It's not how life works. Unless, of course, you're at Western.

The opening notes of Rick McGhie's Country Roads cover always felt like the start of our theme song. "Take me home down Western Road," we'd sing-slash-shout, drowning out John Denver's wistful lyrics.

I don't know when it happened, but at some point, this became every Wednesday night.

My ragtag table of regulars would slide into The Spoke through the back door, bypassing all the crowds. With cheap beer in hand, we'd spend the next three or four hours rambling on about student politics, essays we hadn't written yet, and our hush-hush romantic entanglements. We were on a first-name basis with the manager and gave the stink eye to our sworn enemies, the smarmy student council kids drinking at a nearby table.

That bar was our Central Perk. Our Cheers.

It was, for a brief and beautiful time, our second home. And then it ended – abruptly, I assume, but I can't remember my last 'Rick Night.' It must've taken place sometime before I graduated in 2011, and I'm sure we talked about how it was the end of an era.

Or maybe we didn't.

Was there any sort of fanfare, when the cast of my university years reached our series finale? Probably not. Western: The Next Generation hit the airwaves instead, and we all moved on to adulthood. As you do.

I was reminiscing about those days with some Western friends recently. "We'll never have that again – that time," one friend mused. "That's the point," I replied.

We were drinking wine, not beer, and sitting in my living room, not our local pub. We don't have a local anything these days, and why would we? Now, we're a bunch of 20-somethings in Toronto, where going to the same bar every week

would be rather sad at worst, and a poor use of the city's ever-changing nightlife at best.

All of us inevitably drift further and farther away from the Rick Nights of our time at Western – or whatever it was we latched onto with our respective motley crews – because adult life, as we all know, is almost nothing like a sitcom. Friendships fade. Jobs get busier. People move to new cities and have kids.

While university is a bizarrely tight-knit community of pseudo-grownups, true adulthood is the subsequent diaspora. Have you ever met a group of adults who live their lives like the apartment-sharing, coffee shop-frequenting characters of *Friends*? Of course not.

And if you did, you'd probably find them an odd bunch, stuck in a sort of stunted adolescence.

But, at Western, everyone needs rituals. Those regular checkpoints help forge new bonds and give wide-eyed students a sense of belonging, something most people crave during university.

“Have you ever met a group of adults who live their lives like the apartment-sharing, coffee shop-frequenting characters of Friends?”

For many, those four-ish years offer the first chance to live away from home, far from the comforting familiarity of parents and high school friends. It's such a powerful, world-changing time of transition, and constancy makes the whole thing a little bit easier and a lot more fun.

Attending university is also a blissfully unique phase of life where the whole campus is essentially a small town catering to your every whim. There's a niche for each student, sure, but everyone is also woven into the fabric of university life.

"Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came," goes the theme song for Cheers. "You want to be where you can see our troubles are all the same; you want to be where everyone knows your name."

That's how Rick Nights feel in the moment – everyone knows your name; you're all sharing the same troubles and successes. Life after university isn't like that, and that's OK.

Those Western rituals, those 'local hangouts,' are frozen in time. We need them in the moment and we can't replicate them. But just like an old favourite sitcom, we can play those reruns – those memories – any time.

Lauren Pelley, BA'10, MA'11, is a Toronto-based multimedia journalist and reporter at the Toronto Star.



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that



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A journey that began in remote northern Manitoba has taken writer and musician Tomson Highway (BMus'75, DMus'93) to 57 countries and counting. His plays, which shine a light on Indigenous people, are taught and performed the world over and have made an indelible mark on Canadian culture. He describes his life as "a magic carpet ride of the very first order." His love of word and song started at Western.

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