

# DALMAGAZINE

**INSIDE:** SOCIAL INNOVATORS **LEARNING IN ACTION** MAKING WAVES IN THE AQUATRON

**FALL/WINTER 2023**

## SETTING THE SCENE

Whether at the president's desk or a photoshoot, Kim Brooks is ready to help put Dal's people in the spotlight (p. 28)

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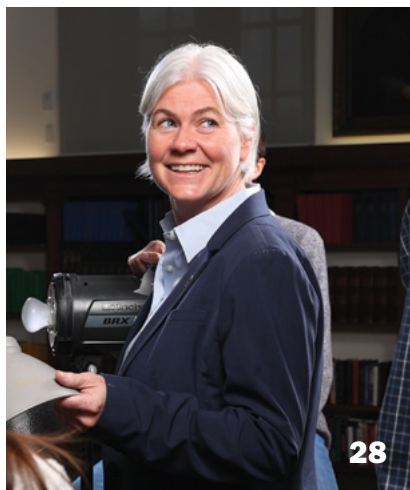
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**Dalhousie University DAL MAGAZINE Fall/Winter 2023**

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Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.



# Nominations are open for the 2024 Aurum Awards

The Aurum Awards are Dalhousie University's flagship alumni awards, honouring community-minded innovators and visionaries who are making a difference around the world.

Do you know an alum we should recognize for their outstanding achievements in innovation, community engagement and leadership, as well as for their contributions to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of society?

*Submissions close January 16, 2024*

[alumni.dal.ca/events-programs/alumni-awards](https://alumni.dal.ca/events-programs/alumni-awards)



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, DR. KIM BROOKS

DECEMBER 2023

I began my term as Dalhousie's president and vice-chancellor in August. I have the privilege of seeing our strategic plan, *Third Century Promise*—or *Si'st Kasqimtlnaqnipunqekl Teli L'wi'tmasimk* in Mi'kmaq—to its fruition in 2026. Aligned with that plan, I've focused my priorities as president around three themes: *people, place and purpose*.

I look forward to sharing more about each of these themes with you in the months to come. In this message, I offer a few reflections on place.

Nova Scotia was once a place where people talked about school and hospital closures. Now, we are racing to keep up with demands for capacity, talent, and infrastructure—including housing. Nova Scotia has added nearly 111,000 new residents since 2015, bringing our population to over a million. That number is expected to double by 2060.

Universities are instrumental to the province's growth strategy. More than 47,000 students attend Nova Scotia's post-secondary institutions—the majority of whom come from outside the province. Dalhousie and other universities play an essential role in Nova Scotia's aspiration to forge a vibrant future for those who call this place home and for those we will welcome. Every year we attract amazing students who enrich our campuses, our municipalities, and our province with their unique perspectives and diverse experiences.

But as with many provinces and cities across the country, Nova Scotia is experiencing an acute affordable housing shortage, which threatens these goals and poses immense challenges for many in our community. Whether it's people living in tents in Halifax, or newcomers desperately seeking affordable housing in many parts of the province, or faculty, staff, and students who decline offers to come to Dalhousie because finding housing is too hard, we witness the lived impacts of this shortage every day.

I'm committed to ensuring that Dalhousie does its part to help address this issue. The urgent question is: what additional steps can we take to respond to this pressing need? How can we better support the growth of vibrant, sustainable communities and our province?

Planning work is underway that puts Dalhousie on track to break ground on new university housing in Halifax within the next 24 months. We also know that expectations for housing are evolving as our province and the world change. We need to address the pressures of climate change, ensure accessibility goals are met, consider the needs of a diverse range of students, and offer affordable options. We've launched a thorough





# Support that makes a difference

## STUDENT LIFE CAN BE CHALLENGING.

An unexpected financial crisis can be a huge setback for any student. It could be the difference between staying in university or having to drop out.

In these moments a little help goes a long way. **AN EMERGENCY MICROBURSARY** is a lifeline for students when they need funds urgently. **Your support will make a difference.**

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community engagement process to ensure what we build is directly informed by the needs and aspirations of our students and surrounding community. This process has been met with enthusiasm—we have received over 2,000 responses to our survey, the results of which will inform deeper student engagements through focus groups and pop-up campus events in the months ahead.

We have expertise within our institution that can contribute new ideas to address our shared housing situation in novel ways. For example, our Faculty of



Architecture and Planning has built on its existing programming with an eye to offering new programs to support the housing and construction sectors. This fall, we hosted the Housing Engagement panel series, which advanced discussions on the social impacts of housing and homelessness in Halifax. We are collaborating with partners in the public and private sectors to better understand how we can support Nova Scotia's housing sector.

Only by working together, listening carefully to our community, and thinking creatively about what the future of life at Dalhousie and Nova Scotia might look like can we make our campuses, our city, and our province stronger. ■

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## NEWS

### Dal welcomes Rustum Southwell as its ninth chancellor

When Rustum Southwell was invited to serve as Dalhousie's next chancellor, he first had to take in the surprise of the moment.

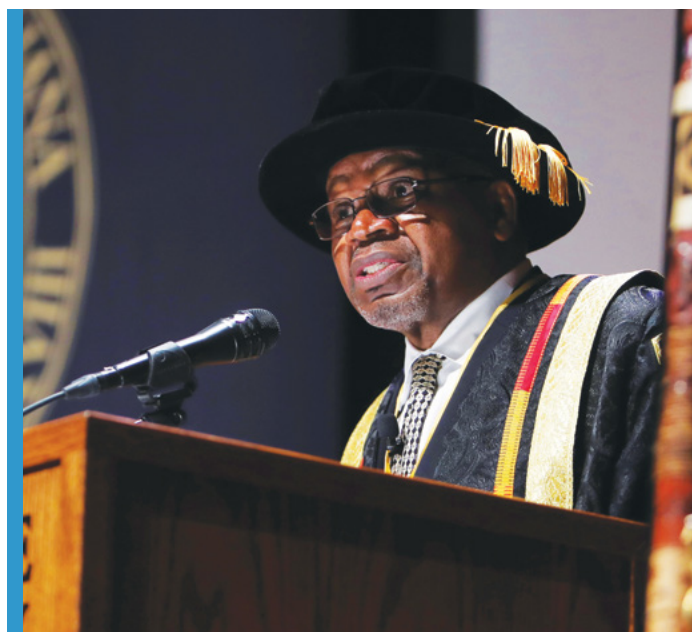
"It was a total shock," he recalls. "To be honest, I didn't think I'd been noticed in the way that you get to a position of this level [of chancellor]. You do the work I do without expecting people to always see what's happening. So I was very surprised—and very honoured."

He then thought back to his first encounters with Dalhousie in the early 1970s. He was an international student from the Caribbean island of Saint Kitts,



Dalhousie's 9th chancellor, Rustum Southwell.

studying psychology for two years on campus. He didn't end up finishing that degree; his path took a turn into the business world and, in time, towards leading the Black Business Initiative—one



Rustum Southwell delivers his speech at commencement at his installation.

of Canada's most transformative and renowned business development organizations.

But he never lost sight of the role education had to play in building stronger communities, including for the African Nova Scotian and African diaspora communities that have been at the foundation of his life's work. Over the years he's helped create scholarship programs in Dal's Faculty of Management, advised and fundraised for the James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies, and served on the board of the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC).

His advocacy has also been recognized with honorary diplomas and degrees from NSCC, Saint Mary's University and, in 2018, from Dalhousie.

At his installation ceremony, Chancellor Southwell followed his pledge with a moving speech and powerful statement: "After a lifetime this long, we do so many things. However, for the

very first time, I believe, I am the first of anything in my life of such consequence—the first Black chancellor of Dalhousie University."—*Ryan McNutt and Tanis Trainor*

### Scholar honoured with Molson Prize for outstanding contributions to bioethics

Acclaimed Dalhousie University bioethicist and scholar Dr. Françoise Baylis has been named a recipient of the Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize, given to only two people every year for their significant contributions to the country's intellectual and cultural heritage.

The Council announced the two winners Monday (in May), honouring Dr. Baylis with the social sciences and humanities prize for her outstanding achievements in academic research that centres on the

complexities of how health-care ethics intersect with technology, policy and practice.

Dr. Baylis, the first Dalhousie researcher to receive the Molson Prize, has over the span of her career become an influential voice in the field of bioethics and a leader in advocating for the ethical application of science, with the goal of bettering society.

At the heart of her scholarship is the hope that she helps generate debate on issues that can be uncomfortable and ethically challenging, but which she believes should be fostered and part of the public discourse.

"It really is quite wonderful to receive this prize," she says of the award, valued at \$50,000. "I'm just hopeful that it creates opportunities for me to share my ideas about the substantive issues I care about with a wider audience."

I also hope it sends the message that there can be legitimate links between academia, advocacy and activism because that is how I understand my work."

—*Alison Auld*

### Dal deepens ties with Indigenous peoples by setting up office in Mi'kmaw community

A small building tucked away in a corner of Millbrook Mi'kmaw community represents a big opportunity for Indigenous youth and other community members interested in studying at Dalhousie. The structure houses a new sub-office of Dal's Office of Equity and Inclusion devoted



Bob Gloade, chief of Millbrook First Nation (second from right), and Karen Pictou, executive director of Nova Scotia Native Women's Association (third from right), cut the ribbon at an opening ceremony Wednesday. Also pictured (L to R): Catherine Martin, Dr. Theresa Rajack-Talley, Mattea Bernard, Cheryl Fraser, and Ashton Comeau.

to Indigenous Community Engagement. Millbrook generously invited members of Dal into their community and the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association warmly welcomed Dal into their leased building to celebrate the official opening of the space.

"This is about a path forward. Helping to work together to look at the best interests of our children going forward," said Millbrook First Nation Chief Bob Gloade in remarks at a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Gloade pointed out the many barriers Indigenous students have faced in the past navigating their way to post-secondary studies. He said this collaboration is an acknowledgement of that past and a commitment to making a difference going forward.

"This connects the community to higher learning, which is historic."

The sub-office will provide access to information about Dal and programming for prospective students as well as services for members of the community who are currently enrolled at the university or have family members who are. —*Matt Reeder*

### Dalhousie set to launch new physician assistant training program for Nova Scotia

A new program at Dalhousie University is poised to make a significant contribution to the health and well-being of Nova Scotians.

On August 3, at Dalhousie's Collaborative Health Education Building (CHEB), the Province of Nova Scotia—represented by Minister of Health and Wellness, The Honourable Michelle Thompson, and Minister of Advanced Education, The Honourable Brian Wong, along

with Dean Dr. David Anderson, Faculty of Medicine—announced the development and funding of a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program in Dal's Faculty of Medicine.

The first of its kind in the Maritime provinces and only the fourth in the country, the MPAS will provide graduates with the competencies needed to provide compassionate, evidence-based care and significantly contribute to interprofessional health-care teams.

"The establishment of a Master of Physician Assistant Program represents a critical step towards improving access

to quality health-care services for Nova Scotians," said Dr. Anderson, who spoke at the announcement. "By training physician assistants, we can help alleviate some of the burden faced by physicians and provide a pathway to meet the health-care needs of our communities." —*Kate Rogers*

### Long sidetracked by family matters, 92-year-old finally receives Dal degree

Over the past several decades, Marie Jones has had plenty of reasons to visit the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium and other



Representatives from the Province of Nova Scotia and Dalhousie University announce funding and development of Master of Physician Assistant Studies program.





## NEWS



Marie Jones received a Master of Arts degree during a Convocation ceremony at Dal this fall.

venues during Dalhousie's bustling Convocation season. She's attended 10 ceremonies for fellow family members alone, mostly for her six children.

The degrees received by the Jones family, including one by her since-departed husband, David I. Jones, run the gamut from law and medicine to public administration and arts.

Marie returned to the Cohn again at age 92—only this time she was the one crossing the stage to pick up a parchment for her Master of Arts. Her achievement brings the family's total number of Dal degrees to 11.

Marie's big day at Dal happened as part of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences spring convocation ceremony and marked the culmination of an educational voyage that began more than a half century ago before being pushed aside in 1975 when one of her sons, David, fell ill.

Managing David's condition proved time consuming for Marie.

"It was quite a bit of work. And I had six kids at the time," she recalled this week following the ceremony during which she received a standing ovation that lasted close to a full minute.

Marie, then in her forties and with several Mount Saint Vincent University degrees to her name already, decided to take a break from her studies at Dal despite being within a stone's throw of completing her degree.

Even her advisor, Dr. Sid Sodhi—who cherished his straight-A student and valued her research—said he agreed with her decision at the time that family should come first.

David passed away in 1985 after getting sick again suddenly, just two months after completing his law degree from Dalhousie. "David was the

valedictorian and spoke at his ceremony," recalled Marie.

Life remained busy, though, and Marie's own Dal degree receded from her mind. That is, until last fall when she was out for a Sunday drive with Martin, her other son, and divulged that not receiving her Dal degree was one of her regrets in life.

Martin, a lawyer by trade with a Bachelor of Arts and law degree from Dal, resolved to investigate. He started with a cold call to Dr. Sodhi, who confirmed that Marie had finished all her academic requirements and deserved her degree.

Armed with an effusive note of support from Dr. Sodhi and his other research, Martin penned a letter to Dalhousie formally asking if they would grant his mother her degree. Dal dug into Marie's old files and approved the request but had to adjust her degree to be a Master of Arts instead of a Master of Education as that program no longer exists at the university.

Marie, Martin, and the other members of the Jones family were given priority front-row seats at the spring convocation ceremony.

They were joined by Dr. Sodhi, now 90, who remembers his former pupil as a "very bright, young mother" interested in special education for children.

"It's the best of the 11 degrees," said Martin, following the ceremony.

With his mother's wish fulfilled, Martin has already begun thinking about the next generation getting set to write their own Dal stories.

"Mom's granddaughter is starting at Dal this fall."

—Matt Reeder

### **Inaugural recipients of new Dal award embody community spirit championed by late prof**

Two Dal faculty members have been named the inaugural recipients of a new award created in honour of the late Dr. Anne Marie Ryan. Drs. Megan Bailey (Marine Affairs) and Tom Ue (now teaching English at CBU) are recipients of the Dr. Anne Marie Ryan Community Growth Award, launched by Dalhousie this year to recognize individuals and groups at the university dedicated to building a better community through education, learning and outreach.

Dr. Ryan, who passed away unexpectedly early last year, was a University Teaching Fellow in the Earth and Environmental Sciences department whose community-minded approach to teaching, learning and leadership left a lasting impact on many at Dal. She was known to focus her teaching on the "whole person" and pushed back against traditional views of leadership in favour of sharing power and building community through servant leadership.

"With her students and colleagues alike, Anne Marie helped to guide, support, and encourage everyone to become the best version of themselves. She believed that all teachers can be amazing leaders, each in their own context," stated an In

Memoria published following her death.

And the students who took her courses in the geological sciences learned about far more than rocks: they were pushed to think outside the box, taught to ask good questions, and given creative assignments that allowed for and encouraged risk taking.

When Dr. Ryan was awarded a prestigious 3M National Teaching Fellowship in 2019, her response to a question about what makes for a great classroom experience spoke volumes about her perspective: “It’s creating community, creating a sense of belonging — that we’re in this together, collaboratively,” said Dr. Ryan at the time. “I’m learning as much from the students as they learn from me.”

The Dr. Anne Marie Ryan Community Growth Award, to be awarded annually, is open to all current students, faculty or staff who are engaged in an educationally focused project within or connected to the Dalhousie community.—*Matt Reeder*

### Researcher leads global project to empower scholars of medieval chant

Imagine incense smoke wafting through the air. A hushed congregation waiting reverently for a lone voice to rise from the front of the cathedral, their plaintive song filling the space with Latin verse that attempts to convey the enormity of spiritual life.

It’s a scene from the Middle Ages that seems distinctly at odds with our current digital world. But the texts that underpin this scene—plainchants—are central to a new data-driven research project led by Dalhousie musicologist Dr. Jennifer Bain.

At the heart of Dr. Bain’s project lies an abundance of data, derived from thousands of handwritten manuscripts that have preserved the melodies and texts of chants throughout history. Computing advancements have allowed numerous libraries and research groups to digitize their collections, but they aren’t

Dr. Jennifer Bain says there are thousands of scholars, early music performers, and others studying liturgical expression to gain insights into how people lived and worshiped over time.

## quoted.

Dal experts in the news.

### **TIME** *Artificially Cooling Rivers Could Protect Fish From Climate Change*

“It was exhilarating. [There was] lots of hooting and hollering from excitement.”

—**Kathryn Smith**

*PhD candidate at Dalhousie University*

### **THE GUARDIAN** *Trudeau’s halt on carbon tax could undo years of his tentpole climate policy*

“One of the big problems of a carbon tax is that people don’t really understand how it works and aren’t terribly convinced that this is going to make a big difference for the climate.”

—**Dr. Lori Turnbull**

*Director of the School of Public Administration*

### **DAVID ENTERPRISE** *Fast-food jobs will soon cease to exist*

“Once the machines are in place, they’re not going to go backwards, especially if there’s large cost savings.”

—**Dr. Casey Warman**

*Department of Economics*

### **COUNTERPUNCH** *Was Patton Really Such A Great General And If So, Did He Actually Matter?*

“It’s been my experience that the American Right loves that movie more than anyone else because it depicts the quintessential example of American Exceptionalism on the battlefield. Too bad it’s based on a despicable human being who got far too much attention.”

—**Roger Thompson**

*Centre for the Study of Security and Development*



NICK PEACRE



## NEWS

linked, and some have fallen into disuse or disrepair as funding lapses or projects end.

Going beyond digitization and cataloging, Dr. Bain's project will foster an interactive research community, actively involved in shaping the development of databases and creating interoperability between online archives. The concerted effort will bring together a fragmented landscape and provide scholars with the tools to navigate the vast world of medieval chant across time and geography.

Over the next seven years, Dr. Bain will create an online platform that links and synergizes plainchant databases around the world. The new digital tool will provide scholars with a vast electronic resource to deepen their understanding of the a cappella chants and those who created and recited them.

To help the researcher take her program from solo performance to orchestral symphony, Canada's Social Sciences and

Humanities Research Council is providing a \$2.5-million Partnership Grant. The funding will support the work of 23 co-investigators, 24 collaborators and 20 partner organizations in Canada and around the world who have committed more than \$3.5 million in in-kind contributions.—*Andrew Riley*

**Two Dalhousie scholars bestowed one of Canada's highest academic honours**

The Royal Society of Canada (RSC) added two world-class researchers from Dalhousie to their esteemed ranks. Dalhousie's newest RSC Fellow is Dr. Krista Kesselring of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science. She joins more than 2500 distinguished Canadians from all branches of learning elected by peers for making remarkable contributions in the arts, the humanities and the

sciences, as well as in Canadian public life.

Dr. Stefanie Colombo of the Faculty of Agriculture joins 400 fellow academics as an RSC Member in the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. This title recognizes individuals who have begun demonstrating leading scholarly, research or artistic excellence within 15 years of completing a post-doctoral program. They are elected for a period of seven years.

"In the realm of Canadian academia, there are few accolades more esteemed than induction into the Royal Society of Canada as a Fellow or Member," says Dr. Alice Aiken, Dalhousie's vice-president of research and innovation. "This honour is richly deserved. The ground-breaking research of Drs. Kesselring and Colombo has significantly advanced the frontiers of their respective fields and deepened our comprehension of the world around us."—*Andrew Riley* ■



Dr. Krista Kesselring, left, and Dr. Stefanie Colombo.

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# found.

## Celebrating a century of close quarters

Nova Scotia's 11 degree-granting institutions collaborate in many ways, but the relationship between Dalhousie and King's College is decidedly special. This year marks the 100th anniversary of their Agreement of Association, which was brought to fruition three years after a fire destroyed King's beloved home in Windsor. Earlier efforts to create a union between them had failed, as had several later attempts to establish a wider federation of Maritime colleges.

The Carnegie Foundation of New York, which had an expressed interest in Maritime education, agreed to assist King's if the college were willing to join with Dalhousie and move its campus to Halifax. The Faculty of Arts would become a joint faculty of Dal and King's professors, the latter to be funded by the foundation—hence King's Carnegie Professors, who still teach across both universities. Other terms of association included Dalhousie's sole right to confer academic degrees and the transfer of King's library collections and scientific apparatus to Dalhousie. In exchange, Dalhousie would provide up to five acres of Studley Campus on which King's could rebuild, with the provision that the college buildings be in keeping with Dalhousie's established style and that plans be approved by their de facto university architect, Andrew Cobb.

It would be six more years before King's had the money to build. In the meantime, the college, with its 85 students, moved into Birchdale, a former hotel on the Northwest Arm bought by Dalhousie to serve as a student residence. In 1930 King's opened the doors to its new campus, nestled on Studley's northwest corner. Built of blue-grey quartzite dotted with red stones, the buildings were both reminiscent of King's Windsor heritage and at ease alongside Dalhousie's neo-Georgian ironstone campus. Distinct but harmonious, a fine reflection on the association itself. And a century later, good neighbours still make good friends.—Jennifer Lambert ■

Blueprints for the  
University of King's  
College

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[dal.ca/archives](http://dal.ca/archives)



## RESEARCH ROUNDUP

By Theresa Anne Salah and Alison Auld



Lifesaving Society of Nova Scotia's Paul D'Eon, centre, with Dal Engineering students (left to right) Willem Glozanski, Liam Carson, Zach Gould, Tanner Duplessis

### **Saving those swept into the sea** Discovery & Innovation

Peggy's Cove is one of Canada's most iconic sites, with its distinctive lighthouse and rugged coastline drawing roughly 800,000 visitors every year. It is also a place that carries certain risks due to high waves that have swept people off the rocks and into the sea. The often tragic outcome prompted Dalhousie Engineering students to develop a device that can keep people afloat until they can be rescued.

The team designed and built a tubular launching device that will shoot an inflatable life-jacket to the victim within the critical 60 seconds after they fall in. It can travel 100 feet through high-force winds and features CO<sub>2</sub> cannisters that can inflate a life-jacket, which is tethered to the launcher by a plastic safety rope, allowing bystanders on-shore to pull the victim to safety.

**RESEARCHERS:** Willem Glozanski, Zach Gould, Liam Carson, Paul D'Eon and Tanner Duplessis.

### **Distant marine food source clogged with microplastics** Environment, Climate Action, Life on Land, Sustainable Ocean

It is a food elevator for bottom-dwelling animals in the deep sea: the algae *melosira arctica* grows rapidly under Arctic sea ice, forming metre-long cell chains that become an important food source for marine life and bacteria.

In addition to food, however, Dalhousie researchers have determined these aggregates also transport a dubious cargo into the deep sea: microplastics.

The team collected samples of the algae and surrounding water from ice floes off Greenland in 2021 and found the algae contained about 10 times the amount of plastics compared to the sea water. It enters the food chain when the zooplankton is eaten by fish, such as polar cod which are eaten by seabirds and seals and in turn by polar bears.

The detailed analysis found a variety of different plastics, including polyethylene, polyester, polypropylene, nylon, acrylic and many more.

**RESEARCHERS:** Steve Allen, Ocean Frontier Institute; Alfred Wegener Institute; University of Birmingham

### **Winter offers no defence against Lyme-infected ticks** Environment, Climate Action, Life on Land

Winter used to offer a reprieve from the irritation and potential health risks associated with certain species of ticks—the leggy arachnids that are tough to kill and can carry a host of diseases. Sub-zero temperatures were thought to reduce their survival rates, but new research shows that female deer ticks infected with the pathogen that causes Lyme disease are more likely to survive winter than uninfected female ticks.

Researchers collected ticks on Nova Scotia's south shore and monitored their overwintering abilities in forests and dune grasses from 2018 to 2021. They found that infected ticks had greater survival rates compared to uninfected ticks for three consecutive winters, raising questions as



Microplastics fall to the ice or are carried there by seawater and become embedded in the slime below the ice before drifting into marine food webs





Nearly 40 per cent of exploited vertebrate species are threatened by humans

to whether the presence of the pathogen makes them able to tolerate the cold.

**RESEARCHERS:** Shelley Adamo, Amal El Nabbout; Teikyo University; Acadia University

### World's most voracious predators? It's us Life on Earth

It's long been known that humans exact a heavy toll on the environment, but quantifying that impact compared to other species has proved a little trickier...until now.

An international team of researchers analyzed human 'use' data for 45,000 vertebrate species, finding that more than one-third of all vertebrate species on Earth are now being used by humans who were found to take up to 300 times more prey species than their competitors, causing outsized impacts on natural ecosystems.

As a result, almost 40 per cent of those exploited vertebrate species are now threatened by humans.

Humans also use prey species differently. While other top predators kill almost exclusively for food, human's practice of capturing terrestrial animals for the pet trade outnumbered food uses almost two to one.

**RESEARCHERS:** Boris Worm; University of Victoria; Raincoast Conservation Foundation; UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology; University of British Columbia; University of Northern British Columbia; University of California; São Paulo State University; Florida International University; Oregon State University; University of Victoria; Hakai Institute.

### Combatting stress linked to cancer

Healthy People,  
Healthy Communities,  
Healthy Populations

Getting a diagnosis of prostate cancer can be devastating, carrying with it profound psychological stress, feelings of isolation and anxiety.

To address that, a team of scientists and physicians at Dalhousie developed the Prostate Cancer Patient Empowerment Program (PC-PEP) and found in a study that it significantly lowered rates of depression and other forms of psychological distress compared to those receiving standard care.

The program provides online physical, mental and social support over a six-month period to men being treated for prostate cancer. It consists of daily e-mails with video instructions on patient activities and healthy living guidance, including dietary recommendations, physical fitness, stress reduction and social connection recommendations.

At six months, patients in the control group had almost four times higher odds for psychological distress and need for psychological treatment than men who received the PC-PEP intervention.

**RESEARCHERS:** Gabriela Ilie, Rob Rutledge, Ricardo Rendon, Ross Mason, Cody MacDonald, Michael J. Kucharczyk, Nikhilesh Patil, David Bowes, Greg Bailly, David Bell, Joseph Lawen, Michael Ha, Derek Wilke, Peter Massaro, Jeffery Zahavich, George Kephart.





# events.

## Champagne Social

At the Dal Alumni Days Champagne Social, guests enjoyed a delicious buffet and toasted milestone alumni. The highlight was the bestowing of a new alumni award—the Golden Eagle Lifetime Achievement Award—to Dr. Margaret Oulton (PhD’75).



## Community Day

In July, Dal Agriculture celebrated its 50th Community Day focused on community, education, and fun. Activities included live music, a slip ‘n’ slide at the bubble barn, garden tours, farm animal visits, a dunk tank, logging games and hayrides, along with many educational displays and booths.



## Open Dialogue Live

At an Open Dialogue Live event, ocean scientists and research partners described how they’re working to preserve the ocean’s health to mitigate climate change.



## Dal Alumni Link

Alumni learned about the Dal Alumni Link—Dal’s alumni mentorship program—at a mixer in May.



## Community Meet and Greet

Dal set up a satellite office in the Mi'kmaw community of Millbrook First Nation that is home to employees from Dal's Office of Equity and Inclusion devoted to Indigenous Community Engagement.



## Secret Codes

To acknowledge Emancipation Day on August 1, the Dal Art Gallery & Dalhousie Office of Equity and Inclusion hosted a talk by curator Dr. David Woods (LLD'22) of the gallery's exhibit *The Secret Codes: African Nova Scotian Quilts*.



## Here We Code

Dal's Faculty of Computer Sciences took part in the second annual Here We Code month in May. The faculty is looking to offer more year-round tech-focused activities to engage alumni, youth, professionals, post-secondary institutions, government, and industry.

## AND MORE!

### Meet a Scientist

The Faculty of Science hosted "Meet a Scientist" in August. Attendees were able to ask questions about climate change, the ocean, clean technology and more, plus see demonstrations.



### Dal Engineering

In May, alumni and friends had the opportunity to tour three additive manufacturing labs at Dal Engineering that together, allow study of the entire additive manufacturing cycle. Included was a tour of the new gas atomizer—the first of its kind in a Canadian university.



## WANT TO RECEIVE EVENT INVITATIONS?

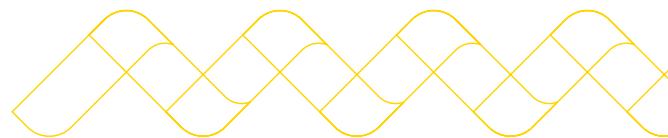
Update your address at [alumni.dal.ca/update](https://alumni.dal.ca/update) or email [alumni.records@dal.ca](mailto:alumni.records@dal.ca)  
See the latest events listings: [alumni.dal.ca/events](https://alumni.dal.ca/events)





# read . watch . listen .

Dal alumni and faculty share their books, television shows, films, webinars, and podcasts.



1.

## 1. BOOK **Wonder World**

By **K.R. Byggdin**

K.R. Byggdin (BA'22) has won the \$30K Thomas Raddall Atlantic Fiction Award for their debut novel. Weaving a heartfelt queer narrative with humour, honesty and grace, Byggdin has proven themselves a writer to watch.

Did you know you can **ORDER BOOKS AND MORE ONLINE** from the Dalhousie Bookstore? Go to [dal.ca/bookstore](https://dal.ca/bookstore)

## 2. RADIO **How Halifax technology could help in the fight against climate change**

By **Dr. Boris Worm and Dr. Will Burt (PhD'16)**

In a February 6, 2023, segment of CBC NS's program, *Mainstreet*, Dr. Worm discusses ocean acidification and how technology being developed and tested in Halifax could help prevent global temperatures from rising with guest Dal alum, Dr. Burt. <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-37-mainstreet-ns/clip/15964666-how-halifax-technology-help-fight-climate-change>

## 3. BOOK **Listening to Laredo**

By **Mehnaaz Momen (MPA'97)**

In a matter of mere decades, the city of Laredo, which houses the largest inland port in the U.S., has changed, not only in terms of its physical landscape, but also in terms of its people and identity.

## 4. TV & RADIO **Power Play**

Hosted by **Vassy Kapelos (MA'06)**

Former CBC journalist Kapelos is the Chief Political Correspondent and host of CTV News Channel's daily political program, *Power Play*. She also hosts the iHeartRadio program *The Vassy Kapelos Show*.

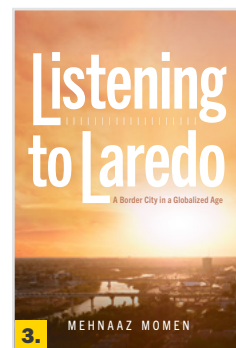
## 5. BOOK **Milk, Eggs, Butter and Broccoli**

By **Dr. Rishi Gupta and Dr. Anuradha Mishra Gupta**

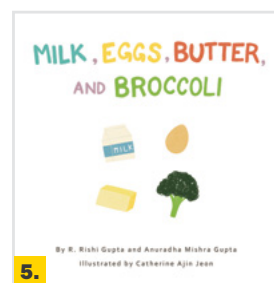
Young readers can practice counting, learn the names of their fingers, test their memory, sing, and more with this book written by spouses and Dal professors Dr. Rishi Gupta and Dr. Anu Mishra, and illustrated by Catherine Ajin Jeon. All proceeds from 2023 sales will be donated to the Halifax IWK Children's Hospital.

## 6. PODCAST **Sciographies**

Season five of *Sciographies*, a podcast and radio show produced by the Faculty of Science, has launched with eight new episodes featuring conversations about chemistry, clean technology, oceanography and more. It's available on most podcast apps or by visiting [dal.ca/sciographies](https://dal.ca/sciographies).



3.



5.



# Where ambition meets opportunity

**Dalhousie University is a place for  
those who want to have it all.**

Dal offers the best in groundbreaking research with world-changing professors and over 200 programs. Students get hands-on experience tackling real-world problems, all while being part of a supportive community in one of the most naturally stunning places in Canada.

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## PEOPLE

From the age of five, **KEEGAN LEAHY** (BSc'20) dreamt of becoming a professional NASCAR driver. Now, the Halifax native is applying his Dal studies in physics, atmospheric science and meteorology to his new career as a sim driver and performance consultant for 23XI Racing—a professional, American auto-racing organization that competes in the NASCAR Cup series—helping make those dreams a reality.

### 24 HOURS

**7 A.M.** Most days, I work from 23XI's head office in Mooresville, N.C., testing simulations to help NASCAR drivers prepare for upcoming race weekends. Today, our team is stationed at the North Wilkesboro Speedway for a full day of testing Goodyear tires and analyzing data.

**8 A.M.** I help set up ramps and scales to measure the car before the driver starts. This speedway hasn't been used in decades, so the ground is uneven. It takes time to adjust and re-adjust things, but I enjoy the challenge.

**10 A.M.** Over the course of 20 laps, the driver gets a feel for the tires while we track how the car slows each lap. We also look to make sure the car is balanced—that the front tires wear as fast as the rear. There's moisture in the air, so I'm applying my studies in meteorology to determine how a race strategy could be impacted by weather.

**12 P.M.** Catering has arrived with fajitas. Fitness and nutrition are big parts of the culture here—it's almost competitive! Lunch re-energizes us to perform at our best for the rest of the afternoon.

**2 P.M.** We continue to use our tools and technology to test drive the race car, tracking data from each lap. When the car doesn't turn well, or the rear tires spin out, that's something we focus on. I'm learning a lot today—all of which can later be applied to my simulation work.

**4 P.M.** The workday will end soon but I stay a little longer to watch the lightning and wait out rush hour on the interstate. Surprisingly, I don't like to contend with traffic.

**9 P.M.** There's much less traffic in the evening, so I take this opportunity to take a drive and get some fresh air. I like fast cars in racing and simulation, but I also enjoy slow, relaxing drives in the real world. Hopefully, I'll be able to find a spot to watch lightning from a thunderstorm off in the distance.



Keegan Leahy at work and on the track





## SPOTLIGHT

Dean Smith at the rink with his son

Glance around any amateur hockey dressing room in Nova Scotia and the faces you're likely to see are mostly male and mostly white. Halifax attorney **DEAN SMITH** (BA'95, LLB'99) is on a mission to change that.

In addition to his busy law career, Smith sits on the Board of Directors at Hockey Nova Scotia as the Chair of Diversity and Inclusion, where he works to make the sport more welcoming for people living with disabilities, African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, and LGBTQ+ players of all genders.

Smith says he's unapologetic about demanding change and budget lines and he welcomes challenges. "I get frustrated all the time," Smith says, "but I welcome the impediments; I welcome the roadblocks. Because if you can see them, you can address them and you can fix them."

And his work is being recognized. In 2023, Smith received the NHL's Willie O'Ree Community Hero Award, given to somebody who positively impacts their community through hockey. "Dean constantly works to create a friendly and safe space for everyone," says O'Ree, who was the first Black player to compete in the NHL. "He gives back in so many ways to grow the game."

Growing the game is exactly what Smith had in mind when his Diversity and Inclusion Task Force at Hockey Nova Scotia noticed a lack of registrations from historically excluded players. When the task force asked parents to name their top three impediments to accessing the game, number one was cost, number two was time and number three was a lack of a

sense of belonging. "It's an echo chamber," says Smith. "Everybody's telling the same story from different communities."

So, in addition to supporting underrepresented players, Smith makes sure to celebrate them too. Because "how can you look up to role models when you don't see them?" he says. "And it's not just having a certain number of players of colour in the NHL. What about in your community?"

The community level is where Smith thrives. In July 2023, Hockey Nova Scotia supported the HFX Pride Cup, a tournament entirely for LGBTQ+ players. Smith serves as lead instructor to the Black Youth Ice Hockey Program and also supports Breaking Ice—a program for new Canadians to learn hockey rules and jargon. "It has an impact on how our underrepresented communities see the game, and whether they feel invited or not," Smith says.

For Smith, diversity isn't a conversation that happens once and fixes everything. "We have to treat it as something that people become *proficient* at and continually learn," he says. "That's how we change the game." —Emily MacKinnon ■





#### WHY I GIVE

For more than 30 years, **DR. JENNIFER MOORE** (MD'86) has been making annual gifts to Dalhousie, mainly in support of the Faculty of Medicine. She hopes her gifts are helping to make medical education more affordable, and that this will lead to an increase in the number and diversity of practicing physicians.

**“** I remember working summers during my studies to make ends meet,” says Dr. Moore. “I’m sure it’s more challenging now and that many students probably don’t even think about applying. I want to get more individuals going to medical school who otherwise might not have that opportunity, whether because of barriers related to cost or because they come from backgrounds that have been underrepresented in medicine.”

Dr. Moore decided to start giving to Dalhousie shortly after she graduated. “It seemed like the right thing to do, even if it was fairly minimal,” she says. “The university provided me with the skills, knowledge, and encouragement to become a physician and start my

own practice. It also gave my husband, Peter [Borwein], his first academic job as professor in the Department of Mathematics. Dalhousie has had a big impact on my life.” That connection has deepened significantly over the years; two of Dr. Moore’s daughters are also Dalhousie alumni.

In 2022, Dr. Moore was inspired to make a special gift to Dalhousie through the Fill the House Seat Campaign. She did so in memory of Peter, who passed away in 2020 from complications related to multiple sclerosis. The opportunity to have a seat in his name at the Joseph Strug Concert Hall resonated with her.

“I’d been looking into different things and remembered all the times we went to the Arts Centre,” Dr. Moore says. “We had so many positive memories, so I decided to support the campaign with a chair for persons with disabilities.”

As Dr. Moore prepares to retire from her practice in BC, she is also reflecting on more ways to continue her legacy of giving to Dalhousie. She hopes that, by sharing her story, she can inspire other alumni to think about how they can give.

“I think people often feel like they have to give a certain amount before they can be comfortable doing so,” Dr. Moore says. “But there are lots of ways you can help, even if you start small, that can really make a difference over time.” —*Mark Campbell* ■

"There are lots of ways you can help, even if you start small, that can really make a difference over time."



## INNOVATOR

**TOMMY DAVIES** is chief science officer of Foodimprover, a startup that helps companies produce better fruit with the power of gene mapping.

**INNOVATION:** Building on unique research from Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture, Foodimprover is set to usher in a new age of gene mapping that will help companies improve the taste, shelf life and resilience of our favourite fruits and berries. Tommy Davies is the genomic cartographer behind the venture. The Dal PhD student says that, while gene editing has revolutionized rice, wheat, and corn, rosaceous crops like apples and strawberries have lagged due to the absence of precise gene editing targets. He says to think of gene editing as a vehicle and the targets as a GPS system. Until now, he says, the GPS system for rosaceous crops has been offline.

**FOUNDATION:** Davies' PhD supervisor is Dr. Sean Myles, a leading researcher at Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture with a penchant for entrepreneurship. Davies says Dr. Myles continually pushes students

to look at their research from every angle. "He encourages us to think beyond the science, to the greater implications of our discoveries and their business and policy implications," he says. The push obviously worked. Better than giving him an "A," Dr. Myles has signed on as Davies' co-founder in Foodimprover. To get started, the pair turned to Dal's Office of Commercialization and Industry Engagement. "OCIE was a great early resource for us. They had plenty of wisdom and examples to share that helped us position ourselves early on," says Davies. They also took Dal's Lab2Market Launch program where Davies says they put in the hard work to validate their business idea. "They emphasize the importance of doing the thing that no one wants to do—cold calling industry contacts," he says. But it paid off. "Those conversations are where we formulated our market intelligence and our understanding of where we could potentially capture value."

**INSPIRATION:** There is nothing like a blank page to motivate creative thinking. In the case of Dr. Myles' lab, it took the form of a whiteboard chart that prompted students to pitch their ideas for the most valuable crops for the team to explore. With ideas buzzing in their heads the prof and students went for a hike up Nova Scotia's Cape Split. While treading the path, they stumbled on a conundrum—there's a lot of gene editing activity, but not a lot of success. Why? Davies says they quickly arrived at a conclusion—they don't know where to edit. "Wow, it's so wild that these groups are still pouring all this money into gene editing when they have no targets. And we thought, given our expertise and our resources we can build the maps."

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Beyond the promise of breaking into a multibillion-dollar industry—they are talking with a range of key players in the sector—Davies says there is a potential for Foodimprover to make significant contributions to strengthening global food security. He says that dramatic shifts in agricultural environments and new pests resulting from climate change will increase the need for rapid development and adaptation of new crops. "We need to be able to accelerate the breeding process or we're going to run into a real problem," he says. "So, when something bad comes up, we have the tools to address it, not on the current scale of 30 years, but perhaps on the scale of four, five or six."

—Andrew Riley ■

"[We're encouraged] to think beyond the science, to the greater implications of our discoveries."





## SPOTLIGHT

**DR. BONNY IBHAWOH** (PhD'03) is a Professor of International Human Rights at McMaster University with over three decades of research in the field of human rights and transitional justice. He draws attention to the fact many African and Asian voices and stories are under-represented in conversations around human rights.

**Dr.** Bonny Ibhawoh was already a burgeoning scholar and a teaching assistant at Bendel State University in Nigeria in the 1990s when the military regime that had overthrown the country's democratically elected government turned even more repressive. This turn of events set his life on an altered course.

Nigeria's military leaders considered universities hotbeds of a pro-democracy movement and closed several universities, including Bendel State (now called Ambrose Alli) University, and Dr. Ibhawoh's work was suddenly halted. He took what he thought would be a temporary leave from his native country, and headed to the UK to become a research fellow with the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

"1994 was a defining year for me," he says, explaining that he intended to do human rights research and scholarship, then return home. But Dr. Ibhawoh discovered he could be more useful to Nigeria from afar, writing reports and working with NGOs and pro-democracy groups. He's never moved back.

### DISCOVERING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY AT DAL

He came to Dalhousie as a Killam Scholar in the late 1990s, saying he was offered an opportunity to be part of a vibrant intellectual community engaged in innovative scholarship. "I found an interdisciplinary community of students and faculty interested in international studies that provided space for debates about human rights."

In the second year of his PhD, he was appointed "residence don" (a role model providing support to the King's residence community) of Cochran Bay at the University of King's College. "The opportunity to live on campus and mentor undergraduate students greatly enriched my experience."

In the years since he graduated from Dal, Dr. Ibhawoh has become one of the world's leading historians and scholars on universal human rights from a global perspective, and restorative justice, writing nine books and countless journal articles. He has held the professorial Chair in Global Human Rights at McMaster University and has been director of the university's Centre for Human Rights and Restorative Justice. He recently renewed a three-year term as chair of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights to Development and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Through it all, he has worked tirelessly to change the discourse around human rights globally so that it includes everybody.

European, Colonial and imperial states do not have exclusivity over human rights, he argues, and he's spent years drawing attention to the fact African and many Asian voices and stories are under-represented in conversations around human rights. "My critique," he says, "is that the human rights doctrine must be universal to command legitimacy."





of vaccines globally. If certain countries are hoarding vaccines, it makes citizens in other countries more vulnerable to disease. And as we saw during the pandemic, one variant from a country that is under-vaccinated can have a global impact.

Regarding climate change, Dr. Ibhawoh questions what obligations countries who have already been through industrial

revolutions have to help countries not there yet. Once again, standards set in more industrially advanced nations can't be equitably and universally applied to all.

#### **'DISCOURSE OF THE WEST'**

His goal is to bring oft-ignored perspectives into big debates of human rights, which he says have been disproportionately centred around the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948. Written after and largely in response to WWII, the UN's Declaration on other early international human rights principles were inspired mostly by Western liberal traditions, says Dr. Ibhawoh. While these principles are important for promoting human rights, they should not be seen as gold standards. He calls international human rights "work in progress enriched by humanistic ideas across the world."

"It came to be seen that certain regions of the world are custodians of human rights," Dr. Ibhawoh says. He laments that the discipline has been exclusionary and is relentless in his drive to make it, and human rights practice, more inclusive and empathetic. "I worry that the world, that society, has become too individualistic," says Dr. Ibhawoh. "We need to recall a little bit of collective humanity."

"I worry that the world has become too individualistic. We need to recall a little bit of collective humanity."

#### **THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN, CONTRIBUTE TO AND ENJOY DEVELOPMENT**

As a UN advisor, one doctrine he champions is the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development. It affirms, he explains, the right of individuals and groups to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy development. When asked to break that down into what it means in practical terms, Dr. Ibhawoh offers contemporary examples including COVID and climate change.

With COVID, he says the application of the right to development framework could be in the fair distribution

#### **PROVIDING SPACE FOR DEBATE**

He says academics and intellectuals do have a role in the great debates of our time, and he says it's his job to provide context for them, often through a historical lens. "It's the privilege of academics who have been trained and schooled to provide a space for debate, and to make evidence-informed arguments."

Dr. Ibhawoh is also a lifelong advocate for increasing public participation in matters of political discourse and creation of policy and has furthered this through creation of Participedia, a crowd-sourced, open-access web platform. Calling it "Wikipedia for political participation," he says even during the pandemic when people worldwide were largely confined to their homes, they could participate in information collection through Participedia submissions and retrievals over their phones in real time.

At the heart of Dr. Ibhawoh's soaring career and significant contribution to human rights and legal scholarship is his belief in *Ubuntu*—an African word meaning 'humanity to others.' It is described as reminding us 'I am what I am because of who we all are' or more simply, 'I am because we are.' It describes the universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity.

"A person is a person through other people," says Dr. Ibhawoh. He says he works to establish middle ground in a polemical world. "Not being too ideological but finding a space for debate," is how he describes it.

As to what propels him the most? "Our global cause. We're all in this together." —Alison DeLory ■





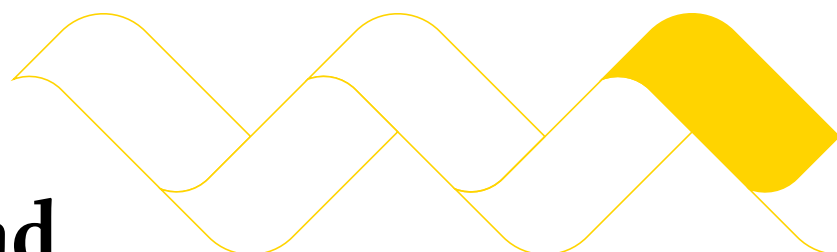
Snack time for sea turtles

BRUCE BOTTOMLEY



## PLACES

# Aquatron makes waves in marine and climate research



Dalhousie professor

**DR. PAUL BENTZEN** is in a race against time. Supported by a team of researchers and students, he's breeding and studying the Atlantic Whitefish with the goal of bringing it back from the brink of extinction.

But he's not doing this in the Petite Rivière watershed—the only place in the world where they live in the wild. He's doing it at the Aquatron Laboratory in the Life Sciences Centre.

"We can't study them in the wild because there are not enough left, and that would be too invasive given their endangered status," Dr. Bentzen explains. "The Aquatron creates an opportunity for us to better understand their biological needs and look at solutions such as expanding their habitat."

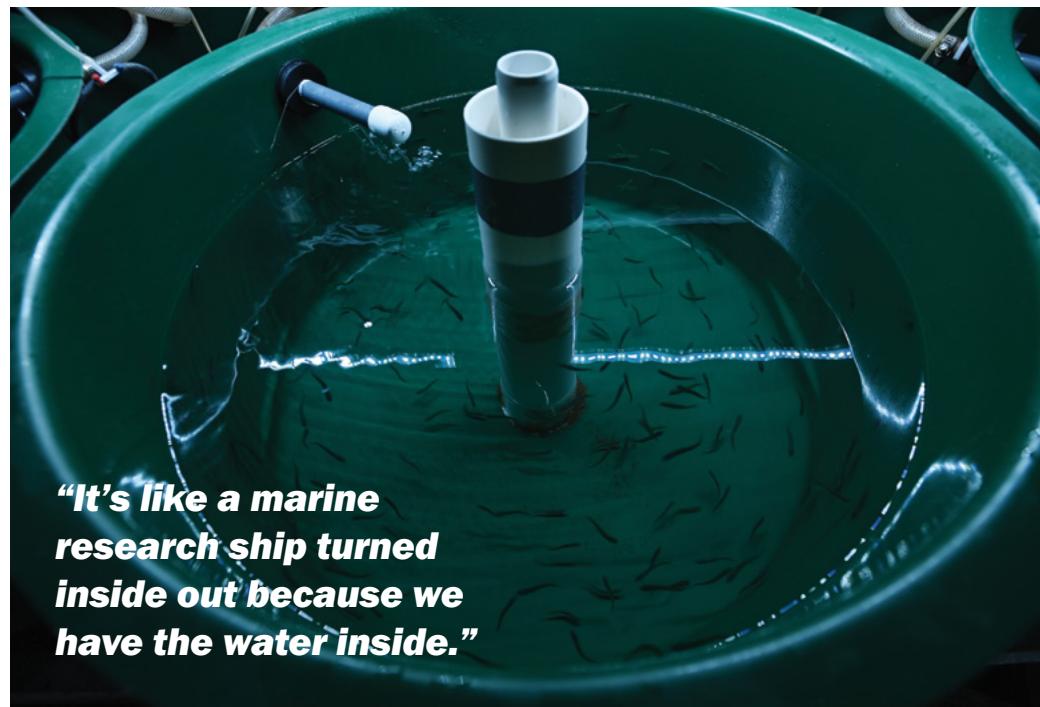
Built in 1974, the Aquatron is a marine and freshwater research facility that is the largest of its kind among any university in Canada and among the best in the world. Its renown rests in part on its six large, specialized seawater tanks, which range in capacity from one litre to nearly 800,000 litres of water—all able to mimic an open-sea environment. And it has a dedicated support team that assists Dalhousie researchers with everything from setting up their experiments to feeding the marine life being studied.

"It's like a marine research ship turned inside out because we have the water inside," explains John Batt, the Aquatron's manager. "And like a ship, we couldn't keep it running without a great team. Their expertise, combined with our cutting-edge equipment, enable us to engage in research activities that few other centres can do."

It's no wonder that the Aquatron has attracted interest from people like former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Prince Albert II of Monaco, who have

both toured the facility. The Aquatron has also attracted research grants, gifts, and partnerships that are not only strengthening Dalhousie's reputation as a world-leading hub of ocean research, but also creating new opportunities to conserve marine life and improve the health of the planet.

One such opportunity is Ocean Alk-align. This ambitious Dalhousie-led project will use the Aquatron to explore ocean alkalinity enhancement (OAE) as a possible solution to global warming. In May 2023, the project



**"It's like a marine research ship turned inside out because we have the water inside."**

Some inhabitants of the Aquatron





received a \$15 million gift from Carbon to Sea, a non-profit philanthropic program that supports OAE research.

“Scientists agree that OAE has enormous potential to permanently remove and store carbon, and our mission is to empower scientists to determine whether it can succeed at the scale we need,” says Mike Schroepfer, board chair of the Carbon to Sea Initiative and former chief technology officer at Meta Platforms, which owns Facebook. “Given Dalhousie’s expertise in the space and its deep global network in ocean science, it became a natural partner for the project.”

The Aquatron will also be a driving force for the newly announced Beaty Centre for Marine Biodiversity. Scheduled to be completed in early 2025, this first-of-its-kind, interactive, ocean-focused science and discovery centre will be accessible to both the entire Dalhousie community and to the public. It will feature several exhibits that will demonstrate the outcomes of research in the Aquatron involving species under threat and will highlight the university’s efforts to conserve them.

The centre has been made possible thanks to an \$8.2 million gift from entrepreneur and conservationist Ross Beaty and his family. “Education and awareness about marine biodiversity are crucial to support informed action to protect it, particularly in light of today’s twin crises of global warming and species extinction,” says Beaty. “I am pleased to support Dalhousie University’s efforts to share its extensive expertise in marine science through the creation of this centre.”

As the Aquatron team prepares for these exciting undertakings, it is also looking to deepen collaborations with valued partners like Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada in Toronto, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in October 2023. The Aquatron hosted two adult green sea turtles while the aquarium was being built, and helped to develop an Atlantic fisheries exhibit at Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada featuring cod and halibut.

“It’s been a fantastic relationship from the start between us, Dalhousie, and the Aquatron lab,” says Peter Doyle, general manager of Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada. “The facility is great, but it’s the team



Peter Doyle

that they have put together that really makes it a pleasure to work with them. We are discussing how we can continue to collaborate going forward.”

Those discussions include the creation of an Atlantic Whitefish exhibit at Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada to share the species’ plight with millions of Canadians. It’s just one way that Batt envisions the Aquatron continuing to have an impact on ocean health and marine life conservation for years to come. “The world is changing, which means more research for us to do,” he says. “We’re ready, even as we adapt to meet the emerging challenges facing the planet.”

—Mark Campbell ■



Ross Beaty talks about the Centre for Marine Biodiversity



#### WHY I DO IT

**KAREINA CADEL**, Dal's manager of student experience, is making sure students get their academic year started off right.

**HER BACKSTORY:** Kareina Cadel cares about the environment. She began her post-secondary education in zoology, imagining her path would take her down the road of veterinary medicine, but quickly discovered it just wasn't the right choice for her. She pivoted to marine biology and spent her days in rivers and lakes of Ontario tagging freshwater molluscs and working as a scuba diver for Ripley's Aquarium in Toronto. When it came time for her to further her education, Dal seemed like a natural choice, and Cadel completed her Master's in Resource and Environmental Management. After a few years of working in policy, research, and education it seemed a natural leap to take her love of science to Dal's Office of Sustainability, where she could put her interest in the environment to good use for her alma mater. She spent five years leading projects and programs aimed at reducing Dalhousie's impact such as Green Labs and Sustainable Events Certification. Always looking for a new challenge, this past summer she took a position as the manager of student experience in Student Affairs, where she's a steward of the environment in a different way—creating a positive atmosphere for students.

"I like the community aspect of working at a university—we're all Dal people working toward the common goal of making Dal better."

**HIGHLIGHTS:** As manager of student experience, one of Cadel's responsibilities is making sure Orientation Week at Dal runs smoothly so that students can get their year started off right. "Orientation Week is unique to working at an academic institution, so getting people involved in it and remembering that the first day of school is fun and there's a lot of energy and excitement, especially for new students, is important." She's also working to keep the momentum going after O-Week winds down. "This year probably feels like the first really normal year we've had in a long time." She says that many of this year's students were in high school or early studies during the pandemic. "We wanted to partner with all of the key groups on campus to create programming that is accessible as possible to our students, but also engaging and exciting for them to remind them that university supposed to be a really fun, exciting time and not terrifying, because it can feel terrifying."

**WHY I DO IT:** Cadel started her university career when she was 19 as a resident assistant (RA) at the University of Guelph, so she's been tapped into what makes for a good student experience for a long time. "This is a really transformative time in people's lives," she says. She enjoys the community aspect of working at Dal and finds it especially rewarding to work with students who might be feeling a little lost because they don't know what the future holds. "I've had students do internships with me who've gone on to become professional planners or energy consultants, and they're doing good in the world. And we were helping to launch them." —AnnMarie MacKinnon ■



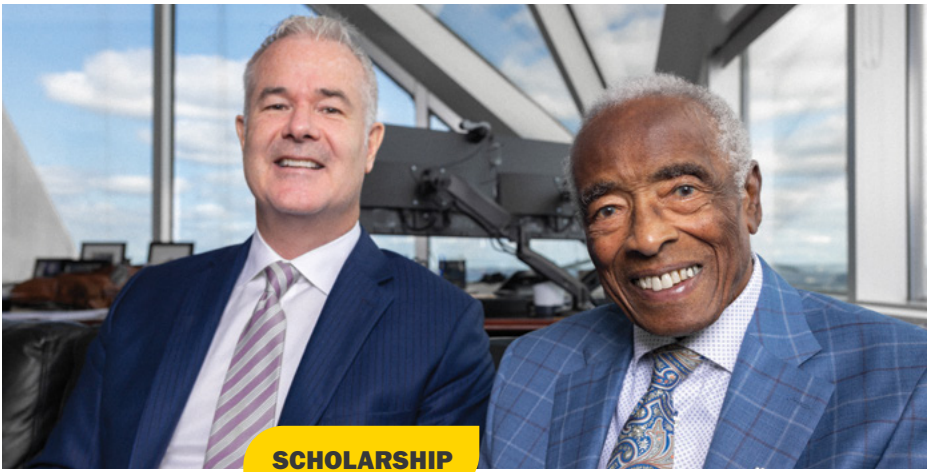


***“I hope they use that  
work to make the  
case for diversity  
and to effect change.  
That would make me  
very happy.”***

***—Senator Don Oliver***

You can give to the  
**SENATOR DON OLIVER  
SCHOLARSHIP** at  
[giving.dal.ca/oliver](http://giving.dal.ca/oliver)





## WADE DAWE creates SENATOR DON OLIVER SCHOLARSHIP

When Don Oliver (LLB '64, LLD '03) came to Dalhousie to study law in 1962, he had a clear objective: to right the many wrongs that Black people face. His fight for equity and justice has spanned his storied career, resulting in meaningful societal change for Nova Scotia and Canada.

As a first-year law student, he helped amend the bill that became the Fair Accommodation Practices Act, which made it illegal to deny anyone access to public spaces based on skin colour. That became the launch point for a legacy of social justice work both in his practice and as Canada's first Black male senator, resulting in laws to protect women, children, people with disabilities, and racialized people.

"The fact that I have been able to bring about change and break down white privilege—the one thing that continues to hold back all Canadians of African descent—without violence means the most to me," says Oliver, whose efforts have earned him the Order of Canada, the Order of Nova Scotia, King's Counsel honours, five honorary degrees, and a number of prestigious medals and awards. In September 2023, his efforts were also recognized with the Dalhousie Schulich School of Law's 2023 Weldon Award for Unselfish Public Service.

Oliver's tenacity, dedication, and accomplishments have served as an inspiration for others, including entrepreneur, financier, and investor Wade Dawe. The chair and CEO of Numus Financial Inc. has honoured his dear friend's legacy by establishing the Senator Don Oliver Scholarship. Dawe says the program will offer financial support as well as access to mentoring, advice, and other supports to help African Nova Scotian students excel in their studies and their careers.

"Senator Oliver has dedicated his career and life to fighting racism and promoting equality," says Dawe. "While receiving an Oliver Scholarship does not rectify the injustices of the past 400 years, it will enable young Black students to continue walking the path that Senator Oliver has so courageously opened for them."

Oliver knows from his own experience how such support can make a difference. Receiving the Sir James Dunn Scholarship enabled him to earn the education he has used to tackle discrimination in all forms.

"The main purpose is to engage Black people throughout Nova Scotia who never thought of going to university," says Oliver. "Anything that Wade and I can do to remove barriers and help make that happen is for the good of the province and Canada."

The scholarship also honours Senator Oliver's longstanding connection to Dalhousie as a Sir James Dunn Scholar in Law, member of the Board of Governors, fundraiser and financial contributor, honorary degree recipient, and creator of new courses and teacher in law.

Now that Dawe has established the scholarship, he is leading the effort to raise funds to advance the education of Black youth in Nova Scotia. Oliver believes it could also inspire recipients to consider postgraduate education and research, which would be transformative for them and for Canada.

"I am hoping these African Nova Scotian students will learn, research, and write about their history," he says. "More than that, I hope they use that work to make the case for diversity and to effect change. That would make me very happy." —Mark Campbell ■

Wade Dawe and  
Senator Don Oliver at  
Dalhousie University



Every good photoshoot benefits from some helping hands. President Kim Brooks may be the focus of this feature, but she wanted to use the opportunity to help shine a spotlight on some of Dal's future alumni. Read more about the students, their backgrounds, and hopes for the future on p.33





BY RYAN MCNUTT

# Sharing the Spotlight

*Dal's 13th president and vice-chancellor, Dr. Kim Brooks*

Adapting to a pandemic world of screens instead of seminars wasn't easy for second-year Law student Haneen Al-Noman. A refugee from Yemen who'd settled in Halifax, she wasn't sure how the bonds and connections that defined her first-year experience in the Schulich School of Law would translate into Zoom lectures and meetings.

Then she enrolled in a course supporting the *Dalhousie Law Journal* and met its editor at the time, Kim Brooks.

"Honestly, Kim made the year bearable," says Al-Noman. "It was a small course during the peak of the pandemic, and what stood out was the way she made space for us to detach from our roles of 'student' or 'instructor' and talk to one another as people, and about all that we were going through that year. She allowed us to be ourselves."

Kim Brooks is nothing if not herself. She's as likely to be spotted in a cowboy shirt and decorative belt buckle as she is in a business suit. She's successfully led two different Dalhousie faculties through eras of growth and change—she's also someone who takes the time to write different convocation speeches for every Faculty to give each class their own uniquely meaningful moment. She sees inclusion as elemental to the academic experience and, by shepherding the 2015 *Belong* report, helped widen the conversation about diversity and equity at Dalhousie. A problem solver with big-picture energy, she's as eager to talk existential questions of "what" and "why" as she is figuring out how to get something new started.

Dr. Brooks's latest "something new": becoming Dalhousie's 13th president and vice-chancellor. Her appointment, which began in August, is noteworthy in that she's the first woman and the first open member of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community to be permanently hired in the role. But if you're trying to understand the excitement that surrounds her solely through those lenses, you're

likely missing a big part of the story. You get a little closer to the heart of it knowing, for example, that Dr. Brooks has continued to mentor Al-Noman through the last year of her studies and into the early days of her legal career—even while serving as dean of an entirely different Faculty.

"She's one of my favourite people that I've ever come across," says Al-Noman, who is preparing to clerk with the Supreme Court of Canada next year. "Kim makes you believe in yourself even when you don't."

The search for a university president is a comprehensive effort that casts its gaze nationally and globally for potential candidates. So what does it say about Dr. Brooks, and Dalhousie, that the search committee recommended the university's first internal presidential hire in over 40 years? Dalhousie Board Chair Cheryl Fraser, who led the hiring process as search committee chair, says it speaks volumes.

"Throughout the process, we got to see Kim bring forward this vibrant energy and ambition for Dalhousie," says Fraser. "She's someone with the ability to see and present Dal in a new light while holding true to our values. And she does this while making you feel like you've known her forever. Her ability to build that relationship with people is really something special."

That comes up time and time again when you ask people about Dr. Brooks: the sense of connection people have with her, no matter how brief the interaction. The Honourable Michael MacDonald, former chief justice of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, was first introduced to Dr. Brooks in 2010 when she arrived in Nova Scotia to serve as dean of the Schulich School of Law. Each year, the chief justice was invited to speak to the incoming Law class, allowing MacDonald to see how Dr. Brooks forged connections with new students and faculty from their first moments on campus.



**“ She’s someone with the ability to see and present Dal in a new light while holding true to our values.”**

“It’s a wonderful combination to have someone so kind and caring, giving and modest, but at the same time so unbelievably smart,” says MacDonald, who most recently chaired and served as commissioner of the Nova Scotia Mass Casualty Commission. “She’s the complete package—the EQ and the IQ.”

“She brings a particular vitality and vibrance to every single conversation she’s involved in, but she never thinks she has all the answers,” says Robert Orr, CEO and managing partner of the sustainable aquaculture impact investment fund Cuna Del Marr and member of the Faculty of Management advisory board. “That really creates space for others to participate. She’s always looking for ways to make things work for everyone involved—how to create a better future not out of compromise and concession, but in what we can co-create together.”

Co-creation and collaboration are distinctly top-of-mind for Dr. Brooks as she works through her busy first months in the President’s Office.

“What’s been delightful is the consistent feedback from people that they’re willing to help in whatever way we can think of,” she says. “And that’s everyone—from government to donors to former students, to faculty and staff here at Dal. They don’t just reach out to say ‘congrats’ but it’s, ‘I’m here if you need me. What can I do to help?’ And I think that really speaks to this moment we’re in as a university: people are looking to be part of something meaningful and purpose driven.”

**T**he story of how Dr. Brooks found her own sense of meaning and purpose is hardly a straight-line journey to the President’s Office. (To steal a line from her sister when told about her new appointment: “I always knew you’d be president of something, but I thought it would be more like a book club.”)

For one thing, Dr. Brooks has a diverse resumé of work outside the academy, be it as a practising lawyer in Toronto and London (UK), or in community capacities like chair of the Halifax Public Libraries board or president of the Canadian Centre for Legal Innovation in Sexual Assault Response. And her academic appointments and achievements have been robust, whether that’s becoming a 3M Teaching Fellow—Canada’s highest honour for university teaching—or serving as the Heward Stikeman Chair in the Law of Taxation at McGill University, or the Purdy Crawford Chair in Business Law at Dalhousie.

But university leadership? It had never crossed her mind until she reached a sort-of “ah-ha” moment eight or nine years into her career.

“I had this realization that I could see, with relative predictability, what the rest of my career would look like,” she says. “And don’t get me wrong: it was good! I’d walk away from academia after 40 years with an







Dr. Brooks and a few of Dal's outstanding students

amazing cluster of students, a solid enough body of scholarship, and a pretty rewarding career, all things considered. But all around me, I saw these people who were more talented than me, in all kinds of different ways, who were experiencing the frictions of university life. They were getting discouraged, or stopped doing things, or were flummoxed because they were running up against barriers.

"And what I realized is that what I love doing, and can be pretty good at, is getting obstacles out of people's way. When someone wants to do something and can articulate that to you, and you can enable it, it's the best feeling in the world."

If there's a Dalhousie experience that best exemplifies this aspect of Dr. Brooks's leadership, it might be the appointment she began in early 2020 as dean of the Faculty of Management.

Mike Smit was the associate dean, academic and part of a group of faculty members that met with Dr.

Brooks while she considered taking on the role. He didn't know her at the time—she had been dean and faculty member in a completely different academic discipline—but her name kept coming up as they considered who at Dal might have the skills needed to take on the challenge they faced.

"We were in an interesting space," says Dr. Smit, who has since stepped in to serve as acting dean following Dr. Brooks's appointments to the Provost's Office and, subsequently, the President's Office. "We had strengths, a lot of potential, but we kept getting bogged down in conversations about structure and internal governance. We weren't set up for what we needed to do, and we were looking for someone to help us decide what the right path was, to collectively come to a structure that works for what we needed."

Getting opinionated academics to align isn't easy at the best of times; doing so amid substantial disagreements, and through the arrival of a global



pandemic that isolated people more than ever before, might have seemed daunting to most. But Dr. Brooks approached it with the same sincerity, good humour, and willingness to listen with which she's done so much of her work. She met with every faculty member, read an awful lot, and took in as much information as she could to ground herself in the Faculty's people and what they cared about. The resulting process led to a new way of organizing the Faculty and its programs that was approved by Senate earlier this year—and, perhaps just as importantly, a shift in attitudes from one of concern to “cautious optimism,” as Dr. Smit puts it.

Chris Smith saw this work unfold as a member of the Faculty's advisory board and credits its success to Dr. Brooks's team-focused approach.

“It's very obvious she establishes an incredible rapport with the people she works with,” says Smith, executive vice-president, finance for Nova Scotia Power. “This was a Faculty struggling in what it was going to be and now, when that team engages with the advisory board, you can see the whole dynamic has shifted. It's a complete 180—a much more collegial and cohesive unit, with a strategy they're all engaged in. It demonstrates her ability to coach, to lead, to mentor, and to create a positive environment.”

“If I were to define one superpower for Kim, it's that she gets the best of the people around her,” says Dr. Smit. “She inspires the people she works with to want to do more interesting things and empowers them to do things they're excited about. And I think that's a power that will serve her very well as president.”

What does that people-focused power look like in the president's chair? Dr. Brooks says she sees the job as if a theatre company were to mash together the roles of artistic director and stage manager. It's about helping the company decide where it's going to place its creative energies—but also about ensuring the stage is set so everyone can hit their marks.

“I like being the person who helps people decide they want *Grease* to be the play they perform, and also to help make sure the pink car is placed where it's supposed to be,” she says, “but I'm not the one playing Sandra Dee.”

In other words: she's not the star. That lack of spotlight-seeking isn't just for show. It's why she was adamant about sharing her *DAL Magazine* cover with some of Dal's outstanding students. It's why she eschewed doing a traditional address at her installation ceremony this October, offering the stage to Law and Management Professor Sherry Pictou to discuss the Indigenous philosophy “seven generations” of impact. And it's why she's “relentless,” as Naomi Metallic puts it, when she sees potential in someone and wants to encourage them to step up and get involved.

“She's the person who encouraged me to apply to join [the faculty at] the law school,” says Prof. Metallic, Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy at Dalhousie. “If she wants to achieve something and thinks it's the right thing to do, she will not let go of it. And I know I'm not the only person she's done that for. It's an inspiring approach; it's made me want to do the same for others.”

As for what she hopes to inspire during her presidency, with Dal's strategic plan, *Third Century Promise*, at its halfway point, the university's immediate priorities are relatively clear. But she is keen to take advantage of this moment, and this enthusiasm she's feeling, to spark big conversations about Dalhousie and its future. How can we empower our people to push forward with their dreams and ambitions for Dalhousie and themselves? How can we unite behind a sense of purpose that defines and emboldens our vision for the rest of the century ahead? And how can we embody our sense of place and grow the vital contributions Dalhousie makes to Nova Scotia and beyond?

“I think she's not only the president Dalhousie needs right now, but what Nova Scotia needs as well,” says Candace Thomas, a Schulich Law alum and former Dal board chair who's currently the province's Deputy Minister of Justice. “She's someone who knows how important it is that Dalhousie be relevant to its community, and how to go out into that community—using the connections she has, and new ones she can make—in the spirit of true collaboration and openness and willingness to listen.”

Right now, what Dr. Brooks is hearing is understandably tinged by the heavy burdens of the past few years.

“We've been through this pandemic that has been very urgent, immediate, and isolating,” she says. “We have an obligation to reconnect people and purpose: how can we take the lessons we learned about our ability to change, our adaptability, all of that, and apply it to something we're all actually excited about and engaged in?”

And that comes back to the university's mission: educating and inspiring generations of students, cultivating new knowledge, accelerating innovation and the university's response to society's challenges, and so much more.

“A president has to hold true to the fundamental purpose and potential of a place like this and find ways to unite people around shared purpose, meaning, and joy,” says Dr. Brooks. “I believe pride is something people feel deep within themselves. They have to feel like they're part of contributing something meaningful to the world.

“I feel that pride in Dalhousie. I know many others do as well. But I think there are so many more people out there waiting for an invitation to be part of something meaningful, something purposeful. I think we can offer that to them.” ■



**Willy Kindo**

CIVIL-GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING,  
VARSITY MEN'S SOCCER #24

"I am eager to pursue a career in geotechnical engineering. Geotechnical engineers combine physics, mathematics, and environmental science, all crucial skills in designing safe and sustainable buildings, roads, and other infrastructure. This career path is a perfect fit for my analytical and problem-solving skills, which I have developed in the classroom and on the pitch playing soccer."

**Sartaj Singh Sidhu**

KINESIOLOGY,  
MEN'S VOLLEYBALL #11

"I chose Dal in pursuit of both academic and athletic excellence. Dal is a major research university which was appealing to me, and also has a rich history for the Tigers Men's Volleyball program."

**Sally Steinberg**

BIOCHEMISTRY,  
WOMEN'S SOCCER #18

"I attended Dalhousie to continue to develop as an athlete—under the guidance of Coach Cindy Tye—prepare myself academically for post-graduate studies and experience the beauty of the East Coast!"

**Tanisha Dabas**

COMPUTER SCIENCE

"Dalhousie's vibrant and inclusive campus community was a significant factor in my decision to study here. The university celebrates diversity and offers a supportive environment for students from all walks of life."

**Jasmine Kwan**

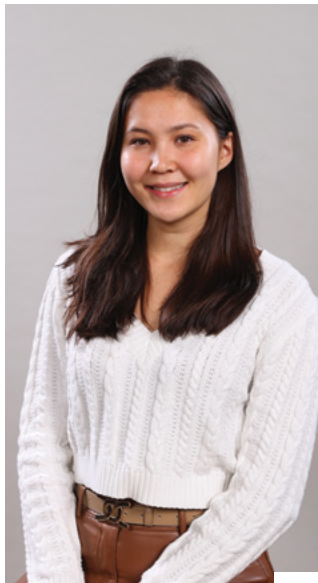
KINESIOLOGY, DALHOUSIE  
WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM #30

"I chose Dalhousie due to its small Kinesiology program, tight-knit community, and overall size of the city. The purpose of coming to Dalhousie was to find my true passions and possibly extend my hockey career. Due to Dal's diverse course selection and passionate professors, I have found new interests and connections which I wouldn't have found at a different university!"

**Travis Price**

COMPUTER SCIENCE,  
ULTIMATE FRISBEE TEAM #18,  
PHOTOGRAPHER FOR  
DAL STUDENT LIFE

"After I graduate, my goal is to spend some time off traveling and hiking. I also want to experiment with some different careers in computer science and commercial video production."

**Anna Kimoto**

ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCE, STUDENT  
ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR AT THE  
FACULTY OF OPEN LEARNING AND  
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

"As a mentor and an event organizer during my academic year at Dalhousie University I got inspired to work in a field where I can contribute to bringing a diverse community together to create positive changes and foster meaningful connections, making the society as a whole better for everyone."

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# The **END** of the Essay?

Staff and faculty on the AI revolution...  
and keeping it all in perspective

**BY PHILIP MOSCOVITCH**





Kate Crane's advice to professors worried about new artificial intelligence tools comes down to two simple words: **don't panic.**

An educational developer with Dal's Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT), Crane says, "I would just want to remind professors that they should prepare, but they don't necessarily have to turn their worlds upside down."

Sometimes it feels like everything, not just teaching, is being turned upside-down by new generative AI tools. (See sidebar: "What is AI anyway?")



Kate Crane, educational developer

Media are experimenting with articles written and illustrated by AI. Sometimes this goes wrong, as when Microsoft made the news for apparently AI-written travel articles that recommended Ottawa tourists visit a food bank "on an empty stomach." Meanwhile, search engines and blogging tools are incorporating AI assistants and chatbots, and photo-enhancing software is using AI to blur the lines between reality and touch-up more than ever.

And your feeds are likely full of AI images, some of them passing themselves off as real. (No, those babies are not really parachuting, and that isn't Van Gogh sitting on the front steps of his house at Arles.)

But what does it all mean for teaching, learning, and academic integrity? Does widespread adoption of ChatGPT mean the end of the essay as a meaningful evaluation tool? Are Dal's academic integrity officers about to be swamped? And should professors ban AI, incorporate it, or embrace it?

### A pedagogical problem and an integrity issue

In an online workshop held earlier this year, Computer Science professor Christian Blouin said AI tools like ChatGPT represent

"a pedagogical problem that has a short-term academic integrity issue—and we need to sort ourselves out very quickly." Dr. Blouin is Dal's institutional lead for AI strategy, and he says it doesn't make sense for a university with as many programs and disciplines as Dal to have one blanket policy on acceptable use of AI by students.

"In computer science, we're thinking about AI-driven tools differently than in engineering, for example," Dr. Blouin said in an interview. Meanwhile, in the arts and social sciences, "We are assessing critical thinking, but the medium through which we do that is writing."

The discussion around AI tools quickly draws us from specifics to big-picture questions: What are universities for? What is the purpose of assignments? What are we assessing and evaluating?

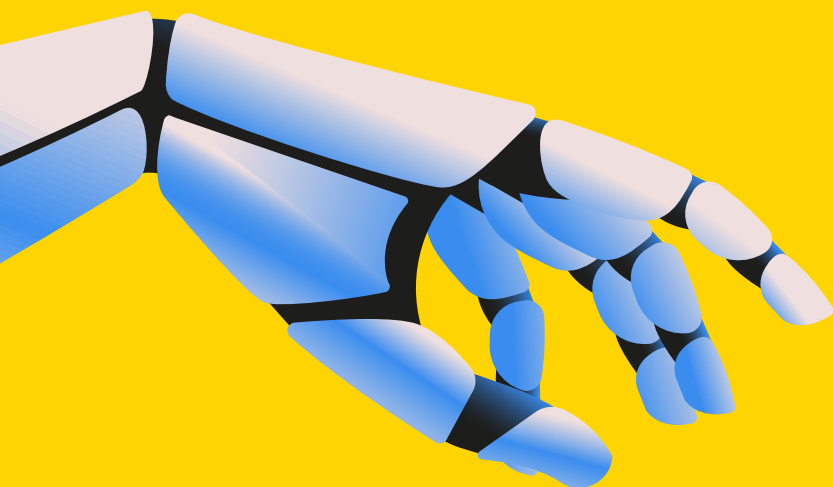
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**"Half the time—maybe more than half the time—AI is not the right approach."**

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When it comes to essays, for instance, "The point is not so much that you wrote something, but the process of thinking,

NICK PEARCE, STOCK







and the process of articulating what's underneath," Dr. Blouin says. "A tool is not an agent, it's not a person... People come to university so they can become citizens and professionals. And it's really important that we provide them with an education and give them an assessment of their abilities in making decisions, and reasoning through, and thinking ethically."

## AI in the workplace

Jesse Albiston (BComm'14) is a founder and partner at Bitstrapped, a Toronto-based consulting firm specializing in machine learning operations and data platforms. In short, they help companies figure out if and how they should be using AI.

The AI revolution has been good for Bitstrapped. Albiston says the company booked more work in the first quarter of this year than all of the previous year. At the same time, he cautions against jumping on the AI bandwagon just because that's what everyone else is doing. When the firm is approached by clients who want to integrate AI into their workflows, "Half the time—maybe more than half the time—AI is not the right approach," he says.

At the same time, he thinks learning how to use these tools should be an essential



Jesse Albiston, pictured on the sofa wearing a cap, with colleagues from Bitstrapped and a robot dog.

part of a university education—at least in some fields—because they are going to be an essential part of the workplace.

"If someone graduates university today, they should be using these tools. You're not going to be replaced by AI. You're going to be replaced by people using these tools," Albiston says. "In my company, I have employees one or two years out of university who are using these tools, and their output is

fantastic. They just need a bit of coaching on how it works."

But if they "just need a bit of coaching," is that something a university should be providing? Dr. Blouin is not so sure. He says graduates will definitely encounter AI integrated into tools like office suites. But universities should take a longer-term view, preparing students for careers that will last decades. (How many of us learned high

DON'T  
PANIC





# What is AI anyway?

The term AI, for artificial intelligence, is a bit of a misnomer for machine learning. That's because these tools are not actually intelligent. But they are very good at absorbing large amounts of data, finding correlations, and making predictions.

You likely encounter AI on a daily basis. Maybe you've listened to Spotify's AI DJ or used an AI transcription service (like one used in putting together this article). AI also shapes the choices you see when you're shopping online, and buying airline or concert tickets.

So, what's all the fuss about? In general conversation, AI seems to have become shorthand for generative AI tools: large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, and image generators, including Midjourney and Dall-E. These are revolutionary, in that they draw on existing datasets to create new content. As an AI resource from Dal's Centre for Learning and Teaching notes, they can appear intelligent because they "automatically adjust and improve... responses based on new information."

school tech skills we never used again, because technology had moved on?) That means thinking beyond ChatGPT and related large language model (LLM) tools.

Even if professors do want to integrate tools like ChatGPT, Crane says they should proceed with caution. While she believes "experimentation is good," she notes that at Dal, instructors are not allowed to require students to use AI for coursework. Apart from any pedagogical concerns, "There are data privacy concerns," she says. The CLT says on its website that making the use of AI tools mandatory for a class contravenes Nova Scotia privacy law and Dalhousie's Protection of Personal Information Policy.

## Process over output

English professor Rohan Maitzen, who teaches both literature and writing, feels "resentment towards the people who are propagating these systems on us without our permission." Teaching and learning writing is more about process than output, she says. And ChatGPT can't help with that. But because it offers the promise of producing passable essays quickly and easily, Dr. Maitzen says she and her colleagues are worried.

"We can't ignore the fact that this is a tool designed to take over the writing process," she says. "Right from the moment you think, 'What am I even going to write about?' that begins your own individual process of figuring something out and putting your mind in contact with it. You can't outsource that work to a machine. It's an act of communication between you and the person you're writing for."

Dr. Maitzen has already received at least one assignment written by ChatGPT. One of the tool's well-known shortcomings is that it is known to make up information, such as false citations and inaccurate "facts." She assigned a reflection on a short poem and received an essay with one critical problem: "The quotations the paper included were not in the poem. They don't exist at all," Dr. Maitzen says. "So it wasn't a mystery looking at this paper—and looking at the relatively short poem that the paper was supposed to be about—there was just no correlation whatsoever."

## Avoiding an arms race

This, of course, brings up the question of cheating and academic integrity. Bob Mann is the manager of discipline appeals for the university secretariat. He said the number of cases referred to academic integrity officers has "gone up dramatically" in the last few years—although that might be because of greater detection. Mann said sometimes students are deliberately cheating, but often they "are just trying to figure things out" and "inadvertently commit offences."

He expects AI tools to make him busier this year. "I call it Napster for homework," he says. But it won't necessitate a change in academic integrity rules. "Writing a paper using AI is not a specific offence we have on the books; a student is required to submit work that is their own. So the rules have not changed."

## "We can't ignore the fact that this is a tool designed to take over the writing process."

But determining what constitutes a student's own work has (with exceptions, like the AI fabricated quotes Dr. Maitzen mentioned earlier) become harder. In terms of enforcement, Mann cautions against assuming students are using AI, saying he has seen cases where accusations proved to be unfounded. Students who struggle with English or who don't understand how to cite properly may be particularly vulnerable to these charges.

And while it might seem tempting to deploy ever-more-sophisticated tools to crack down, everyone interviewed for this story counselled against that approach. On a basic level, if you are "suspicious of generative AI, why are you going to trust another piece of AI software with a decision that can cause harm? It makes no sense from an ethical perspective," Dr. Blouin says.

Dr. Maitzen agrees and says "focusing on this as a discipline-and-punish problem is maybe counterproductive." Plus, she has no interest in an AI arms race with students.

"It isn't just about an enforcement problem. We would like to trust them, and we would like to engage with them in the spirit of trust and authenticity. And so we





want them to understand what it is we're really asking them to do, rather than just emphasizing what we're telling them not to do," she said.

Les T. Johnson, who, like Crane, is an educational developer at the CLT, also emphasizes conversation. He says, "I would want to make sure I had an honest conversation with my students about [AI]."

Crane agrees: "Talk to your students about implications of AI, for themselves, their communities, their learning, society."

### "Artificial intelligence" is not intelligent

A small number of students have always found ways to cheat or cut corners on assignments. They could copy passages out of books, hire people to write papers for them, buy essays online, and use any number of other tools. What AI has done is made it that much easier for students to use outside help—whether or not sanctioned by their professors.

But not that easy. Despite the term "artificial intelligence" there is nothing intelligent about ChatGPT and other LLMs. They recognize patterns and can create coherent sentences. That doesn't mean students can always rely on them to write a decent essay. "It isn't actually quite so easy as just logging on, putting in your assignment prompt, and it'll just give you exactly what you need to get a C or above," Crane says. "It takes some competency to get what you want out of it, and that takes time."

Dr. Johnson has noticed professors seem less worried about students turning in AI-generated assignments than they were six months ago. That may be because a lot of students tried them and found them lacking. "I was thinking about ChatGPT in particular. When it first started, it was, 'Oh my gosh, how exciting! I can have this computer write my essay!'" he says. "But

of the students who used it, some may have been cited for plagiarism and then some just didn't get good grades. And they're like, well, wait a second—I didn't learn anything, I didn't even do that well, and it wasn't that much easier... I'm just going to do it myself."



**"We are assessing critical thinking, but the medium through which we do that is writing."**

*—Dr. Blouin*

Dr. Maitzen doesn't blame students who are anxious about grades. They've grown up in a culture that increasingly tends to view university education as a commodity. "They don't have a sense that it's all right to take a risk, to just give it a try, to just say what they think," Dr. Maitzen says. "They're not sure they have the skills to do that, and they don't have enough meta-cognition to realize that doing it online is exactly what prevents them from developing those skills—and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy."

### How broken are our courses?

Dr. Blouin said the Faculty of Computer Science hired a graduate student over the summer "to assess, if we change nothing in our curriculum, how broken our courses are." Essentially, how far could students get

using AI for assignments, without actually understanding any of the material or learning anything?

In some cases, pretty far. "GPT is a pretty good programmer for simple stuff," Dr. Blouin says. What the faculty found anecdotally was a lot of variation. "There are some third-year assignments that it does very well, and some first-year questions on which it falls apart very quickly." One approach would be to rejig assignments that can be done by ChatGPT, but Dr. Blouin calls that "a dangerous game to play, because as soon as a new version comes out, your entire strategy may fall apart."

Despite the AI revolution, Dr. Blouin says one fundamental thing has not changed: "You are intellectually responsible for the work that you produce." And "universities should not be satisfied with something that looks like work. We are satisfied with and expect actual work from our students," he says. "So I think it's more an issue of personal and professional responsibility than it is of honesty."

Still, Dr. Maitzen is planning on making some changes to her assignments, especially for larger introductory classes. That may mean more contract grading, in-class writing, and multiple-choice tests. (She is less worried about her upper-level Victorian literature courses.)

But she is hoping that honest conversations with students about getting the most out of university will carry the day. Crane agrees with that approach. A good assessment isn't suddenly bad because there is a possibility AI could help with it. She urges faculty to "keep designing good assessments according to evidence-based practice." ■

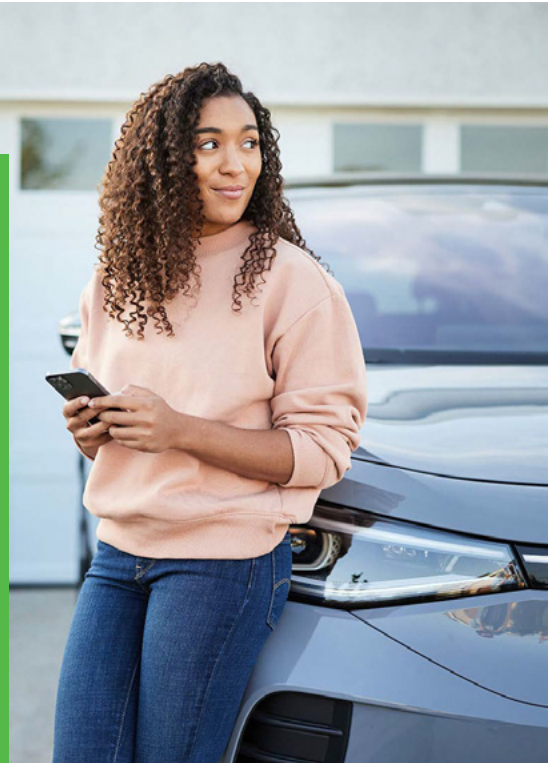


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# *Social* INNOVATORS

by Mark Campbell

Dalhousie law alumni have applied their knowledge to achieve a more inclusive, equitable, and just society

Once a day, **SEAN FOREMAN (LLB'98)**, KC, takes a moment to reflect on the judicial order that overturned the ban on same-sex marriage in Nova Scotia. Not just because he gained the right to marry his husband, Andre [Bernard (MD'06, PGM'12)], but also because he has it framed and hanging in his home office.

Foreman was in court the day the order was issued, September 24, 2004. A junior

lawyer at the time, he was representing three couples and the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project in challenging the ban.

"When I am having one of those days when I feel like I am spinning my wheels and I'm not making a difference, I can look at that and it's very grounding," he says. "But it's also a reminder that we must always be vigilant and can't sit on our laurels, given what is happening south of the border,

around the world, and even with recent protests against inclusive educational policies here in NS and across Canada."

Foreman's determination to achieve societal change, and his vigilance in the face of threats to a more inclusive and equitable society, is admirable. It has also been a distinguishing characteristic among generations of Dalhousie Schulich School of Law graduates. Some alumni, like Foreman,



have taken on outdated or oppressive policies and laws. Some have taken a principled stand against human rights violations, despite drawing considerable initial public and political backlash. And some have been trailblazers who not only became the first in their community to achieve a particular professional or societal milestone, but also used that opportunity to encourage others to follow in their footsteps.

Taken individually, the achievements of these alumni are impressive examples of what one person can do with a Dalhousie law degree. Collectively, they form a rich tapestry of positive, lasting societal change, one that began to take shape with the law school's formation in 1883 and continues to grow with each new generation of students. One of the most notable contributors to that tapestry is **JUSTICE ANNE DERRICK (LLB'80), KC**. During her 24 years as a practicing lawyer, she took on social justice, public interest, and equality cases whose outcomes had major societal reverberations. It was Derrick who won a decisive victory in the fight for reproductive rights through her representation of Dr. Henry Morgentaler. She also helped expose the systemic racism that led to the wrongful conviction of

Anne Derrick

Donald Marshall Jr. as one of the lawyers who represented him during the Royal Commission inquiry into his case. And in 1984, Justice Derrick helped overturn a provincial government injunction aimed at preventing women in the sex trade from working in certain parts of downtown Halifax. It was that effort that led Derrick

to become a founding member of Stepping Stone in 1987. It is the only nonprofit in Atlantic Canada that offers support and services to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of people who are, or were, involved in the sex trade.

"It was very important for those of us that were involved in Stepping Stone's development that it be non-judgmental and inclusive," she says. "It feels good to be a contributor to that and I feel the same way about my involvement in the Morgentaler case. That sense that it is possible to achieve social progress against injustice, or contribute to systemic change, does give one hope that the world can be made a better place for people who are outside the circle of privilege that I enjoy."

That desire to make the world better for others was instilled by Justice Derrick's father, who often questioned injustices he saw. Dalhousie Legal Aid Service offered her an opportunity to explore that passion. "The people I was representing were the people I wanted to be serving," she says. "They were the reason why I was getting a law degree. They were not privileged, so it was a tremendously important experience for me."

In some ways, Justice Derrick's path to being a social innovator parallels that of **DOUGLAS RUCK (LLB'77), KC**. He, too, drew inspiration from his father, Calvin (DSW'79, LLD'94), a senator and activist

NICK PEARCE



Sean Foreman





Douglas Ruck

renowned for breaking down barriers facing African Nova Scotians. And he saw the law as a tool he could use to take on privilege and inequity. But over the course of his studies, Ruck realized how this tool could be used against him and others. “I saw that it could prevent change or make it much more difficult for certain members of the community to acquire the rights, privileges, and type of treatment they deserved,” he says. “That was another motivation for me.”

Ruck subsequently devoted his energy and expertise to making both the law and society more equitable, tackling issues such as labour relations, human rights, and occupational health and safety. Based on that experience, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia asked Ruck to chair a task force into systemic anti-Black racism

within the College in 2021. Motivated in part by the death of George Floyd, he agreed. The result was a May 2022 report which not only found that there was anti-Black racism within the College, but also that the College had failed to understand or act against it. The report made several recommendations for improvement, including the establishment of an equity, diversity, and inclusion committee and the development of an action plan to address anti-Black racism and implement changes identified in the report.

“I’m proud of the work of the task force and am glad to see that the College has followed our recommendation to create a committee to monitor and direct change,” Ruck says. “But we still live in a society that has so much in the way of disparities and anti-Black racism. And the so-called

end of COVID took away the urgency to correct those societal issues. So, I don’t see the task force’s work as a culmination; it’s the beginning. It’s something to grow and expand on. And I hope it motivates and gives others the encouragement to add their voices to making a difference.”

**ALEX NEVE (BCOMM'84, LLB'87)** knows the importance of motivating others to raise their voices on injustices, especially those that are controversial in nature. He faced such challenges several times in his role as secretary general at Amnesty International Canada. One particularly notable instance was his advocacy for the release and repatriation of Omar Khadr, a Canadian citizen who was imprisoned and tortured in Afghanistan and then at Guantanamo Bay by U.S. officials in the wake of 9/11. Although media, political, and public attention was focused on Khadr’s alleged offences, Neve was focused on what he believed to be a far more salient point: Khadr was just 15 years old when he was taken into custody.

“I’d been actively engaged in campaigning to strengthen global standards to protect child soldiers,” he says. “If this was the case here, which it seemed to be, then the human rights approach kicks in and you realize this is someone who needs to be seen as a victim, not as a perpetrator. Based on that, we were off and running.”

Neve’s advocacy began with letter-writing campaigns and media interviews and progressed to submissions to United Nations human rights bodies. In 2010, he travelled to Guantanamo Bay to observe the U.S. military commission trial involving Khadr. These efforts helped shift public and political opinion on repatriation, enabling Khadr to return to Canada in 2012. But Neve’s work was not done. His continued advocacy on Khadr’s behalf helped secure an apology and compensation from the government of Canada in 2017.

“It’s cases like this that remind me why I became a human rights advocate,” Neve says. “It’s about more than the legal concepts we debate in law school or arcane arguments we have in front of the Supreme Court of Canada. It’s real people’s lives, often those who have been vilified and abandoned by society. That’s when showing up as a human



Alex Neve

rights advocate matters most. And it's so reinforcing and bolstering when you get to be part of that win."

Sometimes, the win is a personal one that becomes a springboard for societal change. That's what happened in 1987 when **CORRINE SPARKS (LLB'79, LLM'01)** became the province's first African Nova Scotian judge and the first Black female judge in Canada. It was a significant achievement, and not one Sparks had dreamed was possible. Growing up in a historically Black Nova Scotian community, she had not encountered any African Nova Scotians who had entered the legal

profession who could provide professional mentorship. But her mother, community elders, and teachers inspired her. These informal mentors, coupled with her employment at the province's Human Rights Commission, created an awareness of the value of a law degree to promote and achieve social and racial justice.

Realizing she now had an opportunity to open doors for a new generation, Sparks helped launch and worked with the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers, which is dedicated to diversifying the profession. She provided mentorship and encouragement to Black members of the bar in Nova Scotia and Ontario who were interested in applying for judgeships. And she pursued increased diversity in the legal profession as a member of the Canadian Bar Association's Gender Equality Task Force.

"It is very inspiring to witness the success of several Black lawyers and judges and the general advancement of Indigenous peoples and people of colour in the profession," Sparks says. "The profession is becoming more inclusive. This change has been slow, but with ardent efforts to incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion to overcome historical and systemic racial barriers, we can finally see it happening. This provides me with a comforting belief that there will be improvements for the generations to come."

Although Sparks retired from the bench in 2021, she continues to apply her Dal law knowledge in ways that are impactful. She is one of three commissioners with the provincial government's Land Title Initiative (LTI), which is helping residents in the communities of North Preston, East Preston, Cherry Brook/Lake Loon, Lincolnville, and Sunnyville gain clear title to their properties with the aid of significant government resources.

"I'm grateful to be part of this initiative as it is aligned with my post-retirement plans to serve," Sparks says. "This program is meant to address historical wrongs and systemic discrimination, which have prevented community members from obtaining conveyances to their property. This has long been a blemish on the history of Nova Scotia as identified by a UN working group in 2017. To me, LTI is an important step as we march forward in the right direction."





Corinne Sparks

For Sparks, Dal Law was a means for transforming her interest in human rights into action. **HEATHER MCNEILL (LLB'94), KC** shares that sentiment. She enrolled at the school after working as a nurse for several years, believing that a law degree would enable her to make a difference in a more profound way. “By practising law,” she says, “I could influence decision-makers to look at an issue from a different perspective and that could lead to real change for the people I serve. That was a goal of mine.”

As McNeill gained legal tools and skills, she also gained clarity on how she wanted to use them as a Mi'kmaw woman. For 21 years, she worked at Dalhousie Legal Aid Service, providing representation to individuals who otherwise would not have been able to afford legal advice and pushing for change to make the justice system more equitable. By any measure, it was an impressive career, but McNeill was only getting started. After retiring in 2019, she became a legal advisor with the Maw-Kleyu'kik Knijannaq (keeping our children together). This initiative, overseen by Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn (we are seeking consensus)—the Mi'kmaw treaty rights secretariat—is developing a governance model for a Mi'kmaw child and family well-being services system. This groundbreaking undertaking, led by McNeill and the team she works with, will not only be guided by Mi'kmaq law and policy, but also offer culturally appropriate family support

services that promote keeping children with their families in their communities.

“In my entire legal career, I never thought I would see the day when we would have our own Mi'kmaw governing authority overseeing our own system of child and family well-being,” McNeill says. “That’s why I am doing it. Mi'kmaq reclaiming jurisdiction over child welfare is what drives me and it's an amazing legacy for me to be part of.”

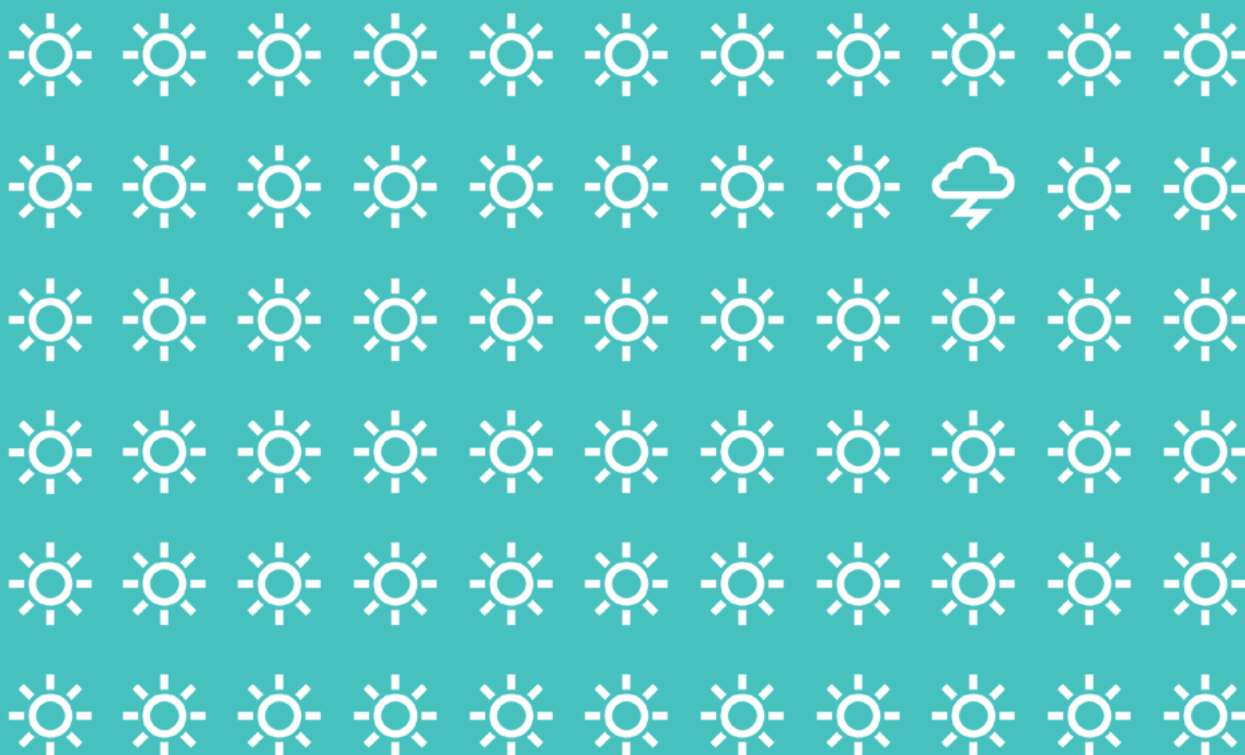
Legacies are powerful. Not just the ones we contribute to, but also the ones we aspire to create. In legacies, we find the inspiration to dream of a better life, work toward it, and

protect it. Dalhousie law alumni have forged one their own—one of positive societal impacts. In doing so, they have cemented the Schulich School of Law's legacy as a place that imparts the necessary tools and motivation for making a difference.

“This school gave me the confidence and the ability to lean into what I wanted to achieve in the world,” Foreman says. “I really valued that experience, and the mentorships and friendships I found at Schulich, and still do to this day. They helped make me who I am.” ■

Heather McNeill





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# LEARNING IN *Action*

## Dalhousie's health clinics support the community while enriching student learning

**BY STEFANIE WILSON**

On September 12, students and faculty from the Clinical Psychology PhD program and Dr. Chuck Macdonald, dean of the Faculty of Science, gathered with representatives from the Office of Addictions of Mental Health at the Fenwick Medical Centre to celebrate the grand opening of Dalhousie's newest community clinic—the Dalhousie Centre for Psychological Health.

"It's a very bright and welcoming space, and the resources needed to best serve clients are readily available. But most importantly, the clinicians involved in the centre—junior students, senior students, and supervising psychologists—create an incredible community of practice," says clinical psychology student Jenn Leckey.

Drs. Shannon Johnson and Alissa Pencer of Dal's Clinical Psychology PhD program had been dreaming of a community-based training clinic for some time. When the Nova Scotia government unveiled their plan for universal mental health and addictions care, they knew it was time to act. They imagined a clinic that could help support the government's plan while enhancing the training of their students. It didn't take long for discussions with the provincial Office of Addictions and Mental Health to develop into an exciting collaboration. The Dalhousie Centre for Psychological Health was the first provincial universal mental health and addictions care pilot project to launch.

"While developing the centre, we worked with the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the IWK Health



Centre to identify current needs and develop a plan to supplement what they're already doing" says Dr. Johnson, the program's director of clinical training and co-director of the Centre for Psychological Health. "We don't intend to be redundant with the public system. There's room for additional services, especially given the increased demand for mental health resources in the wake of the pandemic."

In addition to close collaboration with government and public health, the engagement process also included psychologists from both the public and private systems, and members of a variety of community organizations—most of which will continue to partner with the centre going forward.

"We interacted with a lot of key people to get input about what's needed, what's missing, and what our service delivery priorities should be," says Dr. Johnson.

The result was a mandate to serve clients with low income and to prioritize disadvantaged communities and groups including those who identify as Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, or 2SLGBTQ+; children in care or who were previously in care; and newcomers.

"The centre welcomes a diverse client population, which means we can offer excellent support to underserved client populations and enhance our learning" says Leckey. "And the range of different therapeutic approaches offered by the supervising psychologists at the clinic allows us to match the needs of clients and students."

The Centre for Psychological Health provides assessments and offers intervention services both for individuals and groups. Students in the Clinical Psychology PhD program provide services under the supervision of registered psychologists with a wide range of expertise.

"The centre will give students a consistent start to their training before going to other placements," explains Dr. Pencer, co-director of the centre and field placement coordinator of the Clinical Psychology PhD program. "And they can return throughout their training if they need a specific experience they can't get elsewhere. That means our students get the experiences they need to become well-rounded clinicians who practice with a social justice lens."

Dalhousie has a rich history of community health clinics designed to support student learning while also providing access to care within the community.

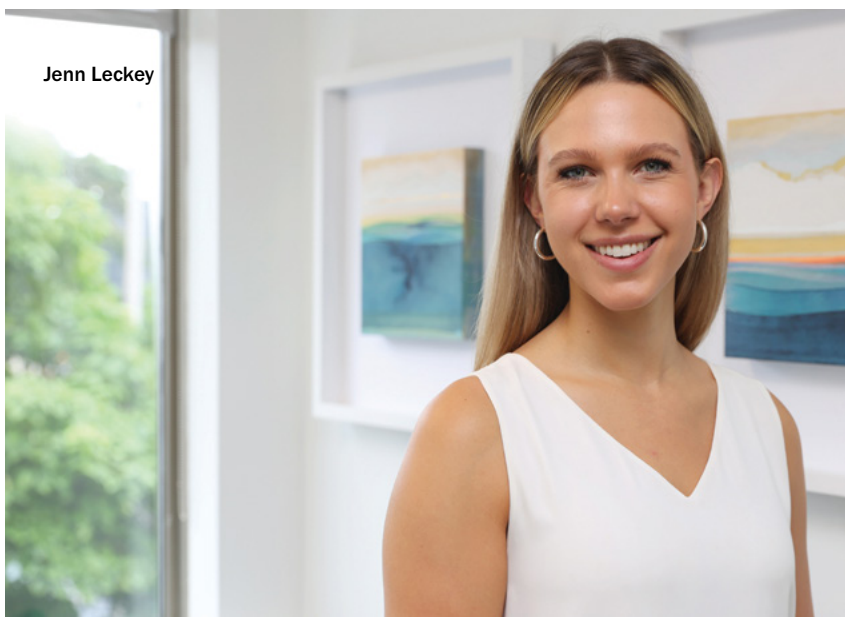
It was November of 1924 when the Dalhousie Medical School opened the Public Health Clinic to provide services to lower-income residents of Halifax while enriching the education of medical students. Today, the Medical School continues to provide training and access to care through various clinics in communities and hospitals.

Dr. Shannon Johnson and  
Dr. Alissa Pencer



*Early intervention  
always equates to  
better prognosis.*

Jenn Leckey



NICK PEARCE





This July, Medicine's Wije'winen Health Centre completed its first full year of operations, welcoming 458 Indigenous patients for culturally safe and appropriate care—a number that continues to grow at a steady and sustainable rate.

"Our goal is to provide high-quality care," says Dr. Brent Young, clinic lead and academic director, Indigenous health in the Department of Family Medicine. "This means allowing physicians to take more time during encounters and booking more frequent appointments to build effective therapeutic relationships with Indigenous patients. This is necessary because our patients are often experiencing ongoing colonial harms and feel mistrust when they interact with the healthcare system."

Integration of Indigenous health into the family medicine curriculum at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level has gradually increased over recent years, and the health centre is part of that effort. By offering this learning experience, both learner and community needs are met. Now, with a year of operations under their belt, Wije'winen is opening the door to medical learners at all levels.

"The requests we have received for placements thus far have demonstrated a high degree of respect for Indigenous culture and health, and an understanding of how limited resources and opportunities should be assigned," says Dr. Tiffany O'Donnell, physician at Wije'winen and associate professor of family medicine.

During the past year, Wije'winen also welcomed a new health director, Paulina Meader, a licensed practical nurse from Membertou First Nation. Meader has been an integral source of wisdom, knowledge, and inspiration to both the team within the centre as well as within the broader health care community.

"Paulina has been the lead on ceremony around birth and death for members of the Indigenous community within the hospital system," says Dr. O'Donnell. "It's left a resounding impression on the care teams involved, demonstrating the importance and impact of ceremony both as a support for patients and their families, as well as a powerful approach to decolonizing health care."

Psychiatry's Rapid Access and Stabilization Program (RASP), which launched this past spring, is another recent addition to Medicine's record of community support. A partnership between the Department of Psychiatry and Nova Scotia Health's Central Zone Mental Health and Addictions Program, RASP's goal is to ensure that no patient waits more than four weeks to see a psychiatrist in the Central Zone of Nova Scotia.

"Early intervention always equates to better prognosis," says Dr. Vincent Agyapong, head and clinical chief of Dalhousie's Department of Psychiatry. "The program supports family doctors by confirming a

patient's diagnosis and providing consultation on the appropriate medication to prescribe."

Data from earlier in the year showed the program has been well received—with scores from those asked to rate their overall satisfaction of the services averaging 9.49 out of 10.

The Faculty of Dentistry has provided dental care to the public as part of its educational programs for more than 100 years. Today, Dal's dental clinics annually support the education and training of around 190 dentistry students and 60 dental hygiene students while caring for more than 23,000 patients.

"Outreach is central to our role in the Faculty of Dentistry," says Dr. Ben Davis, the Faculty's dean. "That means striving to provide oral health care to our most marginalized communities and training our students to be capable and compassionate oral health-care providers, now and in their future professional lives."

In addition to the recently renovated, 50,000-square-foot Dr. William Murphy Dental Clinic on campus, the faculty also runs three permanent outreach clinics, including the North End Community Health Centre (NECHC) dental clinic, where dentistry and dental hygiene students have an opportunity to learn the complexities of supporting community members who are experiencing barriers to adequate care.

Anna Quon (BA'89) a self-described Mad, mixed-race poet and novelist, is one of the NECHC dental clinic's regular clients. The first two stanzas of her poem, "In Support of a Guaranteed Basic Income," highlight how meaningful adequate dental care can be for people experiencing poverty.

In November 2022, Quon won *The Launch*, Lunenburg Doc Fest's documentary pitch contest for underrepresented filmmakers. The \$20,000 prize package of cash and in-kind support was used to help Quon develop a film called *Me and My Teeth*, which explores her interaction with the NECHC dental clinic—one of the settings—and highlights the parallels between dental and mental health. The film was launched at Lunenburg Doc Fest on September 23, 2023.

The soon-to-open Tze/Chiang Paediatric and Adult Special Needs Clinic is one of the Faculty of Dentistry's newest community initiatives. It will support access to care for patients with medical diagnoses or behavioral challenges and provide a learning opportunity that extends beyond current needs.

"Without question, access to oral health care for children, adolescents, and teens with medical diagnoses or behavioural challenges is limited—even regular checkups and fluoride treatments can be challenging for patients, caregivers, and dental treatment providers alike," says Dr. Evan Shaw, an assistant professor in the paediatric dentistry division.



## In Support of a Guaranteed Basic Income

If I had enough money,  
I wouldn't worry  
about spending a bus ticket  
to go to the dentist  
to get my teeth fixed  
so I could smile again.

If I had enough money  
to get my teeth fixed,  
I might choose  
to take a course  
in plumbing or art history  
instead  
because that would make  
me smile too  
and give me something to  
think about at night  
besides how to magically  
stretch  
dollars I don't have.

ANNA QUON

By giving students a chance to gain the experience and confidence needed to provide routine and preventive care to special needs patients, it is hoped they will feel empowered to continue to do so throughout their professional careers.

When the School of Social Work Community Clinic opened its doors in June 2014, it was one of the first in North America to feature the dual mandate of providing social services to underserved populations while offering community-level learning opportunities for social work students.

"We wanted a place where students could come and learn from clients in real-life situations while being supervised by social workers," explains Cyndi Hall, clinic director and field education coordinator in the School of Social Work. "And we wanted it to be interdisciplinary, with many allied professions working together in community. That's a unique approach for a School of Social Work. Usually, the closest students get to that experience is in the hospital setting, which has a very different dynamic than being in community and learning from each other and having the time to follow through."

The clinic now serves a caseload of more than 200 community members and has provided field placement experiences for at least six Bachelor of Social Work and about five Master of Social Work students each year. They also welcome pharmacy, psychology, nutrition, nursing, and occupational therapy students.

"It's always been very intentional—the dynamics of how we bring other disciplines into the clinic," says Jeff Karabanow, clinic director and professor in the School of Social Work. "A: We want to be able to provide meaningful services. B: We also want to be able to provide thoughtful, meaningful student practicums. Those are aligned so deeply because we are very strategic about how we can deliver that." The clinic has a long-standing partnership with Dalhousie Legal Aid, another of Dal's community-based programs, and the new Centre for Psychological Health chose to set up shop in the Fenwick Medical Center, where the Social Work Clinic is also found, because they expect to be able to work together to support community members and student learning.

Examples like these demonstrate how Dalhousie clinics can work together to offer interdisciplinary learning while also providing more holistic health and wellness options in the community. With such a variety of new and established clinics across the university, there's work underway to understand how the clinics might work even more closely in the future to enable interdisciplinary student learning opportunities and support user experience across multiple clinics. ■



“

# Don't be afraid to try new things, just do it.

– Carmen Moir, Class of 1950

”



Carmen Moir is a Dalhousie University alum who is now a resident at Parkland at the Lakes. After graduating 73 years ago, Carmen became a high school teacher, and later, came back to Dal to teach and become the President of the Alumni Association. **“I wanted to try everything, I just love starting new things and just doing it,”** Carmen says. Carmen has been a Parkland resident with his wife for 9 years and has been involved in the community by inviting interesting guest speakers that spark conversation among residents.

Learn more about Carmen's life at Dalhousie and at Parkland, visit our website

[experienceparkland.com/carmen](https://experienceparkland.com/carmen)



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# WORKING TOGETHER TOWARD WELL-BEING

Dal's Be Well initiative encourages us all to take action in our community

**BY ANNMARIE MACKINNON**

**When we think** about what it means to feel “healthy” or “well,” what most often comes to mind is freedom from illness. But good health is about so much more than that. The World Health Organization (WHO) tells us, “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

It can seem more and more challenging every day to care for our health and well-being. We live demanding lives, and many of us feel the weight of expectations put on us from school, work, and life in general. Add to that the heavy current events in the 24-hour news cycle and it's easy to see why people—and especially students, who are navigating huge life changes—might feel a bit weighed down.

Dr. David Pilon, a psychologist and Director of Counselling and Psychological Services at Dalhousie Student Health & Wellness says that while students come to

the centre with all kinds of health issues, the top four presenting concerns have to do with mental health—anxiety, depressed mood and sadness, problems with sleep, or relationship concerns. He says these concerns tend to

cluster together, resulting in an overall feeling of stress and making it difficult for students focus on their studies. The aim, then, is to help students cultivate resilience so they can not only navigate their academic demands, but also cope with everything life throws their way.

In August 2022, Dalhousie signed on to the Okanagan Charter, a call to action to post-secondary schools to “embed health into all aspects of campus culture and to lead health promotion action and collaboration locally and globally.” The charter, along with several other health frameworks used by the university, inspired the creation of the Be Well initiative, a plan to improve health and well-being across the entire university community—faculty, staff and students. This past summer, Be Well got underway with the Be Well Summit, an afternoon during which people from all across campus got together to brainstorm







and set priorities for activities to improve well-being in the university community. “There was such a tremendous sense of enthusiasm, and collaborative spirit, and optimism in the room that it was beyond inspiring,” Dr. Pilon said. “We are hoping the Be Well initiative becomes a grassroots Dalhousie community effort with the support of Dalhousie leaders, and that it will help to strengthen both individual and collective well-being for the community—whether it’s looking at very specific things we need to do to encourage members of our community to walk around this lovely campus for 10 or 15 minutes a day to ground themselves, up to looking at the policies of the university to ensure they are drafted through a lens of well-being.”

The well-being message is spreading fast, and Dr. Raghav Sampangi, a professor in the Faculty of Computer Science, has joined the movement. He makes well-being a priority in his own daily life, and in his approach to the classes he teaches. “The



believe that each of us have the ability to influence and work towards such change.”

To this end, not only was he part of the organizing team for the Be Well Summit, he’s also instituted a few changes to how he works with his students. He’s put in place a “Life Happens” clause that allows those who need more time with assignments to take it, and he’s changed the focus of his grading away from point deductions toward feedback-based, non-numeric scales that emphasize the importance of iterative learning. He says he hopes it means grading will be less of a source of stress for students.

“We have an amazing opportunity to be courageous in making decisions to support the well-being of students, staff and faculty,” Dr. Sampangi says. “From what I can see, the right conversations are happening, including our Be Well Initiative and the Be Well Summit we had in the summer, and there is so much excellent work that is happening.”

Dr. Sampangi’s way of leading with empathy in the classroom highlights the roles members of the university community can play in improving wellness outside a clinical context.

Dr. Pilon recalls an anecdote told during a session of the monthly Dalhousie Mental Health Forum (the regularly scheduled sessions where students, faculty, and staff can come together to talk in an unstructured way about mental health and well-being) about how reassuring it had been for a student to learn their professor was also experiencing difficulty.

“It highlighted for me the importance not only of what happens in the classroom, but

the importance of each and every one of us in terms of who we can be and how we can be as we engage with students.”

It’s common for calls to come in to the Student Health and Wellness Centre from members of the campus community who are seeking information on how to help someone who they see is struggling. Dr. Pilon notes that in a setting where knowledge and expertise are highly valued, such as in a university, those who want to help don’t always feel confident in their skills because it’s outside their areas of expertise. But he tells them, “You have a PhD in life experience, and you can simply use your humanity and your compassion and your supportive, caring nature and say to that student ‘I’m here for you.’”

Dr. Sampangi echoes the sentiment. “I’m grateful that our world is more accepting of the wellness needs of people in our communities, and grateful for the many, many folks—including so many students worldwide—on social media who have shared their stories over the



pandemic was a wake-up call, showing us the structural inequities that exist and has given us in academia a really good opportunity to develop more equitable forms of supports and to make more decisions through a well-being lens. I



past few years advocating for a better and more compassionate world in general, and academia in particular. I believe this has paved the way for all of us to be more accepting of topics of well-being, requests for supports, and in general, to be more compassionate, to be more human.” ■



## CLASS NOTES

For additional class notes, visit [alumni.dal.ca/class-notes](https://alumni.dal.ca/class-notes)

### 1960s

'66

Retired lawyer **Don Green** (LLB) channeled what he learned through six decades of playing golf, a seniors' championship, and a stint as a CPGA teaching pro to write *Golf for Fun, Golf for Life*. Green is donating a portion of proceeds for every book sold to Dalhousie. Email Don at [dggreenland@me.com](mailto:dggreenland@me.com) to place an order.

'68

**David Haas** (MA) has been living in St. Albert, Alta., since gaining a Doctor Juris degree in 1975. His twelfth stage play, *Park Bench With View*, draws on David's experience in Canada's military police, and criminal defence work over his 25-year career.

### 1970s

'72

**Jim Lawrence** (PhD) attended the opening of a new liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry (LC-MS) facility at the CEFAS (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) algal toxin analysis laboratory in Weymouth, UK. It was a particularly happy event for him in the Fall of 2023, as they named the lab the "Lawrence Centre for Mass Spectrometry" (LC-MS) in honour of his work with CEFAS 15 years ago that led to the elimination of live animal testing for shellfish toxins in the UK, the first country to

do so. The day was filled with meeting staff, a tour of the labs, discussing research, and presentations on the latest algal toxin research projects.

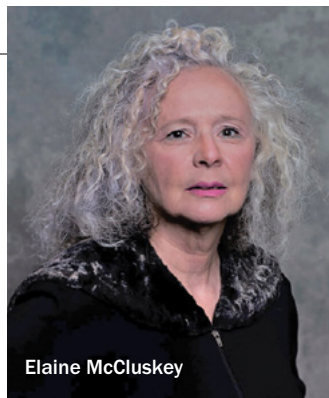
**Lawrence (Laurie) Pascoe** (BComm, LLB'75) had his book *Innovative Legal Service Applications: A Guide to Improved Client Services* published by the American Bar Association's Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice Division. The book provides lawyers in all stages of their careers with his theories and numerous applications to improve client services in all practice areas.

'73

**Roselle Green** (DPA, MA'63, BA BJ'59) was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal at a ceremony in the Red Chamber of Government, in January. The medal was conferred in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne as Queen of Canada and in recognition of a person's dedicated service to one's peers, community, the province and Canada.

'74

**David Frank** (MA, PhD '79), professor emeritus in Canadian history at the University of New Brunswick, has published a new introduction to his prize-winning book, *J.B. McLachlan, A Biography: The Story of a Legendary Labour Leader and the Cape Breton Coal Miners*. The book was reprinted this year by James Lorimer and Company.



Elaine McCluskey

'76

**Elaine McCluskey** (BA) has won the 2023 Alistair MacLeod Prize for Short Fiction for *Rafael Has Pretty Eyes* (Goose Lane Editions.) This is Elaine's sixth book of fiction, having already published two novels and four collections. Her short stories have appeared in many Canadian literary journals and anthologies, including *The Dalhousie Review*. Goose Lane is publishing her next novel, *The Gift Child*, in Fall 2024.

'78

**Paul Ives** (LLB) relocated his law practice to the Courtenay office of Ramsay Lampman Rhodes in June 2022. He can now be reached via email at [pives@rlr.law](mailto:pives@rlr.law). In September 2022, Paul attended the Dal Law Class of 1987's 35th reunion in Halifax and enjoyed reminiscing and reconnecting with his classmates.

### 1980s

'80

**Dr. Raymond Pierotti** (PhD) has published his third book, *Respect and Responsibility in Pacific Coast Indigenous Nation: The World Raven Makes*. It deals with the cultural traditions of Pacific First Nations in respect to their management of the natural world, and their dominance of northwest North America for thousands of years.

'84

**Margaret Ludlow** (MEd) was presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal in January 2023. Margaret received the honour for her volunteer work in the parish, and local and international community.

'87

**Bruce MacGregor** (BA, JD'90) returned home to St. Margaret's Bay, N.S., for new adventures after serving in the Canadian Armed Forces since 1997, most recently as the Director of Military Prosecutions.

'88

**Jim and Andrea (Dowthwaite) Power** (BComm) retired together in July 2023. Jim was a Dalhousie sessional faculty member from 2006–2009 and a limited term appointment from 2009–2018 in the Faculty of Management teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in accounting and finance. Andrea (BComm'88, MPA'10) was an employee from 2003–2018 as the associate secretary, senate and manager, university secretariat. For the last five years they have been based in Calgary, Alta., but the future holds lots of travel!



Jim and Andrea Power

SUPPLIED





## 1990s

'90

**Marc Belliveau** (LLB) would like to send a brief message of gratitude to the following brilliant minds and talented musicians with whom they had the privilege and pleasure to share the stage in three entertaining groups during their Weldon days (1987–1990): The Bailees—Jim Hornby, David Connolly, Frank O'Brien, Scott Beazley; Primal Janitors—Roger Holland, Glen Boswall, Larry Alexander; Test Results—Anita Ploj, Frances Knickle, Robin Sharma, Chris Tennant.

**Ashwin Kutty** (BCSC), President and CEO of WeUsThem, has been named one of Atlantic Canada's Top 50 CEOs for a fourth time. This prestigious list recognizes CEOs who have demonstrated

exceptional leadership skills, positive involvement in their communities, and a commitment to excellence in their respective industries. Kutty was selected based on his outstanding track record of success in growing WeUsThem and leading the company to become an internationally recognized organization.

'94

**Elaine Gibney** (LLB) has opened a new boutique family law firm in Sydney, N.S., Elaine Gibney Law. Elaine will be representing clients from across Nova Scotia, with home bases in both Sydney and Halifax.

'99

**Faten Alshazly** (BSCMCN), Co-Founder & Chief Creative Officer of WeUsThem, has been

recognized for Outstanding Achievement as a global Enterprising Woman as determined by corporate revenue recognizing the world's top women entrepreneurs. Alshazly's leadership was described as "a guiding beacon amidst the ever-changing tides of the industry." With an unwavering commitment to innovation and a keen eye for emerging trends, Faten leads by example, driving WeUsThem to the forefront of the industry's evolution.



Ameeta Vohra

## 2000s

'02

**Colin Franz** (BSc, PhD'07) won a national Scientific Impact Award from the American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine for his significant contribution as senior author of *The Distribution of Acquired Peripheral Nerve Injuries Associated with Severe COVID-19 Implicate a Mechanism of Entrapment Neuropathy*. It was published in the October 2022 *Journal of NeuroEngineering and Rehabilitation*.

'04

**Ameeta Vohra** (BA) won a gold medal at this year's Atlantic Journalism Awards for Best Sports Reporting (any medium) and a silver medal in the Best



I have assisted many Dalhousie University faculty and alumni with their buying and selling needs. Contact me to discuss how I can be of service.

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Magazine Article category for her story “Confronting Hockey’s Dark Side,” about hockey facing intense scrutiny as the World Junior Championships returned to Halifax in December.

**'08**

**Audrey Wubbenhorst** (MBA) was in Bogotá, Colombia, in July 2023 as a Canadian technical expert. While there, she supported the Colombian government with developing more robust data collection and

analysis and visualization tools to support decision-making. Colombia has experienced a surge in migration within the last few years, primarily from Venezuela. Audrey was fortunate to be hosted by the *Departamento Nacional de Planeación*. This project is part of the TAP-EDM/PAT-MDE project deploying Canadian experts around the world facilitated by Alinea International and funded by Global Affairs Canada.



Audrey Wubbenhorst



Dr. Sina Varamini

**2010s**

**'12**

**Dr. Sina Varamini** (BEng, MASc'14), has received the esteemed Earl Kee Volunteer of the Year Award from the Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council. This award acknowledges an individual member who has demonstrated exceptional volunteerism in support of the Council's objectives and has made a substantial contribution to the growth and

progression of the Council and wider industry, involving other stakeholders including the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO).

**'13**

**Dr. Christos Papadopoulos** (DDS) has been selected to be a member of Align Technology's University and Early Career Advisory Board. Align Technology is an American manufacturer of 3D digital scanners and Invisalign clear aligners used in orthodontics.

SUPPLIED



**DALHOUSIE**  
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ALUMNI

## A world of excitement is coming this spring!

Watch your inbox for an invitation to an event that will inspire and connect you to Dalhousie.

**Mark your calendars for the following locations and dates.**

Halifax – April 2  
Truro – April 4  
Ottawa – April 16

Toronto – April 18  
Vancouver – May 7  
Calgary – May 9





Dr. Christos Papadopoulos

'16

**Alex Bromley** (BSC'16) celebrated their marriage to D'arcy McDaid in Hubbards, N.S., in October 2022.

**Krista Collier-Jarvis** (MA), a Dalhousie PhD Candidate finishing up her dissertation in the department of English, joined the department of English at Mount Saint Vincent University as an assistant professor this fall.

'18

**Kyle Train** (BComm) has been named general manager of Hilton Head National Luxury RV Resort located in Hilton Head Island, S.C. Kyle will have specific responsibility over daily operations and guest service performance at the 97-acre RV facility, the largest RV resort at Hilton Head Island's celebrated vacation destination. The resort sits adjacent to the award-winning, 18-hole, championship

Hilton Head National Golf Course. A native of Toronto, Kyle is an accomplished public speaker and golfer who founded his own golf instruction company, Fewer Bogeys Golf. Kyle comes to his new position following a year with The United Company, a privately held diversified holdings enterprise, based in Bristol, VA, whose holdings include the RV resort.

2020s

'21

**Linxi Zhang** (BA) is the president and director of Novazuya/Zuya Inc, a media production company that began during the pandemic in 2020. Novazuya is a media marketing and producing company, which includes social media operations, design, and advertisements, that aims to bridge the gap between international students/new immigrants and the local community. Linxi and her partners are currently launching a new brand called Zuya Production, which will involve more website building, media production, and event planning services.



Krista Collier-Jarvis

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# What's on your mind?



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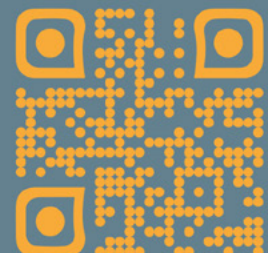
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Management  
Medicine  
Open Learning and Career Development  
Science  
University Libraries

## AWARDS & HONOURS

**Dr. Stefanie Colombo**, Tier II Canada Research Chair in Aquaculture Nutrition joined the Royal Society of Canada as a member. Dr. Colombo, a Tier II Canada Research Chair in Aquaculture Nutrition, directly impacts Canadian farmed seafood by developing novel solutions in fish nutrition.

**Dr. Vasantha Rupasinghe** was named the Arthur B. McDonald Chair of Research Excellence. Dr. Rupasinghe's food bioactive research program is recognized around the globe for increasing our understanding of dietary flavonoids in human health and the innovation of value-added food from cool climate fruits.

Dalhousie Postdoctoral Fellow **Dr. Rafaela Andrade** took home the Mitacs Outstanding Entrepreneur Award for her ground breaking at-home test to monitor muscle health and her efforts to bring it to the world.

Fountain School of Performing Arts professor **Roberta Barker** won the Canadian Association for Theatre Research 2023 Ann Saddlemeyer Award for best book in theatre studies for *Symptoms of the Self: Tuberculosis and the Making of the Modern Stage*.

**Dr. Finlay Maguire**, jointly appointed with the Faculty of Computer Science and the Department of Community Health & Epidemiology, received the Dalhousie 2023 President's Research Excellence Award for Emerging

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Investigators and is a finalist for the Discovery Awards Emerging Professional. Dr. Finlay Maguire's research aim is to develop and collaboratively apply data-driven methods to try and mitigate health and social crises.

**Don Oliver (LLB '64, LLD '03)** was named the 2023 recipient of the Weldon Award for Unselfish Public Service. He was honoured by Schulich Law and the Dalhousie Law Alumni Association for his commitment to equity and justice.

**Dr. Colin Conrad** and **Dr. Dana Kabat Farr** received an award from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation and Research Nova Scotia to launch the Cognition and Organizations Research Group

(CORG) facility at the Faculty of Management.

## APPOINTMENTS & RETIREMENTS

**Drs. Ian Epstein** (Dalhousie Medicine Nova Scotia) and **Samantha Gray** (Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick) were appointed assistant deans of the new Office of Professional Affairs in the Faculty of Medicine.

**Dr. Paola Marcato** is the new Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF)-Atlantic Region Endowed Chair in Breast Cancer Research.

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is pleased to announce the official appointment of

**Isaac Saney** as Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Black and African Diaspora Studies program.

The Schulich School of Law welcomed **Sarah Harding (LLB '89)** as its new dean for a five-year term in August 2023. She is the seventeenth dean of the law school and the fourth woman to serve in the position.

The Faculty of Management welcomes **Dr. Yuntian Li** and **Dr. Armagan Ozbilge** as assistant professors in Accounting and Management Science respectively, and **Dr. Christopher Bennet**, as an instructor in climate and sustainability.

## EVENTS & REUNIONS

The first ever **Here We Code Tech Career Fair** took place in September 2023, featuring a collaboration of employers for students to network with. The event saw over 500 post-secondary students while showcasing Nova Scotia's demand for careers in tech.

You may submit a **FACULTY NEWS OR CLASS NOTES NOTICE** by emailing [classnotes@dal.ca](mailto:classnotes@dal.ca)



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## FUTURE ALUMNI

### Striking a Balance

**C**algary-born Chloe Richardson, a striker on the Dal women's varsity soccer team, recalls her game-winning goal in a pivotal match against a league-leading team last season: "We were down 1-0, and my teammate scored to tie it up just before half. Then, I scored in the second half."

Elation followed, but Chloe's experience in varsity athletics hasn't always been so movie-scene perfect. She struggled to find her comfort zone in running with the track team, starting out as a sprinter before discovering a better pace in middle-distance running.

An ability to recalibrate and embody new modes of thinking has served Chloe well in other areas of her life, too, particularly her community work. In high school, she worked with children on the autism spectrum and with other cognitive differences during a bike camp. When she came to Dal in 2019, she signed up to volunteer with Autism Nova Scotia. "It was just something I realized I really enjoyed doing when I was exposed to it in high school and then I wanted to keep up with it when I got here."

As part of the latter experience, she was able to work one-on-one with a child as part of an autism arts program. "I learned how to help him understand the instructions and present the instructions to him in a way that was easy for him to grasp, and to find out what aspects of the art he could do on his own and which aspects he needed help with."

This past summer, she merged her passions by serving as an inclusion counsellor with Dal Tigers summer camps, aiding campers with different abilities to ensure they got the most out of the experience.

As Chloe shifts to law school, she's excited to explore criminal law, but also other possible avenues. "I'm definitely interested in learning more about accessibility and law."

The Academic All-Canadian will be looking to keep learning skills in her sports as well, with two more years of eligible varsity competition on tap.

"The thing that makes me feel connected to Dal is the athletics community because a lot of my friends are also my teammates, so I spend a lot of my time with them. There's a great community there." —Matt Reeder ■



"I'm definitely interested in learning more about accessibility and law."





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