

Alumni Gazette

WESTERN'S ALUMNI MAGAZINE SINCE 1939

THE FORGOTTEN ONES

UNTOLD AND UNSEEN CONSEQUENCES OF COVID-19



FALL | 2020

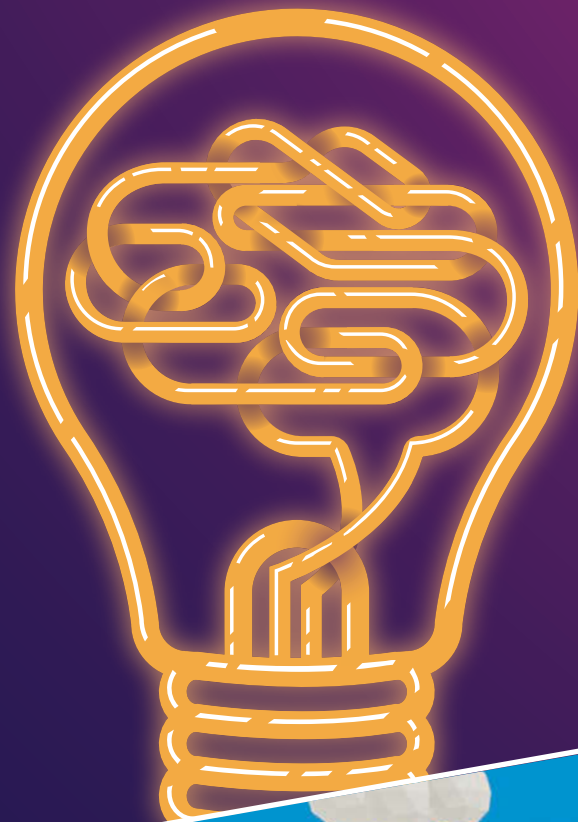
CLASS OF 2020: A YEAR TO REMEMBER

It has been a year like no other for Western graduates, so the university marked their achievements with celebrations like no other in its history. Our newest alumni were feted virtually for their achievements in a purple-and-proud way they could share with friends and family in their own homes. Once it's safe to do so, the Class of 2020 will have the opportunity to cross the stage to hear their names read aloud during traditional in-person convocation ceremonies.



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TAKING CARE

Students, faculty and staff showed their purple pride as they donned Western-branded masks to protect others as the university slowly resumed operations over the summer.

Each campus community member received the reusable masks – more than 121,000 in total – made by TakeCare Supply, a company co-founded by alumni Kevin Vuong, BMOS'11, and Larry Lau, BA'09, MBA'18.

Western made face coverings mandatory indoors in the presence of others and in common and shared spaces and was among the first universities in Ontario to provide masks to its community.



alumnigazette.ca

(PHOTO BY FRANK NEUFELD)

In Brief



WESTERN PARTNERS WITH BELL ON 5G RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Accelerating 5G innovation in Canada, Western has partnered with Bell Canada to create an advanced 5G research centre – turning the campus into a ‘living lab’ that will help shape smarter cities and communications systems, boost drone security, better manage business continuity, and more. Bell will invest \$2.7 million and deploy 5G network equipment and infrastructure throughout campus. The partnership will also fund research and development initiatives, training opportunities, and technological innovations.

LABATT FAMILY GIFT SUPPORTS NURSING EDUCATION, RESEARCH

Research, community involvement and technology are at the heart of a \$5-million gift from Arthur and Sonia Labatt, long-time donors and Western supporters.

The gift to the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing is designed to help researchers explore health inequities to better understand and respond to determinants of health. It will help educate nurses like Nour Al-Farawi, BScN’12, BHSc’12, MN’15 (pictured left) who witnessed first-hand how vulnerable populations can be affected by a health-care crisis while working at a London, Ont. COVID-19 assessment centre.

“This incredible gift will help us build on the Labatt Family’s legacy of impact on the health and well-being of Canadians, including some of our most vulnerable citizens, by promoting health equity through nursing research and education,” said Jayne Garland, Health Sciences Dean.

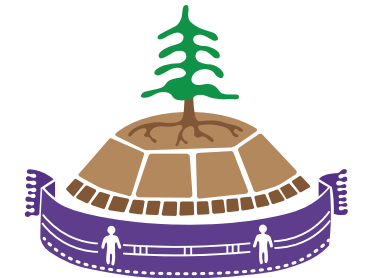
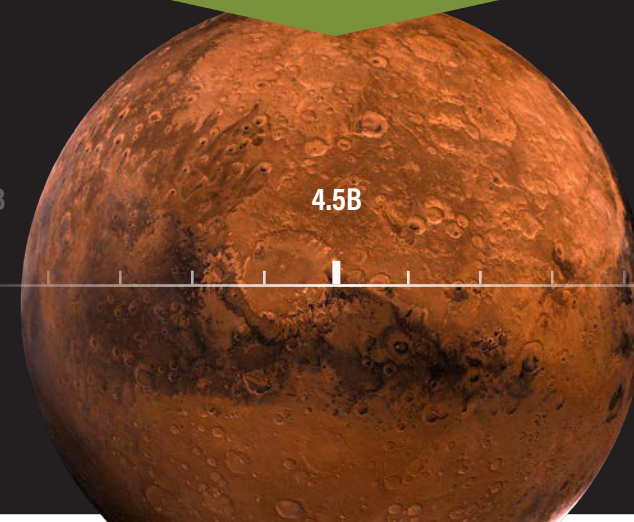


PATRICK HICKEY NAMED AMONG RHODES SCHOLARS

Rhodes Scholar Patrick Hickey, HBA’19, joins a class of 100 from more than 60 countries as recipients of this distinguished scholarship studying at the University of Oxford this year. Nominated by the Newfoundland and Labrador region, he is one of only 11 Canadian students to earn the esteemed award and the 24th Rhodes Scholar in Western’s history.

RESEARCH RESETS TIMELINE FOR LIFE ON MARS

Western researchers are leading an international team that has shown the first ‘real chance’ of Mars developing life started early, 4.48 billion years ago, when giant, life-inhibiting meteorites stopped striking the Red Planet. The findings not only clarify possibilities for Earth’s nearest neighbour, but may reset the timeline for life on our home planet, as well.



NEW OFFICE ELEVATES INDIGENOUS CAMPUS PRESENCE

The establishment of Western’s new Office of Indigenous Initiatives marks the next step in the university’s commitment to stronger Indigenous considerations in all aspects of its operations. The office will work with campus and community partners to help shape governance and decision-making; policy and practice; teaching, learning and curriculum; research and scholarship; physical space planning; workforce planning; and student affairs.

IVAN COYOTE TO BRING PASSION, EMPATHY TO MUNRO CHAIR

Award-winning author and seasoned stage performer Ivan Coyote has been named the Alice Munro Chair in Creativity in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. For more than two decades, Coyote has been using the power of storytelling to work toward a better world by grappling with the complex and intensely personal issues of gender identity, as well as family, class, social justice and queer liberation. Coyote follows renowned Canadian novelist Nino Ricci, who served as the inaugural holder of the Munro Chair.



In Brief

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EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Marcia Steyaert,
BA'96 (King's)

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Keri Ferguson

PUBLISHER

Althea Blackburn-Evans

ART DIRECTOR

Terry Rice, BFA'98, MA'00

DESIGNER

Rob Potter

ADVERTISING

INQUIRIES

Christine Von Wistinghausen
519-661-2111 ext. 85462
advertise@uwo.ca

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Correspondence and return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Western University, Suite 360, Westminster Hall, London, ON N6A 3K7

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ALUMNUS TIFF MACKLEM NAMED GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF CANADA

Tiff Macklem, MA'84, PhD'89 (Economics), was named Governor of the Bank of Canada for a seven-year term, effective June 3. With his appointment, Western alumni continue to occupy four of the Bank's six top spots, including Carolyn Wilkins, MA'88 (Economics), Senior Deputy Governor; Timothy Lane, PhD'83 (Economics), Deputy Governor; and Toni Gravelle, BA'88, PhD'96 (Economics), Deputy Governor. Macklem follows Stephen Poloz, MA'79, PhD'82 (Economics), to the bank's top post.

MACHINE LEARNING PREDICTS ROMANCE SATISFACTION

The most reliable predictor of a relationship's success is a partner's belief that the other person is fully committed, a Western-led international research team has found.

Other important factors in a successful relationship include feeling close to, appreciated by and sexually satisfied with your partner, says the study – the first-ever systematic attempt at using machine-learning algorithms to predict people's relationship satisfaction.

"Satisfaction with romantic relationships has important implications for health, well-being and work productivity," psychology professor Samantha Joel said. "But research on predictors of relationship quality is often limited in scope and scale, and carried out separately in individual laboratories."

The massive machine-learning study, conducted by Joel, Paul Eastwick from University of California, Davis, and 84 other scholars from around the world, delved into more than 11,000 couples and 43 distinct self-reported datasets on romantic couples.



HELPING STUDENTS THRIVE: GIFT BOLSTERS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

A \$9.2-million gift from Jeff and Shelley Parr (pictured above) has helped Western launch a unique centre dedicated to providing collaborative and innovative approaches to proactive student mental health and well-being.

The Parr Centre for Thriving will create greater awareness and provide more support to Western students than ever before – focusing on programs, education and strategic initiatives to help students thrive academically and personally.

"Becoming a leader in student mental health is a priority for Western," said President Alan Shepard. "We are grateful to Jeff and Shelley Parr for recognizing the importance of this area, and

for partnering with us to help ensure we continue to prepare our students to thrive and succeed in university, and in life."

The Parr Centre will bring together the entire campus to help foster a community of experts dedicated to student well-being.

Alumnus Jeff Parr, BA'82, said the work is exactly what he and his wife, Shelley, envisioned for their gift. "We're glad to be investing in this area so when students experience challenges, they can not only get help, but learn to be okay with those challenges and, most importantly, to learn how to overcome them," he said.



HONOURING THE VICTIMS OF FLIGHT PS752

The lives of four Western graduate students – Hadis Hayatdavoudi, Milad Nahavandi, Ghazal Nourian and Sajedeh Saraeian – were cut short in the downing of Ukraine International Flight PS752 on Jan. 8. The deaths sent shockwaves across the campus, especially among the tight-knit graduate student community. In their memory, Western created the Flight 752 Memorial Graduate Scholarship in Engineering and Science, an award presented annually to a full-time master's or doctoral student in the Faculty of Engineering or Faculty of Science, based on academic achievement and research merit. Preference will be given to an international student from Iran.

MARK BROWN NAMED ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Mark Brown, MBA'95, immersed himself as president of the Shanghai and then London, Ont., Ivey Business School Alumni chapters for 10 years before joining the Western Alumni Association Board of Directors in 2013 and becoming its president in June 2020.

BRAIN STUDY EXPLORES LASTING IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Neuroscientists exploring the lasting impacts of COVID-19 on the brain hope their newest study will provide answers for health-care professionals and improved care for millions of patients around the globe.

The COVID-19 Brain Study looks to recruit 50,000 individuals who tested positive for the virus in order to answer pressing questions about the disease's direct and indirect effects on the brain. The study is a collaboration between Western, the University of Toronto and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.





Making the invisible, *visible*

An influential human rights lawyer and counsel at the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Sunil Gurmukh, LLB'08, is partnering with Western Law on the Hidden Racial Profiling Project. Here he speaks with *Alumni Gazette* writer Jeff Renaud on the project, the problem and what drives his passion to do this work.

Criminal law, intellectual property law, entertainment law – there are a lot of sexier, higher-paying lawyer gigs out there. Why human rights?

In the back of my mind, I always wanted to help people. But I got my first real exposure to human rights while articling at Hicks Morley. They represent employers like banks, school boards, police services and large companies. And I was interested in labour and employment law because I wanted to litigate. I wanted to be on my feet and labour and employment law is about people. So it seemed like a good fit. I wrote a response on behalf of a police services board to a complaint alleging racial profiling in policing that was filed with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario. That's what really piqued my interest in human rights.

After articling, I switched sides. I became a staff lawyer at the African Canadian Legal Clinic, a specialty clinic of Legal Aid Ontario that fought anti-Black racism. It just sort of snowballed from there. I've litigated cases about racial profiling and delivered public education sessions to Black youth. I've published articles, written reports and submissions and taught a class on racial profiling. But, most importantly, I've learned from lived experience. When you're holding the hands of a young Black man and his mom as he tells you about being tasered twice while handcuffed... it was listening to that lived experience that really made me passionate about addressing racial profiling in policing.

Is systemic racism a part of your own personal history?

Personally, I don't feel I've been the victim of discrimination or racial profiling in policing. But, I'm using my privilege, my education, my law degree and the oath I took to protect the rights of people in Ontario to address these issues.

You were involved in the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) report released in August, *A Disparate Impact*, the second such OHRC report focused on an inquiry into racial profiling and discrimination of Black persons by the Toronto Police Service. The report doesn't mince words:

Black people are more likely to be arrested by the Toronto police.

Black people are more likely to be charged and over-charged by the Toronto police.

Black people are more likely to be struck, shot or killed by the Toronto police.

It's 2020. How can these inequalities still exist in the Canadian criminal justice system?

My personal view is that police services haven't been taking a hard look at these issues, because the data wasn't being collected or analyzed or reported on, and so you can only address what's being measured. Only now is there more uptake. Only now are police services really starting to collect race-based data. And I think quite honestly, it was a blind spot. I think it was easier for police to dismiss stories, but when you have the hard data, it can't be denied. And now when you have more video, it can't be denied.

What is racial profiling and why is it such a threat to BIPOC communities in Canada?

In the Commission's recent policy on eliminating racial profiling in law enforcement racial profiling is defined as "any act or omission related to actual or claimed reasons of safety, security or public protection by an

organization or individual in a position of authority that results in greater scrutiny, lesser scrutiny or other negative treatment based on race, color, ethnic origin, ancestry, religion, place of origin, or related stereotypes.”

If I was to break that down, and we applied it to the police, it's the police doing something or failing to do something when they're acting in their capacity as an officer that results in greater attention, greater scrutiny or less attention, less scrutiny because of race.

That can mean stopping someone, questioning, searching, it could be using force or it could be on the other end. It could be not investigating as thoroughly because of race. That would be racial profiling. So why is it so offensive? It's so offensive because it's so damaging. That greater scrutiny, the fact that Black and Indigenous Peoples are more likely to be charged, more likely to be arrested, contributes to the over-representation of Black and Indigenous Peoples in jails.

There are significant negative effects, not to mention the physical harm of being the victim of excessive force. There are also serious mental health consequences. It affects not just the person, not just the victim, but it affects their friends, their families, their entire communities.

What do you hope to accomplish with the Hidden Racial Profiling Project?

I want to take academic scholarship on racial profiling to the next level. Together with Western Law students, we will identify recent cases involving major Canadian municipal police forces, including rights violations such as arbitrary detentions, unreasonable searches and excessive force.

Arbitrary detention means you're being detained, you're being stopped and you can't leave. And it's done without reasonable suspicion. What we're going to do is contact defence counsel and the accused to determine the race of the victims in these cases because, often, race isn't even mentioned. We expect to uncover many cases involving Indigenous or Black victims that are consistent with racial profiling and we're going to make those cases visible.

In the 2018 case *R. v. Hines*, the Ontario Court of Justice concluded Tyrone Hines was the victim of excessive force when he was pepper sprayed by a Toronto police officer while handcuffed in the backseat of a cruiser. He was also hit with a baton in the face during the arrest. The court decision makes no mention of the fact Mr. Hines is Black or the issue of racial profiling. But, in my opinion, it's clearly consistent with racial profiling. There is a more physical response or disproportionate use of force which is a particularly damaging manifestation of racial profiling.

I hope this work will inspire students to be human rights lawyers or advocates. I taught an intensive course on racial profiling and policing last year at Western Law. My students were incredible. So many insightful comments and thoughtful questions. I want to provide students interested in racial justice with an applied practical research opportunity that will help them become strong advocates. I hope this project will contribute to the discourse on anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism in policing in Canada so people this is not just a problem south of the border. It's a problem in our own country.

“Our own country.” Those are such important words because as Canadians we often like to point a finger at the U.S. Are we really any further ahead than our neighbours to the south?

Black people have similar experiences here in Canada as they do in the U.S. Quite frankly, I don't think we're much further ahead. In many ways, we're behind because many states in the U.S. collect race-based data so the data can be acted upon, but that's just not the case here.

As Canadians, we feel we're polite and somehow, we don't act on racial stereotypes. We feel we're a kinder nation. We don't actually feel this is a problem. However, the lived experiences of Black communities and Indigenous communities tell us otherwise. The reluctance to acknowledge the problem could be part of what we see in the media. We see so much attention being paid, especially now, to anti-Black racism in policing in America but we don't see the same attention being paid north of the border. It could be a reflection of what Canadians are seeing and it could be a reflection of how Canadians see themselves. I hope this project will help change those views.

“WE EXPECT TO UNCOVER MANY CASES INVOLVING INDIGENOUS OR BLACK VICTIMS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH RACIAL PROFILING AND WE'RE GOING TO MAKE THOSE CASES VISIBLE.”

According to the CBC, there were 461 fatal encounters with police in Canada from 2000 to 2017. Black people were nine per cent or 43 of the victims but less than three per cent of Canada's population. Indigenous Peoples were 15 per cent or 69 of the victims but less than five per cent of Canada's population. Indigenous Peoples were more than a third of people who were fatally shot by the RCMP between 2007 and 2017. We've seen serious concerns about racism and sexism and police investigations of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls – that is across Canada.

In 2015, families of murdered Indigenous women told the United Nations about “a failure by the police to treat cases of missing Aboriginal women in an urgent manner and to carry out adequate investigations.” We've seen the report in 2018 coming from the Office of the Independent Police Review Director that found the Thunder Bay police engaged in systemic racism against Indigenous Peoples. Those are only some examples but, clearly, racism in policing is not just an American problem or a just a Toronto problem. It's a Canadian problem. And Black and Indigenous communities are bearing the brunt of the consequences. ♥

**The views in the forthcoming research and related activities are those of Mr. Gurmukh and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.*

ALUMNA RECEIVES HIGHEST LAW SOCIETY AWARD

By Debora Van Brenk, BA'86, MA'87

If they see a barn on fire, most people will call 911, stand back, wait for the firefighters and hope the horses survive. That's the wise and considered approach, said Heather Joy Ross, LLB'84.

“Then there's a whole other group of people who, without thinking, will run into the barn to save the horses. I'm hard-wired that way.”

After a legal career spanning more than 30 years – including as family lawyer, defence lawyer, mentor, law-firm partner and lifetime bencher (governor) of the Law Society of Upper Canada – Ross was recently awarded the 2020 Law Society Medal for Outstanding Service.

During her career, she has tackled issues of domestic abuse and gender inequity and helped lead the creation of the Huron Women's Shelter in Goderich, Ont. As founder of the South West Region Women's Law Association, she has been a mentor to scores of women lawyers.

She can cite countless times she has gone into the legal 'fire' in support of clients who thought theirs was a lost cause. “I've never been able to back away from injustice,” she said.

At age 29, Ross was married, with a preschool son and 13-year-old daughter at home, when she applied as a mature student to Western Law.

She credits two factors as pivotal in her decision: One was the legacy of a mother who put her social conscience into action. The other was a lobbying effort in the 1970s by a Huron County group wanting to ban several books from high school classrooms.

Ross ran a gift store in nearby Clinton at the time and sold books by Canadian authors. She and Alice Munro, DLitt'76 – a friend, customer and a future Nobel laureate in literature – joined forces to oppose the ban.

They won their case before the school board, and Ross realized law school would be a good path to continue her advocacy.

She was already doing some administrative work with her husband Paul's law firm. “I did that for a year and realized it wasn't for me. But being a lawyer was.”

Her first day of class at Western was also her son Quinn's first day of kindergarten and his fifth birthday. That first morning, a guest lecture by Canadian constitutional lawyer Mary Eberts, BA'68, LLB'77, PhD'99 (Civil Law), confirmed to Ross she'd made the right choice.

Later that day, she raced home to Goderich to make a birthday cake for her son. That was the beginning of what was to become three years of daily, 200-kilometre commutes: “I was focused. I was there for a reason and I felt it a privilege to be accepted.”

She credits professors such as Constance Backhouse, LLD'12, a leading legal scholar in gender and race discrimination (and now at the University of Ottawa), with helping her build a solid foundation in justice, equity and legal principles.

By contrast, Ross and other female students also battled against unsanctioned attitudes about their place in law school. Once, after a documentary screening, she and her friends were blocked and mocked by male law students who yelled that they weren't welcome and should go home.

“It reminded me things were not all well,” Ross recalled. “I simply said, ‘I have as much right to be here as you,’ and moved on.”

“I simply said, I have as much right to be here as you,’ and moved on.”



That determination would echo through her career as she prepared – often over-prepared – for each case and advocacy, whether it was on behalf of women and children who had left abusive relationships or in building support networks for other women lawyers.

Elected as a Law Society bencher in 1999, she has influenced the profession's rules of conduct, as well as its work on human rights and on equity, diversity and inclusion.

In 2019, she retired after helping expand The Ross Firm to four locations. Son Quinn, LLB'04, an immediate past-president of the Ontario Bar Association, now heads the law firm.

Ross was astonished when announced last month the recipient of the Law Society's Medal, for service in keeping with the profession's highest ideals. She hadn't even known she was nominated.

Since then, she has received congratulatory letters from hundreds of people – past clients, friends, colleagues. One of the most poignant was from a woman who thanked Ross for keeping her and her children safe years ago.

She values her education at Western and as a lawyer, particularly now, as racism is being exposed and injustice brought to light. “In this current climate, I appreciate my profession and its importance in keeping tyranny at bay more than ever before.” ♥

“We have to change the way we live...and we actually have to start giving a damn about the people who live on this planet.”

Eric Arts
Professor,
Department of
Microbiology &
Immunology,
Schulich School of
Medicine & Dentistry

Prachi Srivastava
Associate Professor,
Faculty of Education

Kate Choi
Associate Professor,
Faculty of Social
Science



(PHOTOS AND PHOTO COMPOSITE BY FRANK NEUFELD)

THE FORGOTTEN ONES

UNTOLD AND UNSEEN CONSEQUENCES OF COVID-19

Western researchers are looking at the novel coronavirus pandemic from every angle – medicine, science, education, culture and socio-economics. The *Alumni Gazette* brought together three of those researchers for the first time to have a conversation about the many ways COVID-19 is taking global – and local – inequities to even greater heights.

By Jeff Renaud

The new normal. Eric Arts hates this term.

The renowned Western virologist – actively working on a coronavirus vaccine – believes the COVID-19 global pandemic is anything but normal. It’s a world-crippling crisis. And Arts said we should’ve seen it coming, but didn’t – and that’s not even the biggest problem.

As the world remains hyper-focused on finding a vaccine and a cure for a disease that has killed close to one million people, it is becoming clearer every day that those most vulnerable and those who are racialized are paying the highest price with their healthcare, their education, their employment and, ultimately, their lives.

COVID-19 isn’t a racial issue, exactly. But Western researchers say the fear and uncertainty it has unleashed around the world has raised countless questions and concerns of inequality that society must confront if we are to return to normal. And even still, Arts and others at Western contend, ‘normal’ just isn’t good enough.

Kate Choi, a family demographer and acting director of Western’s Centre for Research on Social Inequality, is making creative use of existing data to test anecdotal evidence that COVID-19 has disproportionately affected Black, racialized, and immigrant people in Canada during the pandemic. A key challenge for researchers examining COVID-19 in Canada is the information void that emerges because data on the socio-demographics of COVID-19 patients aren’t being collected or released by government officials.

“A key finding that is consistent across different studies is that independent of socio-economic status, racial

minorities and immigrants are more vulnerable to COVID-19,” said Choi. “Yet in Canada, specifically Ontario, the government is more concerned about privacy rules so they’re not collecting or releasing racial data on COVID-19 patients.”

With governments not collecting and sharing this vital information, researchers like Choi are not able to adequately assess the hardships truly facing Canada’s most vulnerable populations.

“If we’ve learned anything from this pandemic, it’s that we can’t really prevent or contain the virus without addressing concerns of inequality. We know racial minorities in Canada are substantially more likely to be infected by COVID-19,” said Choi. “They’re also more likely to lose jobs as a result of the economic shutdown and be evicted from their homes. And unfortunately, we also know that all of these economic consequences will not only have an impact on one generation, but they’ll have a perpetuating impact on future generations.”

Prachi Srivastava is witnessing these same emergencies of inequity and indifference not only in Canada, but around the world. An expert on global education and international development, the Western education professor is leading a high-level policy brief for the T20 Task Force on COVID-19, which will feed into the G20 Summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia later this year. She has also provided recommendations for Ontario’s Ministry of Education based on this work.

“Hopefully two years from now, we will be in a less precarious situation as it relates to secure and continuous access to education,” said Srivastava. “But I’m very sad to say that I think globally there will be a deepening of current



Alumni Gazette staff writer Jeff Renaud brought professors Eric Arts, Kate Choi and Prachi Srivastava together for the first time in an online Zoom interview.

inequities and an emergence of new inequities. Much of the progress that we've made in global education over the past 20 years and with the United Nations MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) is in grave danger of collapse."

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic – and the resulting lockdowns and closures that occurred all around the world – UNESCO released a staggering number. More than 1.5 billion children were out of school due to the pandemic. That's over 90 per cent of the world's children and youth and nearly 20 per cent of Earth's total population. Pre-pandemic, near universal enrollment was achieved, strongest in primary education, thanks in large part to the global community, national governments, and a host of researchers including Srivastava.

"That's huge," said Srivastava. "It was the first time in human history we were able to achieve that. But now global education has been disrupted. And we are going to feel the after-effects of this pandemic – the lost opportunities and mounting mental and monetary costs – for certain households, certain groups, certain communities, certain nations, certain marginalized individuals, long after finding a vaccine or an effective treatment."

It's unthinkable. The world was right there, said Srivastava. But there was still a substantial number of children out of school – an estimated 250 million – due to entrenched inequities.

A FIGHT WORTH FIGHTING

All things being equal, they're not.

For the past 20 years, Eric Arts has been working on a vaccine for HIV/AIDS in his labs in the United States, Uganda and in Canada at Western's Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. And while he understands the rapid course

correction many G20 countries have taken to allocate resources towards developing a vaccine and a treatment for COVID-19 (his own research included), Arts said the decisions smack of inequality. For when he connects with his collaborators in Uganda to learn how the pandemic is affecting people in the cities and villages where they work, the stories he hears aren't reflecting what he sees in his social media feeds, the daily government briefings and the nightly news. It's quite the opposite.

Arts highlights a stark reality: while the virus has hit hard in low- to middle-income populations within some of the world's richest countries, it's largely not affecting developing countries in the same way.

"HIV/AIDS and diseases like tuberculosis and malaria have a far more dramatic and devastating effect on people in Africa but their economies have all been shut down for COVID-19, a disease that is largely a first-world problem," said Arts.

An estimated three million people still die every year from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria but those deaths predominantly occur in developing countries. Arts isn't convinced the death rate for COVID-19 will surpass one million this year but because it's also crushing the global economy, he said it's become priority number one for policy-makers.

"For those countries that struggle with those other diseases, COVID-19 has pulled all of the resources away from treating them," said Arts. "It's really dramatic in certain parts of the world and now we have a situation where low-income countries that are less impacted by COVID-19 per capita are suffering even greater consequences because of the circumstances beyond the actual disease."

Arts said if a person arrives at a clinic in Kampala, Uganda with a fever, COVID-19 is not the first disease they would check for. Prolonged fevers are associated with 16 million cases of malaria per year in Uganda – a potentially deadly disease, especially in infants.

"Doctors and health practitioners are having a terrible time securing medical supplies when there are a hundred things that will kill you before COVID-19," said Arts.

And that's the real problem. Countries like Canada and the United States are going to survive COVID-19. Arts said it may take a year or two, however, a vaccine will be discovered. But countries like Uganda will continue to suffer. The world has become so focused on COVID-19 that everything else is being exacerbated and everyone else is being left behind. Arts said if developing countries go two or three years with no resources, no funding, no programs and no projects, that's when the world is really going to see inequality.

The differences between the haves and the have-nots can be found right here at home, as well.

During the pandemic, Kate Choi has been studying the socio-economic status of neighbourhoods in Toronto and has found a disturbing trend in how COVID-19 has further exacerbated inequalities. Lower-income neighbourhoods have endured far greater difficulty curbing the spread of the virus because a higher share of their residents belong to racialized and more vulnerable groups. She has also seen an alarming rise in gender inequality.

"Doctors and health practitioners are having a terrible time securing medical supplies when there are a hundred things that will kill you before COVID-19."

"We know that women have taken a larger, disproportionate share of the extra burden that has been created because of the disruption of daily life caused by COVID-19. We also know they are more likely to have lost their jobs as a result of the coronavirus because of the types of industries in which they traditionally work," said Choi. "This amplifies gender inequality and reduces the gains in gender disparities that have actually seen growth over the past decade. Like socioeconomic class and race, we can see that inequality is increasing and amplifying and no one knows the exact magnitude of this inequality or how far it's going to go."

Choi believes there is a unique and "very small" window for governments in Ontario and Canada to mitigate the potential impact by providing financial, medical and housing resources to the country's most vulnerable.

"COVID-19 could affect these neighbourhoods for a very long period of time – not just in our lifetimes but across the

lifetimes of our children and grandchildren," said Choi.

While Choi is looking decades ahead, what's keeping Srivastava up at night now is school re-openings. She said there just isn't enough money being spent on doing it right. Globally, Srivastava finds education nearly always draws the short straw on expenditures. The outcomes – and inherent risks during a pandemic – have now become life-threatening for some. Once again, emerging research is showing families and neighbourhoods with lower socio-economic status bear the brunt of this negligence.

However, data are sparse. Commenting on the limited publicly available data in Ontario, Srivastava said that early patterns show families in wealthier neighbourhoods stated they were more likely to send their children back to school for face-to-face instruction in September. The potential reasons need to be further explored, but families are likely calculating a risk-cost-benefit analysis. According to Srivastava, risk will be at three levels – community (linked to virus transmission), school (including factors like school catchment and implemented precautions) and household (including socio-economic and racial factors, pre-existing health conditions, and flexibility).

Children living in lower-risk communities, from lower-risk households, and in schools with smaller class sizes in well-ventilated classrooms led by stable, established teachers and support staff, and robust measures such as sanitization, personal protective equipment, extra indoor and outdoor space for physical distancing, and regimented flow plans will likely have a more stable experience this year. Families with flexibility and resources may feel they can always pull their kids out and supplement their education if things get very bad. Many are already supplementing with private tuition.

Higher-risk families are also predominantly Black and racialized, as data on infection rates show. They may have members with pre-existing conditions, be multigenerational, with older family members needing care from others living in the home, and they may not be living in single-family homes.

"Whether we're looking at the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of vaccine development or public health or global education or socio-economic inequalities, what we're seeing is a flagrant mishandling at the level of public policy," she said. "We have to change the way we live, we have to take better care of our environment and we actually have to start giving a damn about the people who live on this planet."

Srivastava said we should learn from how Vietnam, classified as a lower-middle-income country, can enact public policies as quickly as a high-income country such as New

Zealand and quell the spread of COVID-19 to near non-existence, while G20 countries like the United States, the United Kingdom and some parts of Canada have been dragging their heels. "There is no reason on Earth for these shortcomings other than a sheer lack of will to institute certain policies," said Srivastava. "We have the resources, we have the space, we have the people and we have the money – and yet six months on, here we are." ♥



RESIDENCY REFLECTIONS

**ARTHUR KWOK, BSC'09, MSC'12,
SHARES EXPERIENCES FROM
THE FRONTLINES**

By Adam Stanley

Arthur Kwok returned home from another 12-hour shift at the hospital, stripping off the day's emotions along with his clothes, before entering the shower. And then he broke down.

It was a scene that played out, over and over, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as Kwok, BSc'09, MSc'12 (Biology), worked the frontlines during his residency at CentraState Medical Center, a hospital associated with Rutgers University in Freehold, N.J.

He helped numerous patients battle the virus, while trying to stay healthy himself, dealing with scenarios one cannot truly prepare for, and telling many families a loved one didn't make it.

But he chose this path.

As a physician, the number one thing you do is help people. These last few months have shown that as difficult as it was to assist patients navigating COVID-19, it was something he had to do.

"If you're a soldier, you go fight a war. If you're a physician, when shit hits the fan, you step up," Kwok said.

The Markham, Ont. native had no plans to be a doctor when he first arrived at Western, drawn by the same tight-knit community feeling that kept him here to pursue his master's degree.

And while he enjoyed research done at both the undergraduate and graduate level, it was his desire to help people directly that saw him apply to medical school.

Kwok attended St. George's University General Hospital in Grenada before doing clinical rotations in Florida and New York. He then landed his top choice for residency: Rutgers University.

Despite the quality of his academic training, Kwok said nothing compares to the education he received on the job since the dawn of the pandemic.

"As a family physician and working in a hospital, we're used to giving bad news," Kwok said. "People pass away all the time, though not at this rate. The conversations we've had to have and the decisions we've had to make are very difficult."

Kwok took to journaling his experience during the pandemic as a therapeutic escape.

He was on an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) rotation when the first confirmed COVID-19 case came through the hospital. With only 26 ICU beds, resources – especially ventilators – were scarce.

"It was difficult. It was overwhelming," he said. "You're scared."

He journaled about an elderly woman who was not going to make it. Her son, an EMT physician himself, was encouraged to try to change her 'code' to allow for a natural death. The son was reluctant, because the 'no visitor' policy would prevent his two sisters from seeing their mother before she passed away. Kwok broke the rule, and penned these

thoughts on watching the sisters see their mother one last time:

"I led the two sisters upstairs to the Critical Care Unit (CCU). Stares of disapproval from some melted away as they approached the room. They were not allowed in. But they mourned from the door. Tears fogging up their face shields. A gloved hand on the CCU room window, reaching out to her deceased mother, but separated by the isolation."

Then it was back to the business at hand. "We got the ventilator back and had to immediately move it to someone else," Kwok said.

Another story brought Kwok into the national spotlight. Seven members of the Fusco family – a large, local family from Freehold, N.J. – contracted the virus at a family dinner. Four members of the family died, with Rita Fusco-Jackson, 55, being the first in the family to pass, and the second recorded death due to COVID-19 in New Jersey. Two of Rita's brothers, Vincent and Carmine also died, along with Grace Fusco, the family matriarch.

Two other Fusco family members were in the ICU for 30 days, only making it out after being intubated. There is a high mortality rate associated with that procedure and Kwok said it would have been easy to give up on them.

"But we maintained continuous, meticulous management, never gave up on them and that's why I would consider this a success story," he said.

The family's story was on TV for a month as the country grew vested in their care and recovery—a "surreal" experience for Kwok.

When Kwok wrapped up his time in Freehold, there were approximately 10 COVID-19 patients left in the hospital and just a couple in the ICU. The initial surge did slow down, but the virus remained a constant fight for him and his fellow front-line doctors and nurses.

While he looks forward to working as a family physician in Atlantic City come November, he will never forget his residency and how he was buoyed by support he received at home and abroad.

He watched members of the community bring gifts of food, masks, and 3D-printed face shields, and local chefs prepare and drop off hundreds of meals at a time at the hospital. The fire department, police officers, and some ambulance services drove up to the hospital one day, sirens blazing in support. And he had countless messages from Canada.

But the people who survived the virus from his hospital – including Steven Barlotta, a saxophonist in the band of New Jersey's favourite son, Bruce Springsteen – were reason enough to feel uplifted.

"There's no substitute for seeing someone walk out of a hospital, honestly," he said. "The satisfaction of seeing someone come through and making it, that's what makes it worth it."

'THE CONVERSATIONS WE'VE HAD TO HAVE AND THE DECISIONS WE'VE HAD TO MAKE ARE VERY DIFFICULT.'



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Nicole Kaniki and Bertha Garcia named special advisors on anti-racism

By Jeff Renaud

Appointed special advisors to President Alan Shepard on anti-racism in August, Dr. Nicole Kaniki and Dr. Bertha Garcia will help Western lay the foundation for a sustained strategy to combat racism on campus.

These interim appointments are among a series of next steps Western announced on June 22 in response to the report and recommendations of the President's Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG).



Dr. Nicole Kaniki

Kaniki and Garcia, both of whom were members of the ARWG, will hold the roles while Western formally establishes a new senior administrative position dedicated to anti-racism initiatives – a permanent role President Shepard aims to have in place later this year, and one that requires governance approval.

"Nicole and Bertha have earned high regard in their roles at Western, and I know they will bring terrific energy and enthusiasm to the work we have ahead of us," said President Shepard.

Together, Kaniki and Garcia will advise President Shepard on a structure for an equity council (one of the ARWG's 23 recommendations), drafting terms of reference for the council and helping to launch it.

Kaniki, MSc'11, PhD'16, is the equity, diversity and inclusion specialist at BrainsCAN, Western's \$66-million neuroscience research initiative supported by the Canada First Research Excellence Fund. Under her guidance the EDI program at BrainsCAN has become a leader at Western and in neuroscience across Canada. She is the architect of a training program focused on EDI in research, which has seen participation from researchers across the university.

Kaniki believes society is experiencing a defining moment as the world faces the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and sees a renewed strength in the Black Lives Matter movement.

"As a Black individual working on diversity, this is an exciting time because never before have we had people listen and ally with us in bringing our voices to the table," said Kaniki. "That is the most exciting part for me and our communities. It is unfortunate that it took such deplorable human tragedy to force a global shift but I am confident that times are changing, especially for equity, diversity and inclusion at Western."

A long-time champion of women in medicine and a celebrated educator, Garcia is a professor in the department of pathology

and laboratory medicine at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. She is also currently serving as acting vice-dean and director of dentistry.

After receiving a medical degree in her native Peru, Garcia came to Canada to pursue postgraduate education and experienced many challenges as a woman, an immigrant and a medical trainee.

"As a member of the Anti-Racism Working Group, I was moved by the many voices we heard from our students, faculty and staff and now have a much deeper understanding of the current and past challenges they encountered," said Garcia. "I am optimistic that



Dr. Bertha Garcia

under Alan's leadership we will be able to develop and implement key changes to begin to lessen the burden currently being carried by members of the Western community."

Since sharing the University's response to the ARWG report, President Shepard has continued a dialogue with the Western community. Student and alumni groups have offered additional feedback, and one group has submitted 13 action items to address anti-black racism specifically.

"We welcome these continuing conversations," said Shepard, noting that all of the 13 newly suggested action items align with the ARWG's 23 recommendations. "This kind of dialogue will enrich our thinking and help hold Western accountable for taking significant and concrete steps forward."

The university also plans to include representatives from the alumni community on the equity council, to provide ongoing guidance and advice on equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

"WE HAVE A FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY TO CREATE A BETTER AND MORE JUST WORLD:"

As President Shepard looks to the future for Western, he reflected again on the harm caused in the past, in particular the work of former Western researcher Philippe Rushton.

"As my colleagues in our psychology department recently acknowledged, 'Rushton's legacy shows that the impact of flawed science lingers on' and continues to be used by white supremacists despite

'deeply flawed assumptions and methodologies'. Once again, I want to apologize for the profound harm this has caused, and continues to cause, in our community and beyond," said Shepard.

"We have a fundamental responsibility to create a better and more just world. I am grateful that Western has an engaged community ready to help us make the university stronger. These conversations are more important now than ever before." 🍀



A CANADIAN CRISIS: Fighting for eldercare reform

By Wendy Haaf

Just two weeks into the COVID-19 pandemic – and well before residents in Canadian care homes began dying of the virus in large numbers – Dr. Samir Sinha became a magnet for criticism when he told *Globe and Mail* health reporter André Picard, “If my mom was in long-term care, I’d pull her out now.”

Surely, things couldn’t be that bad, some Canadian critics said. Surely, we have safeguards protecting frail seniors, they argued.

While he takes no pleasure in being right, Sinha, MD’02, had for years been trying to warn the public and policymakers that fissures in our long-term care system could be blown wide open by a novel pathogen like the virus that causes COVID-19.

Sinha is director of geriatrics at Toronto’s Mount Sinai Hospital and University Health Network Hospitals, director of health policy research at the National Institute of Aging (Ryerson) and expert lead of Ontario’s Seniors Strategy. He was attending medical school at Western when he began honing his advocacy for vulnerable people.

Caring for people at the highest risk of dying and coping with fallout from his public critiques of the system has made life during COVID-19 “some of the most professionally and personally demanding months of my life.”

“Prior to the pandemic, we had 430,000 Canadians with unmet health care needs, and 40,000 on nursing home wait lists across the country,” he explained. “Going into this, we already had an eldercare crisis on our hands. COVID-19 exposed those systemic vulnerabilities that a lot of us were choosing to ignore, or wanting to believe didn’t really exist.”

And it’s not just the sheer numbers that weigh on Sinha and his colleagues. “I don’t think there’s any Canadian who’s not been touched by a loved one, or (doesn’t know) someone who died in a home care setting. Behind those numbers are thousands of people who didn’t have a good death, and that’s unfair.”

But while many of us are now familiar with some of the cracks that contributed to the collapse of the long-term care systems in Ontario and Quebec – poor infection control measures, under-staffing, employees whose part-time hours and poor pay led them to work in more than one care facility – Sinha says protecting our seniors from future pandemics requires a fundamental shift.

The first step? Correcting the underfunding that

lingers from the failure to include long-term care in medicare’s safety net 50 years ago. At the time, the oversight was understandable, since the average Canadian was 27 with a lifespan in the mid-60s. But now Canada spends one third less on home care and nursing home care as a proportion of its GDP than the average for OECD countries.

“If the prime minister called me tomorrow and asked ‘What would you do?’, I’d say, ‘Let’s just start by being average, and boost funding for provision of long-term care by 30 per cent,’” Sinha says. “We’ve seen what being below average gets us – the dubious distinction of being the international leader of deaths in these settings.”

And that’s just the start of Sinha’s recommendations.

“Number two, I would reorient how we spend our money,” said Sinha. “We focus 87 per cent of our long-term care spending on institutionalizing people, but less than seven per cent of our older population is actually living in congregate care settings like nursing or retirement homes. And yet a large proportion of these facilities are outdated and cramped, with two or three residents to a room

– ideal conditions for infections like COVID-19 to spread. In Ontario, for example, we’ve got 79,000 publicly funded nursing home beds, and 30,000 are in need of an upgrade.”

Shifting spending towards helping more older Canadians remain in their homes could go a long way towards solving Canada’s long-term care crisis, he said. “In Denmark, by investing more aggressively in home and community care, not only did they avoid building any new nursing homes or nursing home beds for a 20-year period, they also saw the closure of thousands of hospital beds.”

Until then, however, Sinha continues his advocacy on behalf of vulnerable people as he uses the lessons in leadership he learned during his days at Western.

He has helped create a transparent record of Canada’s COVID-19 deaths in long-term care in the form of the National Institute of Aging’s real-time online tracker.

He continues to push for long-term care reform. And more Canadians are starting to listen to the message, however painful it might be.

“Our opportunity as health-care leaders and as people who have borne witness to this is to never let it happen again, and to learn from international experience how we can better support seniors to stay healthy and independent as long as possible.”

“We’ve seen what being below average gets us – the dubious distinction of being the international leader of deaths.”

Powering through together

Meet Western's Chancellor, Linda Hasenfratz



Linda Hasenfratz, BSc'89, EMBA'97, LLD' 19, was installed as Western's 23rd chancellor last year. Here, the CEO of Linamar Corporation shares her thoughts on leading, learning and living life to the fullest with Alumni Gazette assistant editor Keri Ferguson

How does it feel to serve as chancellor of your alma mater?

It means a lot to me personally from the perspective that I came here for my own education, and all four of my kids are Western students or alumni. More broadly, I think Western is a wonderful institution. I'm proud to be part of its life for a period of time and to work with Alan (Shepard), who I think is a wonderful leader, doing a great job right out of the gate in a very tough year.

You led Linamar through the 2008-09 economic downturn and now through the COVID-19 pandemic. What do you think is key to leading a business – or an academic institution – through a global crisis?

I think in times of uncertainty, the best thing you can do is communicate extensively. That's been a big part of our strategy at Linamar – over communicating with our stakeholders, whether it be our employees, our customers, our shareholders, our bankers, our suppliers. Similarly, I think the university, given the uncertainty our students and recent graduates are facing, should communicate as much as possible. And, you don't have to have all the answers. I think it's valuable to hear, 'Here's what I know. Here's what I don't know. I'm going to come back to you with answers on the things I don't know.'

(PHOTO BY TRINA KOSTER, TRINA KOSTER PHOTOGRAPHY)



“TOUGH TIMES DON’T LAST. TOUGH TEAMS DO.”

What is your message to your stakeholders and to our students?

We are going to get through this. We’re going to learn something from it and there is an end. Tough times don’t last, but tough teams do. And we’re one tough team.

I think it’s important everyone realize that like in other challenging times, we’ll make our way through and come out on the other side. How we come out is very much related to our attitude when we’re in it. We can take adversity as something we run and hide from, or we can take it to be something we learn and grow from and look for options.

What did you gain and learn from lockdown?

I gained time with my family. Time with my four adult children living at home, which I would not have had otherwise. I loved it. I don’t know that my kids would necessarily agree!

Professionally, we learned we can do a lot of things remotely, which I never dreamed of doing before, but I thought, ‘I’m going to give it a whirl.’ It wasn’t fantastic, but it was okay.

On the other hand, we learned how important it is to be together as a team. There’s a lot we’re missing out on – team cohesion, teamwork and the camarade-

rie that comes from working together. It’s much more formal to interact on Zoom or Teams. You have to book it, you can’t just stick your head in someone’s office and if they’re free, talk to them. I think an enormous amount of creativity and innovation comes from informal interactions.

Linamar has diversified over the years in response to changing markets and trends. How do you stay ahead of the curve and take the right risks?

I try and stay informed about what’s happening around a wide variety of topics that may impact our business, whether it be in terms of our markets and products and technologies, or just in terms of people and interactions to learn how we can better work as a team, and think strategically for our business.

I spend a lot of my day reading articles and research to understand factually what’s going on. That in itself is a really important lesson.

While I think Western, and universities in general do a great job of teaching critical thinking, we have more information available to us today than we’ve ever had in history. And yet, I feel we’re less informed than we’ve ever been. With the volume of information, we’re not doing a good enough job evaluating, questioning and validating it.

I encourage Western students to go out and seek information. Don’t just take what comes streamed to you, which

“I ENCOURAGE WESTERN STUDENTS TO GO OUT AND SEEK INFORMATION. DON’T JUST TAKE WHAT COMES STREAMED TO YOU, WHICH FEEDS YOUR BIAS.”

feeds your bias. Force yourself to look at other sources. Read what people are saying about the other side. Look for thoughtful analysis, look for facts. Seek diversity of opinion and then come up with your own positions. You can’t make good decisions without considering all sides.

You went to the White House in 2017 and sat at a roundtable on women in the workforce as part of the Canada-United States Council for the Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders. What was that like?

It was interesting, and an issue the president and the prime minister were aligned around. That bilateral council was made up of five American companies and five Canadian companies, the CEOs of which were all women. It was a great opportunity to offer some thoughts and advice to both governments as well as the private sector, on what more we could do to encourage

women entrepreneurs and women in business.

Your family and company are acting on that, supporting women pursuing a dual-degree in business and engineering at Western with scholarships, co-op placements and job offers.

The dual-degree that Western uniquely offers is such a great combination and really marketable in terms of being able to go out and get a job and move yourself into leadership. Supporting this program was a direct way we could help women to step into those roles. There’s the financial aspect, but also, importantly, the experiential element in offering them a summer job in years three and four and a job upon graduation.

I’m a big believer in experiential learning. Work-integrated learning, co-op opportunities and internships are really key in preparing young people for their careers.

Is that influenced by your own experience, starting at Linamar on the factory floor?

Yes, and making my way around the company and really learning it from the ground up. I started as a machine operator, then went on to engineering quality, production control, accounting, estimating, etc. I really got a great viewpoint of the business from all

perspectives, which I encourage young people to get if they aspire to leadership.

Eventually, you managed one plant, two plants, working your way up to CEO. How did you negotiate assuming that role with your father?

In 2002, he suggested it was time for me to become CEO, and I said, ‘Well, that sounds like a great idea. But if I’m CEO, what are you going to do?’ And he said, ‘The same thing I’m doing now.’ Well that wasn’t going to work, obviously. I thought we should agree on the things he would do as executive chairman, and I would do everything else as the CEO. We went around it for a few weeks and I finally cornered him on an airplane and we wrote down the three things we agreed he was going to do. Then I made him sign the paper because he always taught me to make people sign right away when you agree! To this day, I still have that paper in my desk.

My father has always been an inspiration for me. He’s the consummate entrepreneur, always looking for opportunities to grow. He motivates me and the rest of the team at Linamar. It’s pretty fantastic to think we’ve had that inspiration for more than 50 years.

In addition to education, your family also generously supports the arts and health care. What motivates you to give?

I think we’ve developed a holistic ap-

“I’M A BIG BELIEVER IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THEIR CAREERS.”

proach around our philanthropy that just organically grew out of how I live my life. Supporting education is supporting your mind, supporting healthcare is supporting your body, and supporting the arts is supporting your soul. Life’s a balance of all three.

What do you do to relax and recharge?

I’m a big exercise enthusiast, so I work out every day. Anyone in a high stress job needs a physical outlet to help maintain their health. I’m a very social person, so I like to spend time with friends and entertain. And I love to cook.

What is your philosophy of life?

Number one, you can do a lot more than you think. I think we underestimate our ability to take on more. I find when you have a very full plate, life expands to accommodate. And secondly, in a related way, I think you should live every moment of your life. Don’t wait until the end to look back, thinking you left something on the table. Do as much as you can, squeeze as much into a day as you can, because you get so much out of life when you do that. 🍀

Roots: Born, raised and resides in Guelph, Ont. Her father, Frank, started Linamar in the basement of their family home in 1964, naming the company in honour of Linda, her sister, Nancy, and their mother, Margaret.

Family: Linda and her husband, Ed Newton, have four children: Katie (HBA’19, BESC’19, Mechanical Engineering), Emily (HBA’20, BESC’20, Mechanical Engineering), Tommy (Year 2, HBA) and Olivia (Year 3, Media, Information & Technoculture).

Education: BSc’89, MBA’97
Linda received her Doctor of Laws from Western in 2019.

Role: CEO of Linamar Corporation, a diversified manufacturing company serving access, agriculture and automotive markets worldwide with more than 60 factories across North America, Europe and Asia.

Select Awards & Honours:

- Canada’s Outstanding CEO of the Year (2019)
- Order of Canada (2018)
- Appointed to Canada’s NAFTA Council (2017)
- Canadian Business Hall of Fame Inductee (2016)

Select Board Service:

- Co-Chair, Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders
- Chair, Next Generation Manufacturing Canada
- Director, ROM Board of Governors
- Member, Business Council of Canada
- Member, Ivey Advisory Board

GLOBAL EPIDEMIOLOGIST SOUNDS CAUTIOUS NOTE ON COVID-19

By Wendy Haaf

(Photo by Pan Shiji Photography)

When Dr. Gabriel Leung speaks, the world listens. The dean of medicine at Hong Kong University (HKU), Leung, MD'96, made international headlines in January when he announced that, based on modelling, the number of COVID-19 cases in Wuhan were likely dramatically higher than China's official outbreak total.

But his introduction to novel viral pathogens started back in 2003 with a call from a fellow Western alumnus.

Leung had been conducting a series of cohort studies in non-communicable diseases in HKU's department of community medicine when he received a call from Dr. Margaret Chan, BA'73, MD'77, DSc'99, Hong Kong's then director of health and current head of the World Health Organization.

"(She) asked us to drop everything," Leung recalled in a 2018 *Lancet* profile. Their shared emergency task: fighting what would become known as SARS.

It was an experience Leung has called his 'baptism by fire'. He would go on to lead Hong Kong's efforts against Influenza A (H1N1) in 2009 during a four-year stint in civil service, and conduct research that defined the epidemiology of two novel viral epidemics in addition to COVID-19: SARS-COV in 2003, and Influenza A (H7N9) in 2009.

Leung's career trajectory as one of the world's leading epidemiology and global health experts has been anything but predictable. He had been a piano prodigy in his childhood, then majored in chemistry and minored in music through Western's then-new scholar's elective program.

Initially, following his mother's brain tumour diagnosis, he wanted to become a neurosurgeon. But, realizing he was more of a 'people-person', he switched to family medicine.

After completing a residency at the University of Toronto and a master's in public health at Harvard, Leung joined HKU's department of community medicine. He later received a research doctorate from HKU, and became a full professor in his early 30s, before his appointment as HKU's youngest-ever dean of medicine in 2013.

Now, as dean, Leung has helped provide medical students at HKU with a well-rounded experience – similar to the one he received at Western – by incorporating humanities courses and events such as concerts and movie screenings into the curriculum.

His love for music meanwhile, has never waned. Today, he is also a chamber music pianist and has performed as a guest conductor with the HKU Union Philharmonic Orchestra.

Given his early, accurate, predications on the initial trajectory of COVID-19, where does Leung see the pandemic headed now? "The only way an epidemic with a completely novel pathogen – where there is no pre-existing immunity in the population – is going to die down, whether it's going to become extinct, or, more likely, to become endemic, is for a sufficient proportion

of the world's population to develop immunity to it," he explained.

"And there are only two ways for that to happen: through natural infection and then recovery, or through vaccination," he said. "Given that a vaccine is not going to be widely available – I'm talking about having sufficient doses for sufficient numbers of people so it actually has a population effect – until probably nine to 12 months from now, we're going to see continuing waves of flare-ups."

Leung said the likelihood of future COVID-19 outbreaks is further increased as local outbreaks multiply in countries where restrictions are easing. "When you talk about travel bubbles, when you talk about reopening, you are increasing population mixing, both in countries and between countries.

"Secondly, the additional seasonal forcing in humidity and temperature that comes with autumn and winter in the northern hemisphere makes respiratory bugs much easier to spread, just like the flu," he added. "A combination of those two things almost guarantees a second wave."

**“IT REALLY DEPENDS
ON WHAT WE'VE LEARNED
FROM THE FIRST WAVE.”**

That said, he is hopeful the second wave may not be catastrophic, or even substantial.

"It really depends on what we've learned from the first wave."

Keeping it under control will require concerted efforts to protect those who are most vulnerable, which includes not only older individuals living in institutions, but those belonging to disadvantaged groups and those who live or work in crowded facilities.

"Appropriate physical distancing, that's flexible and responsive to changes in transmissibility, is critical. Testing infrastructure needs to be massively ramped up, as a matter of routine. Making sure the contact tracing infrastructure is there, both in terms of the resources needed to do that, as well as any ancillary IT infrastructure."

One day, perhaps Leung will address some of these topics in the lectures he gives to students on medicine and public health, medical ethics, humanitarianism, and palliative care.

In the meantime, there's no question that applying one particular lesson from history could help lower the potential death toll from COVID-19.

"The precautionary note is very much reflective of the 1919 second wave of the 1918 (flu) pandemic, which actually killed a lot more people than the first wave," Leung said. "That's why we need to plan for the worst, and hope for the best." ♥



SUSTAINED CHANGE

ENTREPRENEURIAL TWINS BYRON AND DEXTER PEART
BRING BUSINESS INTO THE MOMENT

By Tom Kertscher

(Photos by Celia Spendard-Ko)

When it comes to changing the world through the way you do business, for Byron Peart and Dexter Peart sustainability is only the start.

The 48-year-old twins live in the same building in Montreal’s Habitat 67 community and say they’ve never been apart for more than a week in their lives. They have been entrepreneurs together since creating and selling T-shirts and lip balm to their high school classmates.

Now they run Goodee, which offers over 500 products ranging from hand soap to apparel to decor to furniture, selling goods that are “carefully selected and vetted by our in-house sustainability team.” In other words, their artisan partners’ materials, supply chain, labour standards, ecological footprint and business practices are checked to ensure products are ethically made.

But in the disruptive times marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and calls for criminal justice reform in the wake of George Floyd’s death in police custody in Minnesota, the Peart brothers want to promote environmental sustainability and other values, as well.

Much stems from previously working in the fashion industry, where they saw a lot of waste and obsolescence.

“We wanted to create an environment for that conscious consumer who was already there, or close to understanding how their products were made, where they were made, the impact that they were having on people and communities and the planet. That was the starting point for Goodee,” explained Byron, BA’95 (Economics). “We were looking for that kind of retail destination ourselves and we couldn’t find it.”

The brothers are seeking to sell products that uphold other values, such as empowering women and other marginalized communities.

“We’ve seen a straight line between performance – sales, traffic engagement – where there is an audience that’s out there, and it’s not just a young millennial audience, who are simply looking to make better choices,” said Dexter, BA’95 (Economics). “And they’re looking for companies that are putting purpose and mission – not just as a marketing tool, but as a core and intentional and foundational part of their business strategy.”



THE TIMING OF online-based and home-focused Goodee, launched in 2019, turned out to be fortuitous as more consumers looked for ethical choices and then found themselves spending more time at home amid the pandemic.

But the brothers say more important is their bond, with Byron being more of the dreamer and Dexter the pragmatist.

“We can’t underestimate the power of the twinship in the sense of having a partner in that entrepreneurial journey,” Dexter said. “In a lot of cases, when we think of strong entrepreneurs, it’s because someone alongside them helped enable that.”

“Doing this as twins, without a question, has been a very formidable part of how we found success, but also how we just manage the fear of starting something new and not thinking that you’re crazy, because someone else is there to sort of hold your hand and be crazy with you.”

The brothers noted, as America is roiled by demonstrations calling for racial justice in the wake of Floyd’s death, that they emphasize choosing partner-businesses owned by Indigenous people and people of colour.

“We want to see ourselves as leaders in this conversation, whether it’s through business or through our ability to commu-

“DOING THIS AS TWINS, WITHOUT A QUESTION, HAS BEEN A VERY FORMIDABLE PART OF HOW WE FOUND SUCCESS.”

nicate in our private lives,” Dexter said. “This is a challenging and trying time and upsetting in a lot of ways, but hopefully change is going to bring some better ways to look at life and how we consume, but also how we live together.”

Byron also noted that the moment is right for much-needed change.

“We’re really seeing a sustained change in the conversation and the narrative around racial injustice, not only in the United States, but in Canada, as well, and globally. We’re very excited that this will be, in our estimation, a sustained new reset, which, in a large way, society was needing and demanding,” he said.

“We’re excited to play a role in that and help share not only stories, but products, and be active citizens in rewriting what the future looks like. It’s a very exciting time.”



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Miles past that

Josh Vander Vies pushes Canadian athletes to persevere through pandemic and beyond

By Debora Van Brenk, BA'86, MA'87

His Paralympic medal tells a tale of his athleticism and drive, even if today's button-down suit may seem a convenient disguise for an extraordinary life Josh Vander Vies has spent on two kinds of courts.

"As long as I can remember, I've always wanted to win. Every single thing I could do, I've wanted to do it as best I could," he said. "My disability is what people see first, all the time. But I forget about it – I'm miles past that."

Born without arms or legs, Vander Vies, BA'09 (Political Science/French Language and Literature), grew up in Sarnia, Ont. and is a graduate of High Park French Immersion School and Northern Collegiate Institute. He earned a diploma in general arts and science from Lambton College before enrolling at Western.

As important as it was for him to cross the convocation stage, he also set his sights on making it to a Paralympian podium.

Vander Vies lived and breathed sports as a kid. He cheered the Blue Jays' World Series championships in 1992 and 1993 and avidly kept track of Donovan Bailey's record-setting sprints. He envisioned the training and focus needed to become a world-class athlete.

"In all those sports that I watched, it never occurred to me that I wouldn't be able to do that someday."

So he swam, dabbled in shotput, threw discus. Then, he discovered boccia.

Pronounced like 'gotcha,' boccia is one of two sports played at the Paralympics but not the Olympics (the other is goalball). It is a game of stamina, strength, focus and strategy as competitors throw or roll a leather-covered ball to land as close as possible to a 'jack' ball while dislodging their opponents.

"It's like a combination of chess and curling and archery," he said. "That's what drew me to the sport."

He began competing at a local level, then regionally, and in high school made the 2003 national team and qualified "by the skin of my teeth" for the 2004 Paralympics in Athens, where he finished 11th.

"I was way too young to do anything meaningful at that time. But I wanted to win a medal so badly after that."

As a singles player, Vander Vies won national championships six times between 2002 and 2009 and won a bronze medal at the 2011 Parapan American Games.

Partnering with former rival Marco Dispaltrio, he is also a member of a formidable team, nationally and internationally. The duo consistently ranked among the top five in the world for a full decade of competition. The pinnacle: winning a bronze



Josh Vander Vies competes in the 1/8 finals of the individual Boccia BC4 at the London 2012 Paralympic Games at the Excel. (PHOTO BY DANIEL MARCOTTE/CANADIAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE)

"YOU MIGHT NOT ALWAYS WIN OR SUCCEED - BUT YOU MIGHT GET REALLY CLOSE."

medal at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London, England.

"We have a bond that goes beyond friendship. What we really had was a communication that was forged when the stakes were low. And when the stakes were high at the Paralympics, we

took the fear of performing and turned it into something positive," Vander Vies said.

Off the court, Vander Vies was elected athlete representative to the International Boccia Committee, named a director of the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC), and represented Canadian Olympic, Paralympic and national team athletes with AthletesCan, Canada's association of national team athletes.

At the same time, Vander Vies was attending law school at the University of British Columbia. He met and married Dalia, a former member of the Lithuanian national fencing team, and their daughter Olivia was born in 2013.

Juggling a marriage, family, law school, athlete advocacy, speaking tours, training and competition became increasingly difficult. The day he found himself on the road in a hotel room on Father's Day video chatting with his young daughter, he realized his time as a competitive athlete had to end.

"All of us who are high-performance athletes don't give it up easily – we go kicking and screaming into retirement."

But he had gained valuable insights into the organization of sports, and other not-for-profit groups such as charities.

The law surrounding not-for-profit organizations is now his specialty in his legal practice.



Marco Dispaltra and Josh Vander Vies receiving the Bronze Medal in the Boccia Mixed Pairs - BC4 at the London 2012 Paralympic Games at Excel. (PHOTO BY MATTHEW MURNAGHAN/CANADIAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE)

Familiar with charities' work as both an athlete and a disabled Canadian, it was interesting for him to explore what was underpinning them. What he found was an antiquated legal system that had surprisingly few statutes or codifications. Instead, it is governed by common law – a body of precedents tested and ruled upon by different courts.

His job is to sort through those laws – some of which challenge even the basic definition of a charity – and to make sense of them for his clients, large and small.

For Vander Vies, it means spending a lot of time doing research before he ever reaches a courtroom. (As a child, he learned to write by cradling a pencil between his cheek and forearm. Now, computer technology has made his work considerably easier.)

“People come to me with ideas for the good they want to do in the world and I provide them with the legal framework to do it.”

He is also working to hone his skills as an in-house counsel and provide leadership in non-profit governance.

And once the pandemic-delayed Paralympics eventually take place, Vander Vies will serve as assistant chef de mission of the Canadian Paralympic team working with athletes

and with chef de mission (and retired champion para-swimmer) Stephanie Dixon.

He looks forward to helping Canada be frontrunners in supporting Paralympians and Paralympic Games. “We’re at the forefront of the movement but we’re seeing other countries like Britain and Brazil surpassing us not only in results but media coverage.”

Canadian athletes were among the first to say they would not compete in the Olympic or Paralympic Games in summer 2020 – a stance that cascaded to other national sports associations until the International Olympic Committee postponed the Games.

“I’m proud of how Canada reacted to COVID-19,” he said. “To continue international sports under those circumstances was just not possible. I’m in awe of the toughness and resilience that Canadian athletes are showing.”

He knows something of that resilience himself. “You must persevere, no matter how challenging it seems. You might not always win or succeed – but you might get really close. I hope people know they have the opportunity to mould their own lives. I know that sounds incredibly trite but having the right attitude is where it all starts.”

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Sharing Stories Shattering Stereotypes

FILMMAKER AMBER FARES BRINGS STORIES TO LIFE, SHEDS LIGHT ON HUMANITY

By Keri Ferguson

Amber Fares, BA'93, never questioned who she was growing up in Grande Prairie, Alta. She was proudly “100 per cent Canadian and 100 per cent Lebanese,” playing sports and enjoying Arab food prepared by her grandmothers. “We played a lot of hockey, and we ate a lot of hummus,” Fares said.

But that peaceful coexistence came crumbling down with the events of 9/11. While the terrorist attacks took place on U.S. soil far away, the resulting Islamophobia hit close to home.

“All of a sudden, my family was under scrutiny. There was a kind of ‘othering’ as mundane as people asking me where I was from and what religion I was, to incidences of phone calls to my parents, telling them to go back to where they came from,” Fares said. (Her mother and father were born in southern Saskatchewan to parents arriving in Canada between 1900 and 1919.)

“I thought, ‘If I’m not Canadian, then who is?’” she said. “My family has been in Canada since the turn of the century. There was never any question about who we were, or need to separate or stand up for this other culture we embodied, as well.”

It marked a turning point. Fares packed her bags, picked up her camera and put down roots in Ramallah, Palestine, for seven years. Set on a path with “one foot in the Arab culture and the other in North American culture,” she’s become an award-winning documentary filmmaker and cinematographer by sharing stories, shattering stereotypes and shedding light on social issues.

“With a place like Palestine, specifically, there’s a lot of clichés in the way it’s presented in the media,” Fares said. “It is very slanted toward the war and the occupation. Very rarely do you get a chance to dig a little bit deeper and show life there from a personal perspective.”

She found her opportunity with her first feature-length documentary, *Speed Sisters*. Against the backdrop of occupied Palestine, on makeshift tracks across the West Bank and under the watch of Israeli soldiers, Fares takes viewers inside the lives



Fares with Speed Sister Marah Zahalka, a member of the first all-women race car driving team in the Middle East.

of the first all-women race car team in the Middle East.

Although there’s intrigue in the women racing cars in the desert – supported and cheered on by men – their personal stories are what resonated most with North American and Middle Eastern audiences alike, winning audience choice awards while playing more than 100 film festivals worldwide.

Fares’ Canadian passport afforded her freedom to navigate the military checkpoints in making the film – an advantage not all the drivers shared – but it was her solidarity and Palestinian experience that allowed the women to share their strengths and struggles.

“Because I grew up in Canada, very familiar with Arab culture, it made it easy for me to bond with all the drivers and their families, and with the greater community,” Fares said.

Her ability to connect also helped spotlight the lighter side of Kholoud Al-Faqih, star of *The Judge*, and first woman appointed to



the Middle East’s Shari’a courts. Fares co-produced and was cinematographer for the film, which garnered a 2019 Peabody Award.

“Kholoud is a really an amazing character, and so funny,” Fares said. “But, because she is a judge, she speaks and dresses formally, so it was hard to warm up to her. The challenge was to get through to her great personality.”

Women have played an active and important part of the resistance movement in Palestine for several years, Fares said. “*Speed Sisters* and *The Judge* stand on the shoulders of giants, women who have been fighting for the same rights they are.”

A chance conversation about Palestine with Joey Soloway, creator of *Transparent*, saw Fares brought on as associate producer and cast as a Canadian-Palestinian in a third-season episode of the Emmy Award-winning series.

“(Soloway) really wanted Gaby Hoffmann’s character, Ali, to go to Palestine but wasn’t quite sure what to do there, because nobody in the writers’ room really had that experience. We just got talking and three days later I’m on a first-class flight to L.A., driving onto the Paramount lot, thinking, ‘What’s going on?’ walking on to sound stages like it was nothing,” she laughed.

“A lot of the Palestinian parts of that episode came from some of my own time there,” Fares continued. “The check-point scene Ali walks through was shot in a warehouse in downtown L.A, using footage from *Speed Sisters*, where (driver) Marah walks through. We slowed it down and recreated it, hiring Arab and Iranian actors to play Palestinians. It was a surreal moment, being able to use my experience.”

Fares also brought her first-hand knowledge and talents as supervising producer and cinematographer to *The Muslim Next Door*, the premiere episode of the *National Geographic* series *America Inside Out* with Katie Couric, airing in the wake of U.S. President Donald Trump’s Muslim ban.

But her biggest point of pride to date was working on *And She Could Be Next*, a two-part documentary series recently aired on PBS. The film



(PHOTO BY TANYA HAB-JOUQA)

“It was a very historic moment. To witness and be part of such a great project – about women of colour, by women of colour...”



Fares shooting *The Judge*, the story of the first woman appointed to the Middle East's Shari'a courts. The film won a 2019 Peabody Award.

featured women of colour running for office in the United States in 2018 – Rashida Tlaib in Detroit, as well as Stacey Abrams in Georgia, Veronica Escobar in Texas and Deb Haaland in New Mexico.

“We were the only film crew with Rashida Tlaib from the time she announced she was running, all the way through her campaign until the night she won,” Fares said. “It was a very historic moment. To witness and be part of such a great project – about women of colour, by women of colour – the representation and comradery between everybody was just really fantastic.”

Based in New York for more than a decade, Fares remains rooted as a Canadian, and in her love of hockey.

She started a street hockey league in Ramallah that played every Friday in the parking lot in front of the Canadian representative office. It was all part of a heritage she's proud to own.

“I was a producer for a friend of mine in Pittsburgh a couple of summers ago and the Penguins were in the Stanley Cup finals. I was talking hockey with everyone I met. My friends said they had never heard somebody talk about hockey so much in their lives.

“It's funny, in the United States, they love Canadians so much. I use that to my advantage a lot when I'm trying to foster relationships right away with a distributor. I say a few words and play up my being Canadian.”

THE LONG RUN

One family's journey through COVID-19

By Keri Ferguson

John Moore, BA'92, Dip'93 (Political Science), has always been one to go the distance. The avid runner and senior legal counsel at Swiss Re has honed his resilience living in New York City the past 20 years. Moore's mettle was tested further this past spring, when his city became the epicentre for COVID-19.

On March 22, Moore went for his usual 10K morning run. Unexpected exhaustion set in shortly after returning to the Manhattan apartment he shared with his wife Nancy and their children, Caroline, 3, and twins John John and Grant, 18 months. “I immediately knew I wasn't well,” Moore said. “I took my temperature and it was high, 103.5.” John went to a clinic, where both he and Nancy were tested for COVID-19.

The couple lost their sense of smell before receiving their results, testing positive for COVID-19.

“All of a sudden, we had to figure this out,” Moore said.

Both John and Nancy, a credit analyst, had been working from home during the pandemic. Their employers offered them flexibility around their workloads but there was no such reprieve on the home front.

Lockdown had left Caroline's preschool closed and the twins' caregiver no longer available. With John's family in Canada and Nancy's 20 miles away with vulnerable health issues, they were on their own, juggling jobs, kids and debilitating exhaustion. “We had to do shifts,” Moore said. “I would do a morning, and by 12:30 I would have to go to bed for three and half hours.”

They cleaned “manically” – a protocol staying in place long after their quarantine.

“Once you have the virus, you wonder if it's going to get worse, if you're going to be hospitalized and how it would impact the family.”

“No strollers in the apartment until they were completely cleaned with antibacterial wipes,” Moore said. “Every single part of the wheels because basically they track all of New York City into your home.”

Isolation was tough. “We couldn't take the kids or dog for a walk. The playroom in our building was closed and there were no children playing in Central Park, no people anywhere.”

There was also a looming sense of the unknown.

“Once you have the virus, you wonder if it's going to get worse, if you're going to be hospitalized and how it would impact the family. You become a bit like a hypochondriac, each time you feel another symptom.”

The nightly news was grim as their city fell quiet.



Despite taking every precaution, The Moores contracted COVID-19 this past spring. Above with children, John John (left), Grant (right) and Caroline.

“There are certain things indelibly etched into my mind,” Moore said, recalling a walk once out of quarantine. Pushing the twins' stroller past the hospital near their apartment, he noticed an 18-wheeler parked by the service entrance, plywood ramps up the back.

“I thought, ‘Oh boy, I know what this is for,’” he said. Passing the truck five days later, his hunch was confirmed.

“The refrigeration units had turned on. I knew then it was an active morgue. I still get chills when I think about it. I felt scared, sad and just a number of emotions. It felt much more real with it right on the street behind us.”

The Moores, who have since moved to Connecticut, recovered in about three weeks, feeling fortunate to have had mild to moderate symptoms, and to have emerged stronger on the other side.

“COVID-19 forced us to dig deep,” Moore said. “Just like when you are training for a marathon. You're obviously tired at mile 24, but you have to keep pushing.”

A way around the **no's**

FASHION PIONEER LAUREN CHAN CHARTS
HER OWN PATH THROUGH INDUSTRY

By Amelia Eqbal, BA'20

Lauren Chan isn't afraid of the unknown. When an injury ended her varsity career shortly after it began, Chan, BA'12 (Sociology/French), had to reevaluate her post-grad plans of becoming a semi-pro basketball player. In her newfound spare time, she pursued a hobby that quickly turned into something more.

"I had always loved fashion, and I had all this extra time on my hands, so I started writing," Chan said.

She began to consider a career in fashion journalism – a trajectory all but cemented when she learned that Western offered a course on fashion writing.

"I remember looking through the course booklet and seeing the fashion writing class and going, 'No way, we have that?'" Chan said. "I remember crossing my fingers that it wouldn't be full and that I would get in – and I did, and I absolutely loved it."

While her time at Western helped her to find a new dream, it took more than a writing class to make it come true.

Chan knew she needed to be in New York City if she was going to become a fashion editor. But, with few writing credits to her name, she was having trouble getting a visa approved. So she took an alternate route.

"I thought backwards into that logic, and I thought, 'OK, so what job skill would be unique enough to validate that outsourcing?' I figured if my job skill was what I looked like, then that might work."

“I HAVE AN
END GOAL OF
REPRESENTING,
SERVING, AND
CONNECTING
WITH PEOPLE
WHO HAVE BEEN
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BY THE FASHION
INDUSTRY
**BECAUSE OF
THEIR SIZE.**”

”

(PHOTOS BY BFA)



'What am I going to do for the rest of my life if I've already done what I thought I was going to do over the next 20 years?'

Although she had never modelled before, Chan attended an open call at Ford Models in New York City the summer after graduation. She was signed to the plus-size division.

When she wasn't modelling, Chan was interning, freelance writing, going to workshops, attending panels and more to gain her footing in the industry. She quickly learned how to adapt in the face of rejection.

"It took a lot of resilience. One of the biggest lessons I learned early in my career was to find a way around the no's. Whether I was thinking about what publication made the most sense, to what type of content would make sense as my niche, it all had to be really thoughtfully planned out."

Her perseverance paid off when she was hired as a fashion features editor for *Glamour* magazine, a publication Chan describes as the "everywoman's magazine."

"*Glamour* was the best publication I possibly could have been at because it was the place that allowed us to talk about size and shopping in a real, community-driven way."



Achieving your dream at the age of 27, however, comes with its own problems.

"If I look back on the big picture, everything went to plan exceptionally quickly. I had a moment where I remember thinking, 'What am I going to do for the rest of my life if I've already done what I thought I was going to do over the next 20 years?'"

The surprising answer: Leave her dream job to start her own plus-size clothing line.

As a plus-size consumer herself, Chan knew firsthand how difficult it was to find quality, fashionable clothing in her size. While her peers at *Glamour* were wearing the likes of Miu Miu and Celine, Chan had to piece together work outfits from Forever 21.

"I had to sit in meetings with them and pitch myself and sell my ideas, and it was uncomfortable. It was hard to be confident, and the clothes simply didn't perform. I just grew really tired of the disadvantage I was facing just because I was the biggest body in the room."

Chan founded her brand, Henning, to change all that.

"I knew there needed to be better options; I knew that they didn't exist; I knew that it was doable because where there's a will there's a way. I really thought I was the best person to go do that. I figured out how to make clothes and run a business along the way – two small things that are really good to know if you want to run a fashion business," Chan said with a laugh.

Since debuting last fall, Henning has found its way into the closets of some famous women. Model Ashley Graham, entertainer Natasha Rothwell, and politician Stacey Abrams are among the fans of the fledgling brand. While she relishes those pinch-me moments, Chan is more fulfilled by her everyday interactions with her customers.

"I have an end goal of representing, serving and connecting with people who have been marginalized by the fashion industry because of their size. I don't know what will be next after this, but I feel calm knowing there is at least a framework that is clear." 🍷

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1 Jeff Blommers, BSc'09 (Biology), is a happily married man as of June 8, 2019, his 10-year Convocation anniversary from Western.

2 Elaine Cougler, BA'68 (French), published her fourth book, *The Man Behind the Marathons: How Ron Calhoun helped Terry Fox and other heroes make millions for charity*.

3 Lo-Anne (Chang) Chan, BA'11 (Criminology and Psychology), and her husband, Joseph Chan, BSc'11 (Chemistry), welcomed twins, Theodore and Olivia, on Jan. 23. They join their older brother, Tyson (2015) and older sister, Victoria (2017).

4 Ashlynn (Perry) Adachi, BA'08 (Psychology, King's), and her husband Paul Adachi, BA'08 (Psychology, King's), welcomed their second son on Aug. 21, 2019 - Zachary Taylor Adachi.

5 Omar Ha-Redeye, JD'10, and **Dr. Joyce Zhang**, MD'15, welcomed their first child, a baby boy.



1950s

Graeme Goebelle, BA'59, was reappointed as a part-time public member of the Council of the College of Psychologists.

1960s

Walt Cherwaty, BA'62 (King's), has raised more than \$50,000 for various charities with his Golf Balls FORE campaign, started in memory of his daughter, Jacqueline, who lost her battle with cancer in 2005.

Ian Newbould, BA'64 (Huron), was appointed senior consultant to U.S. Universities at The Registry, Peabody, Mass.

Ron Cougler, HBA'66, along with his son Kevin, co-founded STEM Camp Foundation to support STEM initiatives in K-12 classrooms and Women in STEM Awards in community colleges.

Anantha Kumar Konanur, MEd'67, and **Gail Konanur**, BA'78 (English), were married on Aug. 28, 1965, and celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary this year.

After a 45-year career in the energy sector, **Stewart Behie**, BEd'69, MEd'71, PhD'74 (Chemical Engineering), accepted the role as interim director of the Mary

Kay O'Connor Process Safety Center, chemical engineering department, Texas A&M University.

1970s

Lillian (Scott) Salmon, Diploma'70 (Journalism), published her first book, *Living Slim: A Canadian Woman's Way*. She retired in 2009 after 18 years in communications at Toronto Public Library.

John Stuart Durrant, BA'73 (Russian and Spanish), professor emeritus, Memorial University, was presented with the Order of Friendship of the Russian Federation on Nov. 4, 2019, in the Kremlin, Moscow.

Kimble Ainslie, BA'74 (Political Science), published his second book, *Selecting Rationality: public opinion, polling, civic engagement and campaigning*.

Vicki (Ball) Simison, BSc'74, MEd'75 (Communication Disorders), met with her 1974 classmates for a reunion in July 2019. Four from that undergraduate class formed the first graduating class of the master's program in speech pathology and audiology.

In December 2019, **Pat Camozzi**, HBA'75, vice-president sales and marketing for Nammex

Organic Mushroom Extracts, launched his fourth self-published book *Hey Daddy!*: *This book is for you*, a memoir and guidebook for new fathers.

Ian Turnbull, MBA'75, has authored books on human resource management systems and privacy law in Canada. His latest, *Human Resources Guide to Managing Information Systems*, 2nd ed., was published in December 2019.

John Hazell, BA'77 (Sociology), met with his fellow alumni in Kitchener, Ont., in October 2019, for a 43-year reunion. "Times have changed: a few pounds, 10 children and grandchildren, a few health issues but all thankful to be healthy and happy."

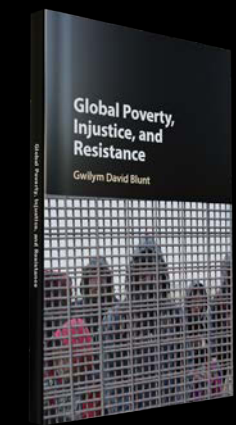
1980s

Mitchell Smet, BA'83 (Physical Education), BEd'85, retired from his position as a secondary school vice-principal in 2016 and is now a professor of business mathematics at Cambrian College.

Stacey Allaster, BA'85 (Physical Education and Economics), MBA'00, LLD'14, was named the tournament director for the U.S. Open Tennis Championships. Allaster, a champion of equality and an innovator in sports administration, was the CEO of the Women's

1 Judith Calixto-Seli, BA'94 (Spanish), retired from Bank of Nova Scotia in July 2016.

2 Joanne (Colling) Moniz, BSc'11, BEd'12, MEd'19, welcomed daughter, Gwendolyn Rose Moniz, on July 4, 2019, graduated with her MEd degree and is working at Western's Faculty of Engineering. "We are definitely a #purpleandproud family."



3 David Blunt, BA'03 (History and Political Science), became interested in global justice while a student and recently published his first book, *Global Poverty, Injustice, and Resistance*.

4 Marissa Younan, MMASc '16 (Biological Sciences), graduated from Wayne State University in 2019 with a degree in genetic counseling. She works at the Children's Hospital of Michigan in the metabolic clinic and got engaged in May 2019.



Tennis Association and has worked at the U.S. Tennis Association since 2016.

Duncan Edgar, BA'89 (History), moved into a new home in August 2019.

Trina Innes, BSc'89 (Geography), received Clean50 and Clean16 awards, for advancing sustainability and clean capitalism in Canada, for her work at Alberta's Municipal Climate Change Action Centre.

English professor **Marianne Micros**, PhD'89 (English), retired from the University of Guelph. She has completed a new collection of poetry entitled *The Aphrodite Suite* and is working on a second collection of stories. Her short story collection, *Eye* (Guernica, 2018), was one of five finalists for the Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction (2019) and was shortlisted for the Danuta Gleed Award from the Writers' Union of Canada.

1990s

Jay Sinha, BSc'90 (Biochemistry), along with Chantal Plamondon, founded Life Without Plastic, a lifestyle brand for plastic-free living. Their book, *Life Without Plastic: The practical step-by-step guide to avoiding plastic to keep your family and the planet healthy*, has been translated into Italian, Japanese, Slovak, and French.

Todd Kasenberg, MSc'91 (Plant Sciences), owner of Guiding Star

Communications and Consulting Inc., was elected mayor of the Municipality of North Perth, Ontario for a four-year term beginning December 2018.

Paul Ling, DDS'93, completed his first graphic novel *The Demonhuntsress*.

Brian Friend, BA'94 (Political Science), celebrated two years as customer liaison at Lakepoint Homes and James Sylvester Enterprises.

Linda M. Verde, BA'94 (Philosophy and Women's Studies), received RISE's Entrepreneur of the Year award for her business, Linda Verde Editing.

Christine (White) Simpson, BScN'95, is a certified sexual assault nurse examiner in the Sexual Assault Care Centre/Partner Assault Clinic at Sault Area Hospital. She also works in the emergency department at War Memorial Hospital in Sault Ste Marie, Mich., and provides training on both sides of the border.

Peter Lukomskyj, BESC'96, was appointed general manager for Lyft in British Columbia, introducing the ridesharing service to the province.

David McCall, BSc'96 (Biology), started Acumen Energy Consultants, performing residential energy assessments on homes throughout Nova Scotia and hopes to expand into the rest of Canada.

Pamela (Rwankole) Morris, BA'97 (Political Science and History), is leading corporate social responsibility communications for a Fortune 17 global company.

Andrew Bowles, BA'99 (Political Science), is manager, government affairs at 3M Canada, leading the company's engagement with provincial and municipal governments across Canada.

2000s

Valerie Brown, LLB'01, was appointed to the Ontario Court of Justice. She has been in private practice in Newmarket since 2002, with a focus on family and child protection law.

Greg Mills, BESC'01 (Mechanical Engineering), celebrated more than 20 years of friendship with his engineering classmates at a BBQ, where they remembered meeting during Frosh Week 1996.

Eran Berliner, BSc'04 (Computer Science), stayed in the high-tech sector by starting an SAAS software called InfoFlo Pay, an invoice-management system.

Remy Knott, BACS'04 (Organizational Studies and Human Resources), developed an over-the-counter reusable medical device, 'MoxyPatch' (patent pending), that works to prevent mild to moderate stress urinary incontinence in women.

Stephanie Reid, BA'06 (Classical Studies), MLIS'08, welcomed a baby boy, Jasper – a brother for daughter Amber.

Alexis (Chapeskie) Juliao, BA'07, MA'09 (Anthropology), welcomed a baby girl in 2019.

Armen Khajetoorian, BMOS'07 (Finance and Administration), returned home after a decade in New York City pursuing his legal career. He joined Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP in Toronto as a partner in the real estate and development group and is looking forward to reconnecting with the Western alumni community.

Matthew Wilson, BA'07 (King's), JD'10, was recognized as a certified specialist in real estate law by the Law Society of Ontario in October 2019.

Lisa Gayhart, MLIS'08, married Matthew Merritt in December 2018 and relocated to Manhattan where she was appointed director of user experience for New York University's division of libraries.

Mike Meldrum, BMOS'08 (Finance and Administration), and his wife, also a Western graduate, welcomed twins Ethan and Emily on Dec. 23, 2019.

Jordan (Simmons) Roberts, BA'08 (Psychology and Childhood and Family Relations), welcomed Lucy Grace Roberts, born Sept. 25, 2019.



5 William A. Howe, BEd '77, received the 2019 Bassett Distinguished Humanitarian Award in October 2019 from Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, Conn. The award recognizes those who exemplify the service and life attributes of Ambassador Ebenezer Don Carlos Bassett, one of the most distinguished civil rights advocates of the 19th century.

6 Dr. Magbule Doko, MD'11, is officially an author, publishing her first book, *Becoming a Mother: The first six weeks*, that offers information on the postpartum period and taking care of a newborn baby.

7 Daniel Sidalak, BSc'14 (Biology and Medical Sciences), met his wife at Western. Together, they finished medical school at McMaster in 2017 and residency training in 2019. He is finishing his fellowship training in Hospital Medicine this year and will begin his independent practice. "I will never forget my time at Western. Go Mustangs!"

8 Chad Fink, BA'13 (Kinesiology), started his career as a chiropractor at Plattsville Natural Health Centre and Health Stratford.

Jason Wood, BA'08 (History), and his wife, Lisa, welcomed daughter Madelyn Angela Wood, born in Oakville on Feb. 12, weighing 6 lbs. 4 oz., a beautiful little sister to brother Lincoln.

Taslim Alani-Verjee, BA'09 (Psychology), recently opened a new business, Silm Centre for Mental Health, that focuses on providing accessible mental-health care to marginalized populations.

Nana (Yirenkyi) Guenther, BMOS'09 (Finance and Administration), recently welcomed her first child, Sebastian.

Kalina (Adams) Van Praet, BA'09 (Kinesiology), got married on June 1, 2019. The couple met at Western and are proud alumni.

2010s

Patricia Christan, BSc'10 (Biology & Biochemistry), and her husband celebrated their one-year wedding anniversary in their new home.

Veronika Gruszczynska, BA'10 (History and Sociology), started a job in human resources-office administration.

Heidi Klopp, BA'10 (Sociology, King's), married Adam Blanchard in June 2019. The ceremony was held at their parish; the reception was held in a tent on their property outside of Zurich, Ont.

Shauna MacWilliam, BA'11 (English Language & Literature), married Chris Doyle, BA'11, MA'12 (History), on June 8, 2019. They met at Western in an American history class.

Nathan Moniz, BA'11 (Kinesiology and Psychology), welcomed a baby girl on Dec. 25, 2019.

Melissa Palmer, BHSc'11 (Health Sciences and Physiology), started a new job at London Health Sciences Centre as a project consultant in ITS.

Tara Berry, BA'12, BEd'13 (Psychology, Family Studies and Education), got engaged in February 2019 and recently purchased a home.

Tanya Murray, BA'12 (Kinesiology), graduated magna cum laude from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law in 2017. She joined the insurance law practice group of Plunkett Cooney and was the recipient of the 2019 Member of the Year award by the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, Oakland Region.

Cassandra (Warne) Stiver, BA'12 (Family Studies), and husband Darryl Stiver welcomed a baby girl, Riley Paige Stiver, on April 29, 2019. They are overjoyed and embracing every challenging but heartwarming moment of parenthood.

Diana Vania, BHSc'12 (Health Sciences and Sociology), welcomed a baby boy, Cyrus, on Jan. 27, in London, UK.

Selina Blais, BA'13 (History), BEd'14, celebrated one year in her first home and began a new job with Imperial Oil as an administrative specialist in June 2019.

Jordana Garbati, PhD'13 (Education), co-authored a book with Dr. Boba Samuels (PhD, Education) titled *Mastering Academic Writing*.

Alycia Leonard, BHSc'13, continued her education to become a dentist. She works with her local health unit to provide smiles to seniors who could otherwise not afford it and finds it amazingly rewarding.

Garry Atkinson, BA'14, MA'15 (Women's Studies & Feminist Research), is a research and administrative coordinator at the Women's Executive Network. "It is an honour to be a part of this organization, and I am grateful to Western for the education I received that has helped me to achieve it."

Crystal Bastin-Nantel, BScN'14, landed a full-time nursing job.

Geoffrey Morrison, MA'14 (English), and Matthew Tomkinson co-wrote *Archaic Torso of Gumby*, a collection of short stories and essays that explore late-capitalist pop culture.

Katrina Beeney, BA'15 (Psychology, Brescia), MSW'19 (King's), is working at the Oxford Community Health Centre and got married on Aug. 24, 2019.



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1 Rebecca Rebeiro, BA'12 (Political Science), and **Jordan Patterson**, BA'12 (English), welcomed their son, Oscar Robert Patterson, on Feb. 24.

2 Kendra Paguaga, BA'13 (Sociology and Criminology), married Derek Boshkov on Feb. 22 in Toronto.

3 Bob Howison, DDS'78, hosted fellow alumni and former teammates from an intramural basketball team at Western in the mid-1970's called the 'Bnorks.' They gather a few times a year and in February, they met to watch some NCAA basketball and play cards. Pictured are from left: Ray Bart; Claude Damiani, BA'77, MBA'85; Carlos Zigrovic, BSc'72, DipEd'74; Bob Howison; Brian Bulger, BA'77; George Grabowski, BA'76, DipEd'78; Ted Reczulski, LLB'80; Bob Hobbs, BA'83; and Moe Kuzemchuk, BA'76.

4 Sarah (Legacy) Raslan, BA'08 (Philosophy and English), and her husband welcomed their second child, Knox, joining son, Nyal, who was born in 2016.

5 Klaudia Gonzalez, MPA'11, runs the VIVE Project-Mexico, a project that works with economically disadvantaged women to provide business training and helps them to get a job or start their own business.



Ross Mortimer, BMus'15, graduated from The Glen Gould School and sang with the Canadian Opera Company chorus last fall in *Turandot*. He has started working on a project to create a full-length Christmas album as a seasonal fundraiser.

John-Paul Bow, MSc'15 (Chemistry), moved to Norway and started a PhD at the University of Oslo.

Kate (Marchand) Fraser, BHSc'15, is an identical twin who gave birth to identical twin girls on her birthday. She also earned a promotion at work, Farm Credit Canada, and coached hockey for the shortened season. "I can't wait to get the girls some Western swag!"

Vivian Gonzalez Diaz, BA'15 (Spanish Language & Linguistics), purchased her first condo and is excited to start her adventure in downtown Toronto.

Dylan Ham, BA'15 (Criminology), met his partner in residence at Western and they have since married and bought a house in Toronto. "Thanks to

Western for a life of love and good things."

Andrew MacIver, JD'15, BA'15 (Political Science), became a London homeowner in March 2019.

Tom Venner, BA'15 (Political Science, Huron), married **Laura Stephenson**, BMOS'15 (Huron), on June 8, 2019.

Jacqueline Anderson, BA'16 (Media, Info and Technoculture), recently purchased her first home.

Tara Chen, BHSc'16, is pursuing her career in international health. She graduated with a master's in public health degree from Europubhealth+, participated in the global climate strike in Sweden, walked the Camino de Santiago trail in Spain, and moved to Taiwan to take on the role of

project manager for the Global Health Literacy Summit.

Rattandeep Gill, MEng'16, got married and relocated to Los Angeles with her new husband. "New place, new life."

Majid Jahanmiri, MEng'17 (Chemical Engineering), won two awards at the Professional Photographers of Canada National Image Competition. His submission, *Vivid Matrix*, was deemed 'Best Student of The Year Outstanding Image' and 'Best in General' Category. He followed that with a 'Highly Commended' from the Italy-based Siena Awards.

Janine Berridge-Paul, MPE'18 (Equity, Diversity & Social Justice), is regional lead, community development at Kids Code Jeunesse, a digital skills education organization with a focus on girls and underserved communities.

Nicholas Samoondar, BSc'18 (Biology), was hired as a business development manager for Corporate Traveller Canada.

Jordan Wajs, HBA/JD'18, had his first research and opinion article, *Common law in a pandemic: Spanish flu of 1918*, published by a major publication, *The Lawyer's Daily*.

Sydnee Beneteau, BMOS'19 (Human Resources and French), is excited to start a job in human resources with the federal government.

Samantha (Driedger) Busma, BA'19 (Psychology, King's), got married on May 25, 2019.

Franco Calamia, BEd'19, was hired as an occasional teacher by the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

Nadia Di-Ruscio, BA'19 (Criminology, King's), started working in marketing operations at GlaxoSmithKline after two summers as a student intern. She will be moving into a sales operations role in the fall.

Olivia Lemenchick, BScN'19, landed her dream nursing job in cancer care right out of school.

Alex Meikleham, BScN'19, passed her entrance exam (NCLEX) and has accepted a front-line nursing job in London. "Thank you, Western, for helping me reach this milestone in life."

Sydney Popescu, BA'19, got a full-time job right out of university through the Faculty of Information and Media Studies job portal. "I am doing exactly what I planned and am extremely happy with how Western set me up for success."

Stephanie Sherrett, BA'19 (Classical Studies), started at the University of Edinburgh in Sept. as a student in the classical art and archaeology MSc program.

Velda Wong, BSc'19 (Neuroscience), has landed a full-time position at Environment and Climate Change Canada as a physical scientist working on environmental effects and associated regulations. "Thanks to the Faculty of Science internship program at Western."

Azadeh Zohourian Pordel, MEd'19, moved to deliver courses online at both of her jobs (King's University College and London District Catholic School Board) "Having my three-year-old at home was both sweet and a challenge. She was mostly interested in my printer which I used to print out essays and exams. What my daughter learned was this printer can also print out animals for her to colour. Then she set up an art gallery next to my desk to add fun to my office."

2020s

Jordan Shantz, BScN'20, accepted a position at Children's Hospital in London, Ont.

1 Donald McLeish, BA'70 (English), senior lightweight varsity captain, Mustangs rowing team, 1967-68, is still rowing at age 80. Photo is the 2017 8+ gold Western Alumni sprints, with Don on the far right.

2 Lavesh Bansal, MEng'19, is working as an associate developer with the consulting firm Capco in Toronto. "Thanks, Western, for all learning, fun and an amazing year well spent."

3 Xueqian Feldman-Kohlver, BA'13 (Sociology of Law and Family Studies), and her husband celebrated the birth of their first child, Bryce Taylor, on Sept. 17, 2019.

4 Randy Luck, EMBA'03, and his wife started a vacation rental business, located east of Parry Sound on the 46-mile Ahmic Lake System.

5 Erin (Campbell) Romeo, BA'08 (Family Studies, Brescia), published *The Visual Guide to Easy Meal Prep: Save time and eat healthy with over 75 recipes*.



IN MEMORIAM

Sharon Frances Malvern, BA'66 (English), died Oct. 6, 2018, in Stratford, Ont.

Byron Montgomery, MA'88 (Political Science), died March 2, 2019, at Parkwood after a brief illness. He is survived by wife, Viola Poletes Montgomery, MPA'93, and children, Daphne and Jemma.

John Carrothers, BA'86 (Geography), died May 22, 2019, in London, Ont.

Jane H. A. (Robertson) Anderson, BA'51 (Home Economics), died June 19, 2019, in Kingston, Ont. A college professor for more than 22 years, she also taught at the Kingston Prison for Women.

Peter Alan Crossley, BA'69, MBA'84, died June 30, 2019, in Preston, Lancashire, England. His last job was as senior lecturer, business studies, University of Winchester, Hampshire UK. He is survived by his wife Susan Crossley, BA'70, MEd'83.

John (Bill) William Rathbone, BSc'75 (Biology), died September 3, 2019 in Toronto, Ont.

Marvin Peter Stringer, BA'53, died Sept. 13, 2019, in Hamilton, Ont.

Dean Douglas (Doug) Russell, MBA'71, LLB'75, died Sept. 17, 2019 in London, Ont.

Peter W. Brown, MBA'62, died Sept. 19, 2019, in Vero Beach, Fla.

Helen Roberts, BA'90 (Social Science), died Oct. 28, 2019, in Canmore, Alta. She spent most of her life in St. Thomas, Ont., was a founding member of the Women's Committee of the St. Thomas Elgin Public Arts Centre, taught ESL through Fanshawe College, and worked with those suffering with addiction through the St. Thomas Psychiatric Hospital Addiction Unit.

Mary Gwendolyn "Gwen" (Brownlee) Eck, BA'61, died Nov. 10, 2019.

Gary Manning, BA'71 (Journalism), died Jan.22, 2020,

in Moncton, NB. Journalism was Gary's life, one he loved unreservedly. His first job after graduating from Western was in Corner Brook, Nfld. during the Smallwood premiership – a great introduction to the profession. He became city editor in Sarnia and managing editor in Cornwall, Guelph, Woodstock and Welland, Ont.. A gentleman in the newsroom and beyond, he was rarely seen without a smile. He demonstrated patience, commitment and enthusiasm and was always receptive to new ideas. Gary appreciated the arts, his first love was theatre, followed by music and visual arts. In honour of Gary's dedicated career in journalism, his widow, Joanna Manning, has endowed The Gary Manning Memorial Journalism Scholarship to students interested in pursuing a career in the arts or public relations.

Dr. David J. Grignon, BSc'77, MD'81, died Jan. 28, 2020, in Indianapolis, Ind.

David J. Thomson, MBA'63, died Feb. 13, 2020, aged 80, at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. David had a varied career, working on the campaigns of Pierre Trudeau and serving as a special advisor in the Prime Minister's Office before shifting into commercial real estate. Every five years, he organized his class reunions to celebrate the milestones and preserve connections among far-flung peers.

Nora Parr, Dip'59 (Public Health Nursing), died March 25, 2020.

Maria Izabella Medley Polkiewicz, BA'73 (History), DipEd'76, died April 28, 2020, in Oshawa, Ont.

Norm Ibsen, BA'51 (Journalism), died June 1, 2020, at the age of 90. A journalist at the *London Free Press*, Norm loved the newspaper life. He joined the paper in 1955 and in time became editor of the editorial page, a position he held until retirement in 1992.



Medical education pioneer **Dr. Douglas Bocking**, MD'43, a former Dean of Medicine at Western, died May 9. He was 99.

Bocking helped usher in a new era of medical education at Western. Starting as chair of the medical curriculum committee in 1959, he pushed program changes to enhance the clinical preparedness of newly trained physicians. Later as dean of medicine (1965-78), vice-president of health sciences (1978-1984) and vice-provost of health sciences (1984-87), he helped revolutionize clinical research.

Bocking led the creation of the country's first academic department in family medicine, helping to establish Canada as a leader in the field. He also oversaw the affiliation of University Hospital with Western in 1970.



Richard M. Ivey, HBA'47, LLD'79, and his wife Beryl M. Ivey, BA '47, LLD '97.

Richard M. Ivey, HBA'47, LLD'79, the visionary Western graduate, philanthropist and champion who helped elevate the university and its business school to international prominence, died Dec. 28, 2019. He was 94.

Ivey was a member of Western's Board of Governors from 1968-78, including three years as chair. He also served as university chancellor from 1980-84, sat on what is now the Ivey Advisory Board from 1966-91, and served as director of the John P. Roberts Research Institute prior to its merger with Western. He helped establish Foundation Western and was a director from 1980-86, also serving as the board's chair.

The Ivey family's support for Western represents one of the most significant philanthropic relationships between a family and a Canadian university. The Ivey family, both personally and through the Ivey Foundation, has donated \$50 million to Western, including gifts to the business school, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Roberts Research Institute, Faculty of Arts & Humanities and Western Libraries.

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