



# Extraordinary Engagement

Western University Alumni Association  
Strategic Plan

Western  Alumni



Western's Alumni Association has been the primary voice and organizational structure serving Western graduates since 1949. The 18 volunteer members of the Board of Directors have prepared this plan to support the advocacy and advisory roles of the Alumni Association in support of the University.

With **286,000** members living and working in more than **150 countries** around the world, our Association continues to grow exponentially each year as new graduates are welcomed into the Western Alumni community.



**VISION:** To inspire all alumni to share a lifelong commitment, pride and passion for Western.

**MISSION:** We are the catalyst for building a vigorous alumni network and a lifelong relationship among Western and its constituents, including students and graduates, and for supporting the University's mission locally, nationally and internationally.

In 2016, the Alumni Association's Board of Directors conducted a strategic planning exercise to reaffirm its vision and mission and provide a forum for alumni to share their views. The Board approached the project with an aim to assist the institution in its goal of doubling alumni engagement. A series of roundtable events, an online portal and stakeholder meetings were delivered. The resulting strategic plan will serve to guide the work of the Board of Directors, volunteers and dedicated staff partners.

We know Western alumni are intensely loyal to their alma mater and want to ensure their University continues to prosper and meet its goals. They are eager to assist both the institution and the Association, but don't always know how they can help. In developing this strategic plan, it became apparent that Western alumni are:

- Often unaware of many of the programs, benefits and initiatives available to them as members of the Alumni Association;
- Happy to raise their hands and roll up their sleeves, but they need to understand how and why; and
- Interested in the needs of current Western students and want to give back.

The Alumni Association must demonstrate a commitment to alumni and communicate clearly what they can expect to receive as part of the Western alumni community. At the highest level, the Association needs to illustrate the desired outcomes of an impact-focused program that demonstrates benefits to alumni and to Western:

Benefits to Alumni	Benefits to Western
Bolster pride in Western among alumni	Strengthen Western's reputation
Participate in meaningful opportunities to become engaged and feel a part of Western's success	Garner investment of time, talent and treasure from alumni and their networks
Provide continuous access to learning, personal and professional development opportunities	Align with the University's strategic direction and core strengths. Assist in supporting academic and research activities and foster the Best Student Experience



# Looking to the Future

A focused and deliberate effort to increase alumni engagement will lead to a greater alumni voice in university life and improved pride in Western with measurable impact by 2018.

The Alumni Association is committed to five pillars of alumni engagement:

## **Extraordinary Stories**

Inspire pride in alumni and inform members through compelling storytelling, engaging awareness campaigns and proactive social media supports.

## **Extraordinary Benefits**

Provide services and benefits that renew alumni affinity with the Association. Steward the endowed Legacy Funds and remain committed to leaving a lasting alumni legacy on campus through the allocation of the funds across campus priority projects.

## **Extraordinary Leadership**

Foster a vibrant volunteer experience from front line to board leadership and ensure the Association continues to be relevant in its service to alumni. Listen to alumni voices and deliver a clear role for valued volunteers.

## **Extraordinary Experiences**

Design, deliver and promote programs that provide alumni meaningful ways to engage with the University over their lifetime.

## **Extraordinary Network**

Provide alumni access to a growing network of peers and facilitate their interactions amongst one another and with Western. Strengthen relationships with Affiliated University College alumni and with those alumni who present with strong affinity for their home faculty, a varsity team or shared experience.





# The Five Pillars of Engagement: Goals and Tactics

## EXTRAORDINARY STORIES

- Advance a strong, recognizable Western Alumni brand that fosters connections by:
  - Developing a comprehensive communications strategy that encompasses call-to-action appeals and clear deliverables for alumni and volunteers; and
  - Embracing Western's Alumni social media channels and providing opportunities for alumni to connect 'Mustang-to-Mustang.'
- Raise awareness among alumni of the many programs, benefits and services available to them by:
  - Revamping the alumni website; and
  - Enhancing the content and delivery of all alumni communication.

## EXTRAORDINARY BENEFITS

- Provide meaningful benefits and relevant services to alumni through the Association's preferred partners by:
  - Expanding current offerings; and
  - Exploring new membership advantages of interest to alumni.
- Leave a lasting legacy of the alumni impact on campus by:
  - Establishing an enhanced presence of key alumni volunteers, past presidents, alumni award recipients and major donors on campus;
  - Continued stewardship of Foundation Western legacy funds that support priority campus projects and innovative initiatives of relevance to the alumni community and of benefit to Western; and
  - Creating a welcome area for alumni that will enhance their visits to campus.

## EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP

- Fully realize and maximize the valuable contributions of our alumni directors by:
  - Onboarding and educating new members to the Association's people, projects, plans and priorities;
  - Aligning volunteer strengths with committee assignments; and
  - Creating opportunities for innovative ideas and fostering an inclusive atmosphere for dialogue at meetings and gatherings.
- Maximize the contributions of our regional alumni volunteers by:
  - Orienting and training all volunteers in regards to the strategic and annual plans of the Association; and
  - Providing volunteers with current and useful materials and supports to best facilitate their gifts of talent and time.
- Listen to alumni voices and serve as advocates for the alumni membership on matters of interest by:
  - Conducting a survey of the alumni membership to seek their input into their desired "Best Alumni Experience";
  - Developing an ongoing feedback mechanism for members of the alumni community; and
  - Championing the affairs of Western and its ongoing development.

- Develop a forum for an exchange of ideas in the manner of a human capital campaign by:
  - Building relationships with Western's advocates and supporters; and
  - Engaging alumni with allegiances to Western's Affiliated University Colleges and Alumni Chapters to develop collaborative ventures that collectively enhance and respect their interests.

## EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

- Increase alumni and student involvement in traditional alumni program offerings while continuing to double alumni engagement and deliver high-quality and high-impact programs by:
  - Broadening the scope of the Alumni Career Management Portfolio and increase enrolment in mentorship and coaching programs;
  - Continuing to deliver the Best Homecoming in Canada through refined programming, partnership supports and continued enhancements of existing event framework;
  - Celebrating reunion milestones and the anniversaries of faculties, divisions and varsity teams; and
  - Honouring key moments in the alumni life cycle – such as Convocation receptions and student-to-alumni transition offerings.

- Design and develop innovative digital strategies to extend our lifelong learning to alumni globally by:
  - Showcasing the Senior Alumni Program online to engage alumni living in all markets;
  - Building digital learning experiences for alumni of all ages around topics of interest for varied life stages; and
  - Offering digital supports for alumni in career transition.
- Enhance the Alumni Awards and Recognition program by:
  - Promoting the achievements of our notable alumni; and
  - Celebrating the recipients of our Alumni Award of Merit program as well as the faculty, varsity and affinity-based recognition programs.

## EXTRAORDINARY NETWORK

- Facilitate alumni access to the Western community and the growing alumni network by:
  - Designing an alumni ambassador program with a focus on regional supports;
  - Analyzing metrics and determining best areas for regional efforts aligned with growth strategies in support of doubling alumni engagement;
  - Building capacity among branch and chapter volunteers through strategic recruitment; and
  - Creating engagement opportunities in our top regional markets with a focus on post-event follow-up measures.

## How we will measure success

- ✓ Number of alumni engaged
- ✓ Alumni engagement retention rates
- ✓ Depth and frequency of engagement
- ✓ Number of alumni communities engaged
- ✓ Communications satisfaction



# Western's extraordinary alumni, globally

Living in more than 150 countries around the world, our **286,104** alumni represent a diverse, talented and exceptional group. Wherever you call home, Western is working to foster a relevant and meaningful lifelong connection among fellow alumni and with the University.



## 286,104

Western alumni living around the world



**150+** Number of countries Western alumni live in around the world



Western alumni living in

### ONTARIO

**92,995**  
in central Ontario

**91,883**  
in southwestern Ontario

**13,506**  
in eastern Ontario

**5,770**  
in northern Ontario



Western alumni living in

### Rest of CANADA

**8,693**  
in British Columbia

**6,211**  
in Alberta

**2,943**  
in Quebec

**2,687**  
in Atlantic Canada

**1,935**  
in Central Prairies

**209**  
in Territories



Western alumni living in the

### WORLD

**18,535**  
outside of Canada, including...

**9,953**  
in the USA

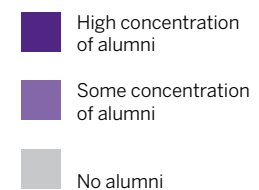
**2,907**  
in China, including Hong Kong

**1,157**  
in the Caribbean

**961**  
in the UK

**579**  
in Australia and New Zealand

**346**  
in Singapore



# Meet your Board

2017-18 Western Alumni Association Board of Directors

President, David Simmonds, BA'07

Trisha Beusaert, BA'11  
Warren Bongard, LLB'91  
Mark Brown, MBA'95  
Sharon Cowin, BA'64  
Fiona Cuddy, BA'99  
Sandra Datars Bere, BA'87, MPA'06  
Susy Martins, HBA'01, BA'03, MBA'08  
John Moore, BA'92  
Erika Mozes, BA'00

Farah Perelmutter, BA'91  
Natalie Raffoul, BSc'01  
Lisa Richards, BA'06  
Ashley Rowe, BA'11  
Promod Sharma, BSc'84  
Nick Staubitz, BSc'06  
Gina Uppal, BHSc'14  
Sunny Uppal, BSc'08

## Strategic Planning Committee Members:

Carol-Lynn Chambers, BSc'82, MPA'01  
Robert Collins, BA'77

David Simmonds, Chair, BA'07  
Sunny Uppal, BSc'08

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We welcome your feedback on this plan.  
Please contact:

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**Western  
Alumni**