

YORKU

WINTER 2014

Melting Point

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is looking for clues to
our vanishing Arctic

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Clothes Call
"Fatshionistas"

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MCKENZIE JAMES

YORKU

THE MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY



5 President's Page

6 Universe HOME BODIES...IN THE MEDIA...SMALL MINDED...GAME CHANGER...EXPERT OPINION...BIG IT UP...MAN WITH A VISION...EPIDEMIC.



14 Eye Witnesses to a Melting World

York researchers are documenting disappearing sea ice, thinner polar bears, thawing permafrost and drier wetlands.

22 Bright Lights

What makes these top students shine?

30 Novel Idea

It's taken Shyam Selvadurai 30 years and three novels, but he's finally put his Canada into words.

33 Helping Hands

10 great ways York reaches out to the local community.

35 Clothes Call

How yesterday's fashion can be today's money maker.



36 Alumni

Bryden Alumni Awards, Class Notes, Alumni News and more!

44 Giving

The Jackman family invests \$1 million in York's philosophy department.

CORRECTIONS

The Fall 2013 and October 2008 issues of YorkU magazine incorrectly refer to Roger Pulwarty (BSc '86) as a Nobel laureate. Pulwarty was a lead author of the report that earned the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change a 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Fall 2013 issue of YorkU contains an ad that incorrectly refers to Michael Tulloch (BA '86, LLB '89) as the first black judge to be appointed to an appellate court in Canada. Rather, Tulloch was the first black judge to be appointed to an appellate court in Ontario.

We have corrected these errors in the digital edition of YorkU's Fall 2013 issue, available online at digital.yorku.ca

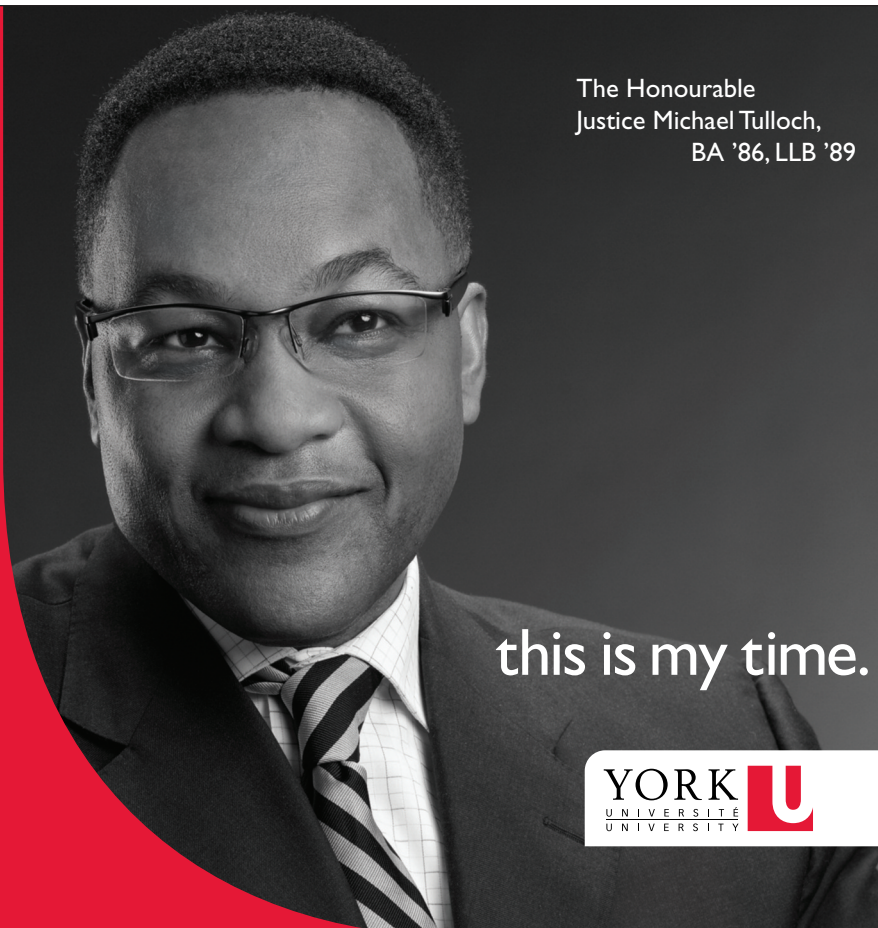
WINTER 2014

From the halls of Osgoode to Canada's halls of justice.

Michael is a Judge of the Court of Appeal for Ontario and former member of the Superior Court of Justice. He is the first black judge to be appointed to an appellate court in Ontario.

yorku.ca/mytime

The Honourable
Justice Michael Tulloch,
BA '86, LLB '89



this is my time.



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President

Canada's social innovation opportunity **BY MAMDOUH SHOUKRI**

The new year is traditionally a time for reflection and renewal, so I thought it appropriate to share my thoughts on a subject I believe is vital to both our University's and Canada's futures. "Social innovation" is a relatively recent term that refers to new strategies and solutions aimed at responding to social problems to collectively strengthen civil society. Done right, social innovation has the potential to transform products, processes, services, communities and perhaps even our very way of thinking.

Since the 1990s, innovation has been referred to as a business model, focused on leveraging knowledge and research in science, engineering and medicine to create economic value. But today, in my view, this traditional technology transfer model is not enough because it doesn't realize the tremendous value being created from research being done in the humanities, social sciences and the arts. By combining the two approaches under the umbrella of social innovation, the increased value will help to drive social and economic development – enhancing social services, public policy development and the well-being of our communities.

Social innovation has the potential to transform our thinking

Unmet social needs create economic burdens for Canada, so what is good for society is also good for the economy. This is being recognized by some of the world's largest corporations, which are fostering cultures of innovation within their operations and collaborating with research partners to address persistent social, economic and environmental challenges.

Like modern corporations, Canadian universities and colleges – as the primary producers of new knowledge and new talent for Canada's innovation systems – are also embracing a more integrated innovation model by complementing their technology transfer offices with knowledge mobilization units to incorporate the transfer of knowledge from the social sciences, humanities and arts. Connecting university research and expertise with government and community agencies will help organizations make better and more informed decisions about public policy and social services.

York's historic strength in these disciplines, and our long-standing commitment to social responsibility and community



engagement, have enabled us to be a leader in driving social innovation in Canada. Through our campus-community collaborations, we have partnered with 231 community and government organizations in York Region and the Greater Toronto Area, including the United Way York Region and the TD Community Engagement Centre. Another example is the new Connected Health and Wellness Project, a collaboration between York's Faculty of Health and 16 partners, which incorporates e-health technology and health coaching to promote healthy living. Through this project, York is developing training and professional standards for the health coach profession – we are the first Canadian university to do so.

Despite the incredible impact of social innovation, we continue to lack a national framework to unleash the true potential of research in Canada. To help address this issue, York is leading an initiative called ResearchImpact, a consortium of ten Canadian universities that have come together to create a national social innovation network. With support from government and the private sector, York and other Canadian universities can continue to be agents of change and dynamic global players – mobilizing knowledge, advancing prosperity and helping to brand our country around the world.

As York alumni, you are our ambassadors to the world. Your commitment to effecting change in your chosen fields is helping us to think bigger, broader and more globally than ever before. Given the excellence of our research and the growing strength of our partnerships, I believe that York University is ideally positioned to lead the world as a model of 21st-century innovation. Together, we are creating novel solutions for the challenges ahead. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Recently, Governor General David Johnston announced that York University President and Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri was appointed member of the Order of Canada.

Mamdouh Shoukri is York's president and vice-chancellor

Home Bodies

Why are GTA girls and young women much less physically active than their male counterparts?

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HORST HERGET

MAYBE IT'S NO SURPRISE that someone like Parissa Safai, a professor in York University's School of Kinesiology and Health Science, would be interested in addressing the barriers to physical activity for Canadian youth, particularly for young women. Safai said her parents were somewhat horrified when she announced at 15 that she was going to play rugby. "Up until that time I had been very bookish and nerdy. I still was, but rugby opened up another world for me," says Safai, who played the sport competitively for the next 16 years.

Her obsession with all things rugby had some very positive spinoffs – aside from keeping fit and having fun, she says. "It got me thinking about the world of physical activity and sport, our perceptions of it, who gets to participate (or not participate) in sport and physical activity and, most importantly, why."

Safai, who joined York as faculty in 2006, normally focuses her research on various aspects of sport at the intersection of risk, health and health care, including the "culture of risk", the development and social organization of sports medicine, as well as sport and social inequality. But she's never quite forgotten how much she enjoyed playing rugby as a young woman. Perhaps that's why a major thrust of her recent research has been focused on youth and physical activity.

Many Canadian youth are not participating in regular and meaningful physical activity. In fact, 2011 statistics show that 93 per cent of Toronto youth are not meeting the recommended daily requirements needed to derive health benefits from physical activity. Furthermore, the data show that despite major public health promotion campaigns, the situation is not improving.

In efforts to better understand this situation locally, Safai became a member of the Get Active Toronto Research Advisory Committee in 2008. She is now the lead qualitative researcher on the team and was an instrumental part of the 2012 Get Active Toronto Report on Physical Activity's focus on youth. Safai designed and analyzed research exercises with more than 140 youth (80 females, 60 males) between the ages of 11 and 14 from across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) who participated in a youth summit sponsored by the YMCA of Greater Toronto.

Some of Safai's 2012 findings from the summit show that

youth from low-income households are often less active than youth from high-income ones; neighbourhood infrastructure and aesthetics play a large role in physical activity participation; and Toronto needs to promote the development of safe public recreation spaces that are accessible to Torontonians, both young and old. Furthermore, Safai's research highlights that there is a large gap in young people's "knowing and doing" when it comes to physical activity and youth are more likely to engage in exercise if it is understood as being fun. "This latter point is a key finding, and one we often overlook," says Safai.

She points to the ways in which physical activity in schools is often organized around fitness drills or competitive sports – activities that may not necessarily be fun for all students.

The results for young women's activity levels were especially troubling. In a 2009-10 Get Active Toronto annual report, 50 per cent of girls were inactive compared to 27 per cent for boys. Drawing on summit data, Safai says the girls frequently mentioned family obligations that kept them from being more active – things like household chores and taking care of siblings for parents who both work and can't afford other child care. Girls also cited sexual stereotypes, such as the myth that boys are stronger, as being barriers to physical activity.

"The girls also cited a lack of female role models and sex-segregated physical activity opportunities," says Safai. "Sometimes co-ed activities can be intimidating for young women, and most of the female participants in the summit said they would prefer the option of accessing a girls-only physical activity class or program."

Beyond gender, a huge social barrier all the young people talked about, and one that often doesn't get much press, was money – that is, the lack of it. "Money was understood as the key determinant or factor for physical activity participation by all the youth," says Safai. "All the participants had a profound sense of 'the lack' in their lives and were easily able to name cultural and structural barriers – such as money, transportation, language, neighbourhood facilities – to physical activity."

"Easy assumptions are often made about youth and physical activity – that somehow they're apathetic about physical activity and sport. But my research is showing this is not the case. Youth want to engage in physical activity and sport, but our current ways of structuring and providing opportunities for them to do so are simply not meeting their needs." ■

Universe



PARISSA SAFAI:
Young girls are less active



In the Media

Pipe Dream

Canada's pipeline industry, in a boast echoed regularly by the Harper government, proclaims a "99.999 per cent safety record." . . . However, York University history Professor Sean Kheraj calls the 99.999 per cent claim "flawed and vague," because it doesn't capture the frequency of spills and leaks. He points to statistics from Alberta's Energy Resources Conservation Board that show there was an average of about 1.5 leaks or ruptures a day in 2011 on the province's 406,974 km of pipelines. "The largest pipeline network in Canada is by no means leak-proof, and oil spills on that system occur very frequently," said Kheraj.

– *Vancouver Sun*

Reality Cheque

"[In terms of retirement planning,] the reality for a lot of people is paying for kids, houses, cars. The difficult dilemma is that you have to take care today versus 20 to 30 years in the future. . . . There isn't a magical dollar amount people should save for their golden years and long-term care. Each person's situation and goals are different."

– PROFESSOR THOMAS KLASSEN,
York University School of Public Policy and Administration,
Newmarket Era

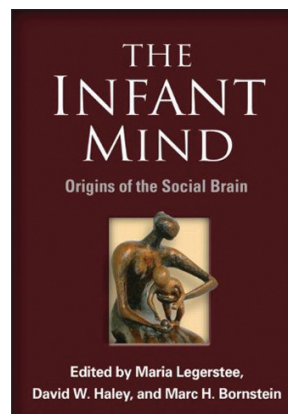
Small Minded

What's going on inside babies' brains?

THE *INFANT MIND*, *Origins of the Social Brain*, edited by York Professor Maria Legerstee and colleagues David W. Haley and Marc H. Bornstein, offers a stunning look at how the mind of the infant comes into being and offers readers a coherent but complex understanding of how infants develop self-awareness and use that to connect to the social world.

Integrating cutting-edge research from multiple disciplines, the book provides a holistic picture of the developing infant mind. Essays by contributors explore the transactions among genes, the brain and the environment in the earliest years of life, probing the neural correlates of core sensory, perceptual, cognitive, emotional and social capacities. The book also highlights the importance of early relationships, presenting compelling findings on how parent-infant interactions influence neural processing and brain maturation

In all, the book attests to the exciting recent strides that have



been made in integrating developmental science and social neuroscience, as the chapters trace and explore the complex transactions through which each child develops a sense of him or herself in relation to the world.

Legerstee is a professor in York's Department of Psychology, director of the Infancy Centre for Research at York University and a recipient of a five-year Canada University Research Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council as well as a Dean's Award for Outstanding Research from York University. Her research focuses on behavioural and neurological correlates of social-cognitive development during early childhood. Co-editor Haley is an associate professor of psychology at the University of Toronto and co-editor Bornstein is a senior investigator and head of child and family research at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in Bethesda, Md. ■

Game Changer

An MBA student creates a role-playing game on a spreadsheet

LAST FALL, chartered accountant Cary Walkin took a leave of absence from his day job to earn a master's degree in business administration at York – and also ended up designing a role-playing computer game in Microsoft Excel.

“It’s the kind of game that only a chartered accountant could build,” remarked a CNET representative when Walkin’s ARENA.Xlsm game went viral this spring after he posted it on his student blog.

The 25-year-old developed the game as a fun way to apply the lessons he learned in his advanced spreadsheet modelling course. “I’m a big fan of learning by doing,” said Walkin. He became hooked on the challenge, spending three hours every night for five months – 500 hours total – designing macros to create a complete game engine all within an Excel spreadsheet.

The player (visually represented by a smiley face) is trapped in a gladiator-style arena to fight for his life against thousands of different enemies. His only news from the outside world comes from smuggled letters from his wife and the mother of their son – a story Walkin took great care to make emotionally engaging. “This game is probably the biggest, craziest thing I’ve ever done,” he said.

Launched without fanfare or expectations, ARENA.Xlsm quickly became an online sensation. Reviewers on gaming websites called it ingenious, brilliant and surprisingly in-depth. Within two weeks, free downloads spiked to 250,000 and later peaked at 400,000.

Walkin graduated in June on the Dean’s Honour Roll and is now looking for opportunities to integrate business and entertainment. Meanwhile, he’s making games for mobile devices such as iPhones and Androids. It’s his new hobby. ■

Expert Opinion

Learning to love the world’s biggest online encyclopedia

IT’S NOT EVERY DAY York professors encourage students to embrace Wikipedia as a point of reference, but when York University political science Professor Alana Cattapan was directing the course Politics of the Canadian Women’s Movement, she thought students could learn more by helping to rewrite Wikipedia’s entries than by ignoring them.

Wikipedia is an online, user-edited encyclopedia that contains more than 30 million articles published in 286 languages. Users can edit its content without special knowledge of web design or programming, although there are community standards and etiquette guidelines outlined in online tutorials for would-be contributors.

“Wikipedia is incredibly accessible. I use it and I’m sure my students use it,” says Cattapan. “It has a lot of value to provide an overview of a subject. However, like readers of any research, you need to be aware of potential bias and errors.”

Cattapan had her students analyze, critique and rebuild Wikipedia’s Canadian feminism history content (with her guidance), including the page on Feminism in Canada. “This Wikipedia page had long been underdeveloped,” says Cattapan. “It overlooked significant historical developments, recent contri-

butions and the work of feminists outside of the English-speaking, white, middle-class mainstream.”

Cattapan believes Wikipedia itself evinces clear power divisions – call it an informational glass ceiling. There are few female Wikipedia editors and this disparity has been widely attributed to a culture amongst Wikipedia editors that discourages women’s contributions, she says.

“Students collaborated over the course of a term with the intent to generate content for an improved page that would more accurately communicate the historical and contemporary realities of Canadian feminism,” notes Cattapan. “Each student wrote a 400- to 700-word contribution to an existing Wikipedia article that related to the course.

“I wanted to make students familiar with the broad history of the Canadian women’s movement, identify gaps in that history and get students to learn how to write something short and clear that would most directly convey information.

“I also wanted to connect students with a world outside the classroom – give them a sense of empowerment by allowing them to assert themselves as knowers, instead of relying solely on conventional academic research.” ■



Big it Up

The skinny on plus-sized consumer demand
for a larger market share

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MCKENZIE JAMES

S MALL-MINDED FASHION MARKETERS BEWARE: “Fatshionistas” (fashion lovers who wear plus-sized clothing) are vying for more clout and power in a market where they feel underserved. Schulich School of Business marketing Professor Eileen Fisher and Schulich alumna Daiane Scaraboto (PhD ’12) recently published a study in the *Journal of Consumer Research* tracking the frustration plus-sized women feel in the fashion market that marginalizes and largely ignores them, and they posit how that quest may drive market change.

Plus-size fashion has typically been defined as clothing sized from 14 to 72. Lane Bryant started making maternity clothes in 1904 and then branched out into women’s plus-size clothing soon after, but few other designers, manufacturers or retailers have followed suit. In fact, a 1995 US survey of 2,700 women aged 18 or older showed that petite and plus-sized consumers had a significantly higher level of dissatisfaction regarding product availability, fashion selection and brand offerings.

“One of the biggest frustrations of the plus-sized consumers we studied is they feel discriminated against in relation to women who wear ‘regular’ sizes. Shopping for clothes should be a positive experience, which is why many women go shopping with girlfriends. But for plus-sized women it’s not [positive],” says Scaraboto.

Where did Fisher and Scaraboto get the idea for this study? “We noticed this research context by looking at online trends. Most of the time consumers are ahead of marketers in defining what’s next, so paying attention to the latest online movements, up-and-coming bloggers and new online platforms pays off,” says Scaraboto.

Fisher adds that before this research, little attention had been focused on consumers who feel their choices in mainstream markets are simply too limited. “Our goals were to better understand the triggers that prompt consumers to seek greater inclusion in – and a more satisfactory set of offerings from – mainstream markets, and to examine the strategies consumers will use when seeking greater inclusion and choice.”

To understand the broader context around which the “fatshionistas” operate, Fisher conducted a netography (an online

ethnography) for more than three years, going back about 10 years. In total, Fisher and Scaraboto collected 5,453 single-spaced pages of text and pictures from various sources. They analyzed blog posts written by plus-sized consumers and eventually narrowed their study down to a group of 80 blogs that addressed what they felt were the “core issues for the ‘fat acceptance movement’.” From that group, they focused on the 10 most influential, highly fashion-oriented blogs in what they refer to as the “fatosphere”. They also analyzed the media coverage of plus-size fashion in three major papers – the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the fashion trade paper *Women’s Wear Daily* – from 1995 to 2010.

Fisher notes that in the thousands of online posts they reviewed, bloggers who were self-described “fatshionistas” were of the opinion that the mainstream fashion industry provides them with too few stylish clothing options. “In principle, such behaviour is consistent with a pursuit of the right to consumer choice that is enshrined by law in many market-based economies,” says Fisher. “In practice, consumers frequently remain relatively disengaged from seeking greater inclusion in markets where they feel underserved.”

She says this research is important because there still isn’t a full understanding in the marketing field of when, why and how consumers can change markets. “In our research, we argue that it’s a puzzling market in that there is a definite consumer demand that marketers seem reluctant to fill,” says Fisher. “Traditional theories say if there is demand, there will be supply. But, as we show in our work, that isn’t always the case. And we give some good explanations as to why that is.”

Can online mobilization help solve consumers’ woes? “The Internet definitely provides a platform that allows those with limited resources to (a) mobilize and (b) try to get what they want from the marketplace,” says Fisher. “But we think the clout they have is very variable. The more stigmatized consumers are, the less likely we think it is that their efforts will result in the kinds of changes they seek.

“There are plenty of examples of consumer actions on the Internet changing the practices of individual marketers. But changing an industry as a whole – particularly, making it more inclusive of outsiders – is a pretty big undertaking.” ■

EILEEN FISHER: What’s a plus-sized consumer to do?

Man With a Vision

York student Luke Durward wins free tuition for a year through contest

Fourth-year Kinesiology & Health Science student Luke Durward was in the middle of a class when York University's president, accompanied by a camera crew, arrived to announce the winner of the second "this is my time" free tuition-for-a-year contest.

"My heart was coming out of my chest it was beating so hard, and the adrenaline was pumping," says Durward. "When Dr. Shoukri started reading the winning entry, I couldn't believe he was reading my vision."

Durward, 22, who is a Lions track & field athlete (he's a pole vaulter), was among 5,059 current students who submitted their visions online for a chance to win the grand prize of free tuition for a year. The contest, which celebrates York University's "this is my time" campaign, showcases the aspirations of York students, their visions for changing the future and how they hope to put their York U degrees to work to make a positive impact on society. Durward's vision was selected by a pan-University panel of judges. The top visions were also reviewed by the deans of York's 11 Faculties prior to choosing the winner.

Durward's winning vision states: "2023: As CEO of a fitness and nutrition company, I make Canada the leader in reversing the growing number of obesity and Type 2 diabetes cases."

As the contest winner, Durward will receive a tuition credit worth \$6,200, which he can use up to April 2017.

"Congratulations to Luke, who has developed a unique and inspirational vision that captures his drive and determination to make a real impact in the world," says York University's President and Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri. ■■



2023: As CEO of a fitness and nutrition company, I make Canada the leader in reversing the growing number of obesity and type 2 diabetes cases.

Luke Durward,
Kinesiology,
Faculty of Health, 2015

this is my time

As the free tuition-for-a-year contest winner, Durward will be featured in York's latest brand campaign pictured here

Luke Durward, "free tuition-for-a-year" winner, receives surprise news of his good luck from York President and Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri

Epidemic

A York prof's e-learning game proves contagious with kids

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MCKENZIE JAMES

THERE'S A FINE LINE IN THE CLASSROOM between computer games that are little more than motivational devices (i.e. rewards for work well done) and those that actually try to – and successfully – make the learning experience a lot more palatable. In other words, it is hard to fool a kid. Too often computer simulations that try to teach are short on that elusive combo of fun and interest.

Luckily there are professors like York's Jennifer Jenson who still understand what it means to be a kid and a gamer, and how learning can be made enjoyable. Jenson realized there was a real lack of pedagogical e-tools out there that promoted personal health consciousness, especially in light of recent health scares such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), avian influenza and H1N1, which have threatened to become global pandemics.

Along with colleagues from Simon Fraser University, Jenson, a Faculty of Education professor, thought there might be a niche for some kind of e-learning platform that would raise kids' health consciousness and educate them about the need for illness prevention and self-care in an engaging and non-didactic way. To accomplish that, Jenson and her team developed an online digital learning

resource using Flash technology, called Epidemic: Self-care for Crisis, featuring information on 30 viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Ebola virus and chickenpox.

Epidemic was initially tested by 50 students at a York summer camp followed by a full study in 2012 with more than 180 students in Grades 7 and 8. Results were positive, with students enjoying playing Epidemic and learning important information while doing so. The e-learning tool has been used in B.C. as part of a research study, as well as in a set of English classes in Australia.

"Too often one barrier to this kind of thing in the classroom is the platform it's built on, which often requires teachers to install new software on classroom computers. With Flash, we don't have to do that. New content can be updated and edited without any need for a trained programmer to come in," says Jenson.

Epidemic, although not a "game" in the traditional sense of the word, does have many game-based features such as a scoring system, a playful user interface that enables users to befriend one another (similar to a social networking site like Facebook) and a character creation tool that allows users to create alternate "virus identities". ■

Eye Witnesses to a Melting World

York researchers are documenting disappearing sea ice,
thinner polar bears, thawing permafrost and drier wetlands

BY MARTHA TANCOCK ● PHOTOGRAPHY BY MCKENZIE JAMES

CHRISTIAN HAAS IS A GEOPHYSICIST who has been measuring polar ice thickness since 1991. When he started his career, the sea ice over the North Pole was 2.5 metres thick. By 2007, a catastrophic year for Arctic melt, the ice was less than one metre thick – 90 centimetres to be precise. With ice thinning at this dramatic rate, will the long inhospitable North soon open for business? When can shipping companies start using the Northwest Passage? When can oil and gas companies start drilling? “Not any time soon,” predicts Haas.

Haas started monitoring polar sea ice 22 years ago as a doctoral student in environmental geophysics in Germany. Now he is the Canada Research Chair in Arctic Sea Ice Geophysics at York and a world expert on sea ice. He is just one of many York researchers who has been documenting the impact of global warming on the Arctic. They are all frontline witnesses to major and likely irreversible trends – retreating sea ice, disappearing snow packs, drying-up wetlands, starving polar bears, thawing permafrost and rising levels of greenhouse gases.

SEA ICE DISAPPEARING

HAAS IS TRYING TO UNDERSTAND the reasons for the recent rapid retreat of Arctic sea ice and its short- and long-term consequences for the climate, ecosystem and the people of the North. It’s a complex undertaking that requires extensive data collection on a massive scale.

When he started climate research in the early 1990s, he would do field work for two to three months every year on ice breakers at both poles. Every spring for the past 10 years, he’s

been flying out of Alert, Nunavut, on Ellesmere Island, making observations from planes and helicopters.

Now, he has narrowed his research focus to the area between Ellesmere Island and the North Pole where sea ice is quickly moving east from Russia to Canada at up to seven kilometres a day. Buffeted by strong winds and currents, the frozen ice pans here bump into and pile up along this part of Canada’s northerly coast, making it the thickest ice in the Arctic. “This is only a tiny little piece of the puzzle, but we need to fully understand these conditions in order to make better predictions,” says Haas. Accurate ice data is essential to generate accurate climate modelling that can serve as a benchmark for safe and responsible shipping and offshore exploration, he says.

Haas is constantly monitoring, adapting and refining a myriad of airborne and ground-based instruments that measure sea ice thickness and the factors that affect it – winds, atmospheric radiation, ocean salinity, atmospheric and ocean temperatures – in both the Arctic and Antarctic.

For ground-based measurements, he starts with the conventional electromagnetic (EM) ice meter to measure sea ice thickness. The 3.5-metre tube is equipped with sonic and laser sensors that are highly versatile because the sensors don’t need to touch the ground to take readings. As a result, Haas has adapted it for a variety of moving platforms and has also designed a shorter, portable version. His EM “bird” is shaped like a torpedo and can be handheld or dangled from low-flying helicopters and planes. It is now manufactured and used by geophysicists all over the world.

The Arctic is so vast and aircraft so expensive to rent – you pay by the minute – that Haas enlists everyone he can to help gather data. He asks local Inuit hunters, Canadian Rangers and North Pole adventurers to tow his ice meters behind their snowmobiles and sleds. He even hooks them onto hovercrafts



CHRISTIAN HAAS: Looking for clues



GREGORY THIEMANN: Polar bear specialist

used for polar research in Scandinavia. A couple of years ago, he persuaded French geophysicist Eric Brossier, who was wintering on his polar yacht Vagabond in Grise Fiord on Ellesmere Island, to drag an ice meter over frozen pans every three days.

Recently, he has been collaborating with York University atmospheric scientists – including the world-renowned Tom McElroy a.k.a. “Mr. Ozone” – and space engineers like Jim Whiteway to improve instruments that can measure sea ice thickness from satellites. While satellites can identify ice types over large areas, their ability to measure the thickness of the ice from space has been less reliable. Haas is currently working on validating satellite observations with ground observations for the European Space Agency.

POLAR BEARS CHANGING DIET

BIOLOGIST GREGORY THIEMANN IS JUST AS concerned about melting sea ice, but for different reasons. As the sea ice disappears, so too does the traditional habitat of polar bears and their main food source, seals. Forced to swim longer distances in increasingly open water to hunt, they are using up the body fat that helps them endure long periods without food, thus threatening their capacity to reproduce.

Thiemann studies Arctic food webs – what eats what from top to bottom of the food chain. He is particularly interested in how carnivores at the top of the food chain “make a living”.



SUZANNE TANK: Monitoring CO₂

Every fall, he and his students fly up to Hudson Bay and James Bay for about two weeks to collect fat samples from the rumps of polar bears they locate and then sedate from helicopters. He also works with Inuit hunters across Nunavut to sample fat from polar bears taken in annual subsistence harvests.

Thiemann can tell from fatty acid signature analysis what species of seal the bears have eaten and the bears' general health. During the past two years, he and his research partners at the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources have also fitted bears with global positioning system collars to track their movements.

"By understanding where, when and how predators hunt for food, we can better predict how wildlife populations will

respond to ongoing environmental change in the North so we can act to protect them and their ecosystems," he explains.

A polar bear's ability to survive varies by individual, sex, age and region, says Thiemann. Adult male bears are most robust because, at twice the size of adult females, they have the strength to subdue and kill the largest seals. Cubs, pregnant females and subadults are more vulnerable. Food sources and sea ice conditions vary across the Arctic, so what happens to polar bear populations will differ depending on their geographical location.

"Evidence is fairly clear that the primary conservation threat to polar bears is habitat loss – sea ice – associated with climate change," says Thiemann. "I want to see the populations I've



KATHY YOUNG: Studying snow cover

worked with continue to be viable,” he adds. “They’re a critical part of the northern marine food webs and essential to people who have lived with them for millennia.”

PERMAFROST THAWING

AS THE SEA ICE MELTS at an ever quickening rate, so does the permafrost. Permafrost is permanently frozen soil and sediment that blankets most of the Arctic. It can be hundreds of metres thick and centuries old. It occurs in two layers – organic above inorganic. Until recently, the ground covering the permafrost – the “active layer” – thaws to consistent depths every summer. But warmer temperatures are driving the annual thaw deeper into the organic layer of permafrost with potentially dire consequences. When frozen organic matter melts, bacteria consumes carbon once locked in ice and unleashes carbon dioxide. Adding more of this greenhouse gas to an atmosphere already overloaded will only amplify global warming. Scientists are calling it a ticking carbon bomb.

York geography professors have been monitoring the carbon cycle – how carbon dioxide in the atmosphere cycles into plant matter, into ground water and into the ocean – in the Arctic for decades. “We seek to understand these processes because they are adding more carbon dioxide to the atmosphere,” explains Arctic researcher Suzanne Tank. “And that has a direct bearing on climate change and global warming.”

CARBON SINKING

TANK CASTS HER RESEARCH NET wide over Canada’s northern aquatic ecosystems. As head of the aquatic ecology and biogeochemistry lab in the North, this York newcomer and her graduate students are doing field research in the Mackenzie River watershed. Their aim is to understand the processes that connect land, freshwater systems and ocean. Their context is climate change.

The scope of Tank’s lab research is wide and deep, reflecting her own multidisciplinary credentials in ecology, environmental biology and aquatic biogeochemistry. Students are monitoring permafrost thaw on land and under water, carbon cycling,

greenhouse gases flux, nutrient dynamics and the biogeochemistry of northern rivers.

Tank has collaborated with researchers around the world. Between graduate degrees, she was a sustainable fisheries analyst for the David Suzuki Foundation. She has co-authored papers on the effect of ultraviolet radiation on Rocky Mountain lakes with David Schindler, the celebrated limnologist whose research on acid rain led to the ban on phosphates and a reduction in acid rain. She has participated in international research on the biogeochemistry of six Arctic rivers and remains involved with the Great Rivers Observatory, as well as pan-Arctic working groups on permafrost.

These days, Tank is excited about a surprising link she has discovered in her research on permafrost degradation.

When permafrost thaws, carbon dioxide is released from the rotting organic matter into the atmosphere. Most research is focused on this upward carbon flux, but Tank is examining how thawing permafrost can also trap carbon dioxide. In a process called chemical weathering, carbon dioxide mixes with water to form carbonic acid, which reacts with the minerals in the inorganic layer further down to form bicarbonate.

It is common knowledge that bicarbonate travels from land to river to ocean bottom, where it is buried and forms a huge carbon sink. Tank is one of a few researchers starting to link permafrost degradation with carbon sequestration through chemical weathering. In other words, thawing permafrost is not only releasing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as a greenhouse gas, it is converting carbon dioxide to bicarbonate, which is a carbon dioxide sink.

Does one help to offset the other? Could the “carbon bomb” be mitigated by this carbon sink? “I want to understand how these effects counter balance each other,” says Tank. “We don’t understand the magnitude of this process but this research will help us.”

GREENHOUSE GASES GROWING

RICK BELLO, A CLIMATOLOGIST AT YORK, has also been monitoring greenhouse gas emissions in the Arctic. He has been studying the spongy wet peatland of the Hudson Bay Lowlands for more than 30 years. The lowlands are the second largest expanse of frozen peatland – semi-decomposed vegetation – in the world

after the Central Siberian Plateau. These boundless tracts of carbon-rich vegetation have been locked in ice for 4,000 years. Until recently, only the top 40 centimetres were affected by seasonal thaws. Now the thaw is going deeper. “It’s like we’re taking carbon out of freezer and putting it on the counter,” says Bello.

In summer, the lowlands turn into a watery landscape dotted with millions of ponds. That’s when Bello and his students set up base at the Churchill Northern Studies Centre in Churchill, Man., then head out to measure evaporation, nutrients and water flow, and, most importantly, carbon dioxide and methane emissions. Thawing peat produces carbon dioxide when it is exposed to air. It produces methane when it thaws under water. Methane is 22 times more dangerous as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, says Bello, so understanding the hydrology – how water moves – is important, too.

Bello is also observing changes in wind patterns due to climate change. His students have tabulated 30 years’ worth of data from hundreds of weather stations around Hudson Bay and discovered a correlation between diminishing ice cover and higher wind speeds. Using the same data source – the North American Re-analysis Dataset – they are correlating wind and wave data to predict the impact of stronger winds and higher waves on shoreline erosion and marine conditions, which could have implications for shipping, fishing and emergency response missions in the Arctic.

WETLANDS DRYING UP

KATHY YOUNG IS A HYDROLOGIST who has been studying snow cover in the High Arctic wetlands for about 20 years. One of her specialties is late-lying snow beds, ridges of snow so massive they sometimes endure for decades.

Most of the High Arctic is polar desert, but there are a few oases. In recent years, Young has focused on one – Polar Bear Pass on Bathurst Island, Nunavut. In summer, the pass blooms with cotton grass, sedges and dwarf shrubs, and abounds with wildlife, from migratory birds to lemmings and fox to caribou. After the main snowmelt in the spring, these late-lying snow beds keep wetlands like Polar Bear Pass hydrated for most of the dry summer.

Young was always aware that these giant snow beds were

shrinking. But even after the record-high temperatures of 2007, she was shocked to discover some had disappeared altogether. Record warm Arctic summers in 2011 and 2012 have only accelerated their deterioration.

Without this reliable water source, aquatic and plant life can’t thrive as well in these High Arctic wetlands. And from aerial surveys, Young and her graduate students have observed that tundra ponds and small patchy wetlands are drying up. As temperatures rise due to climate change, Young says what is happening at Polar Bear Pass could happen in other fragile Arctic wetlands.

Lately, Young has turned her attention to Iceland. When the Icelandic Volcano *Eyjafjallajökull* erupted in 2010, it spewed volcanic ash so thick it stopped air traffic over northern Europe and dusted the entire country in a fine powder. Young is looking at the impact of that cloak of ash and other dust events on snowpacks, snowmelt and streamflows, as well as on permafrost hydrology and geothermal activity.

ADAPT, THE LAST WORD

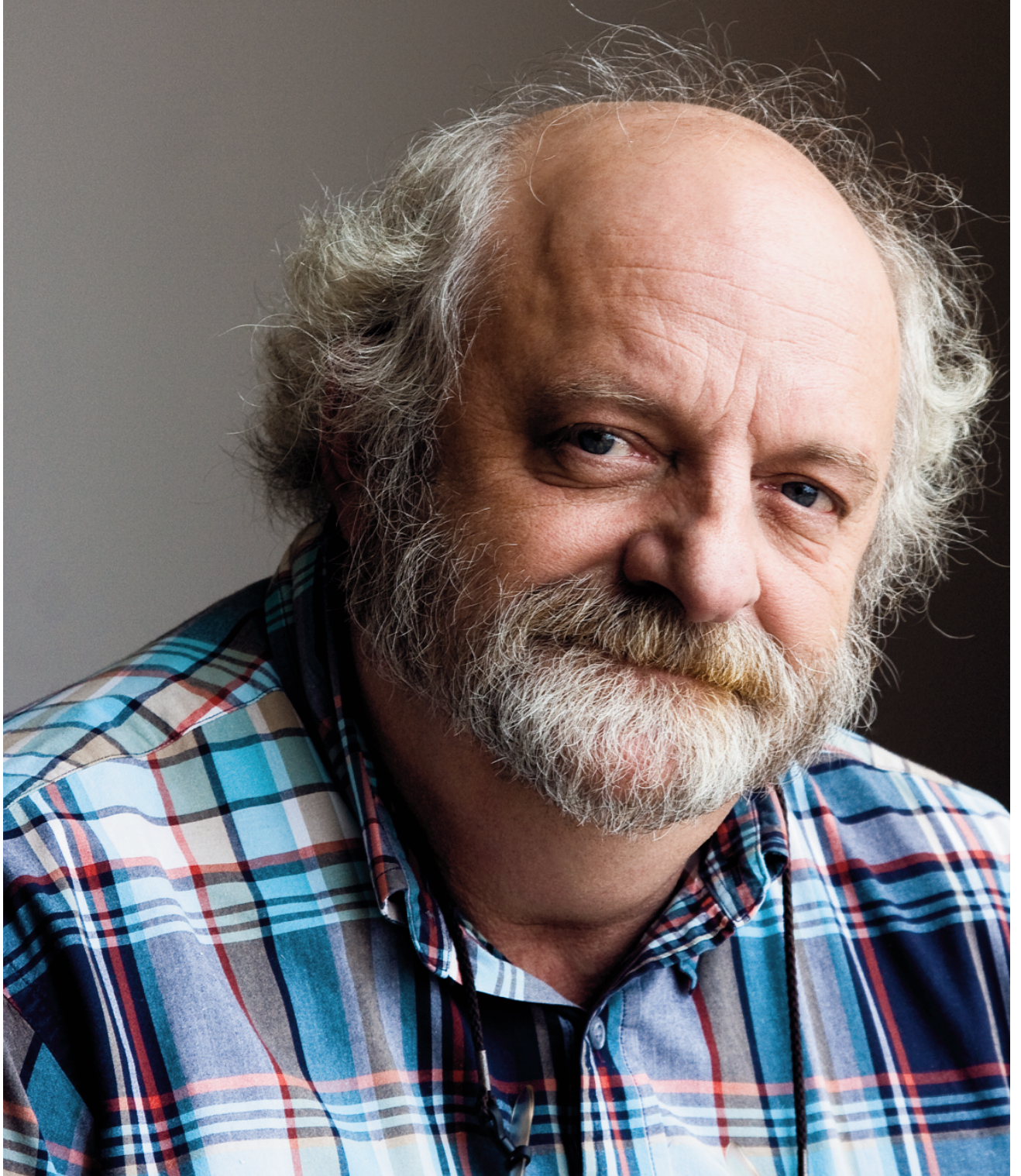
HAAS ANTICIPATES IT COULD BE FIVE or 10 years before the sea ice disappears long enough for seasonal shipping and to allow for oil and gas exploration. “Look at this,” he says, pointing at an aerial image of a patch of frozen Beaufort Sea on his laptop. Barely detectable in the endless white expanse is a lone icebreaker. It was dispatched expressly to test how easily icebreakers could create open water. But it turned out that just as fast as the boat smashed through the ice, the freshly exposed water froze in its wake – like a zipper opening and closing.

Eventually, though, sea ice won’t refreeze and when it’s gone everything will warm up. Open water will bring shipping and oil and gas extraction to the North. It will also bring faster winds, bigger waves and dramatic storms. “Climate change is going to be with us for several generations,” predicts Bello, “even if we could turn off the plug now on fossil fuel emissions.”

“There’s going to be a day when we start talking about North-South in Canada instead of East-West,” says Bello.

The most important issue, according to Bello and his colleagues, is how we adapt to these changes.

For now, says Tank, “our role is to convey what we’re seeing.” ■



Bright Lights

What makes these top students shine?

BY MARTHA TANCOCK ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIE KIRK

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ANIEL MARTINS' MOM calls her son “the go-getter”. It’s a descriptor you could apply to every one of the undergraduate achievers *YorkU* magazine is profiling this year. Whether they always knew or only recently decided what they wanted to do in life, they have all been in the habit of trying hard – sometimes to

please supportive parents but mostly to feed their own intense curiosity and burning passion. That’s how this year’s crop of top students attained the highest accumulated grade point averages in their respective undergraduate Faculties after completing their second year at York. That’s why they’re going to shine as future doctors, educators, business leaders and artists – and help make this a better world. This is their time.

A portrait of Shaheem Abid, a young man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a blue sweater over a striped shirt. He is looking slightly to the left. The background is a solid light green color.

Brain Teaser

Shaheem Abid
Faculty of Health
GPA: 8.9

SHAHEEM ABID WAS FIVE when his Pakistani parents left Saudi Arabia to find better opportunities for their three children in Canada. They settled in Mississauga, Ont., where Abid is content to stay, close to family and friends. Unlike his sister and brother, he won't follow his father into engineering. He shares an interest in people with his mother, a foreign-credentialed doctor now working as an ultrasound technician. Mentored by caring siblings, Abid is majoring in psychology on his way to psychiatry. He's fascinated by the mysteries of the brain and the complexities of mental disorders. After working in a visual perception lab last summer, he doesn't rule out a research career either. As a child, Abid was a fan of the television show "Zoboomafoo" and dreamed of being a zookeeper, then a vet, and can still pass the time happily watching "Planet Earth". At York, he volunteers in a social psychology lab, tutors and is involved with the Undergraduate Psychology Students' Association. At home, he hangs out weekly with old friends and never misses a Raptors game on TV. Otherwise, this 20-year-old is parked on his bed, studying. He has always tried his very best. Sometime this year, he'll write the Medical College Admission Test. "I don't want to let my parents down," he says. "I don't want to waste the effort they made coming here."



All that Jazz

Felipe Cardoso Pereira
Faculty of Fine Arts
GPA: 8.39

AT 19, FELIPE CARDOSO PEREIRA told his parents he wished to go to London, England. The only child of crepe vendors in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and a self-taught guitarist, Cardoso Pereira had been playing pop music in local bands but yearned for something different. Because he was a dual citizen of Brazil and Portugal, he could work in the European Union. His parents sent him off with their blessings – and a return ticket. In London, Cardoso Pereira shared a room and enrolled at a language school. To pay the rent, he sold newspapers, served in a pub and worked in his school office. Shy about his

English, he wouldn't ask bands if he could jam with them and he rarely touched his guitar. When he did finally pull it out of its case, it was because he had signed up for lessons. "I wanted to learn everything – theory, harmony, technique," he says. He fell in love with jazz. When his instructor – a York grad – recommended studying at York, he scrimped and saved, and enrolled in 2011. "I came for jazz and also discovered incredible world music." Now, this 25-year-old guitarist fuses different styles into his own jazz compositions. He hopes to do a master's degree at York or in France *chez son amie*, then return to Rio to teach, perform and launch music programs for children.

A close-up portrait of Nick Zabara, a young man with dark, wavy hair and a light mustache, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a dark blue jacket over a red shirt.

Inspirational Enterprise

Nick Zabara
**Faculty of Liberal Arts
& Professional Studies**
GPA: 8.95

NICK ZABARA WAS SEVEN when he and his parents left Kiev, Ukraine, for Toronto in 1997. Thrust into Grade 2 knowing no English except storybook words, he was soon coaching his parents – a metallographic scientist and an aircraft engineer who came to Canada seeking better opportunities. By Grade 4, Zabara was speaking like his classmates and streamed into the gifted program. By the time he graduated from high school, this A student could also converse in Spanish and French. But business courses really captured his imagination and instead of diving into university, he launched himself as an entrepreneur. “I wanted to be my own boss,” he says. “I wanted to build

something from the ground up.” For three years, he job hopped, started an online business selling gadgets and party supplies – still going strong – travelled and explored academic options. Zabara grew keen about marketing and, after working for a psychiatrist, he signed up for a double major in professional writing and psychology at York. Studying psychology has helped him overcome personal challenges, and while he freelances as a writer and professional organizer, the 23-year-old envisions a career as an inspirational psychologist, giving talks and writing books about living worry-free, optimistic lives. “One day, I’d love to share my experiences and help craft a better society,” he says.

HOMESCHOOLED UNTIL GRADE 6, Ronnie Hoffman learned early the art of self-directed learning. “I read everything I could get my hands on,” remembers this linguistics student from Barrie, Ont. The oldest of four children, he devoured fiction – all the Harry Potter books – and taught himself math, but entered the public school system with deficits in geography, history and especially French. Determined to catch up, he got top marks in French by the end of that year – and maintained his lead in all subjects, except gym, through Grade 12. Gleefully competitive, this trivia buff has tried to get on “Jeopardy” and, last summer, during time off from his job at

the tourism office, he rode all over town geocaching – the treasure-hunt craze using global positioning system technology. Hoffman loves learning, especially languages, both dead and living. He chose Glendon for a bilingual education and enrolled in the international bachelor of arts program for a chance to study abroad. Meanwhile, the 21-year-old who reads basic Latin and Hebrew, and speaks Spanish as well as French, says he’s “fallen in love with linguistics.” Right now, he’s doing the third year of his degree in Switzerland, and exploring Europe in his free time. When he comes home, he’ll immerse himself in further studies on his way to an academic career.

Treasure Hunter

Ronnie Hoffman
Glendon
GPA: 8.48



I**T IS IRONIC, ATIFA KARIM ADMITS,** that her father helped develop oil resources for a living and now has a daughter determined to improve environmental education. To be fair, she says “he does have a passion for the environment.” And clearly she shares it. Originally from Guyana, Karim was raised in Miami, Fla., then Kingston, Jamaica, before her parents relocated to Canada. She entered Grade 10, excelled and soon became active on student council. She dreamed of teaching. Then in Grade 12, she caught her older sister’s enthusiasm for environmental politics and enrolled at York. Now, 20-year-old Karim is fast-tracking two degrees – a

BES in environment & culture, with a minor in geography, and a concurrent BEd in geography and English. She is also on York’s Senate, involved in the environmental studies student association and works as a peer mentor when she’s not devouring 19th-century novels on the bus home to Scarborough, Ont. She intends to teach, but not forever. Her big dream, after graduate studies in education, is to develop curriculum that incorporates environmental education into all grade-school subjects. “Everything we do is rooted in how we see the environment,” says Karim. “If we approach our environment with love and respect, it will allow us to move forward sustainably.”

Green Teacher

Atifa Karim
Faculty of
Environmental Studies
GPA: 8.8



Surgical Aim

Jeffrey Kay Faculty of Science GPA: 9

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK JEFFREY KAY why he's studying applied math when he wants to go into medicine. Well, math is his favourite subject and he's already breezed through the Medical Col-

lege Admission Test without taking university physics or organic chemistry. Math is more than solving equations on paper, says Kay, the 20-year-old middle child of a North York tax accountant and an eye doctor. After Grade 12, Kay won a Spark Science & Engineering Summer Research Award at York and learned how to create mathematical models of the spread of disease. Like mathematicians, doctors are problem solvers. Last summer, as a researcher at Mount Sinai Hospital's inflammatory bowel disease lab, Kay was inspired by a doctor in action: "He put such an effort into figuring out what was wrong with each patient and how to help." Medical research appeals to Kay, but this tennis, hockey and rock climbing enthusiast has the hand-eye coordination to make a good surgeon. If he gets accepted to medical school in Toronto, he'll stay at home, where he can study in peace, work out in his home gym and watch Toronto Maple Leafs games when he's not coaching swimmers or volunteering as a respite caregiver. He could be in school for another 10 years. No matter. "I've always wanted to be a doctor," he says.



A portrait of a young man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a dark shirt, and a patterned tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a light blue gradient.

Fast Tracker

Daniel Martins
Schulich School of Business
GPA: 8.65

DANIEL MARTINS DOES NOT FIT the stereotype of a chartered accountant, his future vocation. This number cruncher from Etobicoke, Ont., is gregarious, a people person who likes organizing charity fundraisers and community events. Last summer, he juggled three paying jobs – bookkeeping at a small accounting firm, supervising duties at Metro grocery store and tutoring college students – and still made time for dates with his girlfriend and pickup sports with friends. This 20-year-old lives at warp speed, talks in a rush and can't sit still. His mom calls him "the go-getter". From Grade 9, Martins threw himself into excelling and graduated top of his class. His

parents – a mechanic and an insurance company ombudsperson – pushed him and his two brothers to get the university education they never had. "They taught us the value of hard work and didn't spoil us," says Martins, the middle son. In high school, he became hooked on business for its sociability. Now, he spends almost every waking minute studying, grateful for support from his mother – his role model – when the going gets tough. "Schulich's a pressure-cooker," he admits. But he keeps his eye on the prize – an accounting career and someday a top job as a chief financial officer or partner. "I do it for my parents," he says. "I want to make them proud." ■

A man with short, dark hair, wearing a dark blue or black coat over a light blue and white striped scarf, stands against a brick wall. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows cast across the wall behind him, suggesting a low sun position. The overall mood is contemplative and artistic.

Novel Idea

It's taken Shyam Selvadurai 30 years and three novels,
but he's finally put his Canada into words

BY MARTHA TANCOCK ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY MCKENZIE JAMES

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1983: CIVIL WAR ERUPTED in Sri Lanka and Shyam Selvadurai's world splintered. It was a pivotal year in his life and in much of his fiction. He had to pack his bags and flee because his parents – one Sinhalese and the other Tamil – feared for their lives in what would become a bloody, prolonged sectarian conflict. They traded privilege, status and professional careers in lush, tropical Colombo for safety, anonymity and menial jobs in cold, bleak Scarborough, Ont. Selvadurai was 19 and the shock of moving to “a place that didn't feel like a place” was so great that this award-winning novelist could never find the right words to describe it. Until now.

Selvadurai (BFA '89) set his first three books — *Funny Boy* (1994), *Cinnamon Gardens* (1998) and *Swimming in the Monsoon Sea* (2005) — in the land of his birth. Leaving Sri Lanka was painful, so he returned to his country of origin in his novels, choosing to ignore Canada. “I always had a huge yearning to go back,” he says. “We were in exile.”

In his fourth novel, *The Hungry Ghosts* (2013), the author, now 49 and comfortably ensconced in midtown Toronto, has “finally found a way to bring the two worlds together.”

As a child, Selvadurai staged little theatricals. He wrote the scripts, designed the sets, assembled the costumes and acted the parts. His dream was to be a director one day. So when he landed in Canada at age 19, he immediately enrolled at York University – the only school that offered a degree in theatre at the time. Like Shivan, the main character in *The Hungry Ghosts*, Selvadurai lived in a dingy basement bedroom in his family's home on a faceless, treeless Scarborough street and, to cope, lost himself in his studies.

Selvadurai imagined a career on stage, but soon rejected the idea because there were few roles for people of colour. “It looked like I would be signing up for a career in race-relations plays and school tours,” he says. So, what else could he do? He took a playwriting course from Urjo Kareda, then artistic director of Tarragon Theatre. “Urjo understood that Canada was changing, becoming more multicultural.”

At the time, immigrants of South Asian heritage like Neil Bissoondath (BA '77) and Rohinton Mistry were making a literary splash in Canada. Perhaps he could write novels instead, Selvadurai thought, and signed up for Matthew Corrigan's writing class. “Like Urjo, Matthew knew that great future Canadian fiction would be coming from non-WASP writers,” says Selvadurai. “Matthew said talented writers are a dime a dozen, but talent is just 10 per cent of what you need. To succeed as a writer, you need 50 per cent ambition and 40 per cent subject. You're gifted, he said, and you have a subject – Sri Lanka.”

Selvadurai moved to Montreal and worked nights at a video

store while drafting his first novel. It was never published but spawned *Funny Boy*, which vaulted the then 29-year-old into literary stardom. *Funny Boy*, about a Tamil boy who comes of age on the eve of civil war in Sri Lanka, was shortlisted for the inaugural Giller Prize, won the Books in Canada First Novel Award and a Lambda Literary Award for Gay Men's Fiction, and became a national bestseller. “It was a shock, but a dream come true,” he says.

War or no war, Selvadurai says he would have studied abroad like other privileged rich boys in his social set. “I probably would never have returned to Sri Lanka,” he says, “because I am gay.” While he longed for his home country, he could safely live as an openly gay man in Canada, just as Shivan does in *The Hungry Ghosts*. For a while after he came out, Selvadurai was politically active in Desh Pradesh, a left-leaning, South Asian gay arts organization. Those were heady times, he recalls: “By joining other progressive South Asians, I saw that I could become Canadian on my own terms.”

After *Funny Boy*, Selvadurai produced two more novels and edited a book of short stories written by South Asians. The idea for *The Hungry Ghosts* took seed soon after he started teaching creative writing at York in 1998 and incubated for 13 long years. It took moving back to Sri Lanka in 2010 to launch the Galle Literary Festival before he finally finished the novel. “There, my writing seemed to come to life again,” he says. “I left Sri Lanka when I was 19. On some level I always remained 19. Once I worked there, I felt fully adult.”

After curating the literary festival for two years, Selvadurai now returns to Sri Lanka every winter to steer another project dear to his heart – Write to Reconcile. The not-for-profit organization encourages young Sinhalese and Tamils – once enemies – to write about their wartime experiences; it brings them together and publishes their work in anthologies. Thirty years after civil war forced him into exile, Selvadurai is building bridges.

He's also finally found words to describe his immigrant experience. Why did it take so long? Because, for him, arriving in Canada wasn't a happy landing. In *The Hungry Ghosts*, Shivan sees Scarborough and York University as stark, ugly and indifferent, especially when compared to the Eden he came from. The author struggled even more mightily to describe the subtle racism here. “I tried to find the humanity in each character,” says Selvadurai, “but nobody's off the hook. The challenge was to get the book right, so I could stand behind it, so I could defend it as my truth.”

Once again, the applause came quickly. *The Hungry Ghosts* was nominated for a 2013 Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction. Now Selvadurai is hard at work on his next novel, his creative juices flowing again. “I just hope it doesn't take another 13 years,” he says. ■



LEGALLY SPEAKING: Osgoode students lend helping hands

HELPING HANDS

10 great ways York reaches out to the local community

BY MICHAEL TODD ● PHOTOGRAPHY BY MCKENZIE JAMES

THE WORD “ENGAGED” has had many meanings over the centuries and almost as many nuances, from the now largely obsolete concept of “to entangle or trap” to more modern ones such as “to make a guarantee”, “to begin and carry out an enterprise” and “to be committed to or supportive of a cause”.

The latter certainly describes York. The University has always taken its role as a leader in community engagement seriously and can be justly proud of its reputation as being socially responsive. York’s commitment to lifelong learning accessibility for mature, part-time and first-generation students is demonstrated and supported by a wide range of community activities. The brief profiles that follow illustrate just a few of the many ways – at last count more than 100 – York is “shaking hands” with the world beyond its borders.

COMMUNITY LEGAL AID SERVICES PROGRAM (CLASP)

Osgoode Hall Law School’s CLASP, part of Ontario’s Student Legal Aid Services Societies, is committed to the realization of social justice through education, advocacy and engaging actively with communities through community outreach and offering legal advice. Under the supervision of lawyers and the community outreach counsellor, students give no-charge client referrals, summary advice and legal representation. For more information, visit osgoode.yorku.ca/clasp or call 416-736-5029.

YORK YOUTH CONNECTION DAY CAMP (YYC)

YYC is a summer day camp for children between the ages of eight and 14, and has been providing a safe, fun and educational experience for children and youth on York University’s Keele campus for nearly 40 years. YYC offers a mix of art and design, performing arts, health, fitness, eco-science

and a leadership curriculum. Children spend the summer exploring, learning and making friends. For more information, visit yorku.ca/yyc, e-mail yyc@yorku.ca (year-round) or call 416-736-5669 (from March to August).

YORK-TD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTRE (CEC)

The CEC is a York University office located just off campus in the Yorkgate Mall, in the heart of the Jane-Finch community. The CEC identifies opportunities for York students to provide services and support to the local community as part of their learning experience. Along with collaborators, students, faculty and staff deliver many valuable services to the community through the CEC, such as: free income tax clinics for residents of the local community during tax season; weekly clinics offering free legal advice and referrals; after-school activity clubs providing homework help and skill building; and action and education networks focused on community finance and food justice. Visit yorku.ca/cec for more information.

THE YORK CIRCLE

The York Circle makes York’s vibrant academic and research life available to the broader community through free lectures and events offered throughout the year. York alumni, friends and neighbours of the University and parents of York students are eligible to participate. By joining The York Circle, members learn from York’s leading professors, meet like-minded people who love to learn and receive invitations to other events at York University. Joining is easy (and free): visit yorku.ca/yorkcirc or call 416-736-5020.

THE ADVANCED CREDIT EXPERIENCE (ACE)

ACE is an exciting outreach program coordinated by York’s Faculty of Education whose aim is to increase access to postsec-

ondary education for high-school students attending Jane-Finch secondary schools (Westview Centennial S.S., Emery Collegiate, James Cardinal McGuigan C.H.S. and C.W. Jefferys S.S.).

Each year, 40 Grade12 students come to York for a semester to take a 0.3 university credit and receive cooperative work placements at York to introduce them to university life. Successful students get bursaries if they register at York in addition to their university credit. The program is funded by York University Faculty Administration (YUFA) Community Projects and the YUFA Trust Fund. For more information, visit yufa.org, e-mail yufa@yorku.ca or call 416-736-5236.

MALOCA COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Maloca Community Garden @ York University provides individuals affiliated with York University, and the surrounding North York, Ont., community, with a unique opportunity to grow and harvest their own food in an environmentally friendly way. As a member, there are plenty of opportunities to attend workshops, learn about gardening, volunteer, plant, harvest, build relationships, give back to the community and socialize. For more information, visit malocagarden.wordpress.com, e-mail maloca.yorku@gmail.com or call 416-736-2100 ext. 22618.

YORK CONSULTING GROUP (YCG)

YCG is a student-staffed and -managed consulting firm that has been in business for more than 40 years. The YCG provides students with the opportunity to get hands-on consulting experience helping small-to-medium sized businesses and not-for-profit organizations with their real-world challenges. Students use their skills in a team-based setting to analyze clients' unique situations and propose realistic solutions to complex business problems. For more information, visit ycg.schulich.yorku.ca or e-mail ycg@schulich.yorku.ca



CLASP Crew: Legal advice when you need it

FINE ARTS SUMMER INTENSIVE (FASI)

FASI is a series of creative experiential workshops for all audiences – high school and university students, professionals, educators and the general public – offered by the Faculty of Fine Arts at York University and supported by York's Academic Innovation Fund. Workshops range from street dance, life drawing and stage combat to screenwriting, sound art and cello. For full program details and registration information, visit yorku.ca/fasi, e-mail fasi@yorku.ca or call 416-736-2100 ext. 44538.

SCIENCE EXPLORATIONS SUMMER CAMP

Science Explorations offers fun, hands-on camp programs that are designed to engage youth and explore topics in science and engineering. It uses an exploratory learning approach that is focused on “learning by doing”. The campers also get a chance to work in small groups on a number of projects that will help foster problem-solving and critical thinking skills. For more information, e-mail explore@yorku.ca or call Cora Toner, program director, at 416-736-2100 ext. 44552.

CONNECTED HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROJECT (CHWP)

York University and other private and academic partners are helping to revolutionize health-care management in Canada by shifting the management of people's health to people themselves with the aid of eHealth technology. The \$38-million CHWP uses cloud-based computer technology to make health-care information easily accessible by smartphone or laptop. The project also features apps for preventative health care and health management, and provides students with the ability to digitally connect with a health coach for expert advice. The mobile technology-based health coach program at York University will be the first of its kind in Canada. ■



Clothes Call

A fashionable way to purge your overcrowded closet

BY MICHAEL TODD • PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIE KIRK

SOMETIMES THE BEST IDEAS come while you're on your bike pedalling along Toronto's waterfront. That's what happened to York grad and Toronto visual arts high-school teacher Jodi Goodfellow (BFA '99) when she got the brainstorm for Fashion Forward (Fashion-Forward.ca). It's a website devoted to fashionistas everywhere who would rather shop than do almost anything else in life, but who simply don't have enough closet space left to indulge their passion. Solution? Create a website that helps them purge their closets and make some money so they can get back to what they love most – buying stuff.

Fashion Forward is an online marketplace operated just like Kijiji and Craigslist, says Goodfellow, but it's exclusive to fashion for men, women, children and – wait for it – even pets. So what's the difference between this and your average consignment store? "Sellers in this case earn 100 per cent of the profit,"

she maintains. "We don't do shipping, which means we don't need to access personal banking information, there is no waiting for packages, no additional fees and no risk of fraud."

Living in a smaller condo downtown, Goodfellow says she quickly realized her penchant for haute couture was outstripping her available closet space: "I thought, why not create a way for people like me to get rid of unwanted clothes and make a profit?"

So she teamed up with design expert and friend Melvin Constantino and launched Fashion Forward last year. "It's a dream realized for me, to co-own a business," says Goodfellow.

She believes Fashion Forward plays a part in helping people responsibly recycle their unwanted clothing: "We're proud to be an innovative Canadian company and we also like to think we're helping reduce everyone's 'fashion footprint'. It's a win-win situation." ■

Alumni

A Night to Shine

The Bryden Alumni Awards

THE BRYDEN ALUMNI AWARDS is an annual event that honours outstanding York grads from a variety of fields and specialties for their extraordinary achievements and contributions. The awards were inspired by Bruce Bryden, an exceptionally committed and influential leader at York. He was a member of the University's first undergraduate class and held several prestigious positions with York, including founding president of the York University Alumni Association and member of the Board of Governors. Learn about this year's Bryden Alumni Awards event at yorku.ca/alumni/awards

If you know of a York grad who is making an outstanding impact and deserves to be recognized with a Bryden Alumni Award, e-mail bryden@yorku.ca ■

The 2013 Bryden Alumni Awards host was York grad and co-host of CBC Radio's "Metro Morning", Jill Dempsey (BA '04)

Class Notes



1971: Edward Finstein

1971

Finstein, Edward (BA Winters), a.k.a. "the Wine Doctor", is a wine writer, international wine judge, consultant and tour guide. In 2013, he published his first novel *Pinot Envy*, a murder mystery set in California's Napa Valley. Visit wine-doctor.ca for more information.

1974

Freeman, Shelley (BA Vanier) recently exhibited her paintings of underground landscapes – caves, mines and tunnels – in a group show at the Gallery at Victoria Hall in Westmount, Que.

1977

Li, Bernard (BA Calumet) has lived in Australia since graduating from York. He is married and has two children – a daughter, 31, and a son, 27. Li invites old friends to contact him at bernardli8@hotmail.com



1977: Bernard Li

1980

Weinstein, Larry (BFA, DLitt '98 Calumet), director and producer of Rhombus Media Inc., co-produced a documentary, *Our Man in Tehran*, shown at the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival. It highlighted the role of then Canadian ambassador Ken Taylor in helping US embassy staff escape during the Iran hostage crisis and gave Taylor full credit, countering Hollywood's version in *Argo*.

1982

Lew, Debbie (BA Calumet) is a member of Ernst & Young LLP's advisory practice in Los Angeles where she provides information technology (IT) governance and risk management services to clients. Lew is a longtime volunteer with ISACA, a professional association focused on IT governance. As a past president of the ISACA Los Angeles chapter, she

was involved in international steering committees.

1989

Lyn, Leonard (JD) practises real estate law in Mississauga, Ont. He has just been appointed chair of the Mississauga Appeal Tribunal, which hears appeals to the city's licensing and animal control bylaws. He also serves as an auxiliary inspector with the Toronto Police Service and was recently awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

1991

Boyden, Joseph (BA Hons. '91) has published a new novel, *The Orenda*, about the arrival of Jesuit missionaries amidst warring Hurons and Iroquois. The book was shortlisted for the Governor General's Literary Award for English-language Fiction in 2013.



1982: Debbie Lew

fornia, best known for his work on the ABC hit series "Castle". He has written music for "Missing", "Lie to Me" and "Buffy the Vampire Slayer". Most recently, he boarded a decom-



1989: Leonard Lyn

Gee, Kenda (LLB), director, producer and vice-president of Lost Years Productions Inc., has received the University of Alberta's Award of Excellence for his 2012 epic feature *Lost Years*, which documents 150 years of the Chinese diaspora in Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Australia. The film, which tracks four generations of Gee's family, has won several international awards.

1994

Duncan, Robert (BFA Vanier) is a three-time Emmy Award-nominated Canadian composer based in Cali-

missioned submarine to create the music for ABC's "Last Resort", a TV show about a US nuclear submarine crew. Visit his website at duncan-music.com for more news.

1997

Uppal, Priscila (BA '97, PhD '04 Vanier) is a York English professor and award-winning poet and novelist. Her latest, the 2013 memoir *Projection: Encounters With My Runaway Mother*, was a finalist for both the Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction and the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Non-fiction.



1994: Robert Duncan

1999

Farnsworth, Vanessa (BA Atkinson) is a freelance writer who has published more than 100 articles and columns in such publications as *Canadian Gardening*, *Canadian Living*, *Cottage and Garden Making*. Her debut book of literary non-fiction, *Rain on a Distant Roof: A Personal Journey Through Lyme Disease in Canada*, was published by Signature Editions in 2013.

2003

Zollo, Sabrina (MBA) has enjoyed a

career in brand management for the past 10 years. She recently published her first young adult novel, *Why I Love My Gay Boyfriend*.

2004

Latif, Ruby (BA '04 McLaughlin), vice-president, diversity and events, Pathway Group, was one of five York grads among the 27 young leaders selected for the DiverseCity Fellows program in Toronto last fall. The year-long fellowship is a leadership and networking program that sees

participants attending workshops and devising city-enhancing projects. The other York grads selected were, in order of graduation date: **Kelly Jackson** (MA '06), director, strategic planning and public affairs, Seneca College; **Sal Rabbani** (BBA '07 Calumet), senior partner, consulting, Business Development Bank of Canada; **Lisa Charleyboy** (BA '10 Stong), founder and editor-in-chief, *Urban Native Magazine*; **Jamil Jivani** (BA '10 Founders),

manager and project associate, Innovation Expedition.

2005

Collier, Martin (MES) is director of Health Transport Consulting. In 2008, he launched Transport Futures, a series of learning events about road pricing, parking fees, gas taxes and transit fares in Ontario. He has coordinated conferences, seminars and roundtable discussions with international experts for government, business, non-governmental organizations and academia.

2008

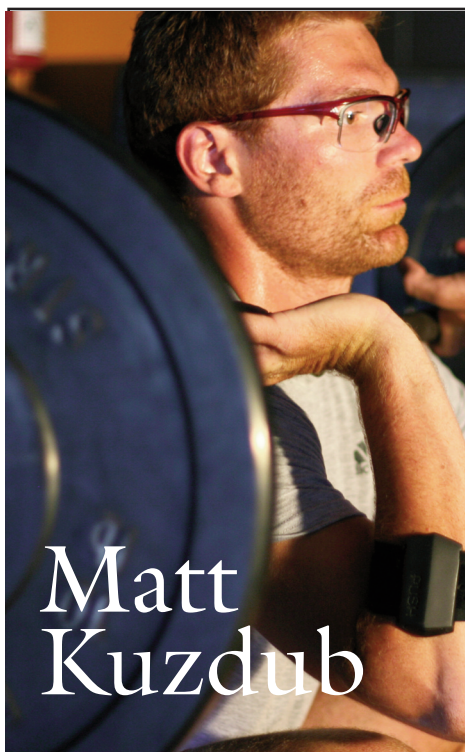
Shafer, Colin Boyd (BEd) is a teacher and photographer who embarked on a project to document Toronto's multicultural community in 2012. Through crowdsourcing on Indiegogo, he raised funding to take portraits of individuals from 190 countries who now call Toronto home. Visit cosmopolistoronto.com to see the results.

2009

Kielburger, Craig (EMBA, LLD '13) and his brother Marc, founders of



1999: Vanessa Farnsworth



Matt Kuzdub

Kinesiology grad develops device to improve workouts

York kinesiology grad Matt Kuzdub (BA '08) and an innovative new startup called PUSH have developed a mobile app-based, wearable device that will track, manage and improve performance in the weight room.

The new device detects movements at a high frequency and collects metrics – force, power and velocity – of each repetition. Using Bluetooth, the device then sends these readings to the corresponding mobile app, which tracks performance and gives exercisers information they can use to enhance their workout sessions.

“PUSH puts the power of improving workout performance into the user's hands through a technology they use every day,” says Kuzdub. National football

and hockey leagues and the National Collegiate Athletic Association have expressed interest in testing the device, he says.

This fall, to raise startup funds, PUSH launched a pre-order campaign on Indiegogo and reached its goal of \$80,000 in two weeks. Buoyed by the success, the company has upped its goal and hopes to raise more than \$100,000.

Kuzdub says his interest in PUSH was sparked by his experiences at York: “My academic studies in kinesiology and sport science gave me the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to this project, and my time as varsity tennis captain gave me unique insight into what athletes need to succeed. I am applying technology to find innovative ways of getting in shape.” ■

Class Notes

the Free the Children charity and Me to We social enterprise, were inducted into Canada's Walk of Fame in September 2013.

McGregor, Alison (BFA Hons. Winters), whose stage name is Ali Raney, has been nominated twice (in 2011 and 2012) for a Canadian Country Music Award in the Fiddle Player of the Year category. Since graduating cum laude from York, she has worked with Barbra Streisand, Ronnie Dunn, Tara Oram, Jason Blaine and Chad Brownlee, and she recently toured with Terri Clark, the only female member of Nashville's



2003: Sabrina Zollo

Grand Ole Opry. McGregor has played at the Grand Ole Opry and the Rogers Centre, and performed at the 2013 Canada Day celebrations on Parliament Hill. She is moving to Nashville with her husband this year.

2010

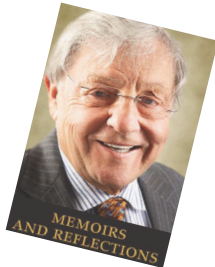
Rashkovsky, Karine (BSc '03, BEd '03, PhD), director and founder of Toronto-based Brain Power Enrichment Programs, a language arts tutorial service, was nominated for a 2013 Stevie Award for Women in Business for her entrepreneurship in Canada.

2013

Brady, Janelle (BA) is an activist and education advocate based in Toronto. In 2009, she founded Mentoring Arts Tutoring Athletics, a student-run organization at York devoted to educational attainment and professional development for youth in marginalized communities – particularly the Jane-Finch neighbourhood. In 2013, the province of Ontario honoured her with an Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers.

Nation Builder

Chancellor Roy McMurtry publishes his memoirs



LAST SEPTEMBER, AT THE AGE OF 81, York University Chancellor Roy McMurtry (LLD '81) published his memoirs. Titled *Memoirs and Reflections*, the 640-page book describes a long and distinguished career in politics and public service. When *Toronto Star* reporter Barbara Turnbull introduced McMurtry at the book launch, she said: "The word 'progressive' has never been more appropriately applied to a citizen of Canada."

McMurtry grew up in a privileged Toronto family, graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School in 1958 and had been a trial lawyer for 17 years when then-Ontario premier Bill Davis, a former football teammate of McMurtry's, persuaded him to enter politics. He won Eglinton riding in 1974 and catapulted into Davis's Progressive Conservative cabinet as attorney general. Over the next 10 years, he became known as a reformist, initiating a bilingual justice system and community legal clinics throughout the province.

But McMurtry's influence extended far beyond Ontario. He is still celebrated with Roy Romanow and Jean Chrétien for brokering the "kitchen accord" to patriate the Canadian Constitution. And later, as high commissioner to the United Kingdom, he chaired the Commonwealth committee that brought an end to apartheid.

At 64, McMurtry started a new career as Ontario chief justice and made history for ruling in favour of same-sex marriage. After 11 years, he hung up his robes, joined a Toronto law firm and began advocating for at-risk youth and social justice. *The Globe and Mail* dubbed him a "nation builder" in 2003. ■

Liz Forsberg

Helping youth ignite their creativity

FOR FIVE YEARS AS MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ART STARTS, Liz Forsberg (MES '07) has been using art to engage underserved youth and celebrate their neighbourhoods.

Best known for producing colourful public murals every year, Art Starts has been shortlisted twice – in 2010 and 2012 – for the Toronto Arts Foundation's Arts for Youth Award. In June 2013, Forsberg and her Art Starts team finally won the \$15,000 prize for their outstanding commitment to engaging Toronto youth through the arts.

"This award is a huge honour for us and reaffirms the impact we can have on the city's young people by engaging them in the arts," says Forsberg.

For 21 years, Art Starts, whose partners include York and OCAD universities, has been inviting dancers, musicians, visual artists, actors and playwrights to collaborate with residents of Toronto's "inner suburbs" on creative projects for and about their communities.

Before joining the not-for-profit organization, Forsberg's passion for art and community development was already evident. "Art has been an important part of my life ever since I was a teenager, and I've looked for ways to make it engaging," she says. "During my time in York's environmental studies program, I went beyond the theoretical and put my knowledge into practice each day. Recognizing the impact that art has made on my life and the potential it has to inspire others, Arts Starts provided the perfect opportunity for me to apply what I had learned and bring my passions to life for a better Toronto." ■



Alumni News



LEFT TO RIGHT:

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION

GUY BURRY, BA '82: chairman & CEO, WhiteHat Inc.; owner, Tenth Power

PINNACLE ACHIEVEMENT

JANICE FUKAKUSA, MBA '79:

chief administrative officer & chief financial officer, Royal Bank of Canada

REDEFINE THE POSSIBLE

CAROLYN ACKER, BAS '87: founder, Pathways Canada

ONE-TO-WATCH

KAREN D. FOSS, BA '01:

Canadian foreign service officer, Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade

LOCAL HERO

DAVE SMITH, BSc '70, MBA '72: director, Management Information, York University (retired)



And the Award Goes to...

Five outstanding York alumni recognized
at the 2013 Bryden Alumni Awards

THE 2013 BRYDEN ALUMNI AWARDS were held on Nov. 21 at the Toronto Reference Library's Bram and Bluma Appel Salon. The evening, which saw more than 250 attendees, was sponsored by TD Insurance Meloche Monnex, MBNA and Manulife Financial, and was hosted by York grad and co-host of CBC Radio's "Metro Morning", Jill Dempsey (BA '04).

"Tonight, we celebrate the successes of five outstanding alumni (Guy, Janice, Carolyn, Karen and Dave) who have realized their visions," said York President & Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri at the event. "As our current students work toward realizing their dreams for the future, the exceptional paths that our recipients have travelled serve as proof that the possibilities after York are endless."

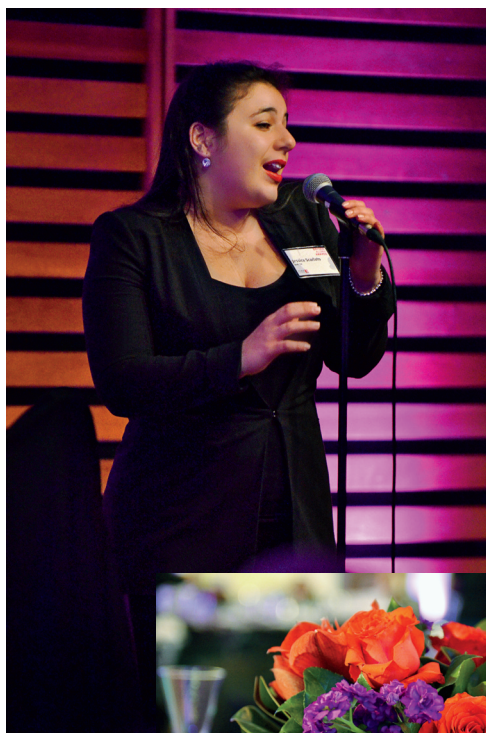
ALSO AMONG THE GUESTS in attendance were Julia Foster, chair of York's Board of Governors, Jeff O'Hagan, vice-president advancement, and Randy Williamson, York University Alumni Association (YUAA) chair, all of whom took to the stage to share their excitement with the night's recipients. As the event came to a close, Williamson announced to the attendees: "Planning has already begun on next year's ceremony and we'll need your help to discover other York grads from our growing community of more than 270,000 alumni that deserve to be recognized."



Randy Williamson (LLB '88),
chair of the York University Alumni Association (YUAA)



Jeff O'Hagan, vice-president advancement, York University





Previous Bryden Award recipients Steve Dranitsaris (BA '73) and Robert Drummond (BA '67)



Julia Foster (BEd '92), chair of York's Board of Governors; Janet Morrison, vice-provost students; and Ken Rogers



Bill Graham and Dezső Horváth, dean of the Schulich Business School, with Vice-President Advancement Jeff O'Hagan



Barbara Crow (BA '84, MA '86, PhD '94), interim dean and associate vice-president graduate; previous Bryden Award recipient Paul Axelrod (BA '72, PhD '80); and Alice Pitt, vice-provost academic



Previous Bryden Award recipients Gretel Reid-Willis (BA/BEd '01) (far left) and Barbara Budd (BA '74) (far right) with 2013 One-to-Watch recipient Karen Foss (BA '01)



Jorge Cardelus (BA '80) and Glendon Principal Kenneth McRoberts



David W. Trick (BA '77) with York President & Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri



Douglas Bryden, Linda Meldrum and previous Bryden Award recipient Gregory Cooper (LLB '69)



Previous Bryden Award recipient Chris Penrose (BA '04) with wife Crystal



Barbara Crow (BA '84, MA '86, PhD '94), interim dean and associate vice-president graduate, with York's Vice-President Research & Innovation Robert Haché



University Secretary and General Counsel Harriet Lewis (BA '69, MA '71), Eldon Bennett (BA '68), YUAA Chair Randy Williamson (LLB '88) and Becky Williamson



Ryerson University President and York alumnus Sheldon Levy (BSc '72, MA '73, Hon. LLD '99) with York President & Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri

Giving



Philosophy's Boon

The Jackman family invests \$1 million in York's philosophy department

DONORS OFTEN CHANNEL their generosity into academic disciplines like engineering, business and law, but gifts for liberal arts and humanities serve to bolster the historic foundation upon which York University has built its distinctive reputation for social innovation.

Over the years, Hal Jackman, a former lieutenant-governor of Ontario, his wife Maruja Jackman and the Jackman Foundation have generously invested in York's students and programs. They have supported Osgoode Hall Law School, the Art Gallery of York University and various scholarships and causes to help students grow, prosper and succeed. In September, the Jackman family made a \$1-million donation to York's Department of Philosophy.


The donation will be used to support graduate students and conferences. Two-thirds of the gift will be used to establish the Philosophy Graduate Awards Endowment, which will be matched two-to-one by the Graduate Studies Awards Program to create a \$2-million endowment. The remaining third will establish the Philosophy Department Conference Fund, which will be

used to host academic conferences, workshops and speakers.

At the reception in September, Henry Jackman, a philosophy professor at York and son of Hal, explained why his family decided to make this donation: "Our family has enjoyed a long and sustained relationship with York University for decades. We felt it was important to give something back to a school that had given us so much."

"With this latest gift, the Jackman family has positioned themselves as champions of education at York," said York's President and Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri at the September reception announcing the donation. "Not only will this generous gift allow us to improve academic and research opportunities for graduate students in the Department of Philosophy, it will enhance the department's profile and thought leadership at conferences."

Such a gift also has enormous social value, said Shoukri. Research in the humanities, social sciences and the arts often translates into enhanced social services, public policy development and the well-being of communities, and is a key driver for economic and social development. ■



What's your Legacy?

If you've included York University in your estate plans, or to learn more, contact Marisa Barlas at 416.650.8221 or barlas@yorku.ca

“York University and Scott Library have given me so much, so I want my current gifts and future bequest to go where students would benefit the most.

Planning ahead ensures that your money and assets will go where you want them to go – to the people and organizations you want to support.”

—Peggy Lau, BA '08, York's youngest planned giving donor

To read Peggy's story, visit myyorklegacy.com



YORK ALUMNI

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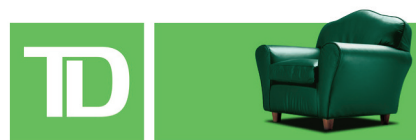
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