

# YORKU

OCTOBER 2006



Wrestler and role model  
Ohenewa Akuffo hopes  
to pin Olympic gold

## Grappling with Success

**PLUS**

York's New Faculty of Health  
The Muslim Diaspora  
Harbourfront's High-Energy Boss



..... A lawyer sees insider trading.

..... An historian sees 1929.

..... A fine arts student sees papier-mâché.

**QUESTION EVERY ANGLE. STUDY EVERY ANGLE. RESEARCH EVERY ANGLE. WELCOME TO THE INTERDISCIPLINARY UNIVERSITY.** A WORLD WITHOUT BORDERS NEEDS AN EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS. AT YORK, WE BREAK DOWN TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES AND BRING TOGETHER THINKERS FROM EVERY DISCIPLINE TO TACKLE REAL-WORLD ISSUES. WE DON'T JUST SEE THINGS IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT, WE SEE THE LIGHT IN ITS ENTIRE SPECTRUM. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE INTERDISCIPLINARY UNIVERSITY, VISIT [YORKU.CA](http://YORKU.CA).



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# OCTOBER 2006



Time to focus on alumni – and awards. BY BERTON WOODWARD

# Good Feedback

**O**ne evening this spring, I entered a darkened L-shaped room with glass window panels along two sides. They looked into a well-lit room with a conference table, which soon filled up with a dozen or so people. Yes, it was a focus group, and beside me were other York staff waiting to hear what these York alumni had to say on the other side of the one-way glass. It was all part of a major exercise by the Alumni Office to survey and talk with York grads across the country. In the Alumni section this issue, we have a report on some key survey results (page 34). And both the survey and the focus groups provided some insight into how alumni see *YorkU* magazine.

First, according to the survey, 84 per cent of respondents reported receiving the magazine, which made it York's biggest communications vehicle. The focus groups elaborated on people's assessments of it. "Impressions of *YorkU* magazine are largely favourable," said the impartial report. Participants lauded the appearance, and compared *YorkU's* quality with subscription-based magazines. While some said they'd like to see an approach more like an academic journal, "most felt that the current format was easy-to-read and made keeping in touch with York quick and simple." What do you think? I would be happy to hear more at [editor@yorku.ca](mailto:editor@yorku.ca).

Alumni are not the only ones judging *YorkU*. We have recently passed through awards season in the world of university magazines. This year, the magazine won a Silver medal in the prestigious competition organized by the Washington-based



Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, or CASE. Judged against magazines from all over the US and Canada, *YorkU* won in the Internal Audience category, for issues that circulated on York's campuses to students, faculty and staff. Those issues – April and December 2005 – can be seen on our Web site at [www.yorku.ca/yorku](http://www.yorku.ca/yorku).

Earlier, in CASE regional awards, *YorkU* won Gold for a December 2004 black and white photograph by Edward Gajdel of Olympic trampolinist Karen Cockburn, and Silver in the Colour Photography category for a picture ("Over, Under, Sideways, Down") taken by Toronto photographer Lindsay Lozon at York's Centre for Vision Research for the Summer 2005 issue. Art director James Nixon oversaw both shoots. And *YorkU's* staff writers – Michael Todd, David Fuller and Martha Tancock – together won a Silver award for general excellence in the category of Periodical Staff Writing.

Here in Canada, for the third year in a row, *YorkU* received the Silver Prix d'Excellence in the Best Magazine category from the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education. We hope it's a sign of consistent quality, for alumni and all our readers. ■

# YORKU

THE MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1

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*YorkU* is published bi-monthly, five times during the academic year, by the Marketing & Communications Division of York University. All issues circulate on York's campuses. The October, February and Summer editions are also sent to alumni, for a total circulation in those issues of 180,000 each.

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Publications Mail Agreement No. 40069546  
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Marketing & Communications Division  
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Ideas and opinions expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect the ideas or opinions of the University or the editors.

ISSN 1708-4512

PRINTED IN CANADA

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY HORST HERGET

Send letters, submissions, comments and ideas to [editor@yorku.ca](mailto:editor@yorku.ca).

The University's pace of change is exhilarating. BY LORNA R. MARSDEN

# Breathless at York

**M**any of us are breathless, made so by the scope of changes occurring on our campuses and in the life of York. There's a lot to be done as we roll up to our 50th anniversary in 2009 but it's well underway.

The "challenge" of the double cohort has turned into an appreciation of a terrific group – hardworking and interesting students, dedicated athletes, great community members and a talent pool for the future. As they graduate, we are being even more selective about our undergraduates to level off growth, while expanding our graduate programs, where demand for places is increasing. Graduate students are a very special – and specialized – group. Along with support and guidance from strong faculty members, they need more funding. So we are carefully planning and recruiting across York's 43 graduate programs, and the Province of Ontario is ready with financial support.



**This year is bursting with possibilities. There's a lot to be done as we roll up to our 50th anniversary.**

Innovative academic units are springing up all over. On July 1 we opened the new Faculty of Health, which brings together in one place nursing, psychology, kinesiology & health science, and health policy & management (see page 24). With the leadership of a new dean, Harvey Skinner, this new Faculty is already being warmly welcomed by the wider community. In the spring, we established the City Institute at York University (CITY), which groups 90 York research specialists into one institute dedicated to the study of global urban issues. Our bilingual Faculty, Glendon, has announced our new School of Public Affairs/École des Affaires publiques, dedicated to training future bilingual leaders in the public sector.

This summer, as our distinguished alumnus, Steve MacLean, prepared to make his second voyage into space, we thought about how far our Faculty of Science & Engineering has come since he was a physics student there. We have dynamic young faculty members doing the most exciting basic and applied research in every field, attracting more graduate

Lorna R. Marsden is York's president and vice-chancellor.

and post-doctoral students to their laboratories. Next year, for example, York technology will play a leading role in the NASA 2007 Phoenix Mission to Mars. Our lidar technology, developed in conjunction with York spin-off firm Optech Inc., will be used to measure the atmosphere of Mars and the presence of

moisture. By "following the water" we hope to determine whether life ever existed on the red planet. And that is only one of the many intensely exciting projects that the new dean of Science & Engineering, Nick Cercone, will help make possible now that he has joined us from Dalhousie University.

Then there are our new buildings – not that there is nearly enough space. The new Accolade Project buildings have brought together all the departments of the Faculty of Fine Arts for the first time in its history. Now we need to bring together the health disciplines in their own space. The libraries are overflowing, there is a dire shortage of athletic space, graduates want an alumni hall for convocation and conference events, and the subway is coming.

The year ahead is bursting with possibilities. As Marcus Aurelius said in the second century, "Keep constantly in mind in how many things you yourself have witnessed changes already. The universe is change, life is understanding." We understand Aurelius very well at York. ■



# UNIVERSE

WORKS

# Pet Project

Michael Davey has created the ultimate in found art



**T**oronto Island native and sculptor Michael Davey has produced some very ‘fetching’ art during his career, an example of which – *Air Dog* – is now hanging in York’s new Accolade East Building. And at least some credit for its creation goes to Davey’s pet Cairn terrier, Angus.

The York fine arts professor incorporates thousands of objects found by Angus during their beach walks into his sculpture. *Objets trouvés* can include, among other things, balls of every shape and size, hockey sticks and even plastic Buddhas.

Before *Air Dog* was acquired by York, it was on display at Toronto’s Harbourfront Centre. It is composed entirely of balls Angus found – 3,000 of them. The sculpture is also an iconic representation of Angus himself jumping for – you guessed it – a ball.

Davey grew up and still lives on the island, and says he collects whatever the wind and waves (and Angus) bring him. But Angus’s objects of choice are most often balls, says Davey, who has exhibited his works worldwide. He estimates Angus has found thousands of balls during his career as an artist’s best friend. “But our biggest single-day haul was probably 40 or 50.” ■



**LITTORAL INTERPRETATION:**  
Islanders Davey and Angus with *Air Dog* (inset)

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK



## What They're Reading

York people reveal what's on the bedside table

**Katherine Anderson**

Faculty of Arts professor, Science & Society Program; recent author of *Predicting the Weather: Victorians and the Science of Meteorology*

*The Lure of the Sea*  
By Alain Corbin

"My bedtable stack consists of Alain Corbin, *The Lure of the Sea*, on top of the pile because it has a lovely Turner on the dust jacket; David Kaiser's history of Feynman diagrams, not on top because it has an ugly dull orange cover; William Golding, *To the Ends of the Earth*; Jacques Cousteau, *The Life and Death of Coral Reefs*; a few *London Review of Books*, one not out of its plastic wrapper; a public school newsletter; and a book about quilting. Although some books are loosely related to my research interests, I prefer books that can be read in small doses and have an entirely predictable plot, like biographies."

**Rob van der Blik**

York music librarian

*The Trial*  
By Franz Kafka

"I just happen to be reading some very stimulating and edifying material. Normally I would be spending my time on e-mail headers, blogs, help files, spine labels and the occasional article in *Harper's*. But I'm now re-reading Kafka's *The Trial*. It seemed absurd to me when I first read it in my early 20s but now it appears somewhat realistic. I'm also reading some of Adorno's *Essays on Music* since I need to stop discounting his unpopular views on popular music and jazz without actually having read them. There must be a long German word that describes my motivation for reading these writers."

## Anti-Hype Therapy

A media-watching Web site tracks medical coverage

**W**hat can a medical reporter do? Labouring under tight copy deadlines and bombarded by drug companies' claims for the latest miracle cure (promoted by sophisticated PR units), it's no wonder health writers often take the information contained in medical press releases at face value. But the result is that everyone – and the truth – suffers, says Dr. Joel Lexchin, a physician and York Faculty of Health professor.

Luckily, there's an antidote to the hype. Now lay people, doctors and reporters alike can visit a new Web site – [www.mediadoctor.ca](http://www.mediadoctor.ca) – and get a different diagnosis on the efficacy claims for the latest wonder drug. Lexchin, a well-known and outspoken critic of drug company activities – and frequently quoted in the media – is one of 13 reviewers, including five Canadian physicians, who contribute to the Media Doctor (MD) project. According to Lexchin, "As the complexity and cost of medical therapy escalates, the need for accurate and unbiased information becomes increasingly acute."

With the goal of improving Canada's media coverage of new drugs and treatments, the MD team reviews current news stories and assesses them with a 1-5 star rating, which is posted with the articles on the Web site. "Patients frequently base their opinions [of drugs or treatment] on what the press reports, and present press clippings to their doctors which then becomes the basis for treatment decisions. Even doctors themselves may first hear about medical news through the media as opposed to clinical journals," Lexchin says. "So we're also using MD to provide e-mail alerts to physicians regarding relevant current media articles."

MD is funded by Industry Canada's Office of Consumer Affairs and the Vancouver-based Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society. ■

## Talking Books

An educator has tips on how to get kids reading

**W**ith kids hitting the books again this fall, it's a good time to think about other books – aside from the school variety – that might engage them. How? Well, as both a mother of twin sons (age 15) and a York education professor, Karen Krasny knows a thing or two about getting kids reading.

Krasny, who is also a former public school teacher, is an expert on literacy theory, reader response and children's lit. She's also a parent who's watched her sons become avid readers. Aside from reading to kids early in life – and being seen to be a reader yourself (for a parent, imitation really is the sincerest form of flattery) – there are many things parents can do to encourage child reading, she says.

"Taking them to the library is a great outing," says Krasny. "We might not do that enough. It's also a good economic alternative to always shopping for books. Conversely, clearance corners in the big book chains are excellent for families on tight budgets. Encourage kids to pick out their own books. Try building up a small library a child can call his or her own. Most importantly, make time for book talk."

Krasny also suggests graphic novels as a way of encouraging kids to read. "They're very popular. And young adult readers like provocative books. We often make too many assumptions about what kids like to read. If they're going to become critically aware they need the freedom to explore a wide range of literature and genres." ■

## Feeling like a Fraud

A York researcher documents the 'impostor phenomenon'

**E**ver had the feeling you're not qualified for that new job and will be "found out"? If so, you're not alone. "Chances are you're suffering from impostor phenomenon," says Diane Zorn, who teaches courses in business ethics in the Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies, as well as applied business ethics at York's Schulich School of Business.

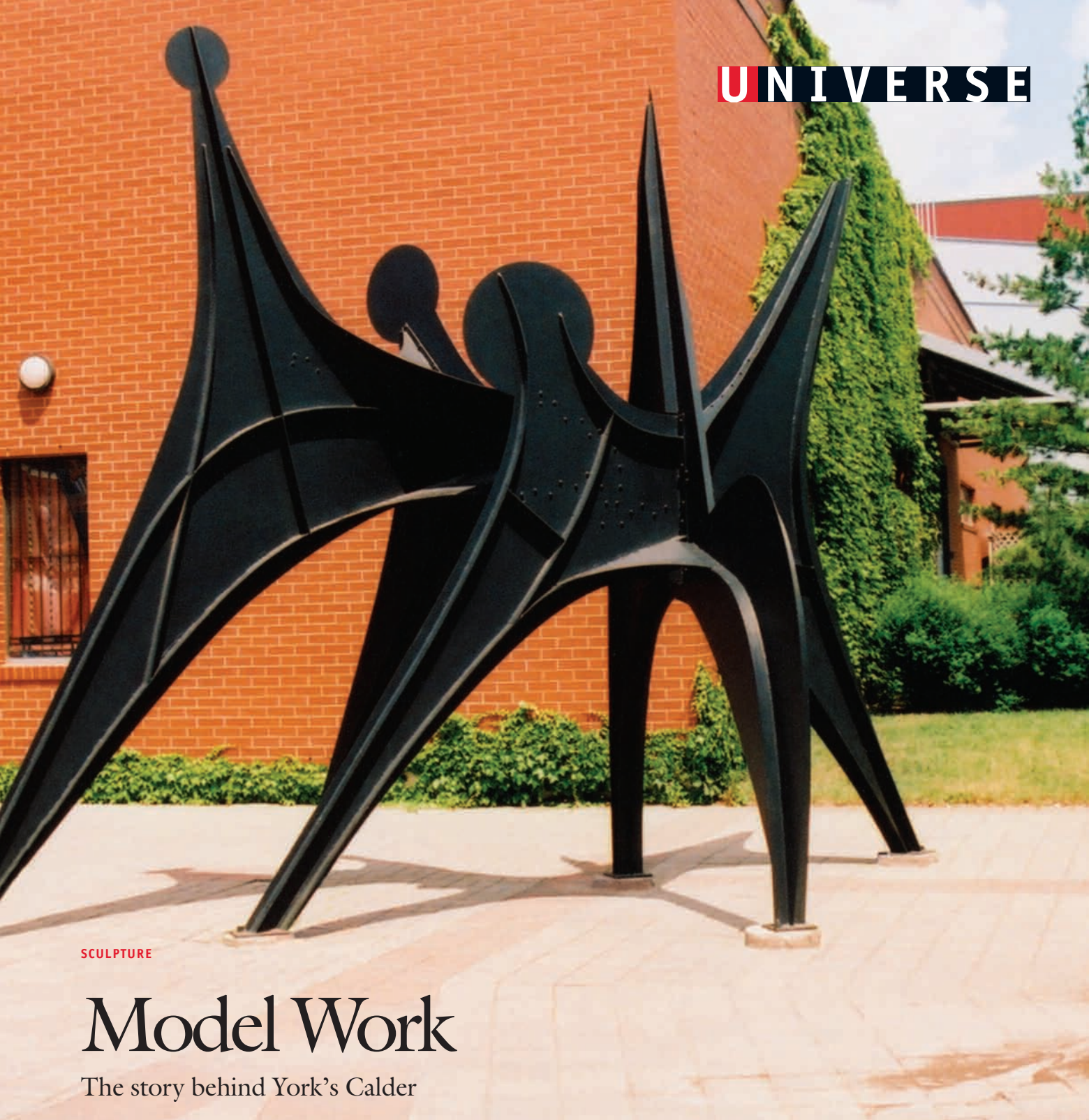
The impostor phenomenon (IP) often strikes high-achieving individuals – managers, CEOs, university professors – and manifests itself as an internal feeling of intellectual phoniness. "It doesn't matter what level you're in in your career or even sometimes how long you've been doing your job. Often people at high levels live in constant fear that they'll be revealed as 'frauds'," says Zorn.

Wouldn't a good therapist solve the problem? Not really, she

says. "This isn't a psychological problem. My research argues it's a cultural phenomenon, not a psychological trait. It's a shared learned behaviour common to high achievers – people are left on their own, competition is intense, and there's not much of a mentor system. As a result, individuals develop an 'impostor cycle' – over-preparing, procrastination etc. They live in fear they won't ever be good enough."

What can be done? At present Zorn is busy doing consciousness raising about IP with new faculty and teaching assistants at York's Centre for the Support of Teaching and at other universities across Canada and the US. She also plans to document IP further at selected Canadian universities in the coming year and hopes to write a book on the subject. Says Zorn, "We're still living with the monastic values universities were founded on. We need to get away from that." ■





SCULPTURE

# Model Work

The story behind York's Calder

Anyone who takes a tour of York's sculpture collection with the Art Gallery of York University (May-October, every Wednesday) is bound to be impressed with one work in particular – a piece by world-renowned American sculptor Alexander Calder.

Titled *Model of Man*, the work is a maquette (small working scale model) for a larger piece that Calder unveiled at Expo 67 where he called it simply *Man*. At 21 metres high, the stainless steel Expo sculpture or “stable” (Calder, famous for his mobiles,

coined the neologism stable to refer to works that did not move) had originally been called Three Disks, but Calder changed the name to complement Expo's Man and His World theme.

Calder (1898-1976) began his career in New York during the 1920s and by the '30s was experimenting with his now famous kinetic sculpture or mobiles. Fittingly the International Nickel Company donated the painted carbon steel maquette to York in 1967. It's located in a courtyard behind York's Centre for Film & Theatre. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

BY PUSHING BEYOND TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES,  
GALILEO REDEFINED THE WAY WE SEE THE WORLD.



## RESEARCH AT YORK IS DOING THE SAME THING.

York University is a leading research innovator in Canada. By working across disciplines and in collaboration with partners outside the university, researchers at York are able to develop innovative ideas and work with policy makers and practitioners to create meaningful change and a more globally competitive Canada.

Examples of York's current collaborations include the Innovation Synergy Centre in Markham (ISCM), which helps Canadian companies realize their full growth potential and become globally competitive. Similarly, YORKbiotech, a regional innovation network and not-for-profit community development corporation, uses the power of convergence in order to help its partners deliver innovative, real-world solutions to real-world challenges. A third initiative, The Consortium on New Media, Culture and Entertainment R&D in Toronto (CONCERT) will, in time, drive the creative potential of the region by facilitating innovative collaborations between the arts, technology and business.

Taken together, these three initiatives are indicative of the unique and relevant way in which York Research is helping to shape Canada's competitiveness and global influence. To learn more about how York's approach to research is redefining university research in Canada and fueling Canada's growth, visit [www.research.yorku.ca](http://www.research.yorku.ca).





# grappling with success

At 27, **Ohenewa Akuffo** is an Olympic contender and a youth role model. And she'll graduate when she's ready.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON

# W

**RESTLING OHENEWA AKUFFO** was almost an initiation rite for male novices at her Brampton high school. How hard could it be, wrestling a girl? Very, they soon learned. With biceps bigger than most men's, the 72-kg senior Canadian champion, known for power and speed, has captured at least a dozen national and international titles in the intervening 12 years. She may look coy in the dresses she models for sponsors on her Web site, but the York marketing student looks positively menacing in the photo on her calling card. There's no mistaking the "don't-mess-with-me" attitude that's made her Canada's No. 1 female wrestler – and a contender for gold at Beijing in 2008.

School and sport are an ever-changing mix for Akuffo, who entered York in 2000, as she fights to qualify for Canada's Olympic team. The month after exams ended last April she successfully defended her national crown, then won her weight class by defeating five-time world champion Kyoko Hamaguchi at the World Cup in Japan. In July she triumphed at the



## COVER

Canada cup then pitted herself against more world-class opponents in Poland, priming herself for the World Championship in China in late September. She's determined not to blow a second chance at making Canada's Olympic team.

If she makes it, she will be 29 when she heads to Beijing. That's over the hill for most athletes but prime for female wrestlers, says Akuffo, who's still crazy about her sport. "In wrestling, everything has to work together. You've got to have strength, speed and flexibility. You can't perfect a move. It's not like being a good three-point shooter in basketball."

Akuffo started wrestling in Grade 9. A natural athlete looking for extracurricular activities at a new high school, she turned up for a club tryout – and chickened out. She had seen professional wrestlers flipping each other on entertainment TV, but didn't have a clue what to expect. "I walked in there and people were doing cartwheels, back springs and front rolls for warm ups." Weeks later, the girl who never says quit gave it a second try – and ended the year placing second in Ontario. She trained with the boys and wasn't shy about asking them to teach her new moves. It was the mid-1990s and she was one of a clutch of fearless young women venturing into the all-male sport in Canada. Being a pioneer made it even more appealing. "It was like uncharted waters, so I wanted to go for it."

She hasn't gone for it at the expense of her education, however. The Canadian-born "happy-go-easy" daughter of Ghanaian immigrants spent her early childhood in Africa and absorbed lessons from both cultures. "My parents always said take the best of both worlds. They said Canada is a world of opportunity and you can make your destiny happen." Akuffo has clearly taken this to heart, just as she has embraced the way Ghanaians value education, enjoy the simple things in life and don't take anything for granted. From the day Akuffo fell in love with wrestling, her father insisted she maintain a B average in high school. These days she won't settle for anything less than B-pluses, which she manages, thanks to the flexibility of the Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies. Depending on her tournament schedule, Akuffo signs up for three or four courses a year – or takes time out when needed. "At the end of the day, I have to be able to wrestle." But she is just as determined to add a degree to her York certificates in management and sports administration. "My education is going to take a long time to finish, but I will get it done."

When Akuffo was in high school she joined the Esteem Team and began giving motivational talks to elementary school kids. Her high marks and national champion status made her – and still make her – an ideal role model. At 27, she goes into schools about four times a year, armed with tales of glory and

cautionary tales of defeat. She tells children that her success – she's won gold and silver at Pan American Games, two World Cup silvers since 2002, and gold for York at the inaugural World University Games in Turkey last year ("My gift to York!") – has hinged on discipline, hard work, setting goals and learning from mistakes. Akuffo trains five hours every other day in Guelph, takes her York courses, and works 20 hours a week at Home Depot as part of an Olympic sponsorship program. She doesn't eat fast food – not even cake on her birthday, she says to the kids. "It's not a choice. If you've got to be the best you've got to do what you've got to do." She loves to go dancing. And the only downside of travelling all over the world is missing special family events, like her sister's engagement. Finally she tells her audiences about two events in 2003 – an amazing victory and an unexpected defeat.

In 2002, the International Olympic Committee declared women's wrestling an Olympic sport and announced it would debut in Athens in 2004. However, the IOC changed the weight classes, and at 75 kg (165 lbs.), Akuffo had to drop three kilos if she wanted to be a contender. A solid muscle machine with no spare fat to lose, she stopped weight training to reduce her body mass. Weight training prevents injuries, but "it was a risk I was willing to take." In May 2003, a year later and three kilos lighter, she defeated six-time world champion

Christine Nordhagen at the Canadian championships. Two months later, she triumphed over American rival Toccara Montgomery for the Canada Cup and was named outstanding female wrestler. Sports reporters pegged her for gold in Athens.

Then came the Canadian Olympic trials. Akuffo started strong, winning the first of three matches, but separated her shoulder in the second, and lost the third. The senior national champion fell out of contention. "I was devastated for a month, then I got up and got going," she says. She had to accept that "at the end of the day, my dream is my responsibility. I made the original decision to stop weight training." She went to Athens as a member of Canada's alternate team.

Akuffo will eventually graduate from York with a bachelor of administrative studies and will likely someday earn a living in the business of sports. But wrestling still grips her like nothing else. Beyond the physical and mental challenge, it has led to self-knowledge, to identifying her strengths and weaknesses. "It's a journey of self-discovery, it's a mystery," says Akuffo. "The day I cannot give anything more of myself to the sport I love is the day I leave."

That won't be anytime soon. Akuffo has set her sights on Beijing and is working harder than ever to fulfill her dream. "I want to go to the Olympics as the best in Canada." ■

**"The day I cannot give anything more of myself to the sport I love is the day I leave."**



..... A biologist sees a pandemic.  
..... A dietitian sees an excellent source of protein.  
..... A philosopher sees what may have come before the egg.

**QUESTION EVERY ANGLE. STUDY EVERY ANGLE. RESEARCH EVERY ANGLE. WELCOME TO THE INTERDISCIPLINARY UNIVERSITY.** A WORLD WITHOUT BORDERS NEEDS AN EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS. AT YORK, WE BREAK DOWN TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES AND BRING TOGETHER THINKERS FROM EVERY DISCIPLINE TO TACKLE REAL-WORLD ISSUES. WE DON'T JUST SEE THINGS IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT, WE SEE THE LIGHT IN ITS ENTIRE SPECTRUM. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE INTERDISCIPLINARY UNIVERSITY, VISIT [YORKU.CA](http://YORKU.CA).

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And for York's, they had a ball

# For Art's Sake



**C**OMEDIAN RICK MERCER and news anchor Sandie Rinaldo were there. Sir Mick Jagger's glamorous Brazilian ex-girlfriend was there. And a lot of very grateful York University people were there too. For 40 years, the Brazilian Carnival Ball has presented Toronto's social and corporate leaders with an engaging mix of exotic entertainment, fine food and high purpose. This year that purpose was to benefit York's Accolade Project, to the tune (or rather, samba beat) of \$2 million. The money will help pay for the two newly opened Accolade buildings, which include superb new facilities for York's Faculty of Fine Arts, and support fine arts students.

Dressed well beyond the nines, the 1,600 guests watched dozens of high-energy Brazilian dancers, some in huge flamboyant costumes and others in not much at all, take the stage while 6-foot-tall Queen of the Ball Luciana Gimenez, a TV personality and mother of seven-year-old Lukas Jagger, hosted the event for Brazilian television. Organized since its inception by Brazil-born Torontonian Anna Maria de Souza, the ball has raised \$42 million for charities in Canada and Brazil. York was also a beneficiary in 1998, when the proceeds went to the LaMarsh Centre for Research on Violence & Conflict Resolution.

Lawyer and alumnus Max Gotlieb (BA '72, LLB '75, LLM '97), a York University Foundation board member, co-chaired this year's ball with his wife Heather. "York has given me much, and this was an opportunity to contribute back," Gotlieb told the guests. "It's a great school." From an evening's fun, York is much the richer. ■

**FANCY DRESSES:** Carnival dancers; Anna Maria de Souza and husband Ivan (top inset); Gimenez (middle); Max and Heather Gotlieb (bottom)



**W**ILLIAM BOYLE ADMITS he doesn't sleep much. For one thing, the founding CEO of Harbourfront Centre has to keep track of 4,000 arts and cultural events the Toronto waterfront jewel hosts each year. For another, he's in a state of perpetual "creative excitement" over new activities he and his 250 staff dream up to add to such renowned events as the largest contemporary international theatre festival in North America and the world's most recognized literary festival. And then, of course, there are surprises, like the time Boyle had to tell a conservative bank the dance series it was sponsoring included a surprise half-hour segment performed totally in the nude.

But what really keeps slumber at bay for Boyle – a trim-for-speed figure with a joyous outlook on life – is cold cash. "Where are we going to find the money to keep this thing going?" Boyle asks himself each night. No wonder. Federal funding for Harbourfront's current \$24 million budget has dropped to 24 per cent from 80 per cent in the good old days. So Boyle, who graduated from York with a BA in English in 1969 and an MA in English literature in 1971, scrambles for funds – in the most unusual places.

Docking your boat or parking your car on site? Eating somosas or buying Canadian crafts? There's a cost to all that, and it goes to support – among numerous other events – dance and concert series, craft classes, children's festivals, gallery exhibitions, an urban studies school for 45,000 students, the largest children's summer camps program in Toronto (4,200 kids), a music garden conceived by cellist Yo Yo Ma, and other gardens involving more than 100 artists. "And we keep recreating it every week," says Boyle.

In fact, Harbourfront's integrated funding model – a 10-acre waterfront site supporting the arts – is so distinctive that Boyle consults constantly with arts organizations and governments around the world who want to duplicate the magic. "Our primary goal is to deliver high-quality cultural and educational programs to the public," says Boyle. Seventy per cent are free. "It's a really great way to get mass public involvement in culture."

And it's a runaway success. Harbourfront attracts 12 million visitors a year, with the average visitor coming back five times a year, making it Toronto's top tourist destination. In surveys, "we can't even find a quotient of negativity," says Boyle,

whose devotion to the arts has seen him named, not only as a Member of the Order of Canada, but by Denmark as a Knight of the Order of Dannebrog for Harbourfront's "SuperDanish" extravaganza of events.

Boyle likens running Harbourfront to what he most liked about university. "Every day I encounter things where I have no idea what I'm doing. I have to fly by the seat of my pants. I'm learning still." In fact, Boyle credits York's broad-based humanities program for preparing him for his "calling" – he doesn't consider it work. "It seems to me in a lot of ways that's exactly what's reflected at Harbourfront Centre. It's not a rarified arts thing. It's literature to culinary pursuits to dance theatre to music. It's the broadest definition of culture, similar to the original humanities vision of York," says Boyle. "It creates an understanding about international cultures – which is so important now."

That emphasis on humanities was what first attracted Boyle to York, despite being accepted at some of the best universities in the US. There was something about the emerging York of the mid-'60s that turned him on. "It was this brand new thing being built and it was really exciting," says Boyle, who now has his own history of building new things, first as founding executive director of Visual Arts Ontario, then as the founding director of The Power Plant gallery, and then as the founding chief executive officer of Harbourfront Centre, when it was spun off from Harbourfront Corporation in 1991.

He now credits his impressive career to one piece of advice he received from a dean at York. On the eve of starting law at Osgoode, he remembers, he had a "major crisis": he really wanted to study English literature, but couldn't see a job coming out of it. A job isn't what university is about, the dean advised. "It is about expanding your mind, training your mind, building your curiosity," Boyle remembers being told.

And that is what his current job is about. Each new performance or exhibit astonishes him. "It opens my mind in some different direction. I realize this is why I do what I do. It's why most of us are here working. We actually believe in the things we're putting on stages that are opening people's minds to new ideas, different perspectives," he says. "It was the best advice I ever had in my life," adds Boyle. "I probably never would have ended up where I am now if I hadn't taken his advice."

But maybe he'd be sleeping at night. ■

# On the Edge

Harbourfront Centre's ebullient CEO, William Boyle, credits advice he got at York for how his life turned out.

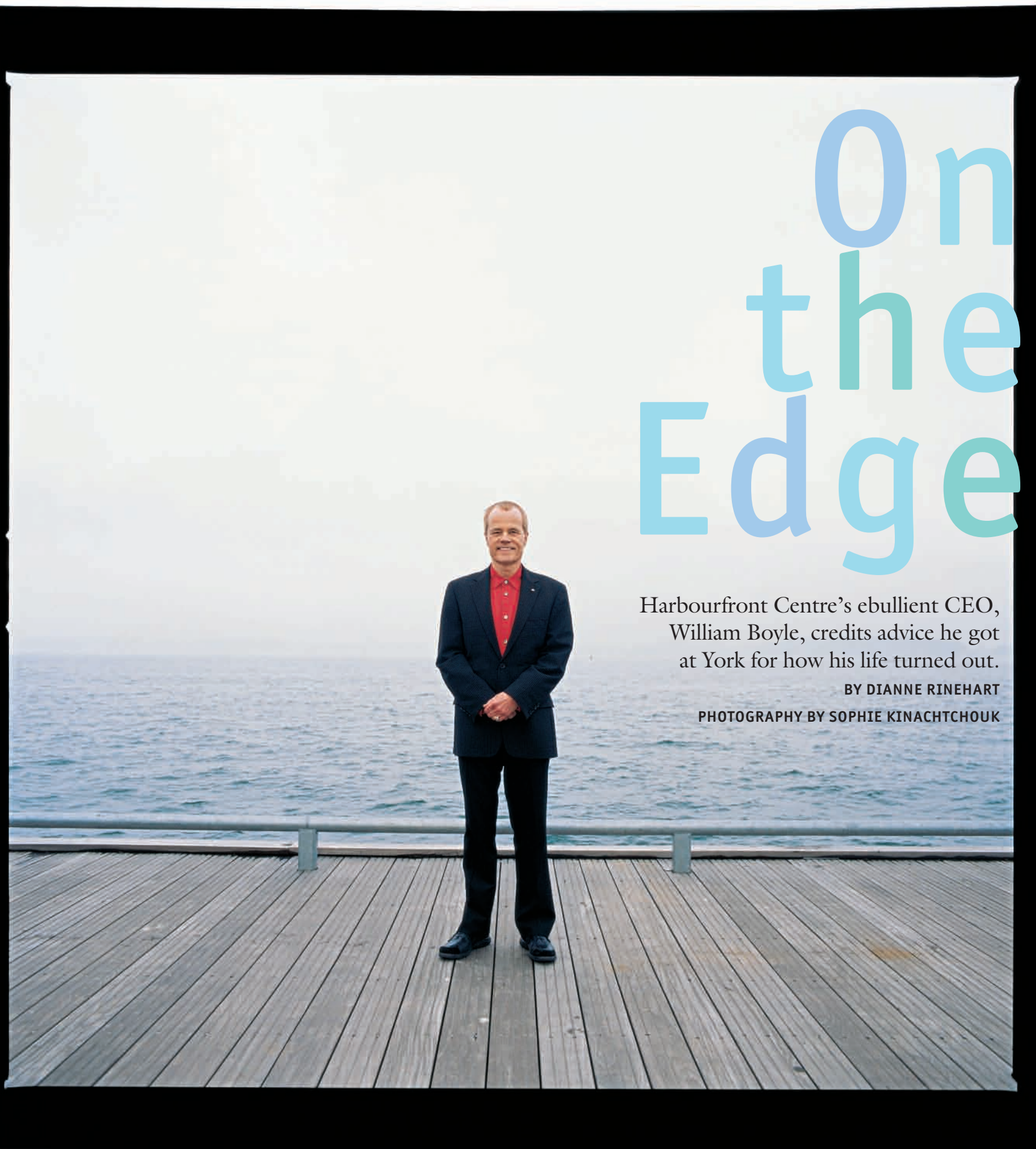
BY DIANNE RINEHART

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

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# Behind the



As a TV news producer, Andrea Owen lives an adrenalin-pumped life. BY SHELDON GORDON

# SCREENS

**F**OR VANCOUVER-BORN Andrea Owen, public service is more than just a noble calling – it’s a family tradition. Her grandfather, Walter Owen, was lieutenant-governor of British Columbia from 1973 to 1978 and her father, Philip Owen, was mayor of Vancouver from 1993 to 2002. The York alumna has followed that tradition, but outside of Canada – and outside of politics. She has made her mark as an ABC TV news impresario, working off-camera with such network luminaries as Sam Donaldson, Cokie Roberts and the late Peter Jennings. “I grew up with politics,” says Owen. “I wanted to try something new, but something important. I consider journalism to be part of public service, because it informs people of what’s going on in their world.”

That’s what Owen has been helping ABC News do for 16 years, the past five as a producer in its Washington bureau. Owen says she got a solid grounding for her broadcast career at York, where she earned a BA in political science in 1988. “My courses on 20th-century international relations and Russian politics are still beneficial,” she says. “They especially helped me when I was overseas.”

It was overseas that Owen learned the broadcast ropes. She went to London in April 1990 to visit her older brother and do an internship with the ABC News bureau there to gain her broadcast-journalism diploma from the BC Institute of Technology. “I expected to stay four weeks, and instead stayed six years,” she says. London is the network’s key foreign bureau, coordinating the flow of news from posts in Europe, Africa and the Middle East to New York. In a whirlwind 16 months, the then-23-year-old Canadian

rose from an unpaid intern to researcher to desk assistant to assignment editor.

Soon after her arrival, she helped Peter Jennings, ABC’s anchor and a fellow Canadian, originate his evening newscast from London during a G-7 summit. “He was so involved in every aspect of the story,” she recalls. “He was such an amazing journalist. He had a standard that he never compromised. I was lucky that I got to work with him.” Jennings, who died of lung cancer in August 2005, is “dearly missed” at ABC, she says.

The learning curve on the assignment desk was unrelenting, she recalls. “There’s a lot to learn every day in a coverage area that vast. The desk is the frontline in getting news people and their equipment out the door to the scene of breaking news as fast as possible. There was lots of bureaucracy, and there were logistical challenges on almost every story.”

Owen was on hand in ABC’s Moscow bureau in October 1993 when then-president Boris Yeltsin triggered a 10-day constitutional crisis. “I was on the assignment desk in the early morning hours when the mass uprising erupted in the city,” she says. The crisis produced the worst armed conflict in Moscow since the Bolshevik Revolution. “For the next 20 hours, I was trying not only to do my job but to get our people who lived in Moscow to safety inside the bureau. I really grew up on that story.” She also recalls being sandwiched between two buses at a stoplight as she arrived in Tel Aviv, the day after a deadly bus bomb had exploded at the same intersection. “I just held my breath, and stared at the candles that had been lit at the street corner in memory of the victims.”

Having spent most of her 20s in London, Owen transferred to ABC’s

Washington bureau later in 1996 in order to be closer to her family. After a stint as operations producer for the Sunday morning telecast “This Week with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts”, she produced the first regularly-scheduled webcast, a live daily program with Donaldson on the ABCNews.com site. Now, she works primarily as a producer for “World News Tonight”.

Since joining the Washington bureau, Owen has added US citizenship to her Canadian nationality, and become thoroughly immersed in US politics. She also found time, three years ago, to wed Richard Ehrenberg, an ABC technical director.

The same year, she also made the acquaintance of Karl Rove, the chief strategist for President George W. Bush. When a then-unidentified US official outed Valerie Plame as a CIA officer, Owen and a cameraman staked out Rove’s home. “Did you have any knowledge or did you leak the name of the CIA agent to the press?” Owen asked Rove in his driveway. “No,” he replied, then got in his car and drove away. It was only a 10-second interview, but Owen was for a time the toast of the Beltway’s bloggers. “It was the first on-camera response by him, and one of the few things he’d said publicly about the affair,” says Owen. “But I wouldn’t say it was a journalistic coup,” she adds with a smile.

While she enjoys such adrenalin-pumping moments, Owen says she would eventually like to produce television at a less frenetic pace. She would also like to spend more time with her parents and do more downhill skiing. Might that suggest a return to Canada? “Absolutely. Canada is a great place. When you leave, you always want to go back.” ■



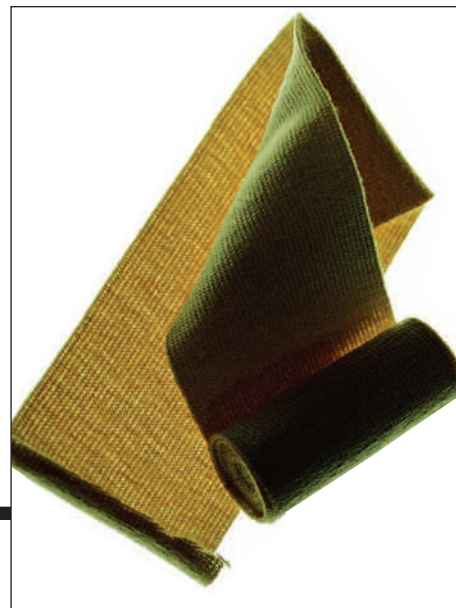


From nursing to psychology, the expertise in York's new Faculty of Health will put the wellness of the nation under a powerful microscope.

BY DAVID FULLER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

# Healthy and Wise



**N**EW FLASH: Stroke victims, heart patients and people suffering pain after surgery are just a few of the many Canadians who are benefiting from the efforts of York researchers. University scientists are working to help such patients regain use of their muscles, survive heart attacks and recover from operations quickly and more comfortably. But wait a minute – how can this be happening at York, which has no medical school?

You'd be forgiven for that query, since some of the best health scientists in the country have been working in relative obscurity as members of three different faculties. That all changed this summer, however, with the creation of the first new Faculty at York in 34 years: the Faculty of Health, which came into being officially on Canada Day 2006.

The new academic home for York's health researchers brings together four academic streams: health policy & management (from the Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies), nursing (from Atkinson), kinesiology & health science (from Science & Engineering and Arts), and psychology (from Arts and Atkinson). Psychologist Harvey Skinner, former Chair of the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Toronto, has joined York as founding dean to continue the job of pulling it all together in a new, highly interdisciplinary environment.

The reasons for the change are relatively simple, even if creating a new Faculty won't be, says Sheila Embleton, York's vice-president academic, who shepherded the new entity into being in response to longstanding interest from both working academics and the health community. It's all about raising profile with government, funding agencies, donors, the public and the York community itself. "So often we find that people just don't know that there's any health research or teaching at York," says Embleton. "It was all buried in various other places. That's not a comment about the

research or the teaching; it's all great and it just deserves to be more visible."

Gill Wu, dean of the Faculty of Science & Engineering when the new Faculty was being created, says it was "the right thing at the right time". A major rethinking of Canada's health infrastructure is underway, and York's reputation for interdisciplinary research makes its Faculty of Health a natural centre for helping transform the system from a strictly biomedical model to a wellness model aimed at reducing the cost of health care through prevention and smarter use of resources. "It's about team approaches and team management to both well and unwell patients," says Embleton. Adds Atkinson Dean Rhonda Lenton, "This was York's opportunity to define how postsecondary education in the area of health could be done differently."

Doug Crawford, Canada Research Chair in Visual-Motor Neuroscience based in the Psychology Department, says the new Faculty will provide a key focus for York's interdisciplinary research. His work on eye-hand coordination at York's Centre for Vision Research, which includes computer scientists, psychologists and kinesiologists, will help astronauts, people with disabilities and everyone in between. Crawford has seen an impact on funding agencies already. "When we met with a panel from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, it was very clear that they understood the direction that York is moving in by creating a Faculty of Health and expressed an interest in whether we would mount a neuroscience program."

Crawford hopes to win approval for a \$25-million brain research facility that would be the largest health project ever at York. Since 1999, York has won a total of just over \$15 million from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the field's main funding body in Canada. Now the University sees strong prospects for attracting new funding, new researchers and, ultimately, new graduate and undergraduate students looking for careers in health. Already, the

York University Foundation has received new gifts and matching funds totalling \$800,000 to support students in the nascent Faculty.

It will be a dynamic enterprise. Long a champion of improving the health of all Canadians, York's first dean of health hopes the new Faculty will tackle issues such as disparities in health status among Canadians, especially in low income and Aboriginal populations, as well as outreach programs aimed at sustaining the health-care system by developing integrative approaches. And, he says, York is the perfect place to do it. "There's a lot of interest among the hospitals, primary care and community health settings in the 905 region," Skinner notes, "and there's a real opportunity to design good systems" that can overcome what he calls the "tyranny of the urgent". "Health promotion is not on [Prime Minister] Stephen Harper's agenda, waiting lists are," he says. "There's enormous pressure on governments, and the trouble with prevention is that there are no quick fixes."

Not every health researcher at York is changing homes. The Faculty of Science & Engineering still has prominent researchers in chemistry and biology working in such areas as cancer drugs, muscle proteins and genetics. And the Faculty of Health will continue to seek out partnerships with colleagues from other units, such as York mathematicians who are looking at the spread of diseases like SARS and West Nile virus. There are also health law experts at Osgoode Hall Law School, industry analysts from the Schulich School of Business and health specialists in other faculties ready to collaborate.

There's still a lot of work to do. Faculties aren't created overnight but Skinner says he's looking forward to the challenge. "I love building, transforming, creating," he says. "York has shown a lot of courage in creating a new Faculty. This is a great opportunity to have an impact on improving health, locally and globally." ■



Haideh Moghissi explores how life – and attitudes – can change for Muslim émigrés like herself.

BY DAVID FULLER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

**I**T'S EASY TO UNDERSTAND why “political sociologist” Haideh Moghissi is passionate about her current research. She is examining the diaspora experience of immigrants from Muslim-majority countries, a five-year project that she and two York colleagues will complete later this year. Moghissi lived the experience herself, fleeing Iran in 1984 with her husband and two sons to come to Canada and, eventually, York’s Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies.

In 1978, as a founder of Iran’s National Union of Women, Moghissi, along with most Iranian intellectuals, was involved in the struggle against Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi’s heavy-handed modernizing of the country without real democratic reform. When hard-line Islamists co-opted what she calls “our revolution” and brought Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini back from exile early in 1979, Moghissi and her friends realized things had gone very wrong for their vision of the country’s future. “We knew within three months,” she says with a note of disappointment still evident in her voice, “but it was our country and we wanted to change things. We didn’t want to leave.”

Four years after the revolution, Moghissi and her husband – Saeed Rahnema, now also a York professor – secretly sold their house to raise the bribe money they needed to obtain passports and a way out of the turmoil. An onslaught against dissident intellectuals that intensified during the Iran-Iraq war, and the approach of military service for their eldest son, prompted the final decision to go. After stops in Austria and France, the family settled a year later in Kingston, Ont., which Moghissi had visited once before when her husband was a graduate student at Queen’s University. The former head of the Old Manuscripts Division in Iran’s National Archives, Moghissi still entered Queen’s graduate school with some trepidation – it was more than 20 years since, as the daughter of a judge, she had completed her undergraduate law degree at Tehran University. After receiving her MA and PhD, she began her teaching career at Queen’s, then came to York in 1994 as a professor of sociology.

The Diaspora, Islam and Gender Project began in 2001. With funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Moghissi and her colleagues have collaborated with researchers in Canada, Jerusalem, Iran, Britain and France to explore how the hostility that immigrants experience in new countries can strengthen their attachment to

their homelands. “In many cases,” says Moghissi, “discrimination, overt and covert racism, and exclusionary practices force Muslim immigrants to become more conservative and religious than they ever were in their original countries.”

Protests earlier this year over anti-Muslim cartoons in a Danish newspaper are a case in point. Moghissi joined 10 other academics and activists of Muslim cultural backgrounds in signing a public letter urging Canadians not to be intimidated by Islamic extremists over the issue. “I don’t like either the politics of silence or the politics of niceness on issues like this,” she says. Not that she didn’t empathize with the protesters. “The reactions to the cartoons, disproportionate as they were, reflected deep-seated grievances against virulent racism and rage against the aggressive, unbalanced policies of Western powers in the Middle East,” Moghissi says. But she thinks Muslims fell into the trap and did what the extremist provocateurs wanted them to do.

Western reaction to the incident highlighted another concern for Moghissi: “the historical blindness that reduces the identity of people from predominantly Muslim societies to just religion and does not see our profound differences.” A disappointing example was the Ontario government’s attempt in 2004 to endorse the use of Sharia law in arbitration. That ill-fated initiative, with all its attendant difficulties for women’s rights, still leaves Moghissi shaking her head in disbelief. “It is a colonial mentality,” she says. “The government talked to the men with beards, the self-appointed ‘community leaders’ who do not represent the majority of Muslims in this country.” Politicians, the media and some academics, she says, still can’t liberate themselves from the perception that all people who come from Muslim-majority countries are a homogenous, conservative crowd with one voice. “This is pure racism.”

If it sounds like Moghissi has maintained her activism over the years, she has – but at a price. “Even now, I don’t feel safe,” she says, alluding to right-wing criticism of her three books and numerous articles on women and Islam. As she embarks on a new, Ford Foundation-funded project with Rahnema, a political scientist, to study immigration and resettlement policies and the experience of Muslims in the West, Moghissi feels hopeful that younger voices are now pushing for justice and democratic rights in her home country. “It’s time,” she says. But it’s hard to imagine a time when Haideh Moghissi will ever give up speaking her mind. ■

# VOICES OF A DIASPORA





Two Yorkies are determined to show the country how to create a sustainable 'national urban park'.

BY MICHAEL TODD ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON

# THE DOWNSVIEW VISION



MEN WITH A MISSION: Genco (left) and Bell

**F**ROM THE ALLEN ROAD, Sheppard Avenue or Keele Street, 231-hectare Downsview Park looks much like what it was just over a decade ago – Toronto's armed forces base. A Day-Glo porta sign proclaims soccer leagues at "The Hangar", a reference to the park's former RCAF/CFB history. And bordering the park – on a remaining slice of Department of National Defence property – an army tank and Second World War vintage landing craft quietly guard the street.

Since being decommissioned in 1994, Downsview Park has served as centre stage for such mega events as Pope John Paul II's visit to Canada in 2002 for World Youth Day, and the 2003 SARS benefit concert featuring the Rolling Stones. Most of the site is pancake flat (the exception is the Keele Street side), making it ideal for landing planes, but not much in the landscape department. So the question is, will the sustainable national urban park that two York grads – Tony Genco and David Bell – envision being built just down the road from the Keele campus, ever take off?

The answer is "yes", according to Genco and Bell. Genco (BA '88) is president & CEO of Parc Downsview Park Inc., a Crown corporation set up in 1999 to run the site. Bell (BA '65) is a former dean of York's Faculty of Environmental Studies (and of Graduate Studies), an FES professor emeritus, and PDP Inc.'s board Chair. Bell is also a "green expert" and political scientist who specialized in the politics of sustainability at York.

Since PDP Inc. was incorporated, some critics have wondered exactly why the park hasn't taken off. Part of the problem, according to Genco and Bell, has been the federal government's snail pace in transferring the land so redevelopment can start. But Genco says the last hurdle should be crossed by December 2006 when the transfer will be complete and borrowing authority approved.

Downsview Park touts itself as "a unique urban recreational greenspace, developed according to the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability." As the first national urban park of its type in Canada, it will be *constructed*, rather than preserve a set of existing natural features. In fact, some of that reconstruction has already begun. This summer, bulldozers and graders were doing their bit to prepare parts of the southwest corner of the park (near Keele Street) for the ongoing 12-hectare urban woodland project, the Canada Forest. In the fall of 2005, 16,000 trees were planted there, and 12,000 more are slated to go into the area now being prepared.

Indeed, looking at the site plan for the park, one is impressed by its vision for a mix of at least 25 per cent forest plus wildflower gardens, an orchard, ponds and a tree nursery.

Bell first became involved with the park while FES dean at York. "An architect friend – Rocco Maragna – who was also interested in the project co-authored a letter with me to then prime minister Chrétien highlighting the opportunity to make Downsview Park a showcase for 21st-century sustainability," says Bell, who was later appointed to the founding board.

For Genco, who grew up in the neighbourhood, "CFB Downsview was a mystery of my adolescence," he says. "It was a place I avoided but found again when I was working for the then local MP, Art Eggleton. I was fascinated by the opportunity to be a part of the park and asked to join the team in '99."

Both Genco and Bell seem drawn to the park's unconventional nature. For instance, unlike most parks, Downsview is expected to pay its own way. Says Bell: "We've got a quadruple bottom line. We have to increase value along four dimensions: social, environmental, economic and cultural. So making money is a means to an end, not an end in itself." To that extent, PDP Inc. currently operates the Downsview Park Film Studios in a 900,000-square-foot former military supply building, renting space to a wide variety of film companies. The same building also houses a weekly merchant's market (response has been so good you can barely find a parking spot, notes Genco), there's a compost manufacturing plant (using worms to make compost from food waste), The Hangar (a sports complex with four indoor soccer fields), a Toronto and Region Conservation Authority office (as tenant), an aviation museum, a butterfly garden, initiatives with local schools, and more.

Ultimately, though, the park's vision is bigger than being self-financing, says Genco. Instead it's about creating a sustainable community that demonstrates the interdependence of social, ecological and economic well-being. "Sustainability isn't something we see as a frill that we'll include where possible," says Bell. "It's the way we approach everything we do to ensure our decisions generate the most value to our shareholders – the Canadian public."

In fact, Downsview is out to redefine just what a park is. "We're actually changing the definition of 'park' in the 21st century," says Bell. "We're introducing the notion that a park is not a refuge, but a place that is part of one's lifestyle. Downsview Park will become a place where people can work – and play." ■





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# YORK PEOPLE



**Alice Panikian**  
Miss Universe Canada

## Showing Attitude

**AFTER A CANADIAN WON** last year, 6-foot-1 Alice Panikian knew the odds of her becoming Miss Universe at July's pageant in Los Angeles were about as tall as she is – no country has ever won the title two years running. That didn't stop the reigning Miss Universe Canada from preparing by brushing up on her skills at public speaking and, surprisingly for a professional model, at walking down a runway. "It's more about glamour and not about the clothes," explained the 22-year-old York English major, who's looking for a career in television. "You have to have attitude, be sexy – but not too sexy."

A native Bulgarian who came to Canada at age 5, Panikian has been adopted by Armenians everywhere as one of their own. "It's mostly because of my name," she explains. "I'm one quarter Armenian but they are still filled with pride and so supportive." On the feminist view of her participation in the global TV spectacle (where she made the top 10), Panikian says firmly, "In my eyes, feminism is about the freedom to make choices that work for me and my career, and that's what I'm doing." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON  
GROOMING BY DAVID GOVEIA, ARTISTS GROUP  
STYLING BY SARAH JAY, PLUTINO GROUP



**Jeff Churchill**

Footwear costumer

# Shoes for Hobbits

AFTER RUNNING AWAY to join the circus, Jeff Churchill came home – to Middle Earth. A York theatre graduate (BFA '05) who specializes in costume footwear design, Churchill toured with Cirque du Soleil for two years while completing his degree online and spent another year working on productions in Tokyo, Belgium and Las Vegas. He returned to Toronto in May 2005, slept for two weeks, and began looking for studio space where he could get back to the creative work he loves – making shoes for actors.

No sooner had he found a place than the phone call came summoning him to his toughest challenge yet – designing 200 pieces of costume footwear for Toronto's world-premiere stage production of *The Lord of the Rings*, now headed to London after a five-month Toronto run. The shoes for the visually stunning show – which won a Dora Mavor Moore award for its costumes – are more than another exercise in period design, says Churchill. "The big thing about the footwear," he says, "is the height alteration that's needed – you have some people who are hobbits and others who are not." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KIRK

**Jeff Johnson**

Football player

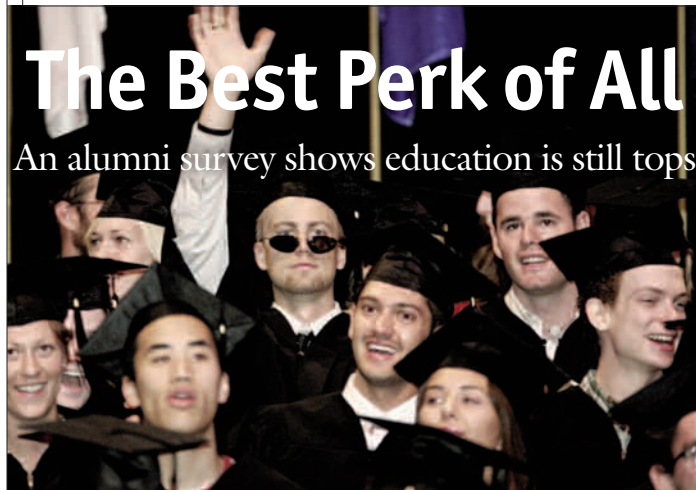
# The Run of his Life

IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR, more than 40,000 fans gasped, then roared as an unfamiliar Argonaut dodged the Hamilton Tiger-Cats' defence and scored the first of two touchdowns – effectively clinching the Canadian Football League's east division top spot for Toronto. That streak of lightning was Jeff Johnson, York Lions tailback from 1995 to 1999, Ti-Cat for two seasons, Argo running back for five. For reasons former York coach Tom Arnott will never fathom, the CFL had let this dazzling five-foot-nine, 212-pound player – the Lions' first all-Canadian athlete – languish on the sidelines until his spectacular late-season performance subbing for an injured American import. After that, sports reporters bet on a brighter future for Johnson. This is indeed a season of new beginnings for the 29-year-old personal trainer with a York BA in kinesiology. He's been promoted to the starting offence as fullback and receiver – and just married his girlfriend of two years. "I feel great," he says. "I still strive to do my best. And I'm having fun. That's what life's all about." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON



## News:



### The Best Perk of All An alumni survey shows education is still tops

**O**NCE YORK students get the education bug, they just can't stop – even after graduation, according to a recent survey of York alumni. Last spring, while students were busy studying for exams, the Alumni Office was hard at work on its own research project – an in-depth poll to find out what alumni want out of their University – and now the results are in.

“One of our main goals was to really understand what York grads want from their Alumni Office so that we can tailor our programs and activities to suit their needs. And our grads have told us that they want us to focus on what York does best: education and research,” says James Allan, director, alumni.

Sixty-eight per cent of the survey respondents said that continuing education for pro-

fessional skills or academic interests was valuable, and 48 per cent felt that speaker sessions and intellectual events were valuable programs.

The findings also demonstrate that affinity programs are important to alumni. Fifty-three per cent of those surveyed said that the perks and discounts offered through the Alumni Office were valuable.

“Learning that alumni are interested in our perks program was very useful,” said Allan. “It means that we're on the right track. But we also learned that some alumni would like to see a wider variety of options and others don't know much about the perks available to them. So we need to do a better job of building and promoting the program.”

York's affinity programs include special group rates on

services such as investment advice, home and auto insurance and car rentals, and discounted prices on tickets to entertainment and sports events. Each time an alumna or alumnus makes a purchase from one of the affinity partners, the University receives a financial contribution that it can apply to alumni programs, student scholarships and other student services.

The survey also demonstrated that alumni are very interested in providing feedback about their relationship with the University. “Alumni were eager to tell us their opinions,” says Sean Donaldson, manager, alumni research and analytics. “With so many surveys and telemarketers out there, it was exciting to see our alumni community so interested in talking with us.”

The 20-minute national telephone survey included 45 key questions that asked alumni for their opinions on a range of subjects including how much they value alumni programs and services, which alumni initiatives they are interested in most, and how they would like the Alumni Office to communicate with them.

The Alumni Office surveyed nearly 1,000 alumni between March 20 and 28, 2006. The respondents were drawn from undergraduate

alumni for whom York had a valid telephone number – all told, about 80,000 graduates.

York's total alumni number more than 190,000; about 55 per cent are female, and half are under 37.

You can read more about the alumni research project – and give your feedback – at [www.yorku.ca/alumni](http://www.yorku.ca/alumni). ■

### What Alumni Value

**CONTINUING EDUCATION**  
68%

**DISCOUNTS ON PRODUCTS/SERVICES**  
53%

**SPEAKERS SERIES & INTELLECTUAL EVENTS**  
48%

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM YORK**  
42%

**NETWORKING & CAREER EVENTS**  
39%

**STUDENT MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**  
38%

**ONLINE ALUMNI DIRECTORY & COMMUNITY**  
36%

SOURCE: YORK ALUMNI SURVEY 2006

## Hitting 40

Glendon and Schulich hold events to celebrate their anniversaries

**T**HEY SAY THAT life begins at 40, and there's no better example than this year's 40th anniversary for two of York's faculties: Glendon College and the Schulich School of Business.

Glendon College – which was York's main campus from 1961 to 1965 – is celebrating the anniversary of its formal opening in 1966 by Escott Reid, the former diplomat and first principal of Glendon. Schulich, which began life in 1966 as the Faculty of Administrative Studies and was renamed after receiving the generous support of Seymour Schulich, is celebrating by reuniting four decades of leaders at its annual alumni forum, Connect 2006.

### Rendez-vous at Glendon

**GLENDON COLLEGE** will mark 40 years on Sunday, Oct. 1, with Rendez-vous 2006, a day of celebratory events at the Glendon campus for alumni and their families. “Rendez-vous 2006 will be a great way for alumni to share the past and to celebrate the future. With strong enrolments, outstanding new faculty, the renovation of Glendon Hall, and most recently, the announcement of the new Graduate School of Public Affairs at Glendon, it's clear that Glendon College will continue to offer students an exceptional university experience,” says David Trick (BA '77), Chair of the Rendez-vous 2006 committee.

The Oct. 1 celebration at Glendon will include an outdoor family picnic, an alumni speakers series with panels on national and international issues, and a closing reception. Events are also planned for alumni chapters in Montreal,

Ottawa and Vancouver.

See the Rendez-vous 2006 Web site at [www.glendon.yorku.ca/rendezvous](http://www.glendon.yorku.ca/rendezvous).

### Connecting at Schulich

**FOR PAUL ALOFS** (MBA '83), being a speaker at Schulich's

annual alumni forum, Connect 2006, is more than just a way to contribute to his alma mater. “It's a way to reconnect with the school, but it's also a tremendous learning opportunity,” says Alofs, president and CEO of the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation, who has attended several Schulich conferences since graduating. “With the breadth of people and talent in the alumni community, I know that I'll end up knowing more by the end of the day than when I walked in the door.”

Hosted by the Schulich Toronto/GTA Alumni Association, the forum takes place on Saturday, Sept. 30, in the Seymour Schulich Building, under the theme “Reuniting Four Decades of Schulich Leaders.” For the forum sessions, the alumni committee has booked accomplished grads along with other leaders from academe and the corporate world. The speakers list includes Mark Lievonen

(MBA '87), president of Sanofi Pasteur; Mary Jo Haddad, CEO of The Hospital for Sick Children; Dennis Fotinos (EMBA '04), president and CEO, Enwave Energy Corp.; and Rob Guenette, president, TAXI Advertising & Design.

Other activities include the Alumni Chocolate Café, which promises an intimate setting for alumni to catch up with old friends and develop new contacts, plus an art tour led by Judy Schulich and tours of the three-year-old Schulich building. Alumni are also invited to attend the Dean's Dinner at The University Club of Toronto on Sept. 29.

Schulich's other 40th anniversary celebration plans include the Schulich Lecture Series with several world renowned speakers, and a new book that covers the school's evolution.

See the Connect 2006 Web site at [www.schulich.yorku.ca/connect2006](http://www.schulich.yorku.ca/connect2006). ■



**COLLEGIAL:** Prime Minister Lester Pearson at Glendon opening, Sept. 30, 1966; Reid sits second from right

YORK UNIVERSITY, CLARA THOMAS ARCHIVES, ASC IMAGE 1348



## Class Notes:

1967

**Bresnahan, Paul** (BA Glendon) had his first book published Nov. 2005, *Everything You Need To Know About Sex In Order To Get To Heaven*. Paul, who was raised by a gay uncle and has two gay sons, wants society to accept the GLBT community for who they are.

1972

**Dranoff, Linda Silver** (LLB) received the Law Society Medal from the Law Society of Upper Canada in May 2006.

1974

**Fenn, W. Michael** (BA '70 Glendon, BA Hons. Atkinson) is CEO of Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network in Oakville, Ont. Previously, he served as Ontario's deputy minister of municipal affairs & housing, and then of community safety.

**Freeman, Shelley** (BA Vanier) has been an artist and psychogeriatric social worker in Montreal since 1980. Her most recent art exhibition opened in Toronto at G+ Galleries in early Sept. 2006.

1975

**Saperia, Michael J.** (BA Founders) was managing editor for Coles Publishing Co., then founded PetPharm, Canada's first discount online pet pharmacy. In Jan. 2006, he published a collection of short stories, *Significant Others*.

1980

**James, Gary** (BA Stong) is director of marketing & business development at Conquest Seismic Services, offering services to the oil & gas exploration industry.

1981

**Walker, Helen S.** (née Schaefer) (BFA Spec. Hons. Stong) has taught dance in Grande Prairie, Alta., for more than 10 years.

1982

**Di Giacomo, James** (MA) completed an MBA at Concordia University in Montreal and has spent 20 years specializing in finance for the natural

resources sector. He is now a director in corporate finance for BMO.

1983

**Balcombe, Jonathan** (BSc Spec. Hons. Bethune) is the author of *Pleasurable Kingdom: Animals and the Nature of Feeling Good*, a 2006 book supporting the argument that animals have emotions and pleasure.

**Bonner, W. Allan** (MA) runs Toronto-based Communications Management Inc., coaching clients around the world on crisis management and media relations.

**Cauchon, Barry** (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) is a Mississauga-based senior project manager involved in high-profile permanent exhibits, touring exhibits, museums, corporate events and retail interiors in Canada, the US and Europe.

**Sparks, Bruce** (BA Hons. Founders) completed his BEd at Trent University and now teaches at the primary level, with an emphasis on special needs.

1984

**De Castro, Mercedes Suzanne** (BA Spec. Hons. Winters) is associate producer for the Alliance Atlantis show "Just One Bite", which premiered on the Food Network April 2006. She also appeared in *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* (2005) with 50 Cent and Terrence Howard.

**Sapinski, Mark** (BFA Spec. Hons. Bethune) is a language educator in Toronto.

1986

**Bazios, Jim** (BA Vanier) graduated in architectural technology from Ryerson and has worked on buildings in Toronto, the US and Europe. He now works at Queen's Quay Architects in Toronto.

1987

**Leggatt, Dianne I.** (née Flawn) (MEd) retired as a school principal in 1999 and volunteers with the Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces Foundation in Toronto.

**Salerno, Robert** (BA Stong) runs an IT consultancy providing services to

1974

*Trespass* by Shelley Freeman



companies around the globe. Rob married York alumna **Anna Palmieri** (BA Hons. '87) in 1990 and they have two sons.

1990

**De Rose, Maria T.** (née Travaglini) (BA '89, BA Hons., BEd McLaughlin) teaches English, geography and visual arts at secondary level in York Region. She and husband **Michael De Rose** (BA, BEd '90 Bethune) have 11-year-old twins.

**Faulkner, Sylvia** (née McEachern) (BA Stong) moved to Ottawa in Feb. 2004, where she lives with her husband and two adopted children.

**McDonall, James S.** (BA Hons. Stong) has worked for Allstate Insurance since graduation, and recently joined Toastmasters to develop his public speaking skills.

**Ross, Karyn** (BFA Spec. Hons. '86, MFA Vanier) is project coordinator for Methods & Materials Inc., a Chicago company that installs monumental pieces of sculpture and

museum exhibits, and is a working artist.

**Sdao, Leo** (MBA) is co-president of Optimal Performance Tools Inc., which distributes business assessment tools designed to help organizations improve strategic HR processes.

1992

**DiMarco-Rhodes, Maryann K.** (née DiMarco) (BA McLaughlin) recently returned to Canada with her family after working in Britain's Education & Skills Department. She wants to pursue a role in teaching childcare while furthering her education.

**Taylor, Nadine** (née Wasilenko) (BA McLaughlin) lives in Kleinburg, Ont., in a circa 1830 log home, works for a San Francisco-based company and was married last year.

1994

**Choa, Jeffrey C.** (BBA Spec. Hons.) is president and CEO of Citibank Savings, Inc., a 36-branch network in

## Class Notes:

the Philippines acquired by Citigroup in 2005.

**Eliot, Kristin** (LLB) gained a master of law degree from the London School of Economics & Political Science in England in 2003. She is an adjunct professor at Queen's University teaching labour law and labour arbitration, and a founding partner of Eliot, Smith Law Office in Kingston, Ont., dealing in labour and human rights law.

1995

**Bridges, Lesley J.** (BA, BEd '77 Calumet, BA Hons. Bethune) is a visual artist and longtime art instructor in Orillia, Ont. After a brain injury in 1998, she couldn't read or write for a year. In 2005 her work was featured on Radio Canada's "Les Arts et les Autres", and in May 2006 she received a prestigious Ontario Arts Council grant for her exhibit in Orillia, *Phoenix Rising*.

**Moore, Karl** (PhD) was recently listed among a group of the world's greatest business thinkers by London-based *Business Strategy Review*. He is a professor of marketing strategy in McGill University's Faculty of Management and a professor of neurology & neurosurgery in McGill's Faculty of Medicine, where he teaches health management.

**Massey, Douglas** (BA Founders) spent eight years with a top Japanese paper manufacturer, and is now in charge of a major Australian forestry firm's joint-venture company in Japan.

**Patti, Krista** (née Sullivan) (BA Hons. Winters) is studying for a

graduate diploma in psychotherapy in Melbourne, Australia, where she lives with her husband and two children.

**Sutter, Chris** (BA '94, BA Hons. Glendon) finished his teaching education at Niagara University, NY, in 1997 and now works for the Toronto District School Board.

1996

**Schilling, Laura** (née Cowland) (BA, BEd Vanier) works at Westway Junior School in Toronto as a teacher-librarian.

1998

**Papoff, Sarah E.** (BEd, BA Spec. Hons. Vanier) teaches elementary grades for the Toronto District School Board.

**Steuter, Erin Christine** (PhD) is this year's recipient of the Herbert & Leota Tucker Teaching Award, one of the highest teaching awards given by Mount Allison University in Sackville, NB. A professor of sociology, Erin also received the Paul Paré Excellence Award this year.

1999

**Bacher, Carrie** (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) completed an MFA at Concordia University and a BEd at the University of Ottawa. She now lives in Montreal with her husband and daughter.

2000

**Leontidis, Dimitrios** (BSc Spec. Hons. Bethune) graduated in 2005 from the Canadian Memorial Chiro-

practic College as a doctor of chiropractic.

2001

**Dorotheo, Ruth E.** (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) is a full-time Latin and ballroom dance instructor at Seneca College, and teaches salsa and tango dance workshops at the Spanish Centre in Toronto. She was recently featured as a dance instructor on Life Network's "Rich Bride, Poor Bride".

**Grabke, Sheldon** (MBA) is director of admissions at Tyndale University College & Seminary in Toronto. He also plays violin for a variety of recording sessions and for the National Ballet of Canada Orchestra.

**Sherman, Aubrey J.** (BA Stong) gained a law degree in 2004 from the University of Windsor, where he won the Windsor Writing Prize for scholarly writing. He recently opened his own law office in Cabbagetown, Toronto.

2002

**Arkin, Harold J.** (LLM) was appointed part-time to the Consent & Capacity Board of Ontario as a lawyer member in February, and is a mediator at the Financial Services Commission of Ontario in Toronto.

**Wong, Sophie** (BEd, BA Hons. Glendon) married her spouse Raymond in the Greek tradition in Toronto on July 10, 2005, and then flew to Manila, Philippines, in August where they had a second wedding in Filipino-Chinese tradition. Sophie is a teacher with the Toronto District School Board.



2005

Alison Ellwood

2003

**Cole, Dianne** (BA Spec. Hons. Winters) is co-president of the American Academy of Religion's Eastern International Region.

**Ellerton, Angelique** (BA '83 Stong, LLB '86, LLM) lives on a golf course in Priddis, Alta., and works as counsel and investigator for the Mutual Fund Dealers Association of Canada.

2004

**Khan, Fakhr-E-Alam** (BA Atkinson) is a clinical database assistant in Georgetown, Guyana, for the Canadian Society for International Health, which is piloting an electronic health information system at the Georgetown public hospital.

2005

**Ellwood, Alison** (BA Hons. Founders) began cycling across Canada in May, collecting stories about women and communities that have been affected by breast cancer. The project, called HerStory, can be seen at [www.herstory2006.com](http://www.herstory2006.com).

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A former journalist finds an MBA a tough assignment. **BY RICHARD BLOOM**

# Into the Inferno

**T**HIS MUST BE WHAT HELL IS LIKE, I thought, as the professor began to speak. The class had something to do with linear equations, Microsoft Excel, decision trees and the ideal number of bowls and mugs that “Company X” needed to sell to realize the maximum amount of profit. “Does anybody know how to begin this type of problem?” the professor asked. My heart sank as hands shot into the air and people began to yell out answers.

One of my nightmares had come true: the one where I’m sitting in class and everybody understands what’s going on except me. But there was no waking up from this dream. Sure, before enrolling in the MBA Program at York’s Schulich

## There was second-guessing

School of Business, my previous job as a business reporter with *The Globe and Mail* had involved some math – percentages, ratios – but I was not ready for anything like this. It had been six years since I had been a full-time student and more than 10 years since I had taken any sort of math class. I have a hard enough time remembering my previous phone number, let alone formulas from a decade ago.

Yup, I was in hell. Meanwhile, I took comfort that more than 15 years earlier and thousands of miles away someone else went through an almost identical experience. This I learned from Peter Robinson’s book *Snapshots from Hell: The Making of an MBA* – the true story of a former White House speechwriter’s journey through Stanford University’s business school. Robinson describes how after “feeling utterly lost” in three different classes, then unsuccessfully trying to understand utility maximization models, he went to the campus bookstore and flipped through Dante Alighieri’s poetic classic *The Divine Comedy*. When he got to the part that described Dante standing at the gates of the inferno, Robinson had his “aha” moment. “That’s me alright...A poet in hell,” he concluded.

That’s not all Robinson and I had in common. We were both writers before deciding, at 29, that it was time to take a different career path. After years spent observing business, it was time to

become participants. Math class wasn’t the only hurdle. There was the second-guessing by family and friends of the decision to leave a steady, high-profile job only to take on a mountain of debt and a huge degree of uncertainty.

There were the bouts of failure. For example, I went into my finance mid-term exam confident but came out with a sinking feeling – there were questions I didn’t know how to start to answer, let alone fully solve. Then there were the countless group projects that required arranging six different schedules – often resulting in late night meetings



that would last until the wee hours as we argued over how best to tackle the problem. And there were the readings. Oh my: hundreds and hundreds of readings.

Still, I’ll admit it wasn’t all hellish. There was the time when one of my group presentations not only scored an A+ but also triggered a fascinating in-class debate and kudos from my professor. There was the meeting of new people from all over the world – and how I now have a network of contacts spanning a dozen countries on five continents. There was the satisfying payoff when hours of studying translated into passing my finance course (a solid B). And of course, there was the incredible sense of pride when I hit Print on the final assignment of that math-heavy course (linear equations, decision trees and all) and realized that I had made it through the fire and brimstone only mildly scathed.

Perhaps, instead of hell, a more accurate analogy would be military basic training – a rigorous set of activities that managers must complete to succeed out there in the war zone more commonly known as the real world. Then again, *Snapshots from Basic Training* doesn’t exactly roll off the tongue. The bottom line (a term I got used to saying during first year) is that while it was tumultuous and certainly torturous at times, I am certain I’m stronger on both a career and personal level because of my business school basic training.

But even the bottom line has its limits. Now that year No. 2 is underway, a friend recently asked: “Would you do first year over again if you could?” No way in hell. ■

Richard Bloom writes a regular account of his MBA adventure for *The Globe and Mail*.