

# Alumni Gazette

WESTERN'S ALUMNI MAGAZINE SINCE 1939

FALL 2018



## A SOUTH AFRICAN ICON

Renowned researcher  
Tebello Nyokong, PhD'87,  
carries hopes and dreams  
of her continent



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HOME COMING 2018 - P. 28

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**On the cover:** The portrait features Tebello Nyokong, PhD'87, in a field surrounded by sheep, wearing the white coat of a chemist. It is a representation of her standing as an award-winning and internationally-recognized scientist, and also acknowledges her younger years in Lesotho. The photo shoot took place on a farm outside Cape Town, South Africa.

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STEPHAN MOCCIO

@alumni.western.ca

**THE FIGHT TO RID HOCKEY OF HEADSHOTS**  
After his son suffered two concussions, Dr. Ken Bocking, MD'75, had to do something to bring attention to the issue.

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Christine Elliott, LLB'78, Rod Phillips, BA'88, and Monte McNaughton, Ivey Executive Education 2010, were named among members of the new cabinet of Ontario Premier Doug Ford.

**MOONLITE BRINGS BRIGHT IDEA TO NIGHT-NIGHT**  
Natalie Rebot, BESC'05, has created Moonlite, a storybook projector that displays classics such as *Goodnight Moon* through a cellphone flashlight and app.

(PHOTO BY JARED POLIN, FROKNOWSPHOTO)

## Alumni Gazette

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## New \$47-Million Interdisciplinary Research Facility Unveiled

Western's new \$47-million state-of-the-art research facility, the Western Interdisciplinary Research Building (WIRB), officially opened in April. It will house the Brain and Mind Institute, BrainsCAN and the Rotman Institute of Philosophy, as well as dry laboratories, teaching and research space and a public plaza.

"Western recognizes many of the significant problems facing humanity today are enormously complex, and the greatest advances made in solving them often emerge at the boundaries and intersection of traditional disciplines," said Western President Amit Chakma. "Our response to this reality has been to promote collaboration and to build operational capacity for interdisciplinary research through a series of strategic investments in selective areas of excellence. WIRB will generate an extraordinary return on those investments by providing the infrastructure we need to conduct truly world-class research and scholarship across multiple disciplines."

A significant percentage of building costs for Western's newest signature seven-storey structure is supported by the Federal Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). With the SIF program support, WIRB was upgraded from LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) silver designation to LEED gold. LEED is a rating system that is recognized as the international mark of excellence for green buildings in more than 160 countries.

WIRB, with a total gross area of 118,000 sq. ft., is located adjacent to the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.



The Western Interdisciplinary Research Building officially opened on April 13, 2018. Left to right: Chris Smeenk, Director of Western's Rotman Institute of Philosophy; Kate Young, Member of Parliament for London West; Melvyn Goodale, Director of the Brain and Mind Institute at Western; Peter Fragiskatos, Member of Parliament for London North Centre; Ravi Menon, Co-Scientific Director, BrainsCAN; Lisa Saksida, Co-Scientific Director, BrainsCAN; Janice Deakin, former Western Provost and Vice-President (Academic); and Western President Amit Chakma. (PHOTO BY PAUL MAYNE)

## The Salamander Foundation gifts \$1 million to Environmental Engineering Chair

Western Engineering will continue to lead the charge in mitigating the effects of pollution on the environment and public health with a new \$1-million donation from The Salamander Foundation.

This endowed gift will be added to the existing endowed fund established by the donor in 1999 in support of The Salamander Chair in Environmental Engineering. The Chair oversees research activities in environmental engineering with a focus on water quality and processing, including wastewater treatment, resource recovery from municipal wastewaters and treatment of organic wastes. This brings the total funds donated by The Salamander Foundation to \$2,811,000.

The Foundation's latest gift was matched by Western, boosting the existing Chair fund and creating an endowment of approximately \$3.4 million.

The current holder of the Salamander Chair, George Nakhla, is a professor in the departments of Civil and Environmental and Chemical and Biochemical Engineering. His research focuses on municipal and industrial wastewater treatment, biological nutrient removal processes and recovery of energy and resources from wastewater.

## Western to Host Two Major Conferences in 2019

Western will host the **Times Higher Education (THE) Teaching Excellence Summit** in 2019 - the first time a THE World Summit Series event has been hosted in Canada, as well as the **International Association of College Admission Counseling (IACAC) Conference**.

Taking place at Western June 4 to 6, the Teaching Excellence Summit will be titled *Degrees of Change: Forces shaping the teaching and learning of tomorrow* and will explore themes of providing students educational opportunities beyond their borders; the impact and integration of technology and artificial intelligence on higher education; and the critical role post-secondary institutions must play in building a more inclusive society.

The IACAC Conference is the largest gathering of international college and university admission counselling/guidance counselling staff in the world, with an anticipated 1,200 to 1,800 attendees. Taking place at Western July 9 to 12, it marks the second time the Conference has been held in Canada.



Western Alumni's 2019 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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**Western Alumni**



# Keys *to his* success

BY KERI FERGUSON

**STEPHAN MOCCIO, BMUS'94,  
EARNED SUCCESS BY INVESTING  
IN HIMSELF, HIS PASSION**

**I**n an industry where less than one per cent achieve international success, Stephan Moccio has struck a chord with his piano serving as both muse and weapon.

A classically trained pianist, composer, conductor and producer, Moccio, BMus'94, began mastering the nuances of piano pop song writing shortly after graduating from Western, passing up a scholarship from the famed Berklee College of Music to sign with Sony / ATV Music Publishing.

Born in St. Catharines, Ont., and raised in Niagara Falls, he hails from a long line of pianists. Music is part of his DNA with his mother passing on a winning mindset as well.

"She taught me, from a very young age, if I have an idea, no one is going to make it happen other than me. It made me a big believer in investing in myself and my passion," Moccio said.

It's what drove him to send a demo tape to his idol, super producer David Foster, during his second year at Western. "He called me back, which was huge, and told

me, 'Keep doing what you're doing,'" Moccio said. It was also at Western that he made a seemingly lofty promise to Celine Dion.

"It's pretty remarkable the genesis of that relationship happened at Alumni Hall," Moccio said of meeting her backstage before her 1993 performance. "I was in my third year. My friend, Gary McAuley (of the R&B vocal quartet McAuley Brothers), and I managed to weasel in and introduce ourselves. I told Celine I would write her a song one day."

Less than a decade later, he did, teaming up with Aldo Nova to write *A New Day Has Come*. The song topped the charts for a record-breaking 21 weeks, affording Moccio the opportunity to start his own publishing company and co-found Bijou Records with long-time manager, James Porter, BA'86.

It also gave him time to record his first solo piano album, *Exposure*. He needed to return to the simplicity of the instrument he knew best. The album became the highest-charting instrumental release in Canada.

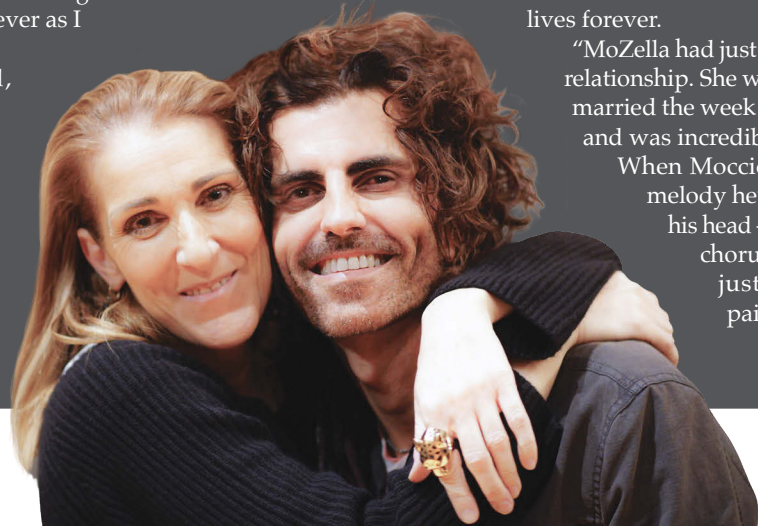
**"IF I'D BEEN BORN 10 YEARS EARLIER OR LATER, IT WOULD NOT HAVE WORKED OUT"**

Writing for Dion wasn't the only dream Moccio manifested. He was just 16 when he heard Foster's composition for the 1988 Calgary Games. "I promised myself when the Olympics came back to Canada, I would write the theme. I was so excited when Vancouver won the bid," he said.

True to his vision, in 2008, he co-wrote *I Believe* with Glass Tiger's Alan Frew, which became the anthem of the 2010 Winter Games. It was broadcast in various formats, with the cover by jazz-pop singer Nikki Yanofsky reaching Multi-Platinum status.

"It's rare in a composer's or a songwriter's life, if it lines up," Moccio said. "Your country has to host the Games; you have to be the right age and 'hot' in your career so people will actually listen to you. If I'd been born 10 years earlier or later, it would not have worked out. It's one of the greatest honours I will carry with me forever as I live down here in L.A."

Moccio continued, "Both my wife (high school sweetheart, Hilary) and I miss Canada. But there's no place to be doing what I'm doing, at the level I'm doing it, other than L.A."



Moccio relocated there with his family in 2013 to better access the growing number of singers seeking his sound, and to further his aspirations to become a film composer. It proved timely, with Miley Cyrus' *Wrecking Ball* dropping just days prior to their move, becoming a No. 1 hit on the *Billboard Top 100* before their bed arrived from Toronto.

"Wow, was that ever a game-changer for me," he said of the song, born out of a session with Sasha Skarbek (James Blunt's *Beautiful*) and Maureen 'MoZella' MacDonald. He had never met his co-writers before, yet circumstances saw them create a power ballad in one afternoon that would change their lives forever.

"MoZella had just ended a semi-toxic relationship. She was supposed to get married the week we wrote the song and was incredibly frail."

When Moccio began playing a melody he'd been carrying in his head – which became the chorus of the song – she just poured out her pain.

Moccio and Hudson Thames orchestral session, Air Studios/Lyndhurst Hall, London, U.K. (June 2018)

(PHOTO BY JARED POLIN, FROKNOWSPHOTO)

Moccio and Celine Dion recording session, Studio at the Palms, Las Vegas (Dec. 2017)

(PHOTO BY DENISE TRUSCELLO)

"The rest," Moccio laughed, "is history. She asked us if she could share it with Miley, whom she knew personally, and Miley loved it."

Moccio's piano, which accompanied MoZella's vocals on the demo, ended up on Cyrus' final recording, and would soon be heard on tracks of a number of artists including, Ne-Yo (*Ballerina*), Seal (*Daylight Saving*) and Gladys Knight (*Need You, Love You*).

Also looking for the Moccio touch, was fellow Canadian The Weeknd. He requested Moccio for his breakout 2015 album, *Beauty Behind The Madness*, which featured *Earned It*, a track the two co-wrote and produced for the *Fifty Shades of Grey* soundtrack.

The Weeknd's signature falsetto paired with Moccio's sultry waltz on the piano earned a Grammy, as did the album.

It also took The Weeknd from

celebrated indie artist, to mainstream sensation, with Moccio joining him on stage to perform at the Academy Awards and on *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*.

"I love finding new talent," Moccio said, having starred on CTV's *The Launch*, co-writing and producing *Soldier of Love*, recorded by the show's winner, Sarah Botelho, BA'16, who goes by the stage name Poesy.

He's currently producing material for "this new kid, Hudson Thames, who's really incredible. He's a big priority at Universal and I have a feeling he's going to break globally. His vocal prowess is just effortless. I put him up there with Sam Smith and Adele. He's a good-looking kid, too, which always helps."

Moccio's now the mentor, like Foster once was, the two becoming good friends since that first phone call back in second year. His relationship with Dion has evolved as well. They were recently back in the studio together, working on tracks for her upcoming album, due out in 2019.

"I feel what I've written for her is 'classic Celine.' She's not trying to conform or be 18 years old again. She's just singing beautiful songs and beautiful melodies" – two things he's kept as his focus throughout his career.

"I remember when I was first starting out, and with Celine Dion, I took big risks to record the demo just to get it to her. I took out major loans, bought beautiful, incredible microphones I still have 20 years later. Here I was in my 20s, spending tens of thousands of dollars on a computer, compressor and all that gear, but it had to be done," he said.

It paid off. "I am one of the few musicians able to make a living at my craft. It's hard to succeed in music. People don't realize for every song that goes big, there are 10 songs I wrote that didn't, and were just as good."

His future plans include a fourth solo piano album, which he hopes to release in 2019.

"I have it in my head. I've just been too busy making other people famous," he laughed.

Until then, his fans can hear his work regularly on Sportsnet. While he may no longer live in Canada, his presence is felt through the themes he penned for *Hockey Central*, *Hockey Night in Canada* and *Blue Jays Baseball*.

"There's a lot of Canadian stuff I carry in my heart. It's bittersweet because, despite the amount of success I've had here in Los Angeles, and the global success, which has been incredible, I have so many things to be proud of back home." **WAG**



(PHOTO BY GEOFF ROBINS)

BY ADELA TALBOT, BA'08, MA'11

# As it happens

## CAROL OFF, BA'81, LLD'17, FINDS A STORY IN EVERY MOMENT

There's no such thing as a frivolous story. Carol Off can attest to that.

In a mere 90 minutes each weekday, the host of CBC Radio One's *As It Happens* switches gears repeatedly and seamlessly. Every guest – be it a world leader, an innovative researcher or an ordinary person in extraordinary circumstances – is provided space for their story to resonate with listeners.

For Off, this space is a “cocoon” in which she is the conduit the story passes through. Cultivating it requires recognizing the inherent humanity at the heart of every interview. It requires providing time, presence and attention to a single person, a single moment in a world that quickly moves from one thing to the next.

“*As It Happens* is like Twitter. If you're looking at Twitter, there's just been a massacre someplace; a disaster someplace else;

somebody lost their dog; someone's got a show someplace; a politician is campaigning someplace,” said Off, BA'81 (English Language and Literature), LLD'17.

“We do that all the time. That's how we intuit and see the world; we see it as a series of things that come one after the other.”

Throughout her career, Off has covered an array of stories from around the world. In the field and in the studio, she has worked “in the moment.” You just have to be there, she said.

It is hard, she admits. You're thinking of how much time you have, trying to steer an interview, trying to stay focused while thinking about what's next in the queue.

“It is a matter of being in a warp, being in a cocoon with the person you're interviewing. Every time somebody is there, it's their story and it's a little piece of humanity. Every single one of those stories is a piece of the human experience. Some are goofy; some are lovely; some of

them are simple; some are complicated and hard and of huge consequence. But they are all just pieces of the human condition.”

The feeling the media had failed to aptly show the human condition – from all sides – in its coverage of two civil wars in the 1990s led to Off writing a best-seller, *The Lion, The Fox, and the Eagle: A Story of Generals and Justice in Yugoslavia and Rwanda*. Since that book came out in 2000, she has written three more, including the recently-published *All We Leave Behind: A Reporter's Journey into the Lives of Others*, which won the British Columbia National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction.

For teaching her how to navigate the stories she tells, she credits her English degree from Western. What Off learned reading Shakespeare, she uses every day. Reading books, studying Canadian literature with renowned poet and playwright James Reaney, reading Greek and Roman classics, provided Off a “portal into the world.”

“I understand things so much because of having that knowledge, having studied and trying to make sense of the meaning of literature. I understand things because of what I learned from literature. It was the best grounding in what I do now – knowing the shape of a story, the rise and fall of action, what redeeming qualities are, learning to look for the humanity in everything. That's what literature does; it seeks the humanity in everything. In every book, at the core of it, is the search for our humanity and the humanity of others. It's a look at the other to find out what the other is and what the other means to us. I use this knowledge every day. Sometimes I'm aware of it; sometimes I'm not. But I know that's where it came from, that

knowledge, that compassion, to appreciate humanity in its complexity – from the humanities,” Off explained.

“The most important thing we learn from studying literature is contradiction, that there can be contradictory ideas at the same time, that you can have them in your mind, that you can embrace contradiction. It's a beautiful thing.”

Off was 21 when she walked into her first English lecture at Western. She was pregnant, recently married and had no plans of pursuing a career in journalism. She gave birth to her son during Reading Week of her first year, forging through to complete her degree in five years.

**“The paper was there in the bin every day in the UCC and I was complaining to a friend saying, ‘It's not even worth bending down to pick one up from the stack.’”**

*The Gazette*, which the proud English student once snubbed, proved a fork in the road for Off.

“The paper was there in the bin every day in the UCC and I was complaining to a friend saying, ‘It's not even worth bending down to pick one up from the stack.’ And my friend said, ‘If you feel that way, why don't you do something about it? I said I was planning to be a creative writer, novelist poet, whatever. I'm not going to be a journalist. But he persuaded me to either stop complaining or go and join – so I signed up,” she said.

Off started her career writing for the arts section of *The Gazette*, later becoming its editor. Things took off from there, she said. Working towards her degree, raising a child, while working part-time at the student paper paved her path. She went from *The Gazette* to a local start-up newspaper from which she was called to freelance for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

“By then, I realized I was never going to be the novelist I wanted to be; I was going to be a journalist. I guess I never looked back.” [WAG](#)

## Save the date for Founder's Day, March 7

It's a time for alumni, students, faculty and staff - wherever they are around the world - to reconnect and share in a celebration of everything [#purpleandproud](#)



# Start-up for adventure

From the high seas to high tech, Fraser Hall, BESC'99, has navigated his own path

BY KATHRYN KINAHAN, BA'86, MLIS'93

**M**any claim to own an adventurous spirit. Fraser Hall, BESC'99, has the resumé to back it up. The computer engineer has travelled up and down the West Coast, spent time on the high seas bringing poachers to justice, started two companies and now, as a founder of Vancouver Founder Fund, is helping aspiring entrepreneurs get their big break.

Even choosing Western from his home in Kelowna, BC, was somewhat uncommon. After touring "out East" universities, Hall chose Western for its academic reputation and well-rounded people. Or, as Hall put it – a campus full of "not necessarily just super-nerds." He also admits to being slightly influenced by his father, Edward, MBA'77. His sister Jennifer, BFA'98, followed him to Western later.

Graduating at the height of the tech bubble, he bought a Volkswagen camper and drove up and down the West Coast with his degree in hand.

"I'd just show up on the door of technology companies and say, 'I'm a computer engineer. Do you want to interview?' Almost always, they'd say yes on the spot. I got to meet with all these incredible companies."

He landed at Creo, a digital imaging firm now part of Eastman Kodak, in Vancouver, where he designed laser-imaging systems for printing presses. Perhaps the selling point was his job title – Firmware Jedi.

"I was pretty nerdy; I still am," laughed Hall.

A year later, Hall became intrigued with the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, a militant iteration of Greenpeace, founded by Paul Watson (a controversial Canadian environmental activist and one of the founding members of Greenpeace). With some background at sea, Hall joined that group in the late 2000s.

"I couldn't believe someone was just fighting for what's right so firmly and putting themselves at risk," he said.

Sea Shepherd is an aggressive group with a controversial reputation for battering whaling and fishing ships.

"If you ever hear of a ship being sunk by activists, it's this group. Greenpeace has never sunk a ship. If someone is doing something illegal, like poaching, Sea Shepherd will go out and stop them. The intention isn't to sink, but if it got to that, it wasn't out of the question," Hall said.

Within a very short



period, Hall was promoted to captain of the flagship where he served for two years throughout the Atlantic and Pacific hunting down poachers – whalers, turtle poachers, shark finners.

The award-winning 2006 movie *Sharkwater* (by the late Canadian filmmaker Rob Stewart, BSc'01) documents one of their campaigns, a tense confrontation with illegal shark finners off the coast of Costa Rica, where they clashed with the authorities, uncovered possible links to organized crime and outran machine-gun-toting coast guards until they reached international waters.

At 24, Hall left Sea Shepherd and became headmaster of a high school at sea called Class Afloat. There, he taught 48 high schoolers and voyaged all through the Atlantic and Pacific for a year.

He followed that with a five-month-long driving adventure across the Sahara Desert and through Europe in a custom-outfitted solar-paneled vehicle.

After that, he signed up as captain and expedition leader of a not-for-profit vessel with Reach the World, a program that digitally connects travellers with classrooms, and sailed from New York across the Pacific for another year.

Hall's next change took him back to school.

"I was very salty from life at sea. Once I got off the boat, I decided to go to the University of British Columbia and do my MBA, figuring school was the best way to transition back to land, friends, etc."

While there, he and a few friends wrote a business plan for a heads-up display company – smart eyewear with an integrated computer display. Hall landed a day job in real estate development while he worked on the business plan at night.

After two years, he quit real estate and jumped full time into the business. He reassembled the group from business school and founded what was to become Recon Instruments in 2008.

Recon was the first technology company to design

and develop smart eyewear products for sports and high-intensity environments. The company's products delivered live activity metrics (location, speed, altitude, temperature), GPS maps, and notifications to a tiny screen in front of the user's eye. Their first offering, a ski mask with an integrated display, was released in 2010, well before Google Glass made its splashy debut.

"After eight years of that, never drawing a salary, living off ramen, experiencing the ups and downs of the business, constantly battling to raise money, we sold the business to Intel Corporation in 2015," Hall said. Terms of the sale were not disclosed but rumoured to be worth millions.

In the later days of Recon, Hall started another business, with a different set of co-founders, known today as Article, an online-only, direct-to-consumer

"I WAS VERY SALTY FROM LIFE AT SEA."

furniture retailer with a modern aesthetic, delivered simply and efficiently.

Founded in 2013, Article promoted their brand on Instagram, where it now has more than 260,000 followers, and they tested their products with small production runs, refining plans based on what sold and what didn't. Their strategy is working, with sales expected to double to \$200 million in 2018.

This experience of starting, growing and ultimately selling a company gave Hall insight into the start-up process. He saw the venture industry was starved in Canada. Despite the presence of talented entrepreneurs, prestigious universities and a highly qualified workforce, there hadn't been a surge in seed funding.

So he launched a fund to address the shortage.

The Vancouver Founder Fund (VFF), a venture capital firm 'built by founders for founders,' leads early-stage financings for companies based in the Pacific Northwest. The fund typically supports start-ups focused on software, but considers a broad spectrum of companies and industries where they feel they can add tangible value – the only caveat being the potential for rapid-growth.

Over the course of two and a half years, the company has invested in 10 companies.

Today, Article and VFF share office space in downtown Vancouver and for now, Hall is enjoying the mix of running Article while sharing his experience and expertise with upstart entrepreneurs.

That is, until the next adventure comes calling. [WAG](#)



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# A vision of home

BY DEBORA VAN BRENK, BA'86, MA'87 (JOURNALISM)

## Pioneering researcher Tebello Nyokong, PhD'87, carries hopes, dreams of continent

**I**t is difficult to know where to start the story – so far – of Tebello Nyokong.

Perhaps it should begin with the renowned chemist being named, alongside the likes of Bishop Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela, among the icons of South Africa for her pioneering research of photo-dynamic therapy as a cancer treatment.

Or, maybe with Nyokong's current leadership of a joint Africa-Canada consortium, that could mean a new way of purifying drinking water for an entire continent.

It would be too easy to start with Nyokong's connection to Western, where the impassioned scientist earned her PhD while raising two young children in a foreign land.

Instead, we will begin here:

In the mountains of land-locked Lesotho, 8-year-old Nyokong tended sheep. She carried her books with her because, on alternate days, she also attended school. Her classmates poked fun at her, with her bare feet and hand-me-down clothes. But no one mocked her sharp, sharp intellect as she rose to the top of her class.

Nevertheless, in high school, her peers and teachers steered

her away from maths and sciences – those subjects were too hard for a girl and led nowhere for a young woman destined for marriage and family. But she quickly grew bored in the arts and, three years into her studies, diverged into the sciences – completing three years' worth of study in two.

After graduation, her family needed her to work to support her sister and brother's quest for education. So, even as Nyokong mixed mortar and laid bricks for her father's construction company, her heart insisted she was meant for something more. She compromised. She would work until her sister finished high school, and then enrol in University of Lesotho. At 26, she graduated with a degree in chemistry and biology.

A Lesotho lecturer with connections to McMaster University urged her to apply through the Canadian International Development Agency for a fellowship that would enable her to study in Canada. After earning her master's, she arrived at Western.

"I needed to be able to touch things, to learn things so that when I came back (to Africa), I would be able to build things myself. Western gave me that opportunity." She pauses for a heartbeat, then erupts into a belly laugh. "I destroyed a few things in the process."

By the time Convocation took place in 1987, she was back in Lesotho working to change the world at a university that had few of the resources she needed.

"Let's be honest, when you are in Canada, you have state-of-the-art equipment. You are thinking, your brain is forever thinking about new ideas. You are dreaming. Then you come back to Lesotho and there is absolutely nothing – no facilities, no allowance for that type of engagement. You become dry.

"I'm not the only one. People educated in Western schools return and they cannot continue their education because they do not have the facilities. In the sciences, we need help, we need an infrastructure. That was our greatest frustration – I could not exercise my brain."

She was offered a position as lecturer at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. Her work and leadership there quickly earned her an appointment as a professor, then a distinguished professor.

Moving to South Africa, where the social and economic scars of apartheid linger, had its difficulties. "But in terms of research, I can see potential. The current South African government put money aside to make sure we continue to do research, scientific research in particular."

Nyokong holds a Department of Science and

Technology-National Research Foundation professorship in medicinal chemistry and nanotechnology. She is also director of the DST Nanotechnology Innovation Centre at Rhodes University, which has attracted scientists from across Africa and around the world.

"We actually have brain gain. One of the staff members I have is Canadian. They came here to work in my country. We are getting brain gain because we have the facilities."

Her interdisciplinary team is seeking to develop a specialized kind of photo-dynamic therapy to battle cancer. Instead of undergoing chemotherapy, patients would be administered a specific drug that would be activated with laser light – figuratively placing a molecular bull's eye on cancer cells.

For this, and her related research, Nyokong won the prestigious Africa-Arab State 2009 L'Oreal-UNESCO Award for Women in Science.

Her latest work is "a huge project" that includes a consortium of researchers in Canada and Africa working to find new ways of sustainable water purification.

Where rain or watercourses are scarce, there needs to be a made-in-Africa way of recycling, purifying and re-using what little water is sometimes available. "We are chemists. The same principles used in killing cancer can, at the same time, be used in killing bacteria in water."

In a real sense, that girl who started tending sheep in the Lesotho mountains now shepherds young scholars and researchers.

More science needs to take place in Africa, by Africans, and not just for girls and women, she stresses.

"Boys are removed from education very early so they can go and take care of their families. You can promote (science) to girls but you also need to be aware of the fact boys also need encouraging. I'm sincerely driven by promoting young people. That is my greatest passion. I feel we need to create leaders, particularly from the African continent, who are disciplined, who know the value of hard work, who are honest and are accomplished."

Nyokong continues to be hands-on in the lab – and she sleeps little.

"My mind is always active. People say they burn out. I can't understand it," she explained.

She admitted to demanding much from the students and researchers who compete to be able to work with her. But there is so much to be done and she is eager to move it along. "People think when you work hard you don't have a life. You can work hard and have a life."

Likewise, she holds both admiration and high standards for her children – born in Lesotho, raised in Canada and South Africa – who are now adults with careers of their own. "They are doing 'differently better' than I have. 'Differently better' is not about making money. It's about making a difference."

Africa has a wealth of young talent just waiting to be found and nurtured, she believes. That talent is slowly emerging from the city suburbs, rural villages and even remote sheep pastures. The world will always present obstacles for learners, but they are surmountable, Nyokong insists.

"Your brain should not be determined by your circumstances." **WAG**





(PHOTO COURTESY OF CBC)

# Heart and Soles

BY JASON WINDERS, MES'10, PHD'16

For veteran actor Paul Soles, BA'53, growing older is another performance to embrace

**P**aul Soles, BA'53, wants you to understand that growing old is a monumental pain in the ass.

Encroaching double vision may cost him his driver's license. Prostate cancer has become an everyday reality. He takes drugs to hold things up and keep things down.

"At my stage, it's another day, another doctor," he laughed. "If it's Tuesday, it's Dr. Bernstein. If it's Friday, it's Dr. Williams. If it's Thursday, it's Dr. Stewart. If it's Monday, hey, I have that open.

"My mother used to say, 'Aging is not for sissies.' I now understand what she meant. It is happening to me and I don't like it."

Nevertheless, at 87, the iconic Canadian stage, screen and voice actor of the last seven decades has found new life in a young person's medium. His latest effort, in fact, has not only introduced him to a new generation of fans, but reinvigorated this veteran actor in a profession he loves.

Raised in Toronto during the Depression, Soles' father was a traveling salesman of infant novelties and children's clothing who always spoke well of his trips to London. So when it came time for the younger Soles, an "average-to-lazy student," to choose a university, he picked Western – sight unseen.

"I was an 18-year-old kid who had never been away from home. At Western, I learned about the whole world – and loved it. The discovery. The comradery. The spirit of the school. It didn't take long to learn 'Western, Western, Western U, college fair and square.'"

Soles always worshipped his cousin, 'Buddy' Cowan, the Voice of CBC shows like *Front Page Challenge*, *Wayne and Shuster Show*, as well as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. That led Soles to jobs as a radio announcer during summer breaks from university. In 1953, he started in television as host and producer of variety and current affairs programs for CFPL-TV, the Forest City's first TV station.

But it was on the CBC where Soles rose to prominence as one of the original hosts of *Take 30* in 1962. Designed to be a light-hearted women's show, the daytime series evolved into a showcase for serious journalism, airing documentary reports and interviews on social and cultural topics. Soles shared the hosting duties until 1978.

Soles always loved his Saturday afternoons at the movies and when a high school English teacher cast him in a one-act play, Soles enjoyed it. "But I am not sure I can tell you why," he said.

Not big enough for football or hockey, Soles arrived at Western and gravitated toward the London Little Theatre and the university's long-standing production company Purple Patches.

Humbly crediting his career success to "more good luck than good management," his arrival in London was timed to the city's cultural golden age. Broadway plays arrived in London almost as

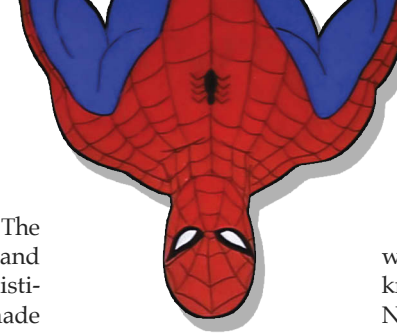
soon as the runs ended in New York. The quality of the city's theatre troupes and musicians, combined with the sophistication and wealth of the audience, made London a popular arts destination.

"There was an amazing legacy of top-quality facilities and work being done. It was an absolute stroke of my good luck to be there when all that was developing," Soles said. "You had wealth, education, proximity to everything important, right there in London. Everything was arranged to give London a particularly rich heritage. What an exciting time."

"Because of the CBC, people all over knew what a good pool of actors there were in Toronto," Soles explained, crediting Canadian actor versatility to their American and British influences. "Orson Welles himself said the world's best English-speaking acting voices were in Canada."

Thanks to timing and location, plus incredible talent, Soles became a fixture in radio and television, as well as theatre and film, over the next several decades where his face and voice have become instantly recognizable. His credits are too numerous to list. He has appeared on Broadway in *Macbeth* with Christopher Plummer, LLD'04, and Glenda Jackson; on film with Edward Norton in *The Score* (2001); on radio, alongside thousands on hundreds of programs.

Soles holds a special place for pop culture fans. He provided the voice of both Hermey, the elf who wants to be a dentist, in the 1964 stop-motion classic *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, as well as the original voice of Spider-Man in the 1967 cartoon series of the same name. As those shows pass landmark anniversaries, Soles has become a popular convention guest in the United States and Canada.



**HE PROVIDED THE VOICE OF BOTH HERMEY, THE ELF WHO WANTS TO BE A DENTIST... AS WELL AS THE ORIGINAL VOICE OF SPIDER-MAN IN THE 1967 CARTOON SERIES.**

"It is unbelievable – it's a whole new world. When we were doing these shows back in the 60s, nobody knew these things would have the legs that they did. Nobody. We hoped – sure. But we never expected to be talking about them years later."

Recently, Soles teamed up with Ethan Cole, BA'06 (History), to star in *My 90-Year-Old Roommate*, a CBC Comedy online-only show. Think *Pardon the Interruption* meets *The Odd Couple*.

The show is shot digitally and produced in more of a freestyle, ad-libbed, guerrilla style than anything Soles has ever experienced. He has embraced the technological shift – although admits to wondering when it will all stop.

"How many times do I have to buy the White Album?" he laughed.

Just wrapping its second season, *My 90-Year-Old Roommate* is funny and a tad blue with language Soles

still wonders what his mother would think of him saying. He appreciates its underlying message of both an old dog and a new dog learning new tricks.

"The idea isn't just about what my character has learned about growing old, but also what he can learn from those who are young and don't know what it is like to have had a another life, or another set of values or culture, different from the one they have now."

The subjects discussed are universal – life, death, sex, frustration. Little is taboo.

But for an actor closer to the end of his career than the beginning, he has found a new appreciation in the work and the life it has afforded him.

"I have done things to myself that I suppose I am lucky to be 87. I have been lucky all my life to get up every morning, work a 12-hour day and enjoy it. Today, I am the so-called star of a show. I am the title role. If you can keep doing that, you are pretty lucky.

"Especially when you get to work, as I have, with some extraordinary good people. Once you have had that experience, you don't ever want it to quit.

"If you can, there is no job better – and I can always use the money." **WAG**

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BY KATHRYN KINAHAN, BA'86, MLIS'93

# News-worthy career

## Alumna rises to the top as President of CTV News



Even after a quarter century, Wendy Freeman, BA'86, is still drawn to the energy of the newsroom.

"When breaking news happens, I get to go out into the newsroom and just be part of the team, be part of history, and see it unfold first-hand," she explained. "That's my favourite part of the job."

Having started at the bottom of the industry, Freeman is no stranger to the hard work of news. Today, as President of CTV News, she carries the lessons learned during those long hours and late nights to lead one of the nation's largest news-gathering organizations into an uncertain future.

"The 24-hour news cycle means you are never offline as big stories break without warning," she explained. "But if you are curious about the world, this is the job for you. It's not glamorous and you've got to live and breathe the news. But if you love to tell stories, if you want to see the world and witness history, it's an amazing, amazing career."

Originally from Montreal, Freeman was drawn to Western after visiting her brother, David Freeman, BA'83, who was working at CHRW at the time. "That was the visit. I fell in love with the campus," she explained. "I thought, 'I have to go here one day.'"

Deciding on a school was no problem; deciding on a program was another story.

"I was one of those students who switched their major every two weeks," explained Freeman, who was followed to



(PHOTO COURTESY OF CTV)

campus by her sister, Carole, BA'87. "Ultimately, I landed on Philosophy. I loved the classes – they involved deep, critical thinking and in-depth, thoughtful discussion."

After graduation, Freeman started working at the now-defunct CKO all-news radio in Toronto. "I started in journalism right at the bottom. My first job in radio news was basically 'ripping wire.' News would come in through the wire service, I'd rip it, re-write it and get it to air," she said.

She moved around, assuming new roles and gaining experience at various stations including City TV in Toronto, WXYZ-TV in Detroit and a stint at WPIX-TV in New York City before joining CTV in the early 1990s. It has been home ever since.

She started as a story producer on *Canada AM*, became a field producer for the *CTV National News*, and was hired first as an assignment editor and then executive producer of the *National News* with Lloyd Robertson and Sandy Rinaldo. Eventually, she became vice-president and then president.

"I really started at the bottom, took on any opportunity and worked my way to the top," she said. "I was someone who did it all."

Named President of CTV News in 2010, Freeman presides over all Bell Media news editorial content and newsgathering efforts for television and digital, and oversees the newsrooms' day-to-day operations. Since then, she has been responsible for news, information and current events programming, including the *CTV National News*, CTV News

Channel, BNN Bloomberg and CP24, as well as *Question Period*, *Power Play* and *W5*.

Under her leadership, the CTV News division has been recognized with the Radio-Television News Directors Association Bert Canning Award for Best Newscast for *CTV National News* for four consecutive years, as well as nine Canadian Screen Awards since 2014.

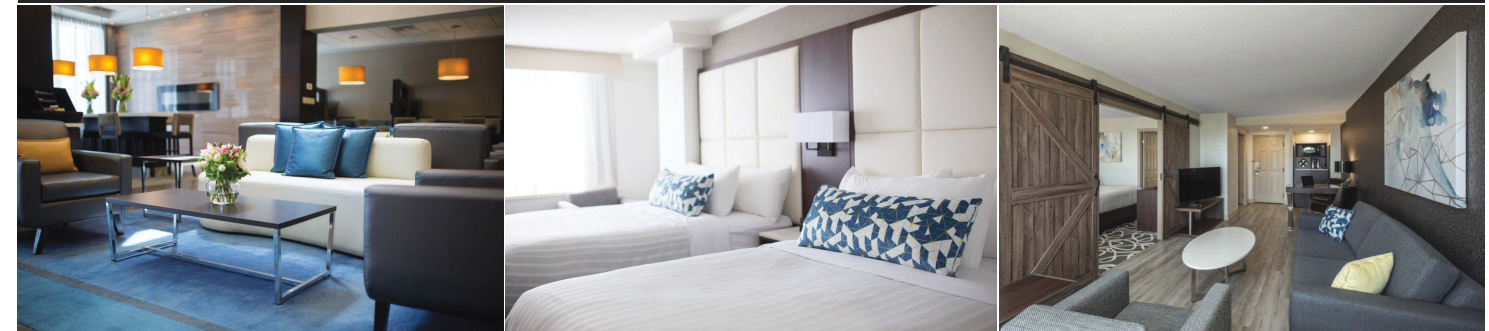
Despite the success, however, it is the energy of news that keeps her going.

"There is no 'typical work day.' You never know what's going to happen in the news; no day is ever the same," she explained. "I wake up and wonder, 'What's going to happen today?' It's like starting every day with a clean slate."

Today, she finds herself leading an industry in transition as audiences shift from traditional television viewing to online and mobile devices. While daunting, Freeman finds this newest challenge invigorating.

"We are in an age of disruption. I like a challenge," she explained. "People are cord-cutting and not watching television anymore. But people will always be interested in big news stories and live events. We need to be there for everyone at all times, on every platform, and in real time."

"People will always watch the news. What's changing is how they watch it. We have to deliver the news in a way that's compatible with the viewer's device of choice – phone, television, iPad, computer, etc. Because the news is never going away." [WAG](#)



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# Taking a chance

Stephen de Boer's journey to represent Canada on the world stage started with the courage to go 'down the road'

BY ADELA TALBOT, BA'08, MA'11

Stephen de Boer felt it brewing as early as he can remember. Growing up in a small town, the third of four children to immigrant Dutch parents, he sensed the restlessness early. It grew in tandem with a quiet self-doubt.

"I had a hankering from an early age to leave home. When I was in high school, I was interested in doing a Rotary exchange and leaving the country for a year. Part of that was birth order, but to a certain extent, I had what you would call impostor syndrome," said de Boer, BA'86 (Political Science), LLB'89, Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva.

When he arrived at Western in the 1980s, de Boer wasn't certain he belonged. Originally from Goderich, Ont., with grades that could take him anywhere, he felt almost obligated to follow his peers to co-op programs at other institutions.

He didn't really consider "the school down the road." But when he arrived on campus for a tour, de Boer knew Western was the right fit.

What he didn't know was that he would find his legs – and a footing that would take him around the world – so close to home.

After completing his undergraduate degree in Political Science and getting involved with the Young Liberals on campus, de Boer was accepted into the Faculty of Law. He was granted an exchange with Case Western Reserve University's School of Law and was offered a spot at Duke University before moving to Georgetown to pursue an LLM. He landed an articling job on Bay Street upon graduation, and thereafter, saw all doors as open.

He's not sure what pulled him towards international trade law. De Boer just knew he had a definite interest in international things. Trade seemed practical.



While he was in law school, the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement was in negotiations; the 1988 election was looming and he saw Canadians starting to engage in discussions of free trade, though "not in any sophisticated way." While de Boer was interested in contributing to the conversation, his path to the WTO took a winding, global route with stops in Poland, Morocco, Argentina and India – among others – as he pursued a career in law, climate change and trade.

After a stint in the Ontario provincial government, de Boer joined Global Affairs Canada in 2005, working in Investment Trade Policy and North America Trade Policy Divisions. The following year, he was named Director of the Softwood Lumber Division, later shifting gears and serving as Director of the Oceans and Environmental Law Division and Lead Counsel for Canada's international climate change negotiations. In 2010, he joined Environment Canada as the Deputy Chief Negotiator for climate change and the Director General responsible for Canada's international climate change negotiations and partnerships. He took the reins of the Trade Controls Bureau in 2013, serving for two years before becoming the Ambassador to Poland, then Ambassador to Belarus. He has served as Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO for the past year.

"I haven't made a lot of deliberate choices in my career," de Boer said. "Most of the things that happened to me have been at the request of someone in senior management.

"People say there's all these secrets to success – but doing a good job is quite underrated. You can spend a lot of time making sure you get face time with your boss, you could be very political about it, or you could put your head down and do a good job and people will notice."

Part of his success can be attributed to taking risks, often embracing opportunities that seemed too difficult – even unappealing – at first. De Boer was habitually hesitant to turn these down; he didn't want to pre-emptively close doors such challenges could have afforded.

"When I was asked to do something hard, I thought it could be really good

because the last time I did something hard, it worked out really well. It was personally satisfying and professionally, it moved me forward.

"Students are looking for the magic bullet – but there isn't necessarily a magic bullet. Doing a good job and showing up isn't rocket science, but it's worth remembering," he said.

De Boer sees his career as united by the theme of multilateralism – which is increasingly presenting a challenge for Canada in both trade and climate change. For Canada to advance in either, let alone become a leader, collaborative approaches are essential. When it comes to climate change, if one party doesn't pull its weight, everyone suffers, he explained. And when it comes to trade, the current political climate is not setting the stage for a promising future.

"We are facing some pretty serious challenges because the United States' commitment to multilateralism is not as clear as it was; there seems to be a sense that 'might makes right.' If we are going to liberalize trade and pull all countries up, and aid in their development, we need to be working together," de Boer noted.

**"If we are going to liberalize trade and pull all countries up, and aid in their development, we need to be working together."**

Canada's economic dependence on the United States won't change overnight, he added, though the government is working towards diversifying trade with the Canada-European Union (EU) Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. There is promise, and there is momentum; de Boer is responsible for building on that and creating markets for Canadian goods and services in diverse contexts.

He knows multilateralism is made possible by forging and fostering international connections and hopes more students would take advantage of international opportunities.

"Canada will do good in the world to the extent that we engage with the world. We have to leave at some point and come back – I hope. I would encourage students to spend a year abroad, do a graduate degree abroad, and if you are at Western, you have the opportunity to do that. I get the cold feet, the thinking that maybe this isn't the right thing to do, but you should do it." **WAG**

(PHOTO BY GEOFF ROBINS)

# BAY STREET and backroads

Joelle Faulkner is developing a new economy of agriculture

BY DEBORA VAN BRENK, BA'86, MA'87 (JOURNALISM)

**J**oelle Faulkner appreciates farmers – she also helps farmers appreciate their land.

Faulkner, BESC/HBA'05, is President and CEO of Area One Farms, an innovative private equity firm that has developed a new model for investing in Canadian farms. At the same time as Area One helps family farmers expand on and improve their acreage, it helps investors find partnerships that are secure, motivated and growing.

Faulkner, who grew up in the city in a family with a long history of farm management, started the business five years ago, following a stellar postsecondary academic career that began at Western.

A Londoner, Faulkner finished a combined, five-year degree in Chemical Engineering and Business in four years – an accelerated pace that reflects both her drive and her focus.

“By the time you go to university, you either have work ethic or you don’t. That’s established before your 20s, and then you have a set of various opportunities to develop that,” she said.

Finishing her degree early, she applied for and received a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford University. Faulkner studied law at Oxford for two years. Then, as a Fulbright Scholar, she earned a master’s in law at Stanford University in California and stayed there to work in medical device design before returning to Ontario.

After a brief stint as a design consultant, she became an advisor to the late Joseph Rotman, BA'57, LLD'09, chairman of investment firm Roy-L Capital Corporation and one of the country’s leading investors and philanthropists.

In 2013, Faulkner began Area One, a company predicated on the idea farmers and investors can each benefit from having equity in the land.

She designed it for the “culture of Canadian farmers” – their independent streak, constant innovation and need to improve productivity without incurring oppressive debt.

Generally, farmers looking to expand their operations either rent more acreage or work with a lender to buy it. But renters often have little incentive to improve the land’s long-term productivity and overall value – by clearing brush or adding tile drainage, for example.

“So (if you’re a farmer), you would like to buy the land because you know there is value in it but you don’t want the debt. If you owned it, you would do those other things that would let you add value to it but there is no model that would let you do that and be rewarded for it,” she said.

Area One changes that game by matching farmers and investors who would together benefit from the equity created by buying the land.

“If I want to be in partnership with the best farmers, then I want to give them what they value, and I believe they value appreciation. If I want to do that, then what does the investor need to participate in to make this work?”

It is, she says, a new economy of agriculture, taking into account the needs of investors, whether they work on Bay Street or in a field on a dirt road.

**“I AM BUILDING SOMETHING THAT HAS TO BE GOOD FOR THE FARMER AND, IF IT IS, THEN IT WILL BE GOOD FOR EVERYONE.”**

She calls it “third-kid financing” – that is, financing that helps stretch the capacity for families who want to pass the farm along to the next generation beyond the first and second child, but who don’t have enough land and/or capital to make it happen.

“If you want to bring a kid home, if you want to tell them you have a place for them on the farm, relative to other options, you have to give them some predictability that they have a long-term option to stay.

“That’s the gap we work in.”

Now the company has invested in 100,000 acres, most in Western Canada. That’s where the land is highest in potential, far from urban centres, she says.

“The joke is, I go to a city you may not want to live in, and then I drive four more hours. It’s really, really great land that is primed for productivity.”

While some would-be investors have pressed for a larger share of the pie, Faulkner pushes back. Understanding how farmers think, and understanding both the economy of agriculture and the business of business, makes this work, she says.

“I am building something that has to be good for the farmer and, if it is, then it will be good for everyone. We’re trying to build a business that does the right thing.” **WAG**

# HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE TEQUILA?

BY JEFF RENAUD

In the early days of Tequila Tromba, Eric Brass, HBA'05, faced a huge obstacle. And knowing the formula for 'discounted cash flow' by heart wasn't going to help. Thank god Ivey Business School also teaches students how to solve a problem or two – or maybe a million. Fast-forward a few years. Tromba is now the No. 2 premium tequila in Canada and one of fastest growing tequilas brands in North America, but at the time, Brass and his partners knew they had an exceptional product. They just lacked the resources (read: money).

Industry insiders told Brass he needed at least \$1 million to get Tromba off the agave plant, but the most he could rustle up was \$20,000 from his savings and some family and friends. So like any good Ivey grad worth a lick of salt, Brass got solving.

"A lot of really smart guys told me that we needed \$1 million to launch a tequila brand in a major market like Ontario and they weren't wrong," laughed Brass. "The only thing to do was to go around and speak to the bartenders and have them taste Tromba and fall in love with it. And we did just that. We backpacked bar by bar, bottle by bottle, and we ended up the No. 1 tequila in bars and restaurants in the province. And we're very proud of that."

Problem solved.

And guess what? Brass didn't need to know his discounted cash flow to find his answer.

"I can memorize the formula for discounted cash flow from



Eric Brass, HBA'05, founded Tequila Tromba in 2010, inspired by an international exchange to Mexico as an Ivey student. (PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)

"GOING TO THE CEEPS AND JIM BOB'S, MOST PEOPLE DON'T HAVE A GOOD TEQUILA STORY. THEY HAVE A BAD TEQUILA STORY."

a textbook, but do you know how many times I've put a discounted cash flow together in the real world? I don't remember a time when I've done that," Brass quipped. "Even when we're evaluating our business nobody asks for a discounted cash flow."

That's the Ivey difference. Of course, Brass says there is a time and a place (and an importance) for memorizing the definitions of 'debt,' 'dividends' and 'discounted cash flow' but the thing Ivey does best is teach its students to solve problems based on a *learn-by-doing* approach.

It's called the Ivey case study method.

And it works.

You just might not know it at first.

"I definitely didn't appreciate that approach when

I was going through Ivey. I just didn't see the tangible benefit," said Brass, who also mentioned his entrepreneurship class with Eric Morse as an Ivey highlight. "It's not like taking a test and getting right and wrong answers. It's a bit fuzzy. But even with my first job in investments and asset management, I understood exactly why and how it works. It trains you to become a great problem solver. And you start to approach problems almost subconsciously. Just take a step back and every problem is just like a case. You don't even have to think about it. It's kind of ingrained in your mind. It just clicks. Now I'm a really great problem solver and I credit Ivey with that."

What isn't a problem for Brass and Tromba is the quality of the tequila. That's because one of his partners is Marco

Cedano, the 'godfather of modern premium tequila.'

While at Ivey, Brass studied in Mexico as part of an international exchange. One of the life-long friends he made during his stay was Rodrigo Cedano, the son of the legendary tequila maker. The elder Cedano was the original master distiller at Don Julio. Now, both Cedanos are partners in Tromba.

"Marco is really our big advantage. His son and I became friends when I was on exchange. When we came up with the idea for Tromba, we thought better be lucky than smart, so we pitched him on being our master distiller. That's like asking Wayne Gretzky to play for your men's league hockey team," Brass said. "We thought he would tell us to bugger off, but he actually said he was interested because he'd never been a partner. He'd always been an employee and never had full control of the production

process. Well now he does. At Tromba, Marco and Rodrigo oversee every single step of the production process."

When asked point blank the difference between a good tequila – let alone a premium one – and a bad tequila, Brass didn't flinch.

"There is definitely bad tequila. Most people have had bad tequila because it's a mix of 51 per cent agave tequila and 49 per cent sugar distillate, corn syrup and caramel and I had many of those when I was going to Western," admitted Brass unabashedly. "That's what I thought tequila was. Going to The Ceeps and Jim Bob's, most people don't have a good tequila story. They have a bad tequila story."

Tromba, like other premium tequilas, is 100 per cent agave but even those tequilas aren't created equal.

"Think of tequila like a steak," offered Brass. "You can get a steak at an OK restaurant or you can get a steak at a fancy, top-of-the-line steak house like Morton's. They're both steaks but the meats are different grades; they're seasoned a different way, they're marinated a different way and they're cooked in a different way. There are many, many things that separate one steak from another steak. And they're priced accordingly. It's everything from soup to nuts. Everything from raw materials to how they're plated is different but they're still both steaks. And the same things goes for 100 per cent agave tequila. Some are good quality, some are not."

Tromba is good quality. And it's a good story. That's a problem that doesn't need solving. [WAG](#)



(PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)



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# Signature Events

**Friday, October 19**

## WESTERN MUSTANGS SPORTS HALL OF FAME DINNER

5:00 p.m. Reception

6:30 p.m. Dinner

The Great Hall, Somerville House

Honouring extraordinary athletic alumni.

\$75 per person. Advanced registration required.



**Saturday, October 20**

## ALUMNI TAILGATE AND BBQ

10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Huron Flats Parking Lot, TD Stadium

Live music, children's activities, a commemorative photo opportunity and free Homecoming giveaways while supplies last. Learn more about the 'purple perks' program and receive special offers. This is a dry event.

BBQ lunch available for \$5.



## SOUTH END ZONE EXPERIENCE

11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. TD Stadium

Join us for eats and cleats in style at field level in the South End Zone. Watch your 2017 Vanier Cup Champions play the Laurier Golden Hawks in what promises to be some great football action. Lunch takes place between 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and the game kicks off at 1:00 p.m. Experience includes tented area, lunch off the grill, access to a private cash bar and a game ticket.

Lunch and game ticket prices:

Adult (13+): \$45 Section D reserved seat/\$40 general admission seat

Youth (12 & Under): \$45 Section D reserved seat/\$25 general admission seat



## THE GAME: WESTERN MUSTANGS VS. LAURIER GOLDEN HAWKS

1:00 p.m. TD Stadium

Football tickets only:

Call 519-661-4077 or order online at [westernmustangstickets.ca](http://westernmustangstickets.ca)



## GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY DINNER

5:00 p.m. Reception

6:00 p.m. Dinner

The Great Hall, Somerville House

Join your classmates from 1968 and earlier for an elegant evening featuring a three-course meal and musical entertainment. Golden reunion pins will be bestowed.

Advanced registration required. Seating by reunion year. Complimentary for alumni celebrating their reunion year ('68, '63, '58, '53, '48, '43). \$50 for guests or alumni in non-reunion years.



## Explore Western's new and iconic spaces

Building tours provide a chance to see campus changes close up

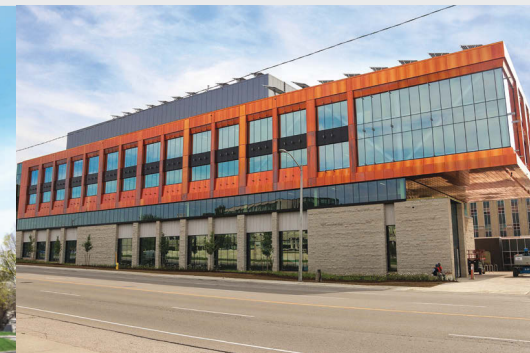
**Saturday, October 20**



### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Official re-opening at 11:00 a.m. followed by tours until 12:30 p.m. (Conron Hall)

Following four years of renovations, the home of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities has been restored to its grandeur. Don't miss this chance to see how one of the first buildings to grace Western's campus has been transformed.



### NEW ENGINEERING BUILDING (THREE C+)

Annual open house and tours 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (Atrium)

A project unlike any other in Western's history, the new Engineering building is informally dubbed Three C+ for its spaces to 'connect, collaborate and create'. A potential Platinum LEED building, Three C+ is a living laboratory and a showcase for intelligent and sustainable design.



### MUSIC BUILDING

Tours 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Lobby)  
Grand opening 4:00 p.m. (von Kuster Hall)

Stop by to see the exciting new rehearsal, performance and classroom spaces as a result of a \$23.5-million renovation project, including a five-storey tower in the courtyard space between the Music Building and Talbot College.

Tear out and take with you

## Come home and connect.

Start making plans to come back to campus for Homecoming – everyone is welcome!

Complimentary parking available in most campus lots after 4 p.m. on Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday during Homecoming weekend.

For more information, including a complete listing of all Homecoming events and registration information, visit [westernhomecoming.uwo.ca](http://westernhomecoming.uwo.ca), email [alumni@uwo.ca](mailto:alumni@uwo.ca) or call our Homecoming Hotline at 519.661.2199 and let us help create your best Homecoming ever!

## Join the conversation



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## SIGNATURE EVENTS

Friday, October 19	Time
Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame Dinner, The Great Hall, Somerville House	5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 20	
Alumni Tailgate and BBQ, Huron Flats Parking Lot, TD Stadium	10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
South End Zone Experience, TD Stadium	11:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Homecoming Football Game: Laurier vs. Western, TD Stadium	1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Golden Anniversary Dinner, The Great Hall, Somerville House	5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

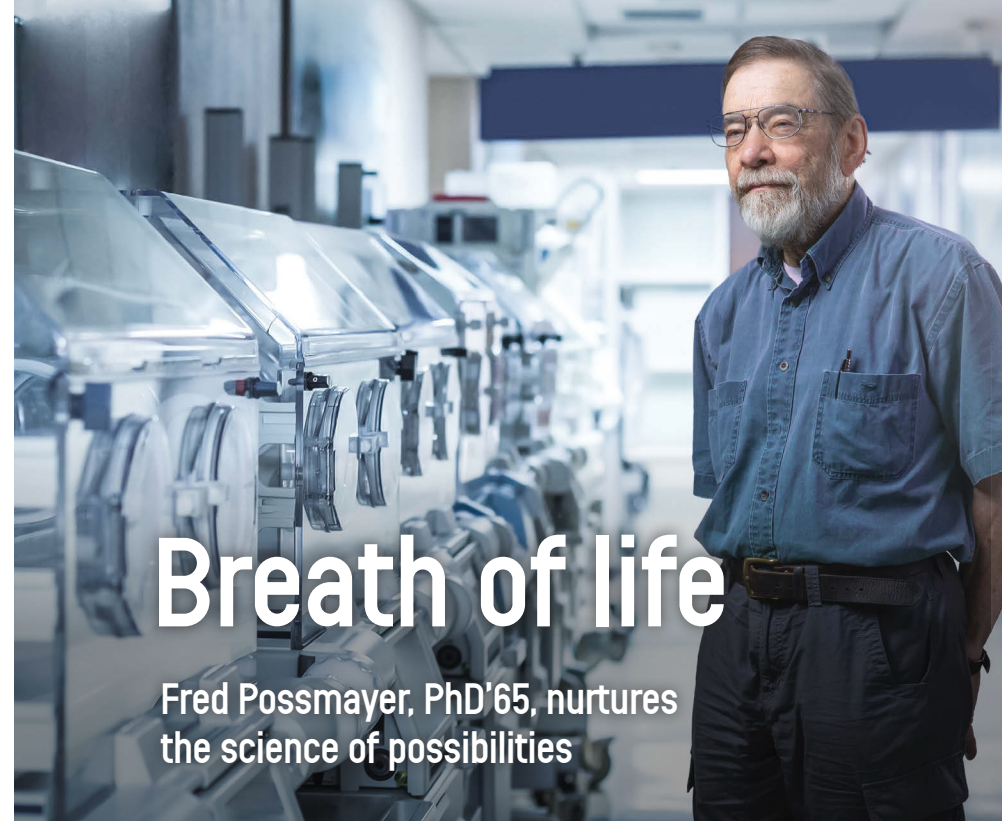
## FACULTY/PROGRAM EVENTS

Friday, October 19	Time
Schulich Dentistry - Periodontal Regeneration, Best Western Lamplighter Inn, 591 Wellington Rd.	8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Don Wright Faculty of Music - Concert with Adrienne Pieczonka, BMus'85, DMus'12, Music Building, von Kuster Hall	12:30 p.m. - 1:20 p.m.
Western Mustang Marching Band - 80th Anniversary, Delta Hotels by Marriott, 325 Dundas St.	6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Social Science - Meet the Dean at The Ceeps, 671 Richmond St.	7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 20	
Ivey - Welcome Back Open House, Richard Ivey Building, 1255 Western Rd.	9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Schulich Medicine & Dentistry - Opioids: A Country in Crisis Panel Discussion, Medical Sciences Building Rm. 146	9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.
Nursing - Alumni Chapter Annual Breakfast, Ivey Spencer Leadership Centre, 551 Windermere Rd.	9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Communication Sciences & Disorders, OT, PT and Health Sciences Rehabilitation - Reception, Elborn College Gym	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Ivey - Lecture Series, Richard Ivey Building, 1255 Western Rd.	10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Ivey - Pledge Ceremony, Richard Ivey Building, 1255 Western Rd.	10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Libraries - Archives Tour with Rare Books and Treasures, Archives & Research Collections Centre, D.B. Weldon Library	10:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
Schulich Medicine & Dentistry - Dean's Distinguished Lecture with Dr. Paul Polak, MD'58, DSc'08, Medical Sciences Building Rm. 146	10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
Arts & Humanities - Official Re-Opening and Tours of University College, Conron Hall	11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Engineering - Annual Open House and Tours, Three C+ Building Atrium (new Engineering building)	11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Science - BBQ with Rick McGhie, Grad Club, Middlesex College	11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Nursing - Simulation Suite Tour, FIMS/Nursing Building	11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Schulich Medicine & Dentistry - Alumni Lunch, Physics & Astronomy Building Atrium	11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Law - Homecoming Football Game, South End Zone, TD Stadium	11:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Health Studies & Kinesiology - Homecoming Football Game, South End Zone, TD Stadium	11:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Ivey - Dean's Welcome & Lunch, BMO Financial Group Auditorium, Richard Ivey Building, 1255 Western Rd.	11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
McIntosh Gallery - Exhibition <i>620 to 550</i> by Malcolm Pate	12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Don Wright Faculty of Music - Tours of the Music Building	12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Ivey - Case Study, Richard Ivey Building, 1255 Western Rd.	1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Chemistry - Alumni Social, Chemistry Building Rm. 105	1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Information & Media Studies - Homecoming Speakers & Panel, FIMS/Nursing Building	1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Education - Homecoming Alumni Concert, Music Building Grand Opening & Reception, Talbot College & Music Building	2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Don Wright Faculty of Music - Alumni Concert, Paul Davenport Theatre, Talbot College	2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Don Wright Faculty of Music - Grand Opening, von Kuster Hall, Music Building	4:00 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.
Don Wright Faculty of Music - Homecoming & Grand Opening Reception, Music Building Main Lobby	4:45 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Schulich Dentistry - Alumni Cocktail Reception, London Convention Centre, 300 York St.	5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Schulich Medicine & Dentistry - Golden Alumni Cocktail Party, London Convention Centre, 300 York St.	5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Schulich Medicine & Dentistry - Dean's Gala, London Convention Centre, 300 York St.	6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Engineering - Reception & Lauchland Medal Presentation, Double Tree by Hilton, 300 King St.	6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, October 21	
Ivey - Golden Alumni Brunch, Richard Ivey Building, 1255 Western Rd.	9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Some events require advance registration. Visit [westernhomecoming.uwo.ca](http://westernhomecoming.uwo.ca), call 519-661-2199 or email [alumni@uwo.ca](mailto:alumni@uwo.ca) for details. For a complete listing of all events, including athletic events and those hosted by Brescia, Huron and King's, visit [westernhomecoming.uwo.ca](http://westernhomecoming.uwo.ca).



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## Breath of life

Fred Possmayer, PhD'65, nurtures the science of possibilities

BY DEBORA VAN BRENK, BA'86, MA'87 (JOURNALISM)

Breathe in. Feel those lungs expand in your chest. Consider how remarkable it is your lungs reflexively continue that task – 15 or so breaths a minute, 20,000 a day.

The unheralded hero of that story is a naturally occurring, micro-thin film that lines the tiny air sacs in your lungs and keeps them from collapsing when you exhale. Without this pulmonary surfactant – a slippery combination of proteins and fats that work together to reduce the surface tension of the fluid in the lungs – breathing would exhaust you. You'd be unable to take a deep breath, to draw in life-giving oxygen or to expel its waste product, carbon dioxide.

Mere breathing would be as difficult as trying to inflate a dollar-store balloon.

That's the life-threatening condition faced by many premature babies, whose little bodies haven't yet produced enough surfactant for their tiny lungs and who often suffer from life-threatening Infant Respiratory Distress Syndrome (RDS).

Enter Fred Possmayer, an RDS pioneer finding solutions that, since the late 1980s, have saved thousands of lives around the world.

Possmayer, PhD'65, conducted all of his surfactant research at Western during a five-decade career that included hundreds of published research papers and scores of invited lectures. His laboratory's work to sterilize and purify bovine lung surfactant was named among the Top 50 most significant Ontario research discoveries of the century.

Underweight and premature, Possmayer went into respiratory distress soon after birth in 1939. There were no ventilators; no one knew pulmonary surfactant existed, much less that preemies struggling to breathe were lacking in it.

"What they knew was keeping the babies warm and maybe jiggling them once in a while to get them breathing

again," Possmayer said.

It was only in 1954 that scientists Richard Pattle and John Clements first demonstrated lung surfactant (whose existence Swiss scientist Kurt von Neergard had hypothesized in the late 1920s in a paper that was widely ignored for almost three decades). In 1959, American paediatrician Dr. Mary Ellen Avery linked RDS in pre-term babies to a deficiency of surfactant.

In 1963, this syndrome became part of the world's lexicon when it claimed the life of baby Patrick Bouvier Kennedy, premature infant son of the U.S. President and First Lady.

But that research was far in the future for Possmayer, whose father came to Canada from Romania with a Grade 3 education, an analytical mind

and the hope of building a better life for his family.

The young Possmayer excelled in the sciences and earned his PhD in biochemistry from Western in 1965. This was specialized basic science. "I had to be very independent at the time," he recalled.

After graduation, he pursued postdoctoral training at the University of Cologne and the University of Utrecht. At the University of California, he specialized in plant biochemistry.

**"If you give BLES, there's an improvement in breathing within 10 minutes and usually by 12 hours, surfactant function is normal."**

In 1971, he returned to Canada, where Western researchers Earl Plunkett and Kenneth P. Strickland, who was Possmayer's PhD supervisor, hired him to examine the role of fetal insulin on brain development. He was quickly diverted to another problem: developing an amniotic fluid test to determine the maturity of fetal lungs.

That was the genesis of his research into lung surfactants.

He began working with Goran Enhorning in Toronto, and they demonstrated in tests that surfactant helped premature rabbits breathe and survive. But it was a long stretch to translate the success with bunnies to babies. What was needed was a reliable, abundant source of pulmonary surfactant – and a method of extracting, purifying and sterilizing it so it could be administered safely to premature babies.

A small abattoir west of London, Ont., helped solve that issue by providing the lab with lungs for \$5 per cow.

"They were interested in helping us for the sake of helping us," Possmayer said, crediting Western-based research associate Shou-Hwa Yu with developing a method for mass processing the precious surfactant. An organic solvent extraction procedure proved key to eliminating microorganisms and protein contaminants while also maintaining surfactant efficacy.



They called it Bovine Lipid Extract Surfactant (BLES).  
 With the assistance of Dr. Graham Chance, Director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, St. Joseph's Health Care London, they began their attempts to treat premature newborns.

"You need to treat them before the lungs are damaged. You're buying them time until they can produce their own surfactant," Possmayer said.

It worked. Testing showed the surfactant needed to be given early, immediately at the first sign of RDS.

"If you give BLES, there's an improvement in breathing within 10 minutes and usually by 12 hours, surfactant function is normal."

Possmayer and Enhorning's 1985 paper – the world's first randomized, controlled clinical trial – demonstrated surfactant therapy saved premature babies' lives. This proved a turning point in premature newborn care around the world.

The lab expanded to meet the newfound demand and included virtually every neonatal unit in Canada. "Other hospitals – Ottawa, Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia, all over Canada – started using this stuff." Morbidity and mortality rates among premature babies dropped.

Once Health and Welfare Canada approved BLES as a drug therapy, other countries signed on and BLES is now used in 20 countries. About 99 per cent of Canada's neonatal intensive care units use BLES.

Now the process continues, as it is being investigated for use in adults suffering from acute lung injury. BLES Biochemicals, although no longer owned by Possmayer, continues to process and supply surfactant to hospitals around the world.

Possmayer, now retired but still active in the Western community, is quick to deflect praise to others, including the support of his wife Mary; and to Enhorning, Yu, Chance (now Paediatrics Professor Emeritus), Dr. Paul Harding, Obstetrics and Gynaecology Professor Emeritus and Dr. Victor Han, Western Paediatrics Professor and Canada Research Chair.

In 2009, the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research recognized Possmayer with the Top Canadian Achievement in Health



Together, Possmayer (left) and Dr. Shou-Hwa-Yu developed a method for mass processing Bovine Lipid Extract Surfactant (BLES).

(PHOTOS BY FRANK NEUFELD)

Research Award. In 2015, he was named one of the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry's Alumni of Distinction. His publication authorship contributions, numbering more than 320, have been cited almost 10,000 times.

Better than all the accolades, though, is the legacy of babies such as Tyler, born in 1988 at 26 weeks. Treated with BLES, then an experimental drug, the tiny infant recovered.

"Last I heard of him, he was a pre-med student." [WAG](#)

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# Not afraid to ask

ROB PATERSON, BA'90, NEVER DODGES THE TOUGH QUESTIONS HE LEARNED TO ASK AT WESTERN

BY JASON WINDERS, MES'10, PHD'17

(PHOTO BY MARK SOMMERFELD)

**F**rom his earliest days on campus in the 1980s, to revolutionizing Canadian banking practices today, Rob Paterson, BA'90 (Philosophy), has never backed away from answering the hard questions he first learned to ask at Western.

"Think of all those global consulting companies where everyone went to biz school. What are you looking for in those companies when you hire them?" asked the CEO of Alterna Savings & Credit Union. "You are looking for people with problem-solving skills – the ability to frame problems, solve problems, resolve problems.

"Biz school is fine. But I am a big proponent of arts degrees because of the critical-thinking skills they instill. Spending four years in Philosophy classrooms at Western set me up to be a critical thinker and effective communicator who can sell ideas across an organization, get a board onside and demonstrate that when you, say, decide to get into the medical cannabis space, it is not an off-the-cuff decision. You can go to the points of reason and rationale why."

More on that in a moment.

Growing up in Paris and Hong Kong, Paterson was tech-literate before we knew what that meant. Between the computer lab at his international school in Hong Kong, the computer his dad brought home as CFO for IBM Asia, and an early Wozniak-days Apple in his bedroom, he was plugged-in long before he arrived on campus.

At Western, he used that knowhow to start a consulting company to help small London area businesses automate operations. He sourced

equipment, built a curriculum for employee training and installed the hardware himself.

"When I saw the difficulties these smaller companies were having automating, I knew I was able to come in and help them. And it wouldn't just be one company; there were quite a few companies in London who needed this type of help," Paterson said. "It was a great opportunity."

Given a passion for debate, he embraced the free flow of ideas in his Philosophy classes. "It was there where I developed my own views and outlook on life. I was able to conflict with and debate with other students my age, as well as professors. The professors encouraged that even as debates ended in class and often continued in The Elbow Room."

Following graduation, he spent his early career in massive organizations – CIBC, JP Morgan Chase, Aon Corp. and McKinsey & Co. But he longed for a challenge to define himself.

"When you are in large corporations, you can get by never knowing how much of success is you versus the infrastructure, the power of your brand or the big budgets they can put behind you."

That was the attraction of the top post at Alterna. Among the oldest credit unions in the country, the organization was struggling to find its place in the modern banking world.

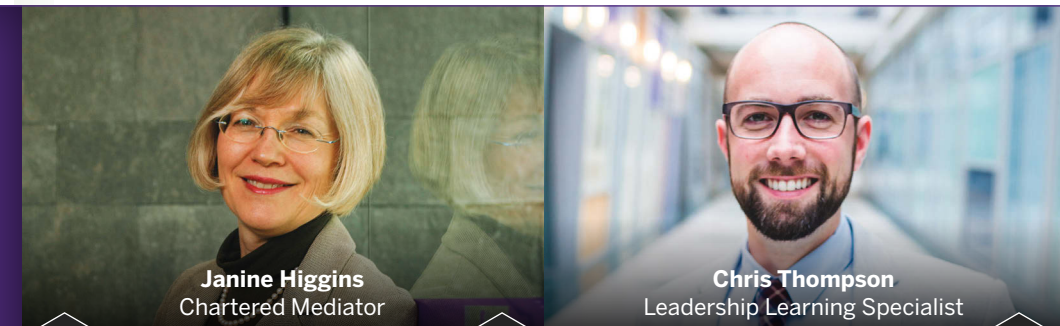
"There was this opportunity to come in and redo the entire organization from culture to capabilities," Paterson explained. "I saw it as the ultimate test of myself. This was returning to my roots of running my own business – it was going to be up to me."

Since taking the top spot in April 2012, Paterson has led a revolution in his organization

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and industry. He has radically altered fintech – financial technology – by shedding old thinking, developing creative partnerships and asking tough questions of his operation. He leverages the credit union’s nimble nature to create change; he embraces a loyalty to customers, not shareholders or analysts.

His successes are numerous, but it was his company’s decision to back a small medical marijuana company that woke up an entire industry.

Three years ago, an entrepreneur wanted to turn an abandoned Hershey chocolate plant in Smiths Falls, Ont. into a medical marijuana factory. Despite the almost limitless opportunity within the sector, and a firm legal foundation, big banks wanted no part of the business. Exhausting those options, the entrepreneur approached Paterson.

He passed. Then he paused. Why had he passed?

“On surface, you hear ‘marijuana’ and people say, ‘Why would I want to be in that?’ But when you spend the time to problem-solve around it, you see this is something for Canadians who are in critical care. This was a real company with real objectives,” Paterson explained.

This was a business fully vetted by government, fully secured by law enforcement, and a needed product and service by customers. The Big Banks saw saying ‘yes’ as putting their other profitable areas at risk. Paterson, however, saw saying ‘no’ as going against everything a credit union stands for.

“Who am I to say I am not going to provide them services

when I know that the people who are going to benefit are the people in critical care,” he explained.

“When I look at what our roots are supposed to be – to exist for the benefit of our community, to aid and help our members from birth to death – there is not an ethical way to rationalize not providing these services. I had a problem if we didn’t do this. This was exactly what a credit union was to do.”

His board agreed – and what a success story they have to tell.

Today, Canopy Growth Co. is the world’s largest publicly traded marijuana producer, with a market value of more than \$6 billion.

On top of that, Paterson prides himself on the economic hope and life the company has injected into the once-fading town. “They are providing quality jobs. The schools are filling up. The homes are filling up. That is what good banking is supposed to be. I am happy to say I had a part in that.”

As for Alterna, that initial ‘yes’ has grown. The company now has \$750 million in pot-related loans and deposits and relationships with two-thirds of the 100 licensed producers.

It is a success Paterson attributes to asking himself and his company the hard questions.

“This was the true test to see if we could be true to our roots. Here was something where we had to stand up and say, ‘Yes, all those things we said we are, here we are demonstrating them on an actual hard issue.’” *WAG*

**“THIS WAS  
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COMPANY  
WITH REAL  
OBJECTIVES.”**



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Life’s brighter under the sun

# Breaking the uncomfortable silence

BY LINDA BARNARD

**N**atalie Novak was no more than five years old and she was fearless. A grinning little girl. A Muskoka lake. A summer day. On the dock, she did not hesitate. She flew down the water slide into the lake, splashing into water over her head, making sure to do it when her parents, Dawn and Ed, weren't looking. She was the opposite of most kids, who holler: "Mom, look! Watch me!" Not Natalie.

She didn't want to be told "no." She didn't want to hear she couldn't do something. Several years later, when her parents were out for the evening, she and her adored older brother, Nicolas, got the idea to leap from the second floor of their house into a pile of pillows on the floor below. Natalie went first.

And then there was the day she slipped on the ice as she got out of the car. She was four years old and there was no way she was going to admit she'd fallen. "I must have fainted," Natalie announced as she popped to her feet.

That was Natalie. A bit of a rascal. Confident. Curious. Afraid of nothing, except perhaps looking foolish.

"A fiercely independent girl," her mother calls her.

There are so many stories, so many memories.

Dawn shares them while sitting in a chair by the fire in the living room. She smiles and laughs as she talks about her daughter. Her eyes fill occasionally. Ed can be heard in his studio just off the living room. He's listening, always there for Dawn, but she tells the story.

There's a watch on her wrist. It has a fashionably chunky silver bracelet and small, blue crystal face. It's a good watch, one that Natalie had saved up to buy. Years later, it was found among 20-year-old Natalie's things after she was murdered in 2006, stabbed to death by her ex-boyfriend in the bedroom of her Toronto apartment.

Now Dawn wears it.

How can Dawn bear to tell it again? There is such sorrow coming in this part of Natalie's story, such heartbreak, frustration and anger about a death both predictable and preventable.



(PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)

There's a reason why her mother bears to keep on telling it. It's all for Natalie, to keep this from happening to another woman and her family. To tell people this could happen to anyone, to warn and to educate.

"This is such a powerful message. We all think we're special or smarter, that those things will protect you, or those things happen to other people," Dawn says. Natalie met Arsei Hindessa in her first year of university, 21 months before her death. They had an off-and-on relationship. For 16 months, he abused her.

He was a slick fellow, Dawn thought when she first met him. Easy with the charm and quick to share information that could never be verified, he was older than Natalie. Dawn likened him to *Leave It To Beaver's* insincere Eddie Haskell.

She had no clue that Hindessa was abusing and terrorizing her daughter for months before he murdered her in her apartment bedroom because she wanted to end their relationship.

There were so many warning signs.

He had assaulted Natalie three times in the past. There had been restraining orders and parole requirements that he stay away from her. Five days before her murder, Hindessa failed to show up for a meeting with his parole officer. There was no follow-up.

"It was the final instalment in a history of physical violence perpetuated by him," Superior Court Justice Anne Molloy said in sentencing Hindessa to life in prison for second-degree murder in 2009 without eligibility for parole for 18 years. "He is a danger to society, particularly women."

Her friends knew and were sometimes nearby when Natalie was verbally and physically attacked. Natalie, who called 911 when she was assaulted, revealed nothing about what she was going through to her family.

She was confident and extremely bright, but she was also naive.

Dawn says her daughter was terrified, ashamed and unable to process what was happening or how to stop it. Her self-confidence eroded. At the same time, she felt responsible for helping Hindessa because of his difficult past as an Ethiopian refugee.

She didn't feel like a victim.

Natalie mentioned things in passing when she came home to visit or when she and her mom met in Toronto. Dawn later realized these were ways of blocking questions that would reveal her violent relationship.

Natalie volunteered she had sudden hair loss and showed her mother some bruises. Maybe she needed to change her diet? She'd read lack of certain vitamins could cause people to bruise more easily. Maybe she should see her doctor?

Dawn had no way of knowing Hindessa was hitting her and pulling out handfuls of hair.

Natalie also seemed less confident and, uncharacteristically, she doubted herself.

She just wasn't the same.

She was not the same dance-crazy teen who had a remarkable sense of style and a domestic streak, working part-time as a waitress to buy just the right clothes and beautiful bed linens to make her room a showplace. This wasn't the same little girl who took ballet lessons, then jazz and hip-hop, or who, as a teen, loved animals, music, hanging out with her large group of girlfriends, laughing when they got caught sneaking smokes outside after dance class.

Natalie had no idea of the danger she was in, had never been

taught or told about the escalating dangers of abuse and its warning signs.

Education could have saved Natalie. Or so her mother thinks. So would awareness among her friends about the need to speak up. But they were hesitant to talk about the abuse and they didn't want to embarrass Natalie. Someone closer to her would mention it. Right?

And finally, co-ordination and communication and following procedure and policy among police, courts and social services could have raised red flags that might have kept Hindessa away from Natalie.

When Dawn speaks to police training classes, she tells them they must believe women when they reach out for help. Don't minimize trauma.

"It's not for men and people to say how traumatized you've been, how destructive this behaviour is being to your personality. Natalie was really struggling," Dawn says. "She was a frightened, confused young woman who thought she was doing better because she was leaving him. That was what happened the night she died."

Since 1992, collaborative research at Western's Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women and Children (CREVAWC) has been ongoing to understand and prevent relationship violence through education and awareness.

Among the community education tools the centre provides is education for young people on healthy dating relationships. It also details dozens of warning signs of abuse and ways of reporting and helping.

Peter Jaffe, CREVAWC Academic Director, says what happened to Natalie was tragically typical.

"Obviously, the outcome is the most extreme. It is every parent's nightmare," he says. "But it's typical in terms of being in a dating relationship, not necessarily talking openly to parents and friends about what's happening, trying to put up with abuse and look for excuses about someone's mental health problems or stress."

Jaffe is also a founding member of the Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee, where research has shown young women aged 15-24 are at greatest risk of relationship violence.

"People don't recognize the risk," he says. They dismiss it, saying, "It's only dating, they're not married." The assumption is that it's older women, those who are married or in partnerships with a home and kids that are at the greatest risk of relationship violence.

Western's research shows in 80 per cent of domestic homicides, at least seven risk factors were present. Natalie's case had 21 warning signs of abuse.

Risk factors include stalking, physical abuse, lying by the aggressor, being isolated, planning to leave the relationship, enduring put downs and being dominated.

Jaffe says women need an "ongoing safety plan and how to stay safe and how to stay away," when leaving an abusive situation.

Dawn didn't know about or recognize the signs of abuse. If only she'd known what her daughter was going through, she would have gotten Natalie out of Toronto

and home immediately. Meanwhile, Natalie didn't know she was at risk and didn't know about making a safety plan to get out.

Natalie did talk to her girlfriends about what was happening in her relationship, which Jaffe explains is also common. Women are five times more likely to discuss partner violence with friends than other adults.

Jaffe says initiating a final break-up is a big risk factor in an abusive relationship built on exerting power and having control. Natalie was trying to end her relationship when she was killed. Dawn believes her daughter hoped they could remain friends.

## WESTERN'S RESEARCH SHOWS IN 80 PER CENT OF DOMESTIC HOMICIDES, AT LEAST SEVEN RISK FACTORS WERE PRESENT. NATALIE'S CASE HAD 21 WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSE.



Education is key and the fact that Dawn and Ed have continued to share Natalie's story in such depth has been "very important" to his work, Jaffe says.

Dawn uses the research and recommendations of the Death Review Committee in her talks.

"I talk a great deal about the importance of risks, understanding what to do. Once you know that the information is there, it's the blueprint of what you can do about it and the infrastructure exists," she says, emphasizing the need for collaboration in case management among "all the different factions," including the legal system.

"Education, education, education."

When Natalie was born, she came "in a flurry and hurry" in a maternity waiting room in Hamilton, Ont. When she was a toddler, the family decided to move just north of Bracebridge,

where Natalie and Nicolas grew up in the family home Ed built largely by himself over a number of years.

The Novak house is on the crest of a wooded hill, up a curving driveway. Modern and cozy, it's a light-filled space where you can warm yourself by the stone fireplace or watch the sun move along a curved wall, shining on one of artist Ed's many paintings.

There are crafts from Mexico on display. The family's adventures there helped spark an interest in travel for Natalie that would lead her to study Hospitality and Tourism Management as a 17-year-old undergraduate.

Maybe she would run a hotel someday, but it had to be in a warm climate. She'd become fluent in Spanish.

They delighted in living like pioneers in the early years while Ed worked on the house. Dawn was a teacher, focusing in her later career on special-needs children. The kids played in one part of the house while Ed worked on another.

In winter, Natalie skated on the ice rink Ed made on a flat patch near the house.

In summer, she and Nicolas went for daily afternoon walks in the woods surrounding the house with their dad. They collected monarch butterfly cocoons. Natalie took them home and nurtured them, full of questions and anxious to see the brilliantly coloured insects that fascinated her emerge and fly.

A photo of her intently examining a monarch butterfly in her gently cupped hands before it flies for the first time is one of her parents' favourites.

For many, that photo has come to symbolize more than Natalie's spirit. It has come to symbolize hope.

The butterfly photo is the first that greet website visitors to the Natalie Novak Fund for the Education and Prevention of Relationship Violence. Through that group, Dawn leads workshops on healthy relationships in schools and in the community and speaks to police officer training groups about the need for communication around domestic abuse.

The video that Dawn uses in her presentations to introduce Natalie is titled *If Only ... Nat's Story*.

"You know it took us a long time to come up with the title and when it came, it was like we all just looked at each other and went 'Oh my god, that's it.' Because there are so many 'If Onlys' in Natalie's story."

Dawn reads from the back of a pamphlet given out at her talks. If only Natalie had been educated, she says. If only she knew anything about relationship violence. If only she had been connected with a women's shelter or support line. If only friends understood the danger she was in.

"If she just knew this isn't nothing, honey," Dawn says. "My mission is just to protect young people with awareness and education and educate frontline workers."

Dawn and Ed also created a comprehensive study, *A Constructive Analysis of the Murder of Natalie Novak*, which details the case and has been used as a policing teaching tool at Wilfrid Laurier University and police colleges in Aylmer and Orillia.

Natalie's second-floor bedroom has been changed, but there's still a painting of young ballerinas over the bed that Ed painted for Natalie. Her white figure skates are still in the closet. There's a heavy earthenware mug Natalie loved in a low, glass-fronted cupboard, tucked among baby shoes, books and dried flowers.

There is also a small urn containing some of her ashes.

Dawn stands at the bedroom window overlooking the woods, with the lake in sight, and recalls Natalie calling down to her while she was working in the garden about a phone call or with a question. There are so many stories, so many memories.

Dawn will continue to tell people about what happened to their beloved Natalie.

"I wish very much and I hope very much that there is a spirit of Natalie but there's a part of me that understands that perhaps all that exists of Natalie is what's in my heart and my memories," she says. "So another reason I talk, is to not let her go." **WAG**



(PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)

# EMPOWERING WOMAN

Farah Mohamed, MA'95, LLD'18, lifts up a world of opportunity for millions

BY KERI FERGUSON

In April 2017, Taliban assassination survivor, education activist and Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai stood before the House of Commons and announced, "A Canadian will now lead the fight for girls' education around the world." She was speaking of Farah Mohamed.

Mohamed, MA'95, LLD'18, became the CEO of the Malala Fund last July, overseeing an organization co-founded by Yousafzai and her father, Ziauddin, to champion every girl's right to 12 years of free, safe, quality education.

"All my life, I've been building up to this moment," Mohamed said, referencing past roles in government, the social profit sector, and her most recent post serving as the Chief Empowerment Officer of G(irls)20, an enterprise that places girls and women at the centre of the G20 process.

"In my service to girls, I could have been any one of them." Mohamed was just two years old when her family fled Uganda under the expulsion order of dictator Idi Amin, who, in a mass ethnic cleansing, gave Indian Ugandans just 90 days to leave the country.

"How lucky am I they chose Canada?" she said of her parents, who instilled in her the importance of service.

After completing her undergraduate degree, Mohamed looked to get involved in a political campaign at her parent's urging. She did – on her own terms – meeting with all the candidates, before deciding for whom she'd campaign. The winning candidate was Liberal Paddy Torsney, who, with Mohamed as her campaign aide, clinched the riding of Burlington, upsetting a 20-year Conservative stronghold.

Mohamed was quick upon the win to ask the new MP for a job.

"She said, 'No.' I wrote her a letter and told her why she was wrong. She then said, 'I will hire you but you need to

go do what you said you would do,' which was to get my master's," Mohamed explained. "That's how I came to Western."

Torsney was true to her word, calling Mohamed half-way through her graduate degree in Political Science and International Relations, inviting her to join her team at school's end. "If Paddy had given me that job initially, I would not have gotten my master's, and I don't know where I would have ended up," Mohamed said.

After four years, Mohamed moved on, becoming Director of Communications for Anne McLellan in her role as Minister of Justice, Minister of Health, and Deputy Prime Minister of Canada.

"Paddy took a real chance on me, and really had my back. She understood what it meant for me to get a higher station of education. She created my first opportunity in politics, which I will never forget, and then encouraged me to seek out another opportunity. This goes to show how one person can make a difference in another's life, why you should take time to invest in people. Mentorship matters. Women can lift other women. I really do believe Paddy, and Anne, set me up for this job."

As did Belinda Stronach, who hired Mohamed on her reputation alone to serve as the Inaugural President of the Belinda Stronach Foundation. The opportunity came at the perfect time for Mohamed, who had been shaken after visiting Uganda following a fundraising climb up Mount Kilimanjaro in her role as Vice-President, Public Affairs and Community Engagement with VON Canada.

"I was pretty devastated by what I saw," Mohamed said of the poverty of her birthplace. "I felt very grateful for Canada, but quite guilty. I came back and said to my boss at the VON, 'I'm giving you my notice. I have to do something in the development world. I don't know what it's going to be. I can't live in

a condo on the water, drive a nice car, eat out all the time and not remember where I came from and not try to do something.'

Responsible for all aspects of the Stronach Foundation, Mohamed launched its flagship programs, including One Laptop Per Child Canada, an initiative that gives Indigenous youth access to educational technology and workshops, and the G(irls) 20.

"I was reading about the G20 Leaders' Summit in the *Toronto Star* one night and at 4 a.m. I woke up and went, 'Oh my god, we have to have a G(irls) 20.' I pitched it to Belinda and six months later we had our very first summit in Toronto."

"It was my first really big risk in life," Mohamed said of the program that invests in the entrepreneurial passion and leadership skills of girls around the world, allowing them to present their ideas on the global empowerment of women to leaders of the G20 Summit.

Mohamed also started the associated Girls on Boards, which trains and places civic-minded Canadian women between the ages of 18-25 on non-profit governance boards in their communities.

Throughout her career, "I have been given an incredible opportunity to help people in the way I was helped," Mohamed said, and that now includes the 130 million girls around the world missing out on an education.

While the 48-year-old Mohamed may quip about having a "21-year-old boss," her respect for Yousafzai is serious.

"Malala's incredibly wise, has incredible values, an incredible family. She never loses sight of what's important. She doesn't feel the struggle for education is her own. She really does feel she is there on behalf of 130 million girls, and she does not take that lightly."

"She is very involved in a good way. We don't do anything without her. Strategically, we have a good board that includes Malala, who has given direction to the Fund, and my job is to make sure we do the work. Her job is to be a student at Oxford, my job is to run the Fund. And I'm very clear about that."

With Yousafzai in exams, that stance meant it was Mohamed delivering Malala's message at the recent G7 Summit in Charlevoix, Quebec.

"It is a global economic imperative that all girls, everywhere, are in school – that they stay there, they learn and they step out of school and into the workforce with 21st-Century skills and capabilities. Simply stated, girls are the economic game-changer you need," Mohamed said on Yousafzai's behalf.

The result of an appeal made by the Malala Fund and its many partners was a historic \$1.3-million investment in girls' education, and was more about economics than altruism, Mohamed explained.

"They have to create jobs, they have to make sure the economy works, they have to make sure their societies and their countries are safe. They have to make sure there is opportunity for all. Check, check, check. If you educate girls, you've really worked on the safety and security of the country."

The first year working alongside Malala and her father, connecting with donors and expanding into Latin America has been "full of 'wow' moments for me," Mohamed said, "because of the privilege of working on an issue I care so deeply about."

Mohamed's accomplishments have been recognized through both a Meritorious Decoration (2017) and a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Award (2012) from the Governor General of Canada, and on lists including the World's 100 Most Inspiring Women, BBC's Top 100, Top 25 Most Influential Women in Canada, and RBC's Top 25 Canadian

Immigrants.

In June she received an honorary degree from Western, a particularly poignant occasion, given it was also World Refugee Day.

"It is not lost on me that I, too, came here as a refugee," Mohamed told the graduating class. "My parents had to flee a country where they were no longer welcome. Thank god they arrived in a country that did not assume they were criminals first, and human beings second. Every day I am thankful they chose Canada." [WAG](#)

**"I HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP PEOPLE IN THE WAY I WAS HELPED."**



## Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame

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Western Alumni



The scene was one of squalor.

When Jeff Stober first walked in, there were stacks of dirty mattresses piled up in corners. Used needles and condoms were strewn about. The Drake Hotel, which opened its doors in one of Toronto's wealthiest neighbourhoods at the close of the 19th Century, had become a flophouse in a run-down quarter.

But during his tour nearly two decades ago, Stober saw something else.

"We all shine in our own chosen areas. The gift I've been fortunate in having is this capacity to very quickly visualize, interpret and imagine, to understand what something could be, what it would look like and all the implications therein," said the owner of the rejuvenated Drake, a now-iconic boutique hotel in West Queen West, a spot *Vogue* magazine listed among the world's trendiest neighbourhoods.

That first walk-through of the Drake was not the first time Stober saw – and created – new life between historic walls. Originally from Montreal, he arrived at Western in the late 1970s as part of the inaugural cohort of the Administrative and Commercial Studies program. The school was a good fit and London had that 'university town' feel Stober wanted to experience. Soon after, he was renting a basement apartment on Paul Street in an established neighbourhood traditionally reigned by a student population.

But Stober knew what he was working with even then. He knew what he liked, what he wanted and what he needed to do to make the vision he had into a reality.

"I was always very visual and loved creating environments. Even in those days, as a student, with all the furniture I was fortunate to



## Understanding what could be

JEFF STOBER, BACS'80, SAW BEYOND THE MOMENT TO CREATE THE DRAKE EMPIRE

BY ADELA TALBOT, BA'08, MA'11

collect from friends and family, I remember bringing a U-Haul out, choosing the right colour paint and making the furniture placement just so," said Stober, BACS'80.

This ability to visualize what could be, once the layers are peeled back, might just be Stober's secret to success. Indeed, he sees everything as a blank canvas waiting to be primed. He knows there's never a shortage of ideas; the trick is knowing which hunch to follow. And the life-long entrepreneur, who started a window-washing company as a teenager and operated side businesses while studying at Western, simply seems to have a knack for the hunch.

Stober often jokes he ended up in Toronto because he ran out of gas en route from London to Montreal. In reality, he saw a thriving city and threw himself into it.

After a two-decade stint owning a computer consulting firm, CNC Global, Stober bought the Drake property for \$860,000 in October 2001. In it, he saw



Stober opened Toronto's iconic Drake Hotel in 2004, after three years and \$6-million in renovations.

something similar to the Hotel Chelsea in New York City, a space where artists and creative types could live and work and mingle. After \$6 million in renovations, he re-opened the hotel in February 2004.

Today, he has something of an empire, owning the hotel and its offshoots – the Drake One Fifty restaurant, five Drake General Stores, the Drake Devonshire Inn and the new food-focused Drake Commissary – which collectively employ more than 500 people.

"To my mind, it's never been about having a shortage of ideas. You never know when the idea is right. What you can do is learn how to articulate the idea, how to surround yourself with trusted advisors and collaborators and be very, very open minded to the feedback you are going to receive," Stober said.

"It's about learning the process of listening to the marketplace, to the stakeholders that I work with, to that ecosystem of employees, neighbours in a given neighbourhood, the supply chain, our customers, employees, the media – the list goes on and on. It's about putting the idea out there and learning and adjusting and benefiting from the feedback you receive. You learn quickly enough whether the idea is right or not."

In any case, when you have a vision, when you fall in love with the idea – as he did with that of the Drake – you have to take the risk, he added. When he toured the property, he saw a space begging for a new lease on life. He saw the kind of life he could create and just went with it.

"My attraction to the space in part represents a love of historic hotels that I've had since I was a kid, my love of artists, of culture in general, and in no small measure the relationship between the two, between artists and hotels. Artists have lived in hotels, died in hotels, bartered their art to sleep in a hotel; this had always fascinated me," Stober explained.

"When I found the Drake Hotel, I found an opportunity for myself to reinvent a business model, a cultural community centre of sorts – kind of an oxymoron for hotels – where it would be a hotel as much for locals as for international travellers."

He stressed that every step of the way is a leap of faith. When he and his team started creating the Drake model, which now has become somewhat ubiquitous in its foundational principles of culture, community and hospitality, it was a risk.

How you build that bridge from where you are to where you are going is key, Stober said. Measured, attainable goals are a process. A challenge. A continual effort. Patience and resolve are essential.

"But you have to go into this knowing the only constant will remain change, but also that, certainly, there will be one hurdle after another that you will have to resolve. The only way to do that is with a deeply entrenched culture that you create from the get-go," he added.

"If we have the blessing and opportunity to pursue our passions, to immerse ourselves professionally in something that is important and relevant and contributes to the world in a better way, I think we are doing a good job and that's what we should all strive towards." **WAG**

courtesy of Ruth Buchanan BA 1955

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Western alumna and donor

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## In conversation with...

**Warren Bongard, LLB'91**, the new President of Western's Alumni Association

**HOME:** Toronto, where I've spent my entire life with the exception of my three years at Western for law school.

**FAMILY:** I met my wife Kelly in 1997, got married in 1998 and had our first of three kids in 1999. We have 19-year-old son Jared, a 16-year-old daughter Carly and a 9-year-old son Harlan.

**CAREER:** After Western, I took a job on Bay Street as a corporate lawyer at Blaney McMurty in 1992. Four years later, I got into the legal search firm business, establishing my own firm and then co-founding ZSA in 1997, where I remain as President today.

**TEAM:** I've always been a Maple Leafs fan. I'm that guy who still believes the Stanley Cup will come back to Toronto! I was so in love with hockey that I started a player agency when I was practising law, where I had the opportunity to negotiate with some of my childhood heroes like Tony Esposito and Bobby Clarke.

**RESTAURANT:** Toronto has so many great restaurants and new ones pop up every day. That said, House of Chan may be my favorite. They make fantastic steak and spare ribs. It's an old local restaurant that always feels like a second home.

**CITY:** I love to travel and recently returned from two weeks in Portugal and Spain. Madrid was amazing - such a great vibe. And I always like going back to southern California and Laguna Beach. The views are breathtaking and the weather is spectacular.

**FONDEST WESTERN MEMORIES:** Hosting the Western Law Games was right up there, especially one very early hockey game that had me going straight from a party to the rink at 6 a.m. Needless to say we lost that game. That, and also celebrating with my fellow students at the "Third Year Party". It was such a great celebration of three years of intensive studies. Our class bonded so well and it was a chance to truly celebrate our accomplishments.



**Above:** Bongard and his family call Toronto home. **Below:** Bongard and one of his hockey heroes, former Maple Leafs player Börje Salming.

To learn more about your Alumni Association or to discover the volunteer opportunities available, please visit [alumni.westernu.ca/get-involved/association](http://alumni.westernu.ca/get-involved/association) or email [alumni@uwo.ca](mailto:alumni@uwo.ca)

## Nominate an outstanding Western alumnus for a prestigious Alumni Award of Merit

Categories, criteria and nomination form can be found at [www.alumni.westernu.ca/connect/awards/merit.html](http://www.alumni.westernu.ca/connect/awards/merit.html)

The nomination deadline is November 30, 2018. Awards will be presented in June 2019.

For more information, please call Susan Henderson at 519.661.2111 ext. 85871



**2018 Alumni Award of Merit Recipients**

**Dr. Barbara Vanderhyden, BSc'83, PhD'88**  
Community Service Award

**Robert Collins, BA'77**  
Dr. Ivan Smith Award

**Saara Bhanji, BA'07, MSc'16**  
Young Alumni Award

**Dr. Scott Lowrey, BEd'89**  
Professional Achievement Award



# ALUMNI CLASS NOTES

**PLEASE NOTE:** Class Notes notices, like all portions of the print magazine, appear in an online version of *Alumni Gazette* and the contents may turn up during a web search. Publicly available personal information may be collected for the purpose of updating alumni records as well as for the purpose of recognizing outstanding achievement or distinguished service by alumni in University publications. Western respects your privacy. At any time you have the right to request that your personal information cease to be used to recognize outstanding achievement or distinguished service in University publications. For more information or to make a request about the kinds of contact you would like to receive, please contact the Operations Administrator, Advancement Services, 519.661.4176 or 1-800.420.7519, fax 519.661.4182, e-mail [advser@uwo.ca](mailto:advser@uwo.ca).



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Deadline for inclusion in the Spring 2019 issue is February 1.



The friendships and fun enjoyed by Kappa Alpha fraternity brothers at Western in the early-mid 1950s inspired them to continue their connection long after graduation. Initially, a few brothers, mostly from Toronto, London and Kitchener, formed a monthly investment group. When travel and refreshment expenses started to outrank investment increases, the group decided to meet annually on the second weekend in June, to play golf and relive their university days. The first event took place in Mississauga, with a round of golf and a barbeque at the home of Bob Davis.

In 1958, spouses started joining the festivities. Thereafter, the annual gathering became known as KAVOO. Golf was the main event, complete with trophies and a "best dressed" award, with old stories told and retold. As the years have gone by, several of the members have passed, but they are never forgotten. On June 9, 2018, the 60th KAVOO was celebrated in Waterloo. In 60 years, not one KAVOO has ever been missed. When asked how long they'll continue to hold KAVOO, the answer was clear: "KAVOO will happen as long as there are two guys who want to get together on the second weekend in June."

**KAVOO members:** Bob Bailey, Bill Baldwin, Ted Browne, Paul Condon, Bob Cowan, Dale Creighton, Bob Cronin, Bob Davis, Wally Delahey, Bill Gleason, Jack Jenkins, Dave Logan, Rex Louth, Don MacMillan, Dick McDuffee, Don McKinley, Jim Murdoch, Collier Osborne, Ron Potter, Bob Race, Ralph Simmons and Charles Wells.

## Six Western alumni named to Canada's Top 40 Under 40® for 2018



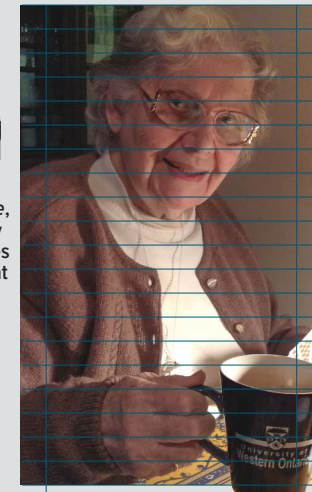
- A) Moez Kassam, BA'04** (Political Science), Principal, Anson Funds
- B) Rebecca McKillican, BSc/HBA'03**, Chief Executive Officer, Well.ca
- C) Dr. Vipin Nikore, BSc'01** (Computer Science), Medical Director, Dept. of Medicine, Credit Valley Hospital, Trillium Health Partners; Physician, Cleveland Clinic; Chief Medical Director, TD Bank
- D) Dr. Andrea Sereda, BSc'03, MD'07**, Physician, London Intercommunity Health Centre
- E) Jason Thacker, HBA'02**, Senior Vice President, Head of Consumer Deposits & Payments, TD Bank Group
- F) Blaine Woodcock, MBA'07**, Chief of Staff and Chair, Deloitte Foundation, Deloitte



**Dr. Boluwaji Ogunyemi, BSc'08** (left), and **Kundan Joshi, BSc'04** (right), founder and CEO of TheAppLabb, and, a dermatologist, were named among the 2018 RBC Top 25 Canadian Immigrants. From among the Top 25 winners, Joshi received the 2018 RBC Entrepreneur Award for excellence in entrepreneurship.



**1941**  
**Citizen Kane**, directed by Orson Welles premieres at the Palace Theater in New York City



**41 Jean Kirby (McNeel) Small, BA'41** (English) of Ottawa celebrated her 100th birthday on Aug. 8, 2018.



**1960**  
John F. Kennedy beats Vice-President Richard Nixon to become 35<sup>th</sup> U.S. president

### 1960s

**40 Frank Cosentino, HBA'60**, has been named to the Canadian Football Hall of Fame Class of 2018. His football career included two Yates Cups; a decade in the CFL and two Grey Cup rings; and a stretch as a university football coach that included two national championships. He joined York University in 1976 as professor and chair of Physical Education and Athletics, coaching for seven more years. He retired from York in 1997.

### 1970s

**76 J. Derek Todd, BA'76** (Political Science), has recently retired after 10 years as a Revenue Agent with the State of Georgia. Derek and his wife Jennifer reside in suburban Atlanta.

### 1977

**Philip Conley, BA'77, BEd'79**, retired in June 2017 after 38 years of teaching, the last 20 with Avon Maitland D.S.B. in physical education.

### 1977

**Fantasy Island** starring Ricardo Montalban premieres

**77 Joan McArthur-Blair, BA'77** (English), has published her second book, *Building Resilience with Appreciative Inquiry: A Leadership Journey through Hope, Despair, and Forgiveness* (Berrett-Koehler, May 2018), co-authored with her business and life partner Jeanie Cockell.

**77 Rob Miller, MA'77** (Journalism), recently retired as Executive Producer of CBC News Windsor. He served 34 years as reporter and producer and is now a consultant and media specialist for Work Global Canada (Ontario Office) and a partner at Manan Strategy in Windsor.

**78 Aloisius Louie, BSc'78, MA'79**, has just published his third book on relational biology, *Intangible Life: Functional Connections in Relational Biology* (Springer 2017).

**78 Alan Patton, LLB'78**, is a London, Ontario lawyer specializing in Municipal and Land Use Planning Law. It has been 40 years since he was

elected President of University Students' Council (1978, Western's centenary year). Alan was also President of Western's Alumni Association from 1986 to 1987.

**79 Alexandre Navarre, MBA'79**, recently published *Practices of innovation management* (Presses universitaires du Quebec). His other activities include occasional consulting and extensive worldwide travelling with his spouse Kim.

## 1980s

**81** After 11 years as General Counsel, **Mary Anne Aldred, BA'81, LLB'84**, has been

appointed Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel of the Ontario Energy Board.

**81 Michael Tukatsch, BA'81**, recently graduated from Emmanuel College of Victoria University at the University of Toronto, and the Toronto School of Theology, with a co-joint Master of Theological Studies (MTS) degree. After having enjoyed a 25+ year career in the IT industry - starting with IBM punch cards at Western's Engineering Building on the Univac computer in 1978 - Michael is now embarking on a new vocation in spiritual and pastoral care, while continuing to develop his liberation theology and social justice activism.



**1981**  
Paul McCartney & Stevie Wonder record *Ebony & Ivory*



**68 Harriet (Hedley) Walker, BA'68**, has concluded 11 years as a trustee of the National Gallery of Canada (Art), most recently chairing the Board. She continues as a heritage governor of the Royal Ontario Museum, having been a long-serving volunteer, and was recipient of the Lt.-Governor's "Distinguished Service Award as a volunteer" in 2016. Harriet was a public member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons and in London, Ontario her career included teaching languages at Central Collegiate; public relations at the Museum of Indian Archeology and the Robarts Research Institute; and operating her own consulting firm.

In December 2018, Harriet celebrates 50 years of marriage to **Gordon Walker, BA'64, LLB'67, QC**, who is concluding five years as Canadian Chairman of The International Joint Commission, a dispute avoidance and dispute resolution organization created within the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, which advises Governments of Canada and United States. Gordon was a former political office-holder, first elected to London City Council in his last year of law school at Western, and then 12 years as MPP and seven years as an Ontario Cabinet Minister. A career in law followed in London and Toronto. He has been on a variety of public and private boards of directors, and at one point was Chairman of Hollinger Inc. Harriett and Gordon have called Toronto home since 1991, and they have two daughters, Wynsome and Melanie, who, with their families, also make their home in Toronto.



**82** At the age of 57, **David Cole**, BACS'82 (right), along with his son Sebastian and six others, set off on the 70-kilometre Lemosho route to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, 19,341 feet to the summit in Jan. 2018. The group was on a Reach Beyond Expedition to raise funds for Outward Bound Canada, which David recently joined as a Board Member. "We had prepared well physically but you can't prepare for the high altitude and the effects on your body. We chose a slow and steady route, eight days of camping, walking 'pole pole' (slowly in Swahili) and we reached Uluru Peak with snow and glaciers. We hiked through rain forests, vast alpine deserts, and scrambled up Barranco Wall, all the while talking about life, our feelings, our goals and our challenges. Reaching the summit gave us a tremendous feeling of success and achievement, but that was a small part of the overall experience. The best part was sharing the expedition with my son."

**85 John Finney**, MA'85, was honoured as an IABC (International Association of Business Communicators) Fellow in June 2018 at the IABC global conference in Montreal in June. The IABC Fellow designation is the highest honor bestowed on an IABC member. Becoming a Fellow denotes a body of achievement by a communicator who has had a significant impact not only on their organization and IABC, but also on the communication profession at large. John began his IABC career in 1985 with the

London, Ont., chapter, where he filled many board positions, including chapter president. He went on to become director of Canada District Two, with chapters in eastern Canada and one in the Caribbean. John served as the IABC Chair in 1997-1998 and over the past 20 years has served on IABC's Ethics Committee and as a Gold Quill Awards judge. His professional career includes serving as director of corporate communications for two healthcare organizations and as a senior communication and change management consultant with Willis Towers Watson, a global human resources firm.

**85 David W. Sandor**, BA'85, BEd '86, retired in June 2018 after 32 years of teaching secondary school physical education and other subjects in the Oxford County School Board, Japan and the Thames Valley District School Board. David shared his fond memories of Western when he brought his students to campus to visit the anatomy lab and soccer fields. He has been married to **Beth (nee**

**Gray)**, BSc'86, for 30 years and they have three children. Retirement life for David will consist of "travel, golf, fun and frolic wherever and whenever possible."

**86 Eric Stevenson**, MBA'86, recently received the T.B. "Happy" Fraser award, given annually since 1975 to an individual or organization that displays a long-term commitment to wild Atlantic salmon conservation on a regional or national level. Since 1995, Eric has been based in Toronto and has actively led a venture capital syndicate whose primary investments have been in shipowning – in refrigerated cargo vessels, bulk carriers and product tankers – and in ship management software. He serves as a Director of Environmental Defence, a non-profit organization dedicated to research, education and advocacy for protection of human health and the environment. He serves on the Board of Casting for Recovery, and is a founding board member of the SERA initiative, which will establish a certifiable

standard for environmentally responsible aggregate mining in Ontario.

## 1990s

Western's **Black Students' Association Reunion** (1993-1996) takes place September 28-30, 2018 in London, Ont. For details, contact Michelle Young, BA'94, BSW'96, at [sista\\_young@hotmail.com](mailto:sista_young@hotmail.com).

**90 Antree C. Demakos**, LLB'90, was presented with the J. Shirley Denison Award at the Law Society's Annual Awards ceremony at Osgoode Hall in Toronto May 23, 2018. Demakos received the prestigious award in recognition of her commitment to helping Canadians obtain better access to justice through Legal Line. She was one of 10 award recipients to be recognized for their exceptional achievements and contributions. Called to the Bar in 1992, Antree has devoted her entire career to demystifying the law and helping millions of Canadians obtain better access to justice. Antree founded and continues to be the driving force behind Legal Line, a federal non-profit organization. For 25 years, she has helped millions of Canadians obtain free legal answers and professional referrals through her pre-recorded, 24-hour information telephone line, live telephone support and the website, [Legalline.ca](http://Legalline.ca)

**91** In October 2017 and February 2018, **Bruce Hart**, PhD'91 (Geology) toured as the 2017-2018 American Association of Petroleum Geologists/Society of Exploration Geophysicists Distinguished Lecturer. During the tour, he gave lectures about an ice age that happened about 360 million years ago, how that ice was triggered (at least in part) by the evolution and spread of land plants, and how sea level changes associated with the ice age created some unusual stratigraphic stacking patterns in North Dakota and Saskatchewan that have helped to fuel a boom in North American oil production. The lectures were delivered



**1990** First McDonald's in the Soviet Union opens in Moscow



**03 Neesa Mistry**, BA'03 (Psychology), her husband, and son Jaiilen welcomed a baby girl, Mila Bella Mistry on December 12, 2017.

to 18 different geoscience departments and professional geoscience societies, from Fairbanks to Roswell and Vancouver to Ottawa (including a stop at Western's Department of Earth Sciences). Bruce currently works as a research geoscientist for Statoil, in Austin, Texas.

**91 Eddie Paton**, BMus'91 (Music Education), recently released his debut album, SOLIS, which features his distinctive and diversified guitar playing across 12 tracks of Latin, adult contemporary, cinematic and pop music.

**93 Matt Davison**, MSc'93 (Applied Math), PhD'95 (Applied Math), has been named the new Dean of Western's Faculty of Science, effective July 1, 2018.

**95 Justice Jennifer Broderick**, BA'95 (Political Science), LLB'99,

was called to the bar in 2001. She was most recently the Crown Attorney, and previously an assistant Crown Attorney, for the City of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County. Justice Broderick is a volunteer member of the fundraising group 100 Women Who Care - Kawartha Lakes. Chief Justice Lise Maisonneuve has assigned Justice Broderick to preside in Peterborough.

**95 Mark Davies**, MLIS'95, was accepted into the 2018 Theology Summer School program at the University of Oxford, England. Previously Mark had earned a Diploma, then a Bachelor degree in Theology, and has just finished a Certificate in Anglican Studies from Thorneloe University at Laurentian.

**95** In April 2018, **Cynthia Lockrey**, BA'95 (English/

History), published her first book, *Bed Rest Mom - Surviving Pregnancy-Related Bed Rest With Your Sanity and Dignity Intact* (Self-Counsel Press). The book helps women navigate the emotional and medical challenges of home and hospital-based bed rest. The book is based on Cynthia's personal experiences with two high-risk pregnancies that resulted in bed rest, and shares the stories of women she has met along the way. Her second book *Your Child's Voice - A Caregiver's Guide to Advocating for Kids with Special Needs, Disabilities or Others Who May Fall through the Cracks*, is set to be released in September 2018, also by Self-Counsel Press.

**97 Eric Strong**, MBA'97, received a federal Governor in Council appointment as a Member (Part-Time) of the

Military Grievances External Review Committee (MGERC). Formerly the Canadian Forces Grievance Board, MGERC reviews military grievances and provides findings and recommendations to the Chief of the Defence Staff and the Canadian Armed Forces member who submitted the grievance. The Committee is an administrative tribunal independent from the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defence and, as such, plays a unique role within the military grievance process.

**99** Led by skip **Mark Ideson**, BSc'99, Canada continued its record of medalling in every Paralympic Winter Games wheelchair curling competition by defeating Korea 5-3 to win bronze at the 2018 Paralympic Games on March 17.



**1999** Basketball player Michael Jordan announces his retirement (only to return in 2001)



**17 Rachel Gutschon**, BScN'17, has received a position in the operating room at Woodstock General Hospital.



**1985** Moonlighting with Cybill Shepard & Bruce Willis premieres on ABC TV in the U.S.



**83 John Dunlap**, JD'83 (right), was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Public Service from John Cabot University, Rome on May 14, 2018.

## 2000s

**02 Gloria Gilbert, MSc'02** (Physiotherapy) has developed a website and written an eBook called *Don't Go To The Ouch!* ([dontgototheouch.com](http://dontgototheouch.com)) which contains information and resources, including exercise guidelines for people with invisible and visible problems as well as their busy health providers. In 2011, Gloria was awarded an Honorary Life Membership Award from the Canadian Physiotherapy Association for her years of devoted service to her patients, colleagues and profession.

**04 Vassy Kapelos, BA'04** (Political Science), began hosting CBC's flagship daily political program, *Power & Politics*, in March 2018.

**05 Michael Arntfield, BA'05, MA'07, PhD'11**, an Arts & Humanities professor and former police officer, is the recipient of this year's Western Humanitarian Award. Since 2010, he has worked with Western students to research unsolved historical homicides.

**08 Amy Booth, BA'08** (Sociology), and her husband recently bought a house in the country which has been a dream of Amy's ever since she attended university.



**14 Thomas Ulanowski, MSc'14** (Geology), married **Tara Despault, MSc'16** (Geology) in a small beach ceremony in Varadero, Cuba in February 2018. Thomas and Tara met at Western seven years ago, when both were enrolled in an MSc Degree (Earth Sciences) with Brian Branfireun (Department of Biology) as their supervisor. They started out as colleagues/friends as well as bandmates, and their relationship evolved from there. They have been together for more than five years and after travelling throughout Asia and graduating from Western, moved to British Columbia and now live in Abbotsford. Thomas is currently employed in the legal cannabis industry as a Quality Assurance Manager, and Tara works for the Province of British Columbia as a Groundwater Authorization Specialist.



**Dr. Margaret Chan, BA'73, MD'77, DSc'99**, former Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and **Ken Chu, BACS'96, LLD'07**, Chairman and CEO of Mission Hills Group, were among 200 delegates from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region that sit on the 13th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the country's top political advisory body attending the "Two Sessions" in Beijing, China on March 3, 2018. The "Two Sessions" is an annual event bringing together the movers and shakers from top levels of government, involving the CPPCC as well as the National People's Congress, the country's legislature. The CPPCC is a broad coalition of delegates representing academics, civil society and other stakeholders that provides proposals and advice to chart the course of the nation.



**2004** Janet Jackson experiences wardrobe malfunction during the half-time show of Super Bowl XXXVIII



Western Alumni Association Board Member **Dr. Kant Chong, BA'03** (left) and **Simon Yu, BMOS'11** (right), President of the Alumni Association's Hong Kong Branch, attended the Canada-China Luncheon with the Honourable **Bill Morneau, BA'86** (Political Science), Minister of Finance (middle), hosted by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CanCham) on April 2, 2018 in Shanghai, China. Kant is an ExCo member of two CanCham committees – Sustainability Development and Education.

## 2010s

**13 Alexander Kopacz, BSc'13** (Mechanical Engineering) and Justin Kripps of Canada tied for gold with Germany in 2-Man Bobsleigh at the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games in Korea on Feb. 19.

**15 Hajer Abid, BSc'15** (Nutrition and Dietetics), recently got a full-time, permanent job at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine and got married in 2016.

**16 Sarah Botelho, BA'16**, a singer-songwriter who goes by the stage name Poesy, beat

out four up-and-coming artists, winning the right to release a new song on CTV's *The Launch*. Her song, *Soldier of Love*, was written and produced by Academy Award-nominated hit-maker **Stephan Moccio, BMus'94**.

**16 Helen Gregory, PhD'16** (Art and Visual Culture), has been named the new curator of Western's McIntosh Gallery.

**16 Jessica Salomon, BSc'16** (Nutrition and Dietetics), has recently started working as a sports dietitian with Evolved Sport and Nutrition in Toronto where she counsels athletes and clients to meet their health, nutrition and performance goals.



**2015** The family of Marvin Gaye wins a record \$7.3-million lawsuit for music copyright infringement against Robin Thicke, Pharrell Williams, and T.I.

## IN MEMORIAM

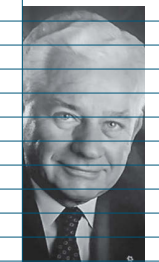
**Harold A. Hodgkins, BA'62**, died January 27, 2018 at age 96. He was an elementary teacher and principal who earned his degree by attending Western as a summer student. After 35 years of teaching, he turned his interest in piano restoration into a successful small business which occupied his retirement for about 30 years.

**Wilfred T. Green, BA'74** (Economics), died February 2, 2018 at age 83 in London, Ont.

**Dr. Alexander Marshall Blair, BA'54, MA'61**, died February 3, 2018. He was a Geography Professor at York University. At the time of his death, he was living in Hattiesburg, Mississippi with his wife, Mary Elizabeth Blair.

**Daniel Durksen, MMus'87**, died February 7, 2018 at age 63. His 30+ year career as a collaborative musician included choral work with Grand Philharmonic Choir (Kitchener), music director at Baptist and Anglican churches (Ingersoll, Brantford), community choir (Tillsonburg), dance (Ingersoll), as well as teaching (piano and voice), examining (Canada Conservatory), and playing piano for innumerable concerts in Southwestern Ontario. Sensitive, servant-hearted, and sparkling spirited, he aspired to make others look and sound good.

**Grant Reuber, BA'50, LLD'85**, who served Western in multiple capacities, including as head of Economics and Sociology, the first dean of the Faculty of Social Science, as Provost &



Vice-President (Academic), and eventually, as Chancellor, died July 7, 2018 at the age of 90. Beyond his remarkable academic career as an economist, Reuber also served as deputy minister of finance under former Prime Minister Joe Clark's Progressive Conservative government, as president and COO of the Bank of Montreal and as chairman of the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation. He was a Member of the Royal Society and the Order of Canada. Born in Mildmay, Ont., Reuber graduated from Western with a BA in economics. After earning his MA and PhD at Harvard University, he returned to Western as a professor of Economics where he quickly distinguished himself as an exceptional scholar and leader. As a scholar, Reuber was the first economist to explicitly use the inverse relationship between unemployment and inflation as a policy constraint. As a result, policy-makers could no longer institute policies that lowered inflation without worrying about raising unemployment, and vice versa.

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## The Final Say

With Shannon Proudfoot, BA'03



### Moving away, growing up and gut-checking along the way

I recently read Ian McEwan's 2007 book, *On Chesil Beach*. It's such an astute observation of human nature and relationships that it takes things that are so familiar they've become invisible and spools them out in a way that re-explains us to ourselves.

One of the protagonists, Edward, is a newlywed in 1962, mulling over moments in his life that have taken on that squeamish quality memories acquire when you see them much more clearly in retrospect. At one point, Edward recalls his fondness for the visceral clarity of the occasional fistfight when he was a student at University College London.

One specific night, he was headed to the pub with a friend. Harold was short, bespectacled, "maddeningly talkative and clever"—exactly the type Edward would have tormented in his younger days but now appreciated. When they passed a couple of leather-clad rocker types in the street, one didn't even slow down as he reached out to smack Harold across the back of the head. Edward immediately popped him square in the face, then returned to help his friend retrieve his broken glasses from the road. It took Edward several hours to recognize that Harold wasn't grateful to him, and still more time to realize Harold was in fact embarrassed; their friendship withered.

At first, Edward thought Harold's pride was wounded, but eventually he understood "that what he had done was simply not cool," McEwan writes. "What he believed was an interesting quirk, a rough virtue, turned out to be vulgarity. He was a country boy, a provincial idiot who thought a bare-knuckle swipe could impress a friend."

Well, that's a pretty solid summary of what it's like to move away from where you grew up and then learn to grow up some more, isn't it?

We tend to judge ourselves against the norms of our

social context, but when those norms are what you're used to, they become invisible, like old wallpaper. There's not a rule you're conscious of following, things just *are*. Until, that is, you're launched into a new world with fresh norms, and then the old ones become bafflingly obvious, and often outdated.

When you head off to university, this becomes clear most quickly in the context that's easiest to rectify: fashion. A glance around Concrete Beach demonstrates that your 'Exiting The Hometown' haircut has more hometown in it than you maybe wanted, or that what was coveted in high school is gauche in your new world. In my high school, that was Ralph Lauren or Tommy Hilfiger sweatshirts that rendered the wearer a human billboard who'd paid handsomely for the privilege (it was the late 1990s in northern Ontario; we did the best we could).

But as Edward discovers, it's the deeper stuff that takes longer to grasp and more work to recalibrate, with more potential embarrassment. You go on acting like the class clown because goofily not caring (or pretending to) was the way in high school, before you realize that earnestness and effort are now the coin of the realm. Or you still think you have to do everything *with* someone, but then you gradually realize that going your own way and being into your own weird stuff is fine—cool, even. What's worth getting angry about and how to express that anger, what you judge or accept with a shrug, what you appreciate or complain about—you tend to shake it all out and scrutinize it anew.

A lot of this, of course, is simply about growing up, but there's also something particular about being chucked together in a shared life with strangers who all have their own default settings that provoke that kind of reckoning and stretching. That's not to say you become a human weathervane, perpetually twisting in someone else's wind currents—moving past that is part of growing up, too—but there's something about being in a place where basically your whole purpose is to sort things out that makes you inclined to, well, to sort things out.

Now, we have the Internet to be our Concrete Beach: a place where we can be constantly exposed to other people's norms and gut-check our own notions that something must be a certain way because of course it is. But it hasn't really turned out that way, has it? Instead, suggesting to someone that perhaps there's another way to see things is often the surest way to get them to double down on their own view, as we all cling ferociously to the baggage we arrived with.

We'd probably all be better off instead recapturing a little of that fish-out-of-water uncertainty that lends you a kind of naked openness, glancing around to see how everyone else is doing things and allowing for a personal reappraisal.

*Shannon Proudfoot is an Ottawa-based staff writer for MacLean's.*



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**HAVE YOU MOVED? SEE PAGE 53.**



A portrait of Pierre Morrissette, founder of Pelmorex Corp., smiling. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue button-down shirt. The background is dark with blurred lights, suggesting an indoor setting like a control room or office.

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