

Year in Review | 2024-2025



As we look back on the past year, we're proud to celebrate the many ways the Western Alumni Association has made a meaningful impact on our community. From fostering connections across generations of alumni to supporting student success and championing volunteer engagement, this year was defined by purpose and momentum. Thanks to the dedication of our board members, volunteers, and supporters, we've strengthened the alumni experience and advanced Western's mission in powerful ways. Here's a look at what we accomplished together.

Alumni Legacy Fund – A Year of Impact

Through the Alumni Legacy Fund, Western's Alumni Association proudly invested in a range of transformative initiatives across campus. These strategic contributions reflect our deep commitment to enhancing the student experience, advancing equity and supporting innovation and academic excellence.



\$500,000 - Engineering Building Innovation Hub

A total of \$500,000 (split over two years) was pledged to support a prominent lab/workshop space in the new 100,000 sq. ft. net-zero energy engineering building. This state-of-the-art facility will house the Canadian Severe Storms Lab, AI and Smart Cities Lab, and more—providing students with cutting-edge learning and collaborative environments.



\$100,000 - Undergraduate Student Research Internships (USRIs)

Two named awards of \$50,000 each were established to support undergraduate research. These internships provide paid, faculty-mentored research experiences, helping reduce barriers and inspire a new generation of researchers.

➤ Alumni Legacy Fund

\$100,000 - Athletic Financial Awards for Female Athletes

To promote gender equity and support student-athletes, this funding helps female athletes thrive competitively and academically by easing financial burdens and strengthening recruitment and retention efforts in varsity sports.

“As a student-athlete at Western, I feel the support from donors in all facets of my life at the university,” said Emma Campbell, Mustangs Women’s Hockey team member. “By receiving this support, I am better able to focus on my academics, athletics and community. The support of female athletes is especially powerful as university athletics helps to shape us into women who will become leaders in our communities and workforces.”



\$10,000 - Western Black Leadership University Experience (B.L.U.E.) Program

As a Western B.L.U.E. partner, the Alumni Association supported Black student leadership through income-earning opportunities, leadership development, and community engagement, fostering a more inclusive and empowered student experience.

➤ Alumni Legacy Fund



\$40,000 - Western Law's Summer After 1L Program (SA1L)

This investment supported up to five first-year law students with paid summer placements in legal and community-based settings, helping them gain practical experience.



Mary J. Wright Child and Youth Development Clinic

A Legacy Fund gift of \$100,000 named the Student Group Work Room supporting student collaboration. George McAuley represented the board at the Clinic's opening on April 8, 2025.

2024 ALUMNI AWARDS

CELEBRATION



Left to right: Kadie Philp, Brian McIntosh, Susan Haigh, Rick Konrad, Amanda Holden, Alan Shepard, Nils Petersen, Louise Taylor, Thomas Neumann, Janelle Coultres, Dr. Jamie Hillman

Alumni Awards 2024

Western's Alumni Association presented its 49th Alumni Awards celebration in 2024, recognizing alumni who have made outstanding contributions to their professions, communities and to Western. The honours celebrated excellence, leadership, and service across diverse fields.

The four signature alumni awards, along with select faculty-specific honours, were presented at a special ceremony during Homecoming weekend.

The event brought together alumni and their families, professional networks, volunteers—including many board members—as well as Western leadership, faculty, staff, and community members. It was a feel-good evening that celebrated alumni achievements and the strong sense of pride and connection within the Western community.

Award Recipients:

Five Alumni Awards of Merit were bestowed at Homecoming on September 28th, 2024:

Ivan Smith Award: Rick Konrad, BA'75

Professional Achievement Award:
Susan Haigh, MLIS'87

Professional Achievement Award:
Nils Petersen, BSc'72

Community Service Award:
Janelle Coultres, BSc'01

Young Alumni Award:
Thomas Neumann, BSc'11

Alumni Summit

The **Western Alumni Summit**, programmed by the Outreach Committee of the Alumni Association Board, is an annual gathering that brings together members of the board and leaders from Western's shared interest groups. Designed to strengthen relationships and enhance communication across our alumni volunteer network, the summit offers a valuable forum for sharing insights, celebrating accomplishments, and identifying opportunities for board support.



This year, **30 alumni volunteers** participated in the event which emphasized group networking and peer-to-peer dialogue—fostering deeper connections and more meaningful engagement among participants.



Western Day, an initiative born by the Alumni Association, was celebrated on March 7th around the globe.



Toronto

Western Day around the world – March 1-7, 2025

These ambassador-led events created an opportunity for alumni to come together to reminisce, re-connect and make new alumni connections in celebration of Western Day.



Shanghai



Dubai



Beijing

➤ Community in Action



New York Alumni Reception – March 4, 2025

This event created an opportunity to connect with alumni and friends. The event included updates from the university and showcased the #purpleandproud spirit of New York alumni.



Local Government Alumni Conference ° November 21 and 22, 2024

The Local Government Alumni Society marked its 50th anniversary at their annual conference, uniting professionals for two days of networking and discussions under the theme: Municipal Eras – the last 50 and the next 50.



Western's Holiday Reception in Toronto – December 11, 2024

Alumni Association Board members along with fellow donors, volunteers, alumni, and community partners gathered to celebrate the season and recognize their collective impact on the university community.

➤ Community in Action



Western's Holiday Reception in the UK – December 2, 2024

Members of Western's UK Advisory Council joined fellow alumni to celebrate the season while strengthening connections and sharing ideas to support Western's global impact.



Mingle Bells – December 4, 2024

Mingle Bells marked the launch of the Western Alumni Leaders Network — a new initiative to build community, expand professional networks, and empower former student leaders of Western.



Calgary President's Reception – October 3, 2024

President Alan Shepard and Vice-President (University Advancement) Karen Bertrand (not pictured) visited Calgary to connect with alumni and friends. The event featured university updates and meaningful conversations about Western's direction and alumni involvement.

➤ Community in Action



Brescia Alumnae Homecoming Luncheon – September 29, 2024

Brescia alumnae gathered to honour Brescia's long-standing legacy and exceptional graduates during Western's 75th annual Homecoming. The celebration reflected the pride, connection, and enduring spirit of the Brescia community.



Homecoming Student Pancake Breakfast – September 28, 2024

During Homecoming, students enjoyed a complimentary breakfast hosted by the Alumni Association Board of Directors and served by the USC Executive team.



Black Alumni Networking Reception – February 6, 2025

Alumni gathered in Toronto for a Black Alumni Networking Reception, co-hosted by the Black at Western Alumni Chapter and Western Alumni in celebration of Black History Month.

The Board and Appointees

2024–2025 Western Alumni Association Board of Directors

Amy Bi, BA'07
Hsiu-Yan Chan, BSc'03, BEd'03, MBA'12
Danny Chang, BSc'20
Sarah Chapman, BSc'10
Burns Cheadle, PhD'86
Avis Favaro, BA'81, MA'82
Matthew Helfand, BA'13, MA'14, JD'18 (President)
Lirim Hajrullahu, BA'13, MA'15
Nathan Ho, BA'08, MBA'16
Melissa Kargiannakis, BHSc'12, MHIS'15
Shannon MacDonald, BA'90
Daniel Matthews, BSc'09, JD'14
George McAuley, BSc'96, BEd'98, MEd'10
Melanie Peacock, MBA'90 (Past President)
Michael Salvatori, BEd'90, MEd'94
Patrick Searle, BA'11
Chantel Smith, BA'10
Victoria Volk, BMOS'14

Alumni Association Appointees 2024–2025

To the Board of Governors:

Greg Dick, BSc'93
George McAuley, BSc'96, BEd'98, MEd'10
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
Lawrence Loh, BSc'02, MD'06

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