

# Year in Review 2023-24

It's been an exciting year for Western Alumni and the Alumni Association. Together with our partners across campus we have made some great strides this year.

## BY THE NUMBERS



More than **362,000** alumni  
in almost 160 countries



**1,771** Book Club participants



**4,732** new sign-ups for  
the Purple Perks app



More than **1,500** alumni  
participated in digital  
engagement initiatives



**25,000** alumni and friends  
registered for 100+ virtual  
programs and in-person events



**5,236** new grad engagements  
in alumni programming



Over **554** alumni volunteered  
their time with us



**3,330** alumni donated to  
support students, research  
and campus initiatives

## Highlights from 2023/2024



In 2024, Western will celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> Homecoming! Until that exciting milestone we are happy to share social media outcomes from 2023.

We received a total of **545,300+** social impressions!

In addition to social media participation, alumni and their families spent memorable time on campus visiting their faculties, attending events and enjoying Mustangs football.

At Homecoming, we bestowed Alumni Awards of Merit to:

### Young Alumni

#### Award:

Gillian Mandich,  
BHSc'07, MSc'12,  
PhD'19

### Dr. Ivan Smith

#### Award :

Greg Dick, HBSc'93

### Community

#### Service Award:

Denise Bebenek,  
HBA'83

### Professional

#### Achievement Award:

Paul Seed, BA'84, &  
Ken Kalopsis, BA'83



## Western Day

On March 7, 2024, alumni across the globe celebrated more than 145 years since Western's founding. It was a busy day on social media with over 100 comments and posts.

[The Western Day page](#) received 11K visits and an impressive **4.8M** social impressions, thanks to the [Western Day video](#).



As part of [Western Day](#) we recognized Alumni Director, Kant Chong with the **Spirit of Western Award**. Kant brings endless energy, optimism and creativity to every volunteer engagement. Working tirelessly to connect alumni with Western, he created the Hong Kong alumni branch and laid the groundwork for the Asian Alumni Network. Kant's contributions have gone above and beyond his role in the Western community.





## Highlights from 2023/2024

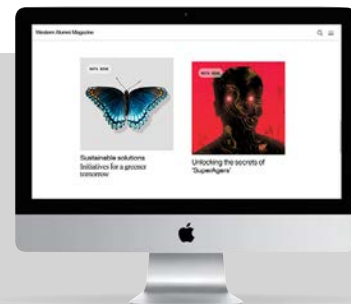
### Welcome Brescia!

Western Alumni warmly welcomes the new Brescia Alumnae Chapter into our family. The chapter will recognize Brescia's long-standing legacy and help create alumnae connections for years to come.



### Global engagement

Building off Western's Global Engagement Plan, [\*Western in the World\*](#), which aims to strengthen the university's internationalization efforts for greater impact across the globe, we have continued to grow the Western Alumni [Global Ambassador Program](#). The program now consists of 30 ambassadors, and has expanded to include Guangzhou, Dubai, Ottawa and the Durham Region. The newly launched Asian Alumni Network hosted another successful [Lunar New Year Event](#) in Toronto.



### Reaching alumni in a reimagined way

This year, Western Communications launched the newly redesigned Western Alumni Magazine and [website](#).

The magazine is mailed and emailed twice each year in spring and fall. The digital site saw more than **10,000** visits during launch.



## Giving

The Alumni Association's Legacy Fund will supported **five** initiatives totalling more than \$400K in giving to Western initiatives including:



**Summer After 1L Program (SA1L):** Western Law launched SA1L – the first of its kind among law schools in Canada. The program connects incoming students with law-related paid summer placements, after their first year of studies, to help them gain practical skills and real-world experiences.

Naomi Ngobila (B.L.U.E. digital media intern)



**Western B.L.U.E. Program:** Western is committed to creating an inclusive, diverse and equitable campus. The Western Black Student Leadership University Experience (B.L.U.E.) provides opportunities to Black students through the pursuit of leadership skills, community involvement and financial opportunities.

### Athletic Financial

**Awards:** Honing in on the need to provide opportunities for women in athletics, the donation will support female student-athletes helping to decrease their financial burdens.



**Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame Celebration:** The Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni (WMAA) is a chapter of the Alumni Association dedicated to the ongoing support and recognition of Western's varsity athletes past and present.



**Western's Mary J. Wright Child and Youth Development Clinic:** Graduate students in the School of Applied Child Psychology program, under the supervision of licensed child psychologists, provide high-quality and affordable psychological consultation, assessment and mental health treatment services to children and youth from three to 18 years of age. Financial support will be directed toward ongoing programming, accessibility, teaching and development.



## Programming

This past year's programming was filled with inspiring and thoughtful messages we can all learn from. Aligned with [Western's Strategic Plan](#), here are a few events from the past year.

### Two pivotal women, two great turnouts

During a sold-out evening, **Dr. Jen Gunter** dispelled the shame, mythology and misinformation around menstruation with scientific facts, medical expertise and a fierce feminist perspective.

In a virtual offering **Dr. Jessica Metcalfe** revealed strategies to untangle complexities of the inner voice including imposter syndrome, perfectionism, burnout and the inner critic.

Between these two events, registration topped **1,600** and saw almost **350** video views after the events.



Dr. Jen Gunter



Dr. Jessica Metcalfe

PHOTO BY TALIA HERMAN



### Connecting for Climate Change

Almost **1,200** people have enrolled in Connecting for Climate Change Action, an award-winning free course that braids together Indigenous knowledge and Eurowestern science to educate and motivate action on climate change.

### How will AI change the world?

Western's first Chief AI Officer, Mark Daley, BSc'99, PhD'03 has been meeting with alumni across North America discussing the impacts and evolution of artificial intelligence on the world. Mark is a sought-after speaker by media outlets everywhere for his expertise on AI.



## The Board and Appointees

### 2023–2024 Western Alumni Association Board of Directors

Amy Bi, BA'07  
Hsiu-Yan Chan, BSc'03, BEd'03, MBA'12  
Sarah Chapman, BSc'10  
Burns Cheadle, PhD'86  
Kant Chong, BA'03  
Avis Favaro, BA'81, MA'82  
Matthew Helfand, BA'13, MA'14, JD'18 (President-Elect)  
Nathan Ho, BA'08, MBA'16  
Shannon MacDonald, BA'90  
Daniel Matthews, BSc'09, JD'14  
George McAuley, BSc'96, BEd'98, MEd'10  
Melanie Peacock, MBA'90 (President)  
Michael Salvatori, BEd'90, MEd'94  
Patrick Searle, BA'11  
Chantel Smith, BA'10  
Laura Spero, BA'95  
Victoria Volk, BMOS'14

### Alumni Association Appointees 2023-2024

#### To the Board of Governors:

Greg Dick, BSc'93  
Keith Gibbons, BA'76  
Sarah Shortreed, BEd'89  
David Simmonds, BA'07

#### To the Senate:

Burns Cheadle, PhD'86  
Dave Ferri, BA'76, BEd'78, MEd'86  
Julie Campbell, BHSc'02, BScN'14, MN'16

#### To Campus Council:

Robert Collins, BA'77

#### To the Honorary Degrees Committee:

Sarah Chapman, BSc'10  
Laura Spero, BA'95



“I sincerely look forward to this new opportunity to serve the Western community in the capacity of President of the Alumni Association. I am fortunate to be building on the tremendous work and leadership of Melanie Peacock, our past president.

In this role, I aspire to effectively carry the voice of the global alumni community, and to strengthen alumni engagement by creating new opportunities for board members and volunteers to embrace their role as ambassadors for the institution.”

**Matthew Helfand**, President, Alumni Association, 2024

Thank you to our partners



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