

Toronto Met University magazine

FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

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**Toronto
Metropolitan
University**

**Graduate
Studies**

Kittie Pang, Project Manager, Strategy and Integration, Sunnybrook Hospital and Master of Health Administration (Community Care) alumna.

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SUMMER 2022



Midwife Laura Solis works with Spanish-speaking clients in downtown Toronto.

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BRENT GOODEN

Photographer, Portraits of Eno Hysi and Almir Brljak (p. 32 and 35)

Brent Gooden is a Toronto-based photographer focusing on portraiture and fashion. Brent's work has been featured in The Globe and Mail and University of Toronto Magazine. @brent.gooden



CARRIE BRUNET DUNCAN

Writer, Profile of Eno Hysi (p. 32)

Once a journalist, always a journalist, Carrie Brunet Duncan is a communications professional who loves hearing a good story as much as she enjoys writing it. @CarrieMDuncan



CHLOË ELLINGSON

Photographer, Community of Care (p. 18)

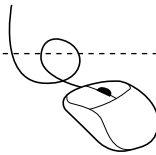
Chloë Ellingson is an independent documentary photographer based in Toronto, and a proud member of Women Photograph. Known for her images of midwives, Ellingson shot grad Laura Solis and her client at the Toronto Birthing Centre for this issue while nine months pregnant herself. @chloellingson



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The university made a milestone decision to adopt a new name earlier this year, a dramatic change committing to unite the community in a space for all. Read more about the new name in the cover story, "What's in a name," and in "Community of care," read about how learning and teaching at Toronto Metropolitan University is embedded in the urban landscape where we live, building community beyond campus. —Colleen Mellor
Journalism '86

DID YOU KNOW... Read the online magazine at magazine.torontomu.ca



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CONTACT Toronto Met University Magazine, Toronto Metropolitan University, 350 Victoria St., Toronto, On, Canada M5B 2K3
Phone: 416-979-5000 ext. 555088 • Email: ryemag@ryerson.ca • Web: magazine.torontomu.ca

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Opening new doors with TMU

By Mohamed Lachemi

President and Vice-Chancellor

THE NEWS OF our renaming caught the attention of people around the world; however, it is just one of a number of significant developments helping to position Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) for a future of growth and success.

In fact, renaming the university was one of 22 recommendations from the Standing Strong Task Force. A great deal of work has begun on the remaining recommendations, including the advancement and support of Black and Indigenous scholarship, establishing a physical and interactive display to provide comprehensive information about the legacy of Egerton Ryerson and developing programming for our community to learn more about Indigenous history and colonial relations. We know that the path toward the outcomes we seek is uncertain and will take time, but we are committed to implementing every one of the task force recommendations.

As we continue to build TMU for the 21st century, our new name and its focus on our connection to the city will help us immeasurably. Adding Toronto to our name in the most prominent way possible gives us instant recognition internationally. Toronto is viewed around the globe as a diverse, innovative, creative and open-minded city. That recognition will open doors for us and create opportunities for our community to have even greater global impact.

Similarly, the term metropolitan speaks to our urban presence, influence and mission to advance conversations on culture, technology, social innovation, health, justice, democracy and the environment, to help create safe, diverse, inclusive and sustainable communities one neighbourhood at a time.

To be metropolitan is to be defined by life in a big city and its suburbs—the diversity of its cultures and the creativity that comes

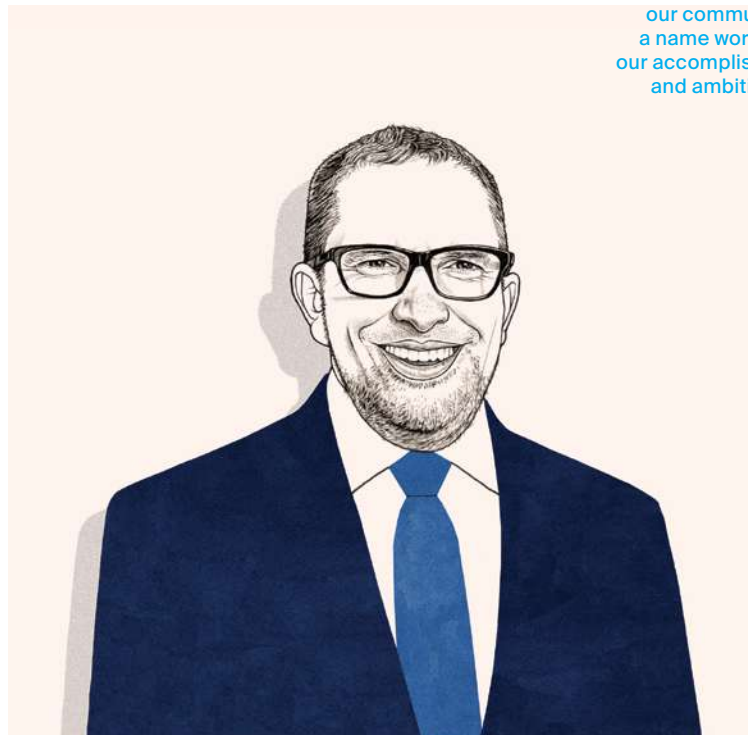
from so many people in proximity. The collision of broad perspectives drives new ways of thinking and doing. It is both a marker of place and a statement of identity: our community's identity.

The truth is, since its founding in 1948, our university has been an outlier in the province's post-secondary system. We like that positioning. Our alumni and current students have been attracted to a unique form of education that offers a focus on solving real world challenges, and we are building on that tradition at a remarkable scale. Consider that within just the past

few years we have launched the Lincoln Alexander School of Law and are planning for a new School of Medicine in Brampton. Both of these professional schools were purposefully designed to be innovative, disruptive, diverse and inclusive.

The evolution of our university continues, and that includes our name. In keeping with our values, and with deep respect for our past, we sought a new name that would unite and strengthen our community, a name worthy of our accomplishments and ambition. In Toronto Metropolitan University, we found that name. ●

"We sought a new name that would strengthen our community, a name worthy of our accomplishments and ambition."



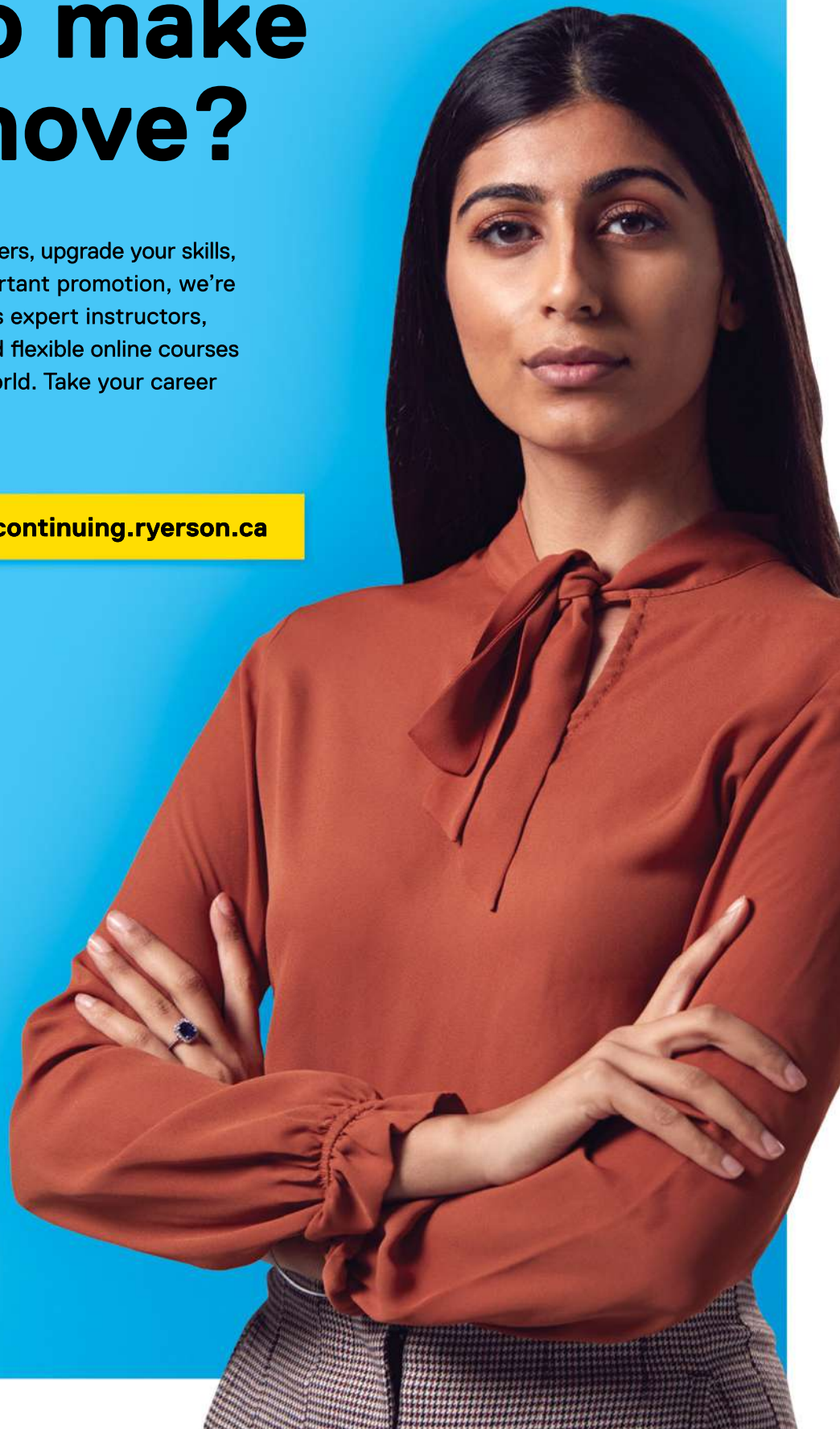
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gould street

/ LATEST MEDICAL SCHOOL NEWS / FACULTY OF SCIENCE'S 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY / CONFRONTING ANTI-BLACK RACISM /



HEALTH CARE

School of Medicine moves ahead

Brampton-based school will contribute to responsive provincial health-care system

PHOTOGRAPH BY NIKITA OVSYANNIKOV

IN MARCH, the Province of Ontario announced a new Toronto Metropolitan University School of Medicine based in Brampton.

“We’re building a brand new school of medicine that will open right here in Brampton. Our government is investing in training the doctors who will serve this community,” said Premier Doug Ford at a press conference held on →

Tuesday, March 15. “With this investment, we’re supporting more students to take the path to becoming a doctor and creating the family doctors and specialists that will take care of us in the years to come.”

At the same conference, the province announced that it will invest in 80 medical school seats for undergraduate students and 95 postgraduate seats for the university’s school of medicine.

“I have always said that the university is well-placed to support this need and the announcement from Premier Ford confirms it,” said President Mohamed Lachemi. “Our future students and graduates will contribute to creating a health-care system that is stronger, more resilient and more responsive to the diverse needs of Brampton, Peel Region and Ontario.”

The pandemic put a spotlight on the increased need for investment in the provincial health-care systems.

SUSTAINABILITY

Campus wins sustainability award

The 2021 Sustainable Campus Index recognized the university in the category of transportation modes after looking at data about the quality and quantity of the campus fleet, how students and employees commute to campus and existing programs promoting sustainable transportation.

Published by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), the annual report recognizes top-performing colleges and universities in 17 sustainability impact areas, as measured

by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS).

Out of the seven campus vehicles, three are electric vehicles, and the campus grounds team mostly uses electric utility trucks and battery-operated grounds equipment instead of gasoline-operated ones to reduce the use of fossil fuels.

The campus’ downtown location adds to its high performance as well, with access to the subway line and bicycle lanes.



GIVING

Donations for racial justice

In 2021, the Lincoln Alexander School of Law received two substantial donations to advance initiatives in racial justice.

University Chancellor **Janice Fukakusa** donated \$1 million to help launch the Racial Justice Initiative, and Ed Sonshine, founder and non-executive chair of RioCan, and his wife, Fran,

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (BIG PUSH) ALYSSA K. FAORO; (FUKAKUSA) MAY TRUONG; (PROGRESS) WEEKEND IMAGES INC.



gifted the law school an additional \$1 million to establish the Edward Sonshine Chair in Race and the Law.

The Belbeck-Fukakusa Family Foundation contribution will be recognized through the Chancellor Janice Fukakusa Racial Justice Scholar-in-Residence. It enables the law school to attract and nurture leading scholars in critical race theory, conduct innovative research and share that knowledge widely through lectures, conferences and



DID YOU KNOW...

There's a podcast about the university! Check out our second season of *The Forefront* at torontomu.ca/alumni/podcasts/the-forefront

judicial training for students and practitioners.

In the coming years, the Racial Justice Initiative will weave racial justice throughout the school's curriculum, develop a racial justice legal clinic and a program of funded internships, mentoring and experiential learning opportunities for students.

The Sonshines' gift will help to recruit a leading scholar whose work will inform the direction of the Racial Justice Initiative, strengthening it through research and talent development, and convening a diverse range of voices to engage the public in conversations about racism in all its forms.

The Edward Sonshine Chair in Race and the Law will ensure that the legal education of students includes a critical understanding of the historic and current role of the law in both promoting and perpetuating various forms of discrimination, including antisemitism, Islamophobia and the systemic oppression of Indigenous, Asian, Black and other racialized people. In this way, they will be equipped to shape a more equitable justice system.

EQUITY

Progress report on confronting anti-Black racism

The university has made significant progress on 14 recommendations from the *Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report*.

To measure diversity in curriculum and course delivery, an audit was conducted. The audit found 116 courses across the university with Afrocentric, Black- and Caribbean-centred content, and identified Black teaching staff across faculties and programs.

The audit provides a snapshot and benchmark to inform future curriculum development and improve hiring practices of Black teaching staff.

The Black Initiatives Fund (BIF) has been established to provide funding to develop and advance events, meetings and information sessions that support and centre Black students.

In an effort to recruit Black faculty and Black scholars to the university, the Faculty →



← STUDENTS

The Bug Push is an annual fundraising event at the university, held by the Metropolitan Undergraduate Engineering Society (MUES). For 24 hours, rain or shine, students push a Volkswagen Beetle around the Kerr Hall Quad. The 2022 fundraiser marked the 20th annual event, raising \$5,000 for the SickKids Foundation.



↑ The university has made progress on 14 recommendations in the *Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report*.

Working Group has drafted language for job ads to attract candidates who self-identify as Black. In 2021, the percentage of full-time Black faculty increased by 18 per cent and represented 17 per cent of all new full-time faculty hires at the university.

To further support both recruitment and retention, postdoctoral fellowships for Black scholars are being developed to improve the applicant pool of Black scholars by strengthening their capacity and qualifications.

The report was published by the university's Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion (OVPECI) in 2020, aiming to advance the university's vision of being a national leader in equity, diversity and inclusion.

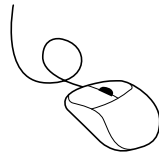
ATHLETICS

Meet the Giles sisters, part of a basketball dynasty

Kyia and Keneca Giles are household names around the Mattamy Athletic Centre.

The Winnipeg sisters played for the Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) women's basketball team and were part of the university's most successful teams. Keneca's team won the OUA championship and national silver medal in 2016, and Kyia was on the undefeated 2022 U SPORTS national championship team.

Keneca (Master's in Public Policy and Admin '16) played five seasons with the Rams and made outstanding appearances at nationals in both her fourth and fifth seasons. She had a stellar final season, winning the OUA championship, a silver medal at the national championship



DID YOU KNOW...

October is Alumni Month. Update your info at torontomu.ca/alumni/update-your-info/ so we can let you know when registration opens!

and was named Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) player of the year in women's basketball.

Kyia (Politics and Governance '21 and Certificate, Public Administration and Leadership '22) followed in her sister's footsteps, joining the team in 2019 after playing basketball for three years with the University of Regina.

After being sidelined by the COVID-19 pandemic, Kyia and the team went undefeated during the 2022 season. They

won the OUA title and gold at the national championships this year in Kingston, Ont.

Few people may know that the Giles family has a third sister, Kyia's twin sister Kyanna, who plays varsity basketball for the University of Winnipeg, the other finalist at the national championships.

On April 3, 2022, for the first time ever, Kyia faced off against her sister Kyanna for the championship title, while Keneca cheered both sisters on in the championship game.

—Jessica Leach



↑ Alumni sisters Keneca Giles (top) and Kyia Giles played for Toronto Metropolitan University's basketball team, both achieving remarkable success.

SCIENCE

Faculty of Science celebrates 10 years of discovery

This year, the Faculty of Science (FOS) celebrates its 10-year anniversary. Since it became an independent faculty in 2012, new research facilities have opened at the Institute for Biomedical Engineering, Science and Technology (iBEST) at St. Michael's Hospital, Unity Health Toronto.

After becoming the university's first comprehensive faculty, FOS has expanded undergraduate and graduate programs across all departments in physics, computer science, mathematics, chemistry and biology. Other highlights include the establishment of the SciExchange and approval of the Science Discovery Complex.

Going forward, the Faculty of Science will push more fundamental science discoveries and explore potential tie-ins to new applications for real-world problems. —Irina Vukosavic

Q&A

Paul Roth talks 10 years of focus on photography at The Image Centre



↓
Fast Facts
What do you photograph?
My dog, Ooona.
Favourite camera?
30 years ago—a twin-lens Mamiya C-330; now—my iPhone.
Book you're reading?
Tune In: The Beatles –All These Years: Volume One by Mark Lewisohn.

to our mission, to explore the diverse uses and meanings of the photographic image in society. And we wanted to emphasize our status as a “centre,” not only a museum with a collection, or a gallery with exhibitions, but at the heart of it all, a centre for cutting-edge research about the cultural impacts of this incredible medium, an integral mode of communication and expression.

The Image Centre at Toronto Metropolitan University celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. Formerly the Ryerson Image Centre, the Toronto institution is world-renowned for its groundbreaking photography exhibitions, robust research program and collection of nearly 375,000 objects spanning the medium’s history. Paul Roth, director of the centre since fall 2013, gives us a snapshot of the centre’s impact and future.

mode of communication and expression in people’s lives all over the world. We are all photographers, because we all have cameras in our phones and we connect to one another through our photos, so I think that the study of this medium is critically important. Over the last 10 years, Toronto has been one of the few cities with a world-class photography centre.

TM What impact has The Image Centre had on the city of Toronto?

PR The Image Centre has helped consolidate Toronto’s position as an important place for photography, an integral

TM Tell us about the new name.

PR As we neared our 10-year anniversary, the university changed its name, and we saw an opportunity to enter our next chapter with a renewed commitment

TM Can you share some highlights from the past 10 years?

PR Our opening exhibition was called Archival Dialogues. We invited a number of artists, local and international, to take our marquee Black Star Collection, and use the images as inspiration for new artworks. So from the very beginning, we’ve been able to show how historical photography can lead to contemporary knowledge. Our shows set the tone for what we always want to do, which is to help people understand how photography—and the history it tells—can be of great importance to people who are reflecting on the past to understand the present.

TM What’s something lesser known about The Image Centre?

PR The importance of the collection—with several hundreds of thousands of objects in it—and the research that we do. Our collection and our research program are the basis for our reputation as a world leader in photographic history. I’m also really proud of our great team—fully half of our staff went through the university’s photography collections management program.

TM Is there an upcoming exhibition that you’re particularly excited about?

PR In the fall of 2024 we’re mounting an exhibition of portraits by Richard Avedon that is all about the aging face. It’s a thematic survey of his career, focusing on the portraits that he made, where he specifically tried to document the experience of aging, and convey the resilience and struggle of aging people. These pictures are some of the greatest portraits Avedon ever made. —Deborah Smyth

The full interview is available online at magazine.torontomu.ca.

GRAPHIC DETAILS

Nursing simulation lab helps students gain valuable experience

A \$1.6 million grant adds more state-of-the-art technology to the lab for learning opportunities

→ SINCE THE Daphne Cockwell Health Sciences Complex opened in 2019, hundreds of nursing students have been able to access the state-of-the-art simulation lab that replicates a real hospital. The space gives nursing students valuable learning opportunities that prepare them for working in the health-care system.

In the simulation lab, students practise interactions with patients and in-depth clinical examinations. The suites can be adapted to accommodate several different settings, including out in the community and inside the home, preparing students for community-based health-care practise.

Nearly 400 students use the lab in each academic year. In 2022, the simulation lab was host to 20 third-year students for a community newborn and postpartum assessment that included Toronto Metropolitan University's midwifery team. Students participated in a high-fidelity delivery simulation.

Also this year, the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing (DCSN) secured \$1.6 million from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities Training and Equipment Renewal Fund to make upgrades to the simulation lab.

With this fund, the school has been able to purchase models and equipment to ensure that every student has access to equipment while in the lab. The school also enhanced the use of the latest technology in nursing education: two 3D holographic anatomy tables —anatomage; VR goggles; two new high-fidelity mannequins and seven low-fidelity highly realistic mannequins.

The features of the simulation lab—access to modern technology, live-actor simulations and award-winning gamification—help set the DCSN apart as one of the most innovative nursing schools in the province of Ontario.

“This grant enables the School of Nursing to increase the use of the latest technology in nursing education by embedding a high level of realism and diversity in the models and equipment purchased to enhance the student experiential learning experience,” said Susana Neves-Silva, manager of the DCSN's central placement office and simulation. “It will also allow for complexity in simulation that supports our nursing programs.” —**Jessica Leach**

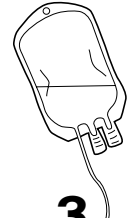
Students practise nursing in the simulation lab using technology such as high-fidelity realistic mannequins and 3D holographic anatomy tables.



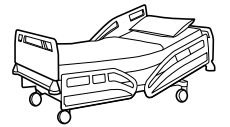
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSE MILNS



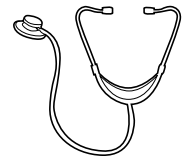
**NURSING
SIMULATION LAB
BY THE NUMBERS**



3
large 'hospital'
wards



45
hospital beds



375
second- and
fourth-year
students use
the lab
throughout one
academic year



WHAT'S *in a* NAME?

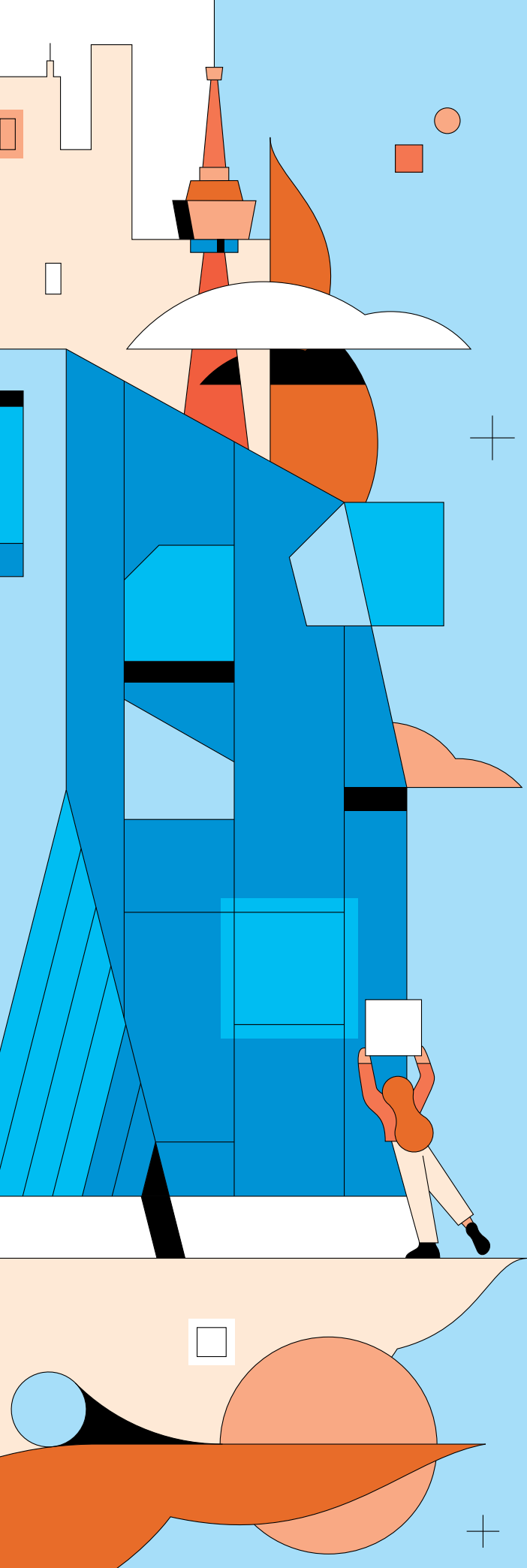
With the change to
Toronto Metropolitan University,
the community commits
to a space for all

BY MICHELLE GRADY



ILLUSTRATION BY CALVIN SPRAGUE





ALL *across* CANADA,

public spaces and institutions are in the process of reckoning with the legacy of the country's past and examining monuments, statues and names with an eye toward the future. As we are learning, history isn't static and the meanings these monuments carry can change. Over the past decade, students, faculty and staff from this university have been deeply involved in the process of reconciling Egerton Ryerson's connection to residential schools.

After the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, a worldwide anti-racism movement reached a crescendo and had sports teams, institutions and even consumer products taking a deeper look at whether their names have stood the test of time. In September 2020, university President Mohamed Lachemi established the Standing Strong Task Force to formally conduct the necessary research around Egerton Ryerson's legacy and provide recommendations on a path forward, including whether his statue should remain on campus and if the university should change its name.

Once the university accepted the task force's recommendations, one of which was to change the institution's name, the university faced the challenge of finding a new name that reduces harm for community members and better reflects its values. Though other institutions have addressed the names of individual buildings or schools—Queen's University removed John A. Macdonald's name from their law school building and Carleton University decided to change the name of Robertson Hall—we are the first university to undertake a full-scale name change in this context.

A DIFFERENT WORLD

On April 26, 2022, after unanimous approval from the Board of Governors, the university announced its official transition to the new name: Toronto Metropolitan University.

President Lachemi explained the rationale for the new name: "Toronto Metropolitan University embodies so many things about our university, our community, our students, faculty, staff and alumni. Located in the heart of our country's biggest and most diverse city—we represent all that it is to be metropolitan.

"We are a gathering place for people from all over the world, from all walks of life, with broad and diverse perspectives, lived experiences and aspirations. Our



university is where it all happens—our energy, creativity, innovation and commitment to welcoming and accepting all who come here is what makes us who we are.”

When it comes to changing a name, “the challenges are both big and small,” said Martin Pyle, Ted Rogers School of Management professor in Marketing Management. “The university we attend is often a part of our self-concept, an identity we share with others. One challenge with the name change is making sure our students and alumni still feel connected to the university, while providing a name they can share with pride.” The legacy of the name Ryerson was beginning to introduce irreconcilable contradictions between this sense of pride and the name of the institution. “We learn more as time goes on and meanings change. As the meaning of a name changes, we have to change too.”

Pyle says part of this process of change is recognizing that we are in a different world than in 1948 when the name Ryerson was chosen to represent the institution’s values because Egerton Ryerson was well-known at the time.

Justin Poy (Radio and Television Arts ’93), who runs his own advertising agency, says the name change marks an exciting new chapter. “The name change is an opportunity for the university to show that it wants to meet the challenges of Canada today, as we continue to evolve as a country.”

For Michael Mihalicz (Master’s of Science in Management ’19), who is a professor and Indigenous advisor at TRSM, and University Renaming Advisory Committee (URAC) member, this change has been on the horizon for some time and was a necessary move to reflect these societal shifts. “I was aware of the petition to remove the statue of Egerton Ryerson and change the name ever since I was an undergraduate student at the university. When I heard about the statue coming down after a rally held in response to the discovery of

unmarked graves on the grounds of a former residential school in British Columbia, the issue then became ‘what more can we do about this?’”

A NAME IS BUT PART OF A WHOLE BRAND

But this doesn’t mean the entire brand is in a process of change—a new name is but one part of a brand’s whole, and Poy sees the move as something to celebrate as a recommitment to the values that are part of the university’s brand.

Camilo Garay (Master’s in Molecular Science ’15), elected member of the Board of Governors and URAC member, agrees. “The thing that will remain core to Toronto Metropolitan University despite the name change is everything that made the institution what it was to begin with,” he said. “The fact that we decided to pursue a name change is what this university is about: listening to the community, making bold decisions and driving action. It’s about innovation, and collaboration—it’s a space that is deeply about its people. And I think that all of those things are what put us in a position to be able to say that a name change actually made sense for this institution.”

In fact, Garay says that if Toronto Metropolitan University didn’t pursue a name change, what was at stake was the university’s very brand. “Then we would no longer have been living our values of caring for community, being innovative, adaptive, and being bold. So I think that the very fact that we pursued this difficult path is an indication that we will continue to uphold our values into the future no matter how difficult the conversations get.”



Mihalicz echoes this. “We like our culture and the impact that we’re making. We don’t want to change any of that. And the association with Egerton Ryerson would have become increasingly problematic.” To Mihalicz and many within the community, Ryerson has come to symbolize the historical and ongoing violences against Indigenous Peoples that is contrary to who we are, the work we do and the values we embody.

“When I was in my undergrad, I was involved in a tragic incident in my third year,” Mihalicz says. “I had to complete the majority of my studies remotely and no one had ever done that at the time and they didn’t know how it was going to be done. I had limited access to the internet but I knew that I needed this positive influence in my life. And I reached out to professors, staff, family and friends to ask how we could make

A community process

The University Renaming Advisory Committee invited the community to make suggestions and share their opinion on the type of name best suited for the institution.

SURVEY PERIOD FROM NOV. 16 – DEC. 8, 2021

**TOTAL
ENGAGEMENT**

31,748
survey responses

1,820

social media posts using the #nextchaptername hashtag

226

email responses

Most respondents indicated that they do not want the university’s new name to honour a notable person.

More than
8,000

participants suggested an idea for the new name.

2,600

unique names were considered.

Survey responses supported a name based on the university’s location and its mission, vision and values.

Find out more at
torontomu.ca/next-chapter/renaming-process/.

this work. You should have seen how many people came together to make that possible for me.

“To me, that is who we are: we are willing to go above and beyond to provide the opportunity for people to come to the university to receive their education and to make it a space that works for everyone. I feel that we owe it to ourselves to have a name that reflects that.”

ADDRESSING WHAT WE COMMEMORATE

When brands fail to change with the times, they risk alienating their support base, as brands are part of a co-creation process—one where the fans or stakeholders play an integral part. “With brands, you want people to feel connected and positive; instead, we were faced with a group being alienated and hurt by the very name,” said Pyle.

“This new name shows that our principles of boldness and inclusivity are supported by actions, and this will increase the value of the brand, for many.”

Mihalicz sees this as one step of many in the ongoing process of truth and reconciliation. “It’s not just



reconciliation: it includes truth. And to me, this is about the need for truth. Which also means being true to ourselves and taking a hard look at who we are as an institution and how who we are and what we're doing could perpetuate harm among our community. And only then can we really decide what we could be doing differently. For reconciliation to occur, we must first do the hard work of finding our truth and I think that's what this name change gets down to."

The work to get to this place has been in service of this. "The recommendation to rename the university through a process that engages with community members was contextualized by the Standing Strong Task Force as a necessary step to recognize the need for the university to uphold institutional values," said Jennifer S. Simpson, URAC chair, and provost and vice-president, academic. "Particularly at academic institutions, we work hard to encourage a layered understanding of the world around us."

URAC vice-chair Tanya (Toni) De Mello, assistant dean, student programming, development and equity at

"OUR BELIEF IS THAT THE NEW NAME WILL BETTER REPRESENT OUR UNIVERSITY AND ALLOW OUR VALUES AND OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DEFINE WHO WE ARE AS AN INSTITUTION."

the Lincoln Alexander School of Law, says the renaming process was of national importance. "We committed to a process to address how to deal with the legacies of colonialism, how we rename our institutions and how we pay tribute to where we are today and where we aspire to be, that the nation was watching closely."

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

The Standing Strong Task Force completed its thorough review of Egerton Ryerson's historical role and legacy and prepared a final report sharing their learnings as well as 22 recommendations to address the impact of commemoration within the context of the university's values—one of which was a name change for the institution. On August 26, 2021, the Board of Governors accepted all 22 recommendations.

Thereafter, the University Renaming Advisory Committee launched a robust, six-month long process which included broad community engagement, extensive research, discussion and deliberation. This engagement included a three-week-long public survey period to learn what the community felt were the most critical considerations in the search for the new name and to generate ideas for what the new name could be. They received over 30,000 responses and deliberated on over 2,600 name suggestions.

The committee presented President Lachemi with a short list of new names for consideration as a result of this process. Thus, we embarked on our new chapter with the name, Toronto Metropolitan University. "It's our hope that our students, faculty, staff and alumni feel proud to be part of an institution that takes reconciliation and diversity, equity and inclusion seriously," said De Mello. "Our belief is that the new name will better represent our university and allow our values and our accomplishments to define who we are as an institution."

The renaming is an act of courage and it sets a precedent, says Garay. "It shows what we can do in difficult situations—there aren't mountains too big for the university to overcome. I'm sure there are a lot of people that might feel like there's no point in investing this much in a name change. But again, I believe this is an indication that even when something might feel too difficult, or might be a huge risk, the institution will do what it needs to do to continue to live its values."

Garay urges the university's large alumni community to celebrate this bold move toward truth and share the reasons behind it with their own communities. "It's a chance to celebrate the new name and all that it means. It might not be the name you submitted or the one you would have chosen, but as ambassadors of the institution it is our duty to spread awareness around the new name and the intentions behind it. A university is only as strong as the community behind it—so I feel like it's on us to get behind TMU and continue to grow the movement—how will you help?" ●



↑
Midwife Laura Solis meets client Vianey De La Torre
for a prenatal checkup at the Toronto Birth Centre.



COMMUNITY OF CARE

» HOW THE UNIVERSITY'S HEALTH-CARE PROGRAMS PREPARE PRACTITIONERS FOR INTEGRATIVE CARE

By
WENDY GLAUSER

Photographs by **CHLOË ELLINGSON**



In March, the Ontario government greenlit Toronto Metropolitan University's new medical school. To be located in Brampton, a diverse and underserved area, the school will enrol 80 undergraduate and 95 postgraduate students beginning in the fall of 2025. The teaching will emphasize the importance of diversity in health care and the key role that community, culture and life experience play in shaping physical and mental health.

A community-based approach is already ingrained in the university's health-care programs, including its Midwifery, Psychology and Nursing programs, and the coming School of Medicine will augment this. Read on to learn about how these programs both educate health providers to understand the role of community, and how they advance care by working collaboratively with other community-based providers.

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Midwifery Education Program helps practitioners build a caring community of clients and health-care providers

Laura Solis knew she wanted to be a midwife after moving to Toronto from Mexico and experiencing the supportive care of midwives through her own pregnancies. "Having a baby in a different country can be intimidating and isolating. When I didn't have my community, parents or aunts to support me, midwifery filled the gap," says Solis, who has two children.

Solis chose Toronto Metropolitan University's Midwifery Education Program (MEP) so she could work downtown with newcomers, especially Spanish-speaking people. "The MEP works to create an environment that is welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive, with many opportunities for dialogue and self-reflection," she says. It also helped her to find Spanish-speaking midwives for one of her placements.

Through the program, Solis pursued a range of other placements that taught her the value of working in partnership with health specialists from obstetricians to lactation consultants to social workers. "The faculty know how important it is to build strong inter-professional relationships and how to hone collaboration and communication skills."

Solis now works as a midwife in Toronto, serving primarily Spanish-speaking and uninsured clients. She not only monitors

their pregnancies and counsels them on their health-care options in their first language, but she also helps her clients adjust to life in Canada by sharing information about various community programs and answering their questions about how to navigate daily life in the city.

By offering group prenatal classes in Spanish, she helps clients combat feelings of isolation and vulnerability that can crop up as a newcomer. "I introduce a group of

people to those in similar situations and connect them so they can support each other."

For Solis, the work is about more than giving back to the Spanish-speaking community that supported her as a newcomer—it's also reaffirming for her. "Working with my community helps me feel connected with my country, with my people, with my beliefs and with my values," she says. "It's a win-win situation where I feel I can help my community and they fill my heart."





**“HAVING A BABY
IN A DIFFERENT
COUNTRY CAN BE
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WHEN I DIDN'T HAVE
MY COMMUNITY
TO SUPPORT ME,
MIDWIFERY FILLED
THAT GAP.”**

— Laura Solis, Midwife

COLLABORATIVE CARE

In their placements at an urban clinic, psychology students work with interdisciplinary professionals to provide holistic care

The university's Psychology Training Clinic is designed to train students to both recognize cultural barriers and build on the strengths of communities when providing care. In a partnership between the university and the Academic Family Health Team at St. Michael's Hospital, Unity Health Toronto, students provide assessment services and psychotherapy in an interdisciplinary primary care clinic setting. Through the program, eight graduate students provide psychological services for four to five patients each throughout the year. Many of these patients come from marginalized or lower income populations, says Dr. Michael Cheng, director of the Psychology Training Clinic at Toronto Metropolitan University. In 2017, the program received the Collaborative Mental Health Care Award from the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

Ahead of the placement, students' coursework and role-play simulations prepare them to feel comfortable with structured clinical interviewing in a real-world setting. During the placement, their one-on-one interactions with patients are recorded, with the patients' consent, so supervisors can watch the interactions and provide helpful feedback.

Reviewing interviews with a supervisor “helps us see our strengths and weaknesses, and see opportunities for helping patients that we might not have recognized in the moment,” says Shadini Dematogoda, a master's student in clinical psychology who is currently completing her placement at the Psychology Training Centre.

Dematogoda also appreciates that the program lets her work with interdisciplinary providers to provide holistic care. Students can call or message the patient's primary care provider if they think an underlying health issue might be contributing to psychological symptoms. Likewise, they can work with an allied health provider to connect patients to social services or access income, housing or other supports.

This sets the program apart from other programs' in-house psychology clinic placements, which are often in standalone psychotherapy clinics, usually affiliated

with a campus health program. “The students really appreciate the family health team setting. The physicians and nurse practitioners are supportive and collaborative. When our students have a question or a concern about the patient, the staff clinicians are welcoming and responsive,” says Cheng.

In some cases, depression or anxiety may primarily be “the result of the patient's social situation, whether that involves housing or employment uncertainty,” says Cheng. By connecting patients with resources to address these social determinants of health, students can help patients “without pathologizing social problems,” he explains. “In other cases, biological factors may play the predominant role in mental health illness, requiring close collaboration with primary care providers or psychiatrists.” He hopes that students will advocate for collaborative care models in their careers, which recognize the diversity of patients' problems.

Dematogoda says she feels fortunate to have her first practicum at the clinic at the hospital. “We've been exposed to such a diverse community,” she says. “Our training has shown us that a patient's symptoms and their current circumstances are an accumulation of their biology; their thoughts, emo-

**“SOME PATIENTS
REQUIRE MORE TIME TO
BUILD TRUST AND
ENGAGEMENT. I'VE
LEARNED DIFFERENT WAYS
TO EXPLORE PROBLEMS
AND COLLABORATIVELY
BUILD INSIGHT.”**

tions, and behaviour; and also their social determinants like environment, family circumstances and economic situation.”

→
Student Shadini Dematogoda outside the Psychology Training Clinic.

One of the biggest lessons from the practical training is that psychotherapy doesn't fit a set schedule. “Some patients require more time to build trust and engagement. I've learned different ways to explore problems, validate unmet needs, and to collaboratively build insight related to unhealthy automatic thoughts and behaviours,” she says.

Dematogoda adds that she has learned to provide patient-directed care and to help the patient address the issues they see as most pressing, rather than start with the problems the provider sees as paramount. “Building rapport and making sure patients feel their concerns are heard is something I don't feel we could have gotten from a classroom.”

A BROADER VIEW OF HEALTH CARE

Placements outside of hospitals offer nursing students insight into the diversity of community resources available to their clients

The third year of the university's nursing program is dedicated to the social determinants of health, health promotion and advocacy. During this year, students pursue placements outside of hospital walls—at places like social services agencies, shelters, detention centres, and public health departments. Students conduct a needs assessment, including asking clients about how services could be improved, and work in partnership with their preceptors to find a solution, explains Barbara Chyzy, who leads the third-year collaborative nursing degree program at the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing.

Some students create and lead training sessions for young parents on topics like bonding with their child, nutrition,

and mental health. Others have worked in partnership with safe consumption sites, visiting local businesses to educate stakeholders on their importance. In one case, students working with a doula agency mapped out gender-affirming services.

“That's something they had never even considered—what services are available for trans or non-binary pregnant people,” says Chyzy. (In her own community health role, Chyzy works with the Young Parents No Fixed Address network of over 30 agencies that support young parents in Toronto).

Each week, the students have small group conferences to talk about their placements and learn from each other. Chyzy says the community placements, combined with the theory they learn in class, teach them about the needs and challenges of patients outside of hospital walls, and to think critically about a strictly biomedical approach to health.

For example, students recently attended a workshop led by a Toronto-based mid-

wife. It was a revelation to learn how midwives prioritize the patient's wants, in terms of birthing position and other preferences. “We can also change the way nurses work within hospitals.”

The overarching goal of the placements is to expose students to the wide diversity of community resources. This way, even if they aren't working in the community, they will be able to connect their patients to these resources, and also advocate for their expansion.

“If I don't have students having an ‘Aha moment’ in their third year, then I haven't succeeded,” Chyzy laughs. “Probably the biggest revelation is, ‘I had no idea that nurses work in all of these areas.’”

Chyzy says third-year students are “climbing up a hill, getting to the top of the hill, looking out to the world. They see this world in a totally different way. And then even if they go back down the hill, they always remember what they learned in community health.” ●



2022 Board of Governors election

Voting July 6 – 20

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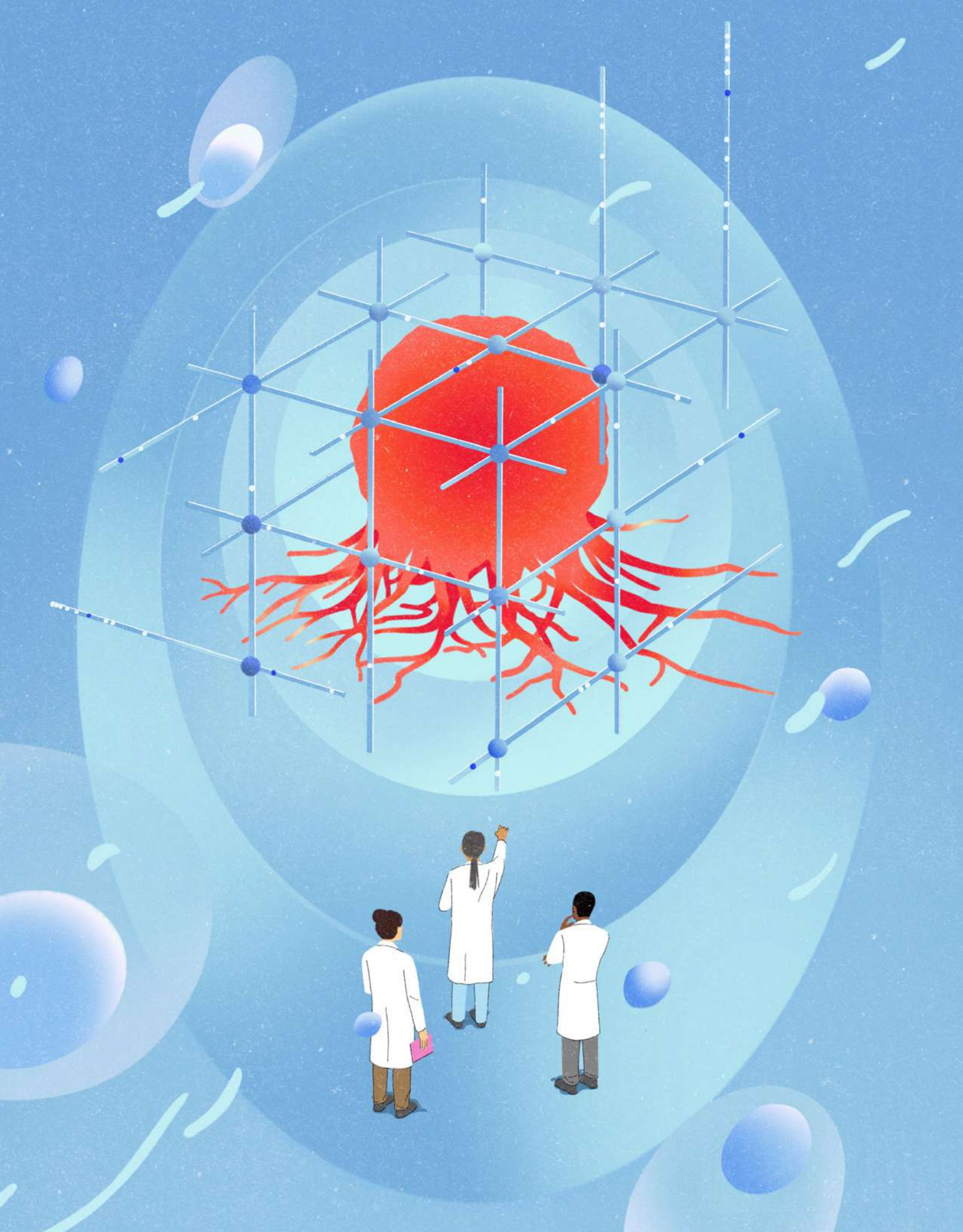
Get election and voting information, along with candidate platform statements at torontomu.ca/governors/elections

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IMPROVING THE ODDS FOR CANCER TREATMENT

MATH MODELS CAN HELP IDENTIFY OPTIMUM
CHEMOTHERAPY FOR
INDIVIDUAL PATIENTS

BY MARK WITTEN

ILLUSTRATION BY ARD SU

Mathematician Kathleen Wilkie's research aims to open a door to better outcomes and quality of life for people with cancer, through math modelling and computer-aided numerical simulations.

"I use math to help understand how a patient's body is going to respond to the disease and the therapy they choose. Everyone's body is different and to achieve better outcomes for more patients, cancer treatment needs to be personalized to address the whole patient," says Wilkie, a professor in the Department of Mathematics, in the university's Faculty of Science.

One of the greatest challenges in cancer treatment is to figure out why a specific treatment works for some patients with the same type of cancer—such as breast, prostate or colorectal cancer—and not others, and predict who will benefit to help choose the right therapy for each patient.

Cancer survival rates for Canadians have risen to about 65 per cent today from 55 per cent in the early 1990s and 25 per cent in the 1940s, but treatment still fails for 35 per cent of patients. Wilkie hopes her research will improve those odds further.

"We're trying to better understand the heterogeneity of populations and use models as virtual clinical trials to help identify which patients would benefit from a type of treatment and which ones should avoid that specific treatment because it would be pro-tumour rather than anti-tumour," explains Wilkie. "If we can avoid giving a patient a treatment that's not going to work for them, we will improve their quality of life by avoiding an unnecessary treatment phase, and possibly suggest another treatment that could provide a better outcome."

Personalizing treatment

Wilkie is using her methods to help identify personalized treatment options to address cachexia—a dramatic loss of muscle and fat tissue that is a common condition developed in certain cancer types and an unintended side effect of certain chemotherapy drugs. It's a debilitating condition that may lead to the patient feeling too unwell to proceed with treatment.

In a recently published study, Wilkie's model simulations quantified the effects of many different chemotherapy dosing schedules on lean body mass and tumour control. "We used our model to identify potential drug dosing schedules that can preserve lean mass better than others and still shrink the tumour," she says.

In future, this specificity around different treatment regimens on cachexia could give patients more agency. "Low-dose, high-frequency schedules might be chosen in palliative care settings, for example, where cancer remission is no longer an option, so the goal then becomes reducing pain and increasing quality of life," says Wilkie.

To further personalize treatment choices, Wilkie will use math models to look at how individual differences in factors such as age, body composition, gut health and immune system health influence muscle wasting risk in response to the cancer and the treatment. "My vision would be to make more measurements about the person's whole body and integrate this information into patient-specific treatment planning, including dosing schedules," she says.

In a journal article in *Mathematical Medicine and Biology*, Wilkie's math modelling simulations showed another promising application: anti-inflammatory treatment at the time of surgery inhibits a pro-tumor response. "As more data and models are generated to show the influence of inflammation on cancer growth and progression, prescribing anti-inflammatory drugs during and after surgery may become the standard of care," she says.

For Wilkie, developing more treatment options for cancer patients that address cachexia is both a scientific and personal priority. "It's very satisfying to do research that has the potential to help cancer patients reduce a condition that is painful, exhausting and worsens their quality of life." ●

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**Toronto
Metropolitan
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alumni diary

/ HOLOCAUST MEMOIR / ALUMNI FAVES ON THEIR HUMBLE START / POLANYI PRIZE WINNER /



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Get more than you give

For Valerie Pringle (Radio and Television Arts '74), going to the university was the second-best decision she ever made. (Marrying her husband Andrew takes first place.) "It set me on my path—gave me an exciting career in broadcasting that has made all the difference."

She and Andrew enjoy giving back by providing law school scholarships and funding the green roof on the engineering building, a visionary urban farm that grows some 10,000 lbs of produce each year.

As chair of the Blue & Gold Society, Pringle encourages others to donate, and she was proud to participate in something especially meaningful: the University Renaming Advisory Committee.

"We've been soaked in colonialism all our lives and it's so important to listen and reimagine the future of an institution where everyone feels welcome."

Pringle encourages others to volunteer, which is her focus now.

"It's the best thing to do. It is exciting to see what a difference you can make in an institution. You always get more than you give."
—Sue Horner



NOTEWORTHY

Back on campus

Alumni Treisha Hylton, Social Work '04, and Omar Ha-Redeye, Health Services Management '05, return to campus to teach in their respective fields. Find out more at magazine.torontomu.ca.

Humble beginnings

We asked these notable grads about their unconventional first forays into the workforce



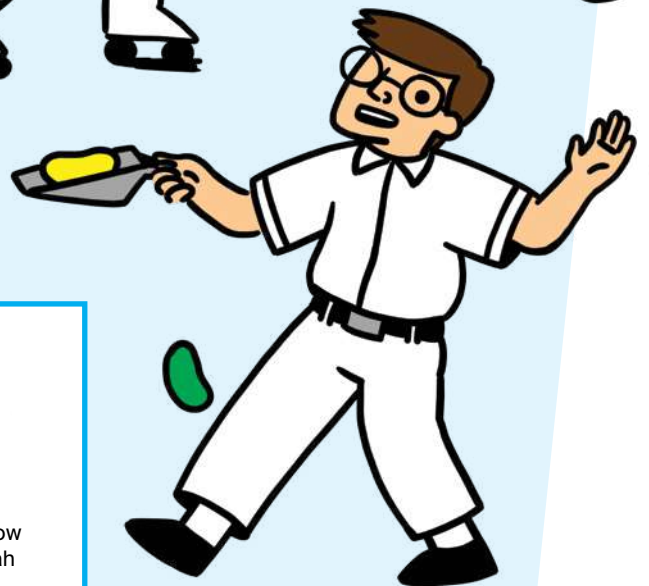
**JESSICA HOLMES,
RADIO AND TELEVISION ARTS '98,
MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER AND AUTHOR**

The summer after fourth grade, my best friend and I put up flyers around our neighbourhood saying "hire girls on skates," with a list of the odd jobs we'd do, including washing dishes and vacuuming. We were too young to get real jobs and not responsible enough for paper routes. We had no idea how dangerous this was. Luckily, the only person who hired us was a nice old lady who paid us double our \$2 wage!



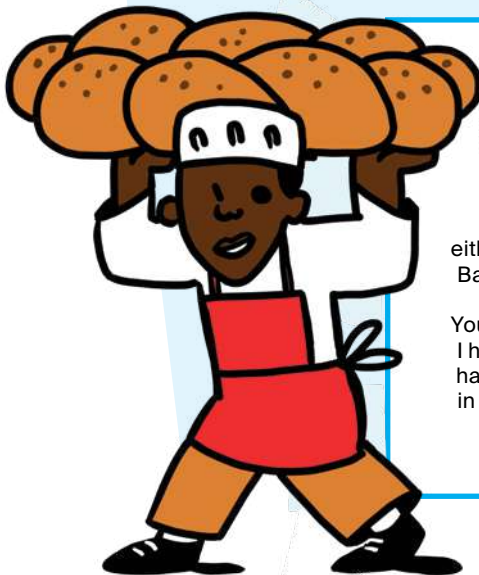
**BRIAN GLUCKSTEIN,
INTERIOR DESIGN '83, PRINCIPAL,
GLUCKSTEIN DESIGN PLANNING**

I was a jelly bean scooper! I worked at Mr. Greenjeans at the Eaton Centre in the '80s while I attended the university and I was in charge of the jelly bean bins at the front of the restaurant. Customers were very specific about their requests—they'd want three pineapple jelly beans, two red ones, four lemon, a few coconut ... and I had to scoop their precise order. It was a fun job and it was close to the school, so it was perfect for me.



**DWIGHT DRUMMOND,
RADIO AND TELEVISION ARTS '91,
HOST, CBC TORONTO NEWS**

The quirkiest job I ever had was either when I worked at Open Window Bakery in North York making Challah bread, which I got through the Youth Employment Service, or the job I had cleaning up factories after they had fires. I learned that I should stay in school because making hundreds of Challah a day was not fun!



Memoir examines a painful past for a brighter tomorrow

In conversation with alumna Marsha Lederman, author of *Kiss the Red Stairs: The Holocaust, Once Removed*



AWARD-WINNING journalist for The Globe and Mail, Marsha Lederman (Radio and Television Arts '88), decided to look towards her family for her next big project. *Kiss the Red Stairs: The Holocaust, Once Removed* is a gripping memoir, which delves into her parents' Holocaust stories and examines how intergenerational trauma may have shaped her own life and experiences.

In this Q&A, we sit down with Lederman to discuss her new book, the impact of reliving her late parents' painful memories and the importance of writing down the stories of your loved ones.

What did it feel like to write this book?

Sometimes I've felt comforted learning these stories about my parents, and other times, it was difficult and lonely. There were different kinds of research—the research I was doing into my family's story was sort of comforting. But the research about the death camps and what people experienced was brutal, because I'll never know what

happened to my grandparents. I pictured them in these circumstances, which was absolutely shattering for me.

Did this research give you a greater understanding of what your parents experienced?

I learned more about my parents, but not necessarily because of what they experienced but because forcing myself into this zone where I thought about

them a lot led me to feel a level of closeness and intimacy with them that I had not felt before. Being immersed in them while writing gave me so much admiration for them and made me very protective of them.

Can you think of one message you hope readers will take away from your book?

Talk to your parents, talk to your grandparents if they're alive and get the stories down while you can. I also hope that there's an uplifting aspect to the book, that

no matter what happens to you in your life—there is some light and there can be rebirth in some way. Maybe it's in unexpected places, so try and find that.

—Haweya Fadal

This interview has been edited. Read the full interview online at magazine.torontomu.ca.

Want to know more?

Visit our *Lifelong Learning page online and watch the Book Talk* *Kiss the Red Stairs: The Holocaust, Once Removed*.



Toronto Metropolitan University

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Martha and Rick are giving students another chance to pursue their dreams. You can too.

"Education is a core value in our lives," says Martha Lee-Blickstead, retired director of the Community Services program at The Chang School. "So in our estate plan, my husband Rick and I made sure we could take care of our family and leave a legacy for students getting a second chance at post-secondary education."

"The university is a great place for someone looking to improve their future and follow their dreams," Martha adds. "This is just a small gesture toward making that happen."

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LIFE STORY

Changing the face of venture investing

How Snita Balsara navigated her way into venture capital

Snita Balsara, a founding member of Canadian Women in the VC Community, is an inaugural winner of the DMZ's Women of the Year Award.



→ MY PARENTS CAME to Toronto in the 1970s from India with the objective of making sure their children had better lives than they did. Honouring their sacrifice and making them proud is one of my guiding lights.

They believed science, technology, engineering and math would be the way for us to succeed. My older sister, younger brother and I are all Toronto Metropolitan University alumni. My sister and I studied business technology and my brother did an

engineering degree. The Information Technology Management program gave me the ability to speak two different languages and liaise between the tech and business folks.

Right out of school I worked with IBM, earned my project management designation and an MBA. My mother had a master's of art and was a teacher in India and my dad was an engineer but their education wasn't recognized here. Part of the reason I got an MBA was to show my mother her hard work was an inspiration to the next generation.

I joined the Herjavec Group in 2013 as a project manager. My skills weren't being fully utilized in that capacity and I was honest about that, so the organization made a role for me in business development where I sharpened my business skills. Through that experience I supported Robert Herjavec's *Shark Tank* portfolio. Once a handshake was made on air, I dove into diligence and when a deal was finalized, we supported portfolio companies with business strategy and advisory calls. That was my entry point into the venture capital space.

Grassroots solutions

I joined the MaRS Investment Accelerator Fund (IAF) and learned how venture capital operates here in Canada and how to focus on Canadian tech companies. I enjoy the insightful conversations that happen around the table and working with entrepreneurs energizes me.

In 2022, with the blessing of MaRS, the entire MaRS IAF team launched Graphite Ventures. We are raising a \$100-million fund, of which \$77 million closed in late 2021. It's an opportunity for our team to commit increased dollars at the critical early stages of a business.

The Canadian startup ecosystem has so many more entry points and resources for founders to build their businesses that just were not available before.

In addition to the great funds and startup founders, the community is coming together with grassroots organizations to strengthen the community's fabric. Canadian Women in the VC Community started with five of us and now there are nearly 200 women in the group in all types of roles in venture capital.

The Diversity and Inclusion Small Council started as a way to bring together investors to support under-represented founders. These founders may never have pitched to investors before and now have an opportunity to present their business and get feedback from investors in a friendly environment. High tides raise all ships, and it takes community involvement to build a strong startup ecosystem.

Having more diverse individuals building business solutions and having more diverse solutions is better for everyone because our population is so diverse. There is a lot more work to be done but we are starting to open the door. —Interview by Mary Teresa Bitti.

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Eno Hysi at the ready to assess a kidney for quality before transplant.



PHOTOGRAPH BY BRENT GOODEN

PROFILES

‘Learning everything I need to be a scientist’

Research by Polanyi Prize winner Eno Hysi can lead to better outcomes for kidney transplant recipients

BY CARRIE BRUNET DUNCAN

➔ HOPING TO IMPROVE the lives of kidney transplant recipients using innovative imaging, Eno Hysi (Biomedical Physics PhD '20) waits on standby to be called into the operating room at St. Michael's Hospital, Unity Health Toronto, one of Canada's leading centres in kidney transplant and care.

When a kidney is recovered from a donor, Hysi is on hand to assess its quality. Using a standard ultrasound machine paired with a laser and configured through his unique algorithms, Hysi's noninvasive photoacoustic technique combines sound and light to examine kidneys for fibrotic damage. Kidneys without scarring lead to better outcomes for transplant recipients.

In recognition of this work, Hysi, a Banting and Kidney Research Scientist Core Education and National Training (KRESCENT) post-doctoral fellow, received the prestigious Polanyi Prize in Physics—named for the 1986 Nobel Prize Laureate, John Charles Polanyi. “The past recipients have been some of the most respected names in science in Ontario,” Hysi says. “It’s

a tremendous honour to be in their midst.”

Hysi was already using photoacoustics to monitor the treatment response of cancerous tumours as part of his PhD when he met his collaborator, nephrologist Dr. Darren Yuen, through the Institute for Biomedical Engineering, Science and Technology (iBEST), a partnership with St. Michael's Hospital. “I didn't know anything about kidneys, transplants or being in an operating room,” says Hysi. “But using my scientific training to collaborate with clinicians has allowed me to contribute in ways I had never imagined.”

An early student of the Medical Physics undergraduate program at Toronto Metropolitan University, Hysi did all three of his degrees here (bachelor of science '10, master of science '12 and PhD '20). He credits his mentor Michael Kolios for inspiring his love of research and credits the university for his success. “Just as the university grew in size and reputation, I grew up alongside it. Here, I learned everything I needed to become a scientist.” ●

PROFILES

Healing Indigenous childhoods

Anishinaabe ways of knowing and being are central to Dawn-Estelle Miskokomon's advocacy

BY RHIANNON RUSSELL



Dawn-Estelle Miskokomon focuses on safety and well-being of First Nations children.

→ SINCE THE AGE of eight, Dawn-Estelle Miskokomon has wanted to find ways to protect First Nations children.

“At that age, I already understood how life was unfair to First Nations children,” says Miskokomon, who was born and raised in Bkejwanong, or Walpole Island First Nation. Miskokomon now embraces her home and community in Deshkan Ziiibiing, or Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, in southwestern Ontario, where she lives with her family.

In the years since her vision for change, Miskokomon has focused her career on ensuring the safety and well-being of First Nations children in both Bkejwanong, Deshkan Ziiibiing, a collaborative network of local First Nations communities, and in local urban settings. Anishinaabe ways of knowing and being are central to Miskokomon's

advocacy work with Indigenous children and their families.

Now Miskokomon (master's in Early Childhood Studies '21) is in the first cohort of Toronto Metropolitan University's new Urban Health PhD program in the Faculty of Community Services. She is studying how Anishinaabe ways of knowing and being may be actualized within the Canadian system when applying the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action.

Miskokomon intends to focus on London, Ont., the urban centre closest to Deshkan Ziiibiing, and its larger child-focused initiatives. Her work will be informed by the historical relationship between London and Deshkan Ziiibiing, where First Nations children who attended the Mount Elgin Industrial Institute residential school were forced to do manual labour.

The relationship is still problematic, with the polluted Thames River travelling southwest from London through Deshkan Ziiibiing and neighbouring First Nations communities, which have been and continue to be under a boil-water advisory. Miskokomon's community has been under the boil water advisory since December 2021.

“When we think about urban health and how we invest in knowing about the health and well-being of First Nations children, health initiatives aren't always made with First Nations youth in mind and so colonial impacts, like water pollution and residential school trauma, aren't factored into the concept of health in these programs,” Miskokomon says.

“I want to be able to get to this place where we create the platform that reveals to us how it is we can work better together.” ●

Almir Brljak and his co-founders shot to the top of the charts with their game *Swordsman VR*.



PROFILES

Putting Canada on the VR gaming map

Almir Brljak talks breaking out in a burgeoning industry

BY MICHELLE GRADY

→ IT DIDN'T TAKE Almir Brljak (Geographical Analysis '16) long after graduation to discover what he wanted to spend his time doing. He had already started some minor ventures and was getting his feet wet in tech. "I had a friend who was looking for capital to start a VR company, and I was able to pour my own into the project so we didn't have to look for investors."

At the time, Brljak says VR capabilities were still in their infancy and he and his two co-founders saw an opportunity. "The market was still so niche, so the big players hadn't caught on. And because we knew the tech very well and only saw the hardware getting better, we were able to conceptually plan." Sinn Studio Inc. was born—a completely independent studio of three, with Brljak as the chief operating officer.

The nimble team worked together to launch three games before their big hit, *Swordsman VR*, reached the market in 2020, all of which saw only minimal return on investment and, as a result, their work nearly ground to a halt. "The revenue we were getting from these games was so minimal that it wasn't covering the operating expenses. That's difficult for a person in their early 20s because there's a lot of life to be lived thereafter, and I was starting to think I worked so hard for the first five years of my 20s and it could be for nothing."

The day the team launched *Swordsman VR*, they were completely out of funds and the game was their last ditch effort to break out among heavy-hitting competitors like *Star Wars* or *The Walking Dead*.

To market the game, the trio used alternative routes like connecting with smaller influencers and building relationships with players through the platform Discord. "We had to get scrappy because we didn't have the marketing resources or industry connections that these big studios have."

But all their efforts paid off. "When we first started off, our goal was to be in the top 10 selling games on PlayStation. In early 2021, we became the third best selling game in North America. It was huge for us to be third among studios that are backed by Silicon Valley venture funds and it puts Canada on the map in the field." Owing to the game's success, Brljak and his co-founders continue to grow their team, now with over 10 full-time staff. "We only want to get bigger and better." ●

Class Notes

UPDATES FROM ALUMNI ON PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL MILESTONES

1950s



Robert V. Bocking

Photographic Arts '58
“Some highlights: manager of a photo finishing plant, official photographer for the Toronto Board of Education, coordinator of the film program at Conestoga College, coordinator and curriculum developer for the Film & Television Production Program in Toronto. I incorporated Robert Bocking Productions Ltd. and produced films for the National Geographic Society and television series in Canada. I began oil painting in retirement and most recently authored my first book, *The Corinthian Gold*, photographed in Greece.”

Joan (Jarvis) Colbourn

Fashion '53
Joan noticed herself in the last issue of the magazine in the photo of the Tuck Shop. “The photo was taken during the 1952-53 school year. I was at the university that year and am now 87 years old. I met my husband there that fateful year. Thanks for the memory!”

Douglas Lavery

Electronic Technology '58
“I worked for Bell Telephone for six years and completed my bachelor of science at Concordia University. I later worked for Sir Sandford Fleming College for 33 years and completed my master's of science in computer science at the University of Glasgow.”

Paul Tichinoff

Chemistry '55
“I joined Imperial Oil in Sarnia, Ont., where I progressed from technical advisor to production manager over 20 years. I joined Syncrude Can. Ltd as startup manager of the oil sand facility, which led to a career change as director of human resources. Upon retirement, a 14-year employment with the Alberta government followed as hearing chairman for the Worker's Compensation Appeal Tribunal and the Municipal Government Board. Retirement now involves golf, bowling, exercise, and most importantly, family life.”
Paul can be reached at paul.tichinoff@gmail.com.

1960s

Caryl Hamilton

Secretarial Science '63
“I've travelled to Italy, France, Croatia and Slovenia. I am a member of Oakville Historical Society. I have volunteered with the Rogers Cup tennis tournament and the Toronto Jazz Festival.”

Skip Letheren

Furniture and Interior Design '61
An environmental activist whose focus is the Great



↑
Hala Bissada (centre), Hospitality and Tourism Management '91, is president and CEO of Hala, Inc., an international award-winning event firm. Her family appeared on the television game show "Family Feud" in November 2021.

Lakes, Skip recently authored a book called *The Great Lakes: A Time of Reckoning*, available online at bluebayfield.ca.

Marilyn Mottola Madigan

Fashion '69
“Retired, I now live on beautiful Vancouver Island, enjoying life and grateful to be close to my grandkids.”

Robert F. Thom

Mechanical Technology '64
“After graduation, I was hired by GM in St. Catharines to assist with the impending impact of the original Auto

PHOTOGRAPH (ABOVE) FAMILY FEUD CANADA

**Alumni
Spotlight**



Pact in 1967. I retired in 2000. Married 52 years to my wife, Deanna, a teacher, we have a son and daughter, and five grandkids. We still live in and enjoy the Niagara area.”

1970s

George Brown

Urban and Regional Planning '75

“I’m currently enjoying retirement in the White Mountains, working seasonally for AMC and volunteering on trails projects.”

Sandra Calderon

Business Technology Management '79

“I retired from teaching in 2003 after 31 years as a high school teacher. I’ve lived in the Toronto area most of my life except for a year in Mexico and a year in Costa Rica; I have two children who are married with children. I spend my winters in Mexico and summers in Thunder Bay with family.”

Gord Corlett

RTA School of Media '74
Gord started his career in community programming at

Maclean Hunter Cable TV in Owen Sound and finished at Rogers Cable in Hamilton and Toronto. He published a memoir in January titled *Bench Coach*. “The memoir chronicles my 45 years in the communications business. I wanted to share the highs and lows, and everything in between.” Gord is donating proceeds of book sales to the YMCA, War Amps and the university Annual Fund.”

Rod Crombie

RTA School of Media '76
“After graduating, I found work as a news cameraman for CBLFT in Sudbury. I transitioned into long format as one of the first Steadicam owner/operators in Canada and I moved back to Toronto to work on TV series and movies. I’ve pretty much retired now, but still do the occasional day call, which I enjoy. I volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, Shelter Movers and Not Just Tourists. For fun, I travel with my wife and go on long cross-country motorcycle rides.”

Tang Lee

Architectural Technology '70
Tang retired in 2019 after 41 years teaching at the University of Calgary.

David Montgomery

Business Administration '78
“Upon graduation, I was selling residential real estate in Aurora, Ont. I started taking courses towards an accredited real estate designation. However, I suffered a major life-altering illness and my plans never came to fruition. I lived in B.C. for a number of years, then in Ontario, working with Bell Canada in

switchboard technology. Now in Bracebridge, I work for Trillium Lakelands District School Board in maintenance/custodial with plans to retire in two years. I am loving life in Muskoka with a hobby involving classic vehicles.”

Joan Perry

Nursing '76
Joan retired in March 2022, after 34 years as director of volunteers at Roper St. Francis Healthcare in Charleston, S.C. She began her career in obstetrical nursing, certified as a childbirth educator, and served as director of a free-standing birthing centre in West Virginia. Moving to Charleston in 1987, she worked at Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital in obstetrics, opening the health line office and serving as health information coordinator.

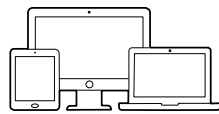
William A. Sadler

Chemical Technology '71
William is looking to reconnect with Chemical Technology alumni from the class of 1970 or 1971: wasadler@hotmail.com.

Kevin Tibbles

Journalism '79
After 27 years at NBC News, Kevin is retiring. He served as a correspondent for NBC Nightly News, Today and MSNBC. His reporting took him to London as a foreign correspondent from 1995 to 2000, where he filed from Bosnia, Rwanda, Kosovo, South Africa, Russia and beyond. Since 2000, he has been based in Chicago. Prior to NBC, Kevin spent 15 years with the CBC in Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary and Montreal, where he proudly

worked for the National and the Journal. He still remembers that the first thing he learned at the university was to write his own obituary.



DID YOU KNOW...

Our webinars are available on the TMU connections Youtube channel.

1980s

Ted Denniston

Civil Engineering '86
Ted married **Caroline Repard, Interior Design '87**. “We have two adventurous daughters. We moved to Vancouver in 2003 to open the first Western Canada office for a consulting engineering firm. In 2014

Image from the past: Richard Drygas sent in a photo of the university's Amateur Radio Club taken in 1980.



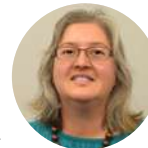
I founded Sense Engineering with a former colleague. We now have seven offices and 50 employees across the country. I love to travel with my wife, whether exploring B.C.'s Gulf Islands, snowboarding the interior backcountry, trekking through Europe or surfing the shores of Costa Rica.”

Richard Drygas

Electrical Engineering Technology '84
“I found an old photo to share of the Ryerson Amateur Radio Club taken in 1980!”

Tina Fumo

Business Administration '88
Tina has published a book titled *Fancy Prison* about the child welfare system in Canada. What begins as the story of a grandmother wanting to hold her newborn grandchild pulls readers into an unbelievable ordeal about a grandmother's struggle to reclaim her grandchild.



Rosemarie Millones

Information Management Technology '81
“I obtained a BEd from the University of Toronto and spent 25 years teaching high school. Following this, I obtained an honours LLB at the University of London, U.K., and have been practising education law and alternative dispute resolution since graduating in 2014.”

Shelly Sanders

Journalism '88
Shelly published a book titled *Daughters of the Occupation* with Harper Collins in April 2022. “This historical fiction explores trauma, resilience

and survival in the face of the little-known yet pivotal Latvian Holocaust. I was inspired by my family's never-spoken-of experiences as Jews in Riga, Latvia, during the Second World War.” She is also the author of three young adult novels in *The Rachel Trilogy* by Second Story Press.

Joanne Sandul

Fashion Design '82
“I have been in Hong Kong for 17 years, 13 years teaching at the Canadian International School. I have also taught in the Philippines, Korea and Japan. As a visual arts teacher, I use the skills I acquired at the university to teach fashion design and the history of fashion.”

Ken Weinberg

Electrical Technology '81
“I've been very active in Toastmasters in several leadership roles. I've also been fundraising for Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation as a member of the Metrolinx GO Getters bicycle team on the Ride to Conquer Cancer.”

1990s

Jonathan Cumberbatch

Business Management '95
A Trinidadian artist and poet, Jonathan published his first book, *Primary Colours*, a collection of poetry, in November 2021. “My poems have often been inspired by an impactful observation, conversation, music, or as an emotional urge that simply presents itself in written words.”



Nicholas Di Cuia

Business Management '98
 “My international travels have helped me succeed and enrich my career. I play competitive tennis, locally and internationally. I obtained my second dan (black belt) in Shotokan Karate. I am the creative director, writer and ghostwriter at my consultancy, Kopy Kat, after having worked in marketing and advertising for various brands locally and internationally. I sit on the Chartered Institute of Marketing Management of Ontario’s board. It’s been a busy ride, but a very exciting and rewarding one!”

Warren Ford

Hospitality and Tourism '93
 “I pursued my career in hospitality working in a variety of restaurants, hotels and resorts, with senior management positions in Bermuda, Miami, Italy, Grenada and Toronto. Teaching at George Brown College for the last 13 years; I am now a culinary professor and coordinator for Canada’s first bachelor of commerce culinary degree program. My wife and two kids all share my passion for travelling and food.”

Kate Jaimet

Journalism '97
 Kate is a writer whose play “Mixed Doubles” opened in January at Toronto’s historic Alumnae Theatre. Generations and genders collide in her 21st-century farce that focuses on Chandra, who is stuck in an unpaid internship in



↑ Vince Lupo in his artist-in-residence workspace in Carrizozo, New Mexico, January 2022. Photo courtesy of Vince Lupo.

a tumbledown community tennis club and must prove her mettle by raising enough money to fix the roof before the city inspector shuts the club down.

Vince Lupo

Image Arts '94
 Vince moved to the United States after graduation and obtained his MFA from the Savannah College of Art and Design in 1996. Since then, he and his wife, Mary, have lived in the Baltimore area where he has a commercial photography business, Direction One, Inc. In 2012 he started a photography project, “Mapping the West,” which examines the people and scenes of the American West. Visit: directiononeinc.com/mapping-the-west/.



DID YOU KNOW...

The TMU Library invites you to submit images to the COVID-19 digital archive. Visit library.ryerson.ca.

Hannah Minzloff

Photo Arts '94
 Hannah’s documentary film, *Dementia, Dad and Me*, premiered at FIN Atlantic in September on World Alzheimer’s Day. The documentary follows the filmmaker as she provides a personal look at her relationship with her father, Rainer, who has dementia. Made in Dartmouth by Truefaux Films, the film tells a patient-centred story that recognizes the man, not just the disease.

Azeem Moorji

Business '95
 “I have been breaking barriers in the workplace by founding and leading a multidisciplinary engineering firm. I have a patent-pending innovation for

waste to energy that will be a game changer. At Stamped Engineering Corporation I help guide businesses with their patent-pending innovations, and support large commercial and oil and gas projects with very specialized technical needs. I am applying the knowledge I gained at the university in a purposeful way.”

Xerxes Vesuna

Accounting & Finance '94
“Thanks to the university, I got my start in cost accounting and ended in marketing and sales management before retiring at the age of 50.”

Mark Watson

Bachelor of Commerce '95
“Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary have been called home since graduation. With two teenagers, life is busy; however, this is changing with both moving on to university outside of Alberta. Beer has been my industry, and drink of choice, with great times spent at Labatt's and now The Great Western Brewing Company. Cheers to all the inaugural 1991 ninth-floor residence mates!

2000s

Marlene Bambao

Nursing '06
“Since graduating, I've had so many unique nursing-related jobs and have been so fortunate to have worked alongside amazing nurses. The university helped me with scholarships and bursaries throughout my four years there. I am so proud to say I graduated from there—I've accomplished so much within the last 16 years in my nursing career.”

Lucian Ciubotaru-Bordeianu

Ted Rogers School of Management '08
“I have two awesome kids (twins: girl and boy), and my life is an ever-changing balance between family life, my work as a cyber security expert, helping my wife manage and grow her law office, and most recently partnering up in a new IT services venture.”

David Gilbert

Business '02
“I spend my days talking to myself in a three-by-three-foot padded cell! No, I'm not ill. I'm a professional freelance voice-over talent. A big change from my days in the Business Management program, but I'm enjoying every minute. I get to help companies tell their stories in an authentic way, building trust in their audiences.”

Kumail Manji

Industrial Engineering '06
“In 2006, I returned to Tanzania to join the family business. Over the years I have established ventures and investments spanning four countries: Tanzania, Rwanda, Mozambique and the United Arab Emirates. I also received the MBA qualification from Warwick Business School in 2014. Now, with my wife, Sayyedah, and two daughters, Rayhana and Zahra, I am back in Canada.”

Jonathan L. Milevsky

Bachelor of Commerce '05
“I completed a PhD in Religious Studies at McMaster University in 2017 and have published a book with Brill, titled *Understanding the Evolving Meaning of Reason in David Novak's Natural Law Theory*.”

Mariete Pacheco

Business Management '03
“In 2021 to support the growing PPE demand, I started a PPE recycling business with friends and former suppliers of mine to help divert tons of plastic from landfills and turn them into new products!”

2010s

Cortney Cassidy Vint

Theatre – Technical Production '02
“I recently celebrated five years in business as an event specialist in the non-profit consulting industry

and received the Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) professional designation.”

Jessica Dymond

Master in Documentary Media '11
Jessica writes that she is an editor on the new National Film Board VR experience “This Is Not a Ceremony” that celebrated its world premiere in January at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

Alexa Clair Kack

Social Work '11
“I work for myself fulfilling contracts with at-risk individuals across the GTA.”



↑
Cortney Cassidy Vint celebrates five years in the non-profit consulting field.

Daniel Orban

Professional Communication '19
Daniel is the brand founder for Rendezvous Scents. "I decided to turn one of my biggest passions into a business and founded my own company. Rendezvous is a luxury fragrance subscription service that connects consumers to high-quality perfume from around the globe, explored monthly via a selection of immersive scent journeys. Visit rendezvouscents.com and [@Rendezvous_Scents](https://www.instagram.com/Rendezvous_Scents) on Instagram.

Kelly Steinhoff

Film Studies '14
Kelly has been freelancing in the Toronto film industry for the past eight years.

Gary Edward Taylor

Environment and Urban Sustainability '19
Gary completed his master's in forest conservation at the University of Toronto in 2021.

Daniel Teperman

Urban and Regional Planning '14
Daniel has been working in planning and development as a senior project manager and professional planner for a real estate developer.

2020s

Melanie O. Amadasun

Social Work '20
"In 2020 I founded F.A.M Coaching & Consulting, a coaching and consulting company offering life coaching, public speaking and workshops. Our mission is to help youth who have had traumatic pasts heal and feel



← Daniel Orban founded a luxury fragrance subscription service.

and now have joined Certn, a startup tech company, as a verifications specialist.

Laura Griffin

Social Work '21
"I've moved to British Columbia, working as a social worker and program coordinator for the Social Concern Office in downtown Victoria. We provide programs that include a free food pantry, income tax support, referrals, housing, and homelessness prevention support.

Shivanie Mangal

Global Management Studies '21
"In November 2021, I trained to become a facilitator for #IamRemarkable. This Google initiative empowers women and other underrepresented groups to celebrate their achievements in the workplace and beyond. Visit: iamremarkable.withgoogle.com/.

Shannon Schaefer

Journalism '21
"My new children's book, *Rudy's Belly of Bees*, has made its international debut and rose to number six on Amazon Canada's Hot New Releases on Emotions and Feelings."

Jakob Schapelhouman

Business Management '21
"I'm working a super cool role as the marketing lead for a rapidly growing agri-tech startup. I got the job right out of university and learned so much so quickly."

Kayla Anne Thomson

New Media '20
"I began my first full-time, permanent job in May 2021 as lead of content marketing with Public Services Health and Safety Association."



DID YOU KNOW...

The Image Centre is open to the public. Plan your visit at ryersonimagecentre.ca.

like positive, fully integrated members of society. Visit famcc.ca. I am also very passionate about food and have a line of vegan and gluten-free hot sauces. F.A.M. Hot Sauce is on Facebook [@famsauces](https://www.facebook.com/famsauces) and Instagram [@fam_sauces_catering](https://www.instagram.com/fam_sauces_catering)."

Dianne Cheng

Biomedical Science '20
"I recently got engaged to Igor Podkolzin, also a grad, in Hospitality. We had multiple serendipitous meetings back in 2015. The very first one was because of a French elective. After graduation, I worked in sales for a small medical device company

In memoriam



Olive Baker

Former staff member
Olive died in Oct. 2021 at the age of 92. She staffed the Student Services Information desk for 21 years before retiring back to the United Kingdom in 1989. The space where she worked was lovingly, unofficially named The Olive Baker Lounge.

Gregory Campbell

Environmental Engineering Certificate
Gregory Campbell died in July 2017. After graduating, he worked on the renovation

↑
Beloved former staff member Olive Baker passed away last year. Above, the student newspaper at the time celebrated her 60th birthday just before her retirement.

of Maple Leaf Gardens as the liaison officer with the construction firm.

Jennifer Handley

MBA, Ted Rogers School of Management '11
Jennifer died suddenly on Oct. 19, 2021, at age 36 in Livingston, N.J. She began her career at TD Bank's headquarters in Toronto, and in 2011, moved to South Carolina to take on a significant role on the checking product team. She married Frank Chiarello in June 2017, moving to New Jersey, and they welcomed a baby daughter in October 2021.

Carolyn (Cole) Jackson

Journalism '65
Carolyn died Jan. 5, 2022. A force in the publishing industry, she began her career at age 12, writing children's book reviews for the Toronto Telegram. After graduation, she worked at the Toronto Telegram and then as an assistant travel editor at the Toronto Sun. She was editor of Air Canada's enRoute Magazine, and later was managing editor at non-fiction book publisher St. Remy Press, then managing editor at feminist publisher Second Story Press.

Sandra Kerr

Formerly of The Chang School of Continuing Education
Sandra passed away Nov. 6, 2021. Sandra worked at the university for more than 20 years, developing the Seniors Programming and LIFE Institute at The Chang School, and retired in 2019. The Sandra Kerr Award in Community Engagement

was created in recognition of her contributions to Programs 50+.

Kenneth "Ken" Young MacKeracher

Former Dean of Continuing Studies
Ken died in Toronto on Oct. 5, 2021, at age 89. Ken was awarded the Canadian Association for Adult Education's Roby Kidd Medal for his contributions to adult learning and community outreach. In retirement, he served as a Unitarian lay chaplain and actively participated in the Out of The Cold program.

Tim Pearce

Image Arts '09
Tim passed away Nov. 17, 2021, at the age of 47 of Huntington's disease.

Frank Maikawa

Electrical and Computer Engineering '56
Frank died Feb. 9, 2021. Following his graduation, he was hired by De Havilland Aircraft. He later joined Nortel, where he worked for 38 years until his retirement in 1996.

Ian Robinson

Journalism '83
Ian died February 12, 2022, at age 64, after a long battle with cancer. Born in Timmins, Ont., Ian met his wife, **Kathleen**, while they were both studying journalism at the university. They moved to Calgary in the mid-1990s and both worked at the Calgary Sun. When Ian left his job to focus on his cancer treatment, he didn't stop writing. After connecting with Wellspring Calgary, which links cancer patients

and caretakers to support, resources and community, he used his experience to comfort others and raise awareness of the organization.

Susan (Sproule) Beavan
Radio and Television Arts '69
Susan passed away from Alzheimer's disease on Sept. 20, 2021, in Nova Scotia. She had a groundbreaking career in television production at TVO and CTV in Toronto. After retiring in 2001, she attended the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design as a part-time student and graduated in 2011 with a BFA (Diversified), where she specialized in painting, drawing and sculpture.



↑
Susan (Sproule) Beavan worked in television production at TVO and CTV.



DID YOU KNOW...

You could volunteer as a career mentor with TMU's Tri-Mentoring program.
Email tmentor@ryerson.ca.

Arthur Allen (Art) Ward
Hotel Administration '59
Art died Dec. 28, 2021, in Waterloo. Art met his wife **Joan Douglas, Interior Design '60** at the university. A one-season roster assignment with the Toronto Argonauts earned him an induction into the university Sports Hall of Fame. In 1967, Art and Joan bought the WigaMog Inn in Haliburton, Ont., which they poured their heart and soul into for 27 years. Art ardently served his community as president of the Haliburton Rotary Club and earned a Rotary Lifetime Achievement Award and the Canada 150 Volunteer Award.
—Christine Julien Sullivan, Journalism '97

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REMEMBER WHEN?

Looking back on 10 years at the Mattamy Athletic Centre

Over the past decade, the historic building has become a vital part of campus

IT WAS September 2012 when the university officially opened the Mattamy Athletic Centre (MAC), having taken over the hallowed grounds of Maple Leaf Gardens. The building, which previously housed the Toronto Maple Leafs for 67 years until 1999, was renovated into a state-of-the-art facility for varsity athletes, students and community members. It has an NHL-sized ice rink, a multi-purpose court for basketball and volleyball, a fitness centre, as well as a studio and high-performance gym.

From September 6-9, 2012, the university held a grand opening weekend that featured a parade, a free skate for the community, varsity volleyball, basketball and hockey games, as well as a concert featuring Big Sean, Marianas Trench and Fefe Dobson.

Since the MAC opened 10 years ago, it has become an integral part of campus life. The facilities are used for intramural sports, student recreational club participation, varsity team practices and games and community skates. The space also hosts exams and convocation ceremonies every year. The building hosted the Pan American Games basketball and wheelchair basketball in 2015, Invictus Games events in 2017, speaking events for Michelle Obama and Al Gore in 2017 and 2018 and the U SPORTS women's basketball final eight and national championship in 2019.

To celebrate this milestone anniversary of the MAC, the university's Athletics and Recreation department will be rolling out a series of events this coming fall. —Jessica Leach

Ten years ago, the Mattamy Athletic Centre grand opening included a concert (below) and a free skate on the hockey rink where the Maple Leafs once played.



PHOTOGRAPH BY NORM BETTS



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You may also contact John Kucher, CFP, CH.F.C., CLU, CHS., collect at 905-305-1144.

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