



The York University Magazine

SUMMER 2020

Creative Directions

Visionaries navigating the intersection of art and commerce

PLUS

Self-Driving Cars
Deep-Sea Diving
Mosquito Control

SPECIAL MESSAGE
FROM THE PRESIDENT

On June 11, President Rhonda Lenton sent the communication below to students, faculty and staff, announcing a series of steps that the University is taking as part of York’s shared responsibility to build a more inclusive, diverse and just community.



RHONDA L. LENTON
PRESIDENT
AND VICE-CHANCELLOR



SHEILA COTE-MEEK
VICE-PRESIDENT
EQUITY, PEOPLE & CULTURE

FOLLOWING the global outpouring of grief, anger and demands for change following the brutal death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, York affirmed its solidarity with those experiencing anti-Black racism and our commitment to fighting racism in all of its forms.

In the days since my statement, we have heard from many members of our community. The message has been clear: while it is essential to stand in solidarity, it is not enough to issue statements. Action is required to address the long and destructive legacy of anti-Black racism in Canadian society. Today, I am pleased to announce a series of steps that we will take as part of our shared responsibility to build a more inclusive, diverse and just community.

STEPS WE HAVE
ALREADY TAKEN

York has been actively engaged through our teaching and our research in addressing anti-Black

racism. Some existing initiatives include:

- The Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community & Diaspora, currently held by Professor Carl James.
- Our innovative Black Canadian Studies Certificate in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies.
- Work undertaken by colleagues in two of our organized research units, the Harriet Tubman Institute and the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC).
- The York University-TD Bank Community Engagement Centre, working to increase access to education and facilitate community-engaged research in the Black Creek neighbourhood.
- Our Community Safety Council, which provides a valuable forum for community members to provide input into campus safety and security. Due to complications arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings were recently deferred and Council members were informed that the meetings would be rescheduled in the summer.

WHAT WE ARE DOING NOW

More recently, York has been working to increase the representation of Black faculty and ensure diverse applicant pools in our complement searches. I am pleased to highlight that York has hired 14 new Black faculty members over the past two years, underscoring our long-standing commitment to inclusive excellence. Together with the York University Faculty Association (YUFA), we also struck the Joint Subcommittee on Employment Equity and Inclusivity, tasked with looking at the question of Black faculty representation on campus. This subcommittee delivered a series of important recommendations in early January of this year.

We know that the need for further action is urgent, and the recommendations in the Joint Subcommittee report provide a good place to start. Today we are announcing new measures to address anti-Black racism and the need for greater representation on our campuses, including:

- Initiating dedicated searches to hire a minimum of six new Black faculty over the next three years.
- Our new Vice-President of People, Equity and Culture is currently finalizing the appointment of a Senior Advisor on Equity and Representation to support the implementation of the Joint Subcommittee’s report.
- We are undertaking a review of our affirmative action program and unconscious bias training jointly with the York University Faculty Association. A key area for examination will be the disaggregation of hiring data to give the University a better understanding of where equity and diversity gaps exist.
- Developing a post-doctoral fellows program dedicated to emerging scholars who are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour to foster and build a pool of potential faculty hires for the future.
- Developing a solution to ensure the long-term leadership and vibrancy of our Race Inclusion and Supportive Environments (RISE) committee.
- Delivering a number of online training modules on Challenging Unconscious Bias to faculty, staff and students, as well as modules on Understanding Racism. We know that education is a proven route to positive and permanent social change, and we are committed to increasing the educational resources available to our community focused on anti-racism.

WHAT WE WANT TO DO NEXT

We are also contemplating a range of new initiatives that require more consultation and development before we can implement them. They include:

- Surveying our community to develop a complete picture of diversity and representation to better identify where resources are required. This should include the collection of disaggregated data for faculty, staff and students.

- Deepening the integration of critical race theory and anti-racism training into our curriculum through, for example, requirements in student learning outcomes, and the potential creation of a new micro-credential in anti-racism and anti-bias training available to all members of the York community using digital badging.
- Working with Black students, faculty and staff to refine our community safety model.

We hope that these actions represent a substantive first step in fulfilling our responsibility to address anti-Black racism and all

forms of discrimination. I also know that these actions cannot be top-down. York needs to listen carefully to those living with anti-Black racism to shape programs that respond to their needs and to identify new initiatives that will ensure that every member of our community is supported as they pursue their personal visions of educational, research and career success.

To that end, we will be engaging in a series of consultations with Black students, faculty and staff over the coming weeks. We are finalizing the details of this consultation process, and I hope to provide the community with more information soon. ●

THE PRESIDENT’S LETTER

AS I WRITE THIS MESSAGE in the summer of 2020, the world is in the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic. Millions are sick and tens of thousands have died. The global economy is on lockdown. York University has also been severely affected, with our courses and all non-required services moving to online and remote formats.

Through this sudden and jarring change, I have been so impressed with the strength and resilience of the York community. The examples are many, but include faculty who have quickly adapted their courses to new teaching models; staff who continue to provide critical services and support to community members, including approximately 600 students still living in residence; the alumni and donors who have been steadfast in their support of the University as they heed the call to help students in need; and the thousands of students who are persevering to complete their courses and lift up their peers. I am grateful to every one of them for their dedication as we manage this crisis together.

The health and well-being of our community are our first priority and have guided every decision that we have made as we respond to the pandemic. COVID-19 has had a disproportionate effect on the most vulnerable members of our community, which is why we launched the Student Relief Fund. This initiative allows our alumni and supporters to contribute to our emergency bursaries, which provide financial aid to our students.

The fight against COVID-19 is global, and the York community is embracing its role in the struggle. We have donated thousands of masks and other items of personal protective equipment (PPE) to local hospitals and made 1,500 laptops available to students, staff and faculty to facilitate learning and working from home. The University also created a new \$250,000 internal research fund to support York researchers tackling the virus and its effects.

This contribution adds to the nearly \$2.5 million awarded to 13 of our colleagues through the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) rapid research program, supporting their work on the health, economic and social impacts of the virus. This funding includes Professor Jianhong Wu, who is part of a national mathematics team working on multi-scale modelling to assist in the development of effective intervention and mitigation strategies. Our Dahdaleh Distinguished Chair in Global Governance & Legal Epidemiology, Steven Hoffman, convened nearly all the world’s international law and global health scholars to achieve a juridical consensus on what countries may legally do during infectious disease outbreaks. Students at the Schulich School of Business created a COVID-19 Predictive Dashboard, which will help policymakers and public health authorities make informed decisions as they co-ordinate responses to the pandemic. Rahim Bhimani, a design instructor in our School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design, created and distributed 300 face masks for front-line healthcare workers. These are a few of the many initiatives already being led by York students and experts, and I know many more projects will be launched in the days ahead.

I hope that, as you read this message, the world is emerging from the worst of the pandemic. Perhaps children are going back to school, businesses are reopening and some semblance of normalcy is returning to our lives. But even if we are not there yet, I know York will continue to play a leadership role in delivering high-quality higher education and winning the fight against COVID-19. If you would like to learn more about our contributions, please visit coronavirus.info.yorku.ca/better-together. You can also connect with me on Twitter and Instagram @YorkUPresident or by email president@yorku.ca. Thank you all for your ongoing commitment to the University.

Season of Change

COVID-19, ALONG WITH a growing awareness of societal inequalities, has forced us all to confront the inherent fragility of our society, these days more than ever.

But we have not lost hope yet.

Our shared struggle these past few months has given rise to “We’re All In This Together” and “Black Lives Matter” as beacons of resistance and change.

We want so badly to return to our days in the sun, but we are quickly learning that we can no longer take anything for granted.

While it’s definitely still not business as usual, the summer issue of *The York University Magazine* highlights optimism, bravery and adaptability – in good times and bad.

Inside, you will find articles on scientific research aimed at finding ways to curb the spread of infectious diseases, for instance, and advancing medical treatments using emerging biotechnologies.

Other articles look at new economic thinking, experiential

learning and automated transportation – subjects predicated on the anticipation of a better future.

Hope does spring eternal, and embodying that spirit of aspiration is the quartet of York graduates profiled in our Creative Directions cover story.

Overall, it’s a selection of stories illustrating the quintessential character of the University, each showcasing integrity, talent and vision.

Nothing, not even a virus, can prevent their progress.

May they be an inspiration to us all. ●

– DEIRDRE KELLY

EDITOR’S NOTES



PHOTOGRAPH BY MCKENZIE JAMES

The York University Magazine

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY



Volume 5, Number 3

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ADVERTISING: See rate card at yorku.ca/yorku.

For bookings, email advyumag@yorku.ca

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40069546

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

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THE YORK UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE is printed and mailed to alumni and friends of the University once a year, in the fall. The summer and winter issues are available online only, at yorku.ca/magazine. Ideas and opinions expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect the ideas or opinions of the University or the editors. To get in touch, email yumag@yorku.ca



Dani Roche and Jason Cyrus
photographed by Mike Ford



The York University Magazine

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Experiential learning outside the classroom

*Not just a space but a head space:
learning continues
while the campus sits quietly*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

Summer Vacated

DOORS CLOSED. Minds still open. York University keeps on trucking through a pandemic that has most of the world at a standstill.

It might look quiet. But so much is still going on. Since the cessation of all in-class instruction on March 16, the University has quickly adapted to virtual modes of learning, with classes offered on Moodle, Zoom, Google Classroom and expansive online course platforms. In fact, summer enrolment is higher than ever and scholarship is flourishing – remotely but rigorously – as York faculty and students rise to the challenge of the COVID-19 crisis with new ways of thinking that continue to drive the University’s global reputation for teaching and research excellence. A more comprehensive look at how the University has handled the pandemic will follow in the fall issue. But for now, let’s celebrate the University’s extraordinary nimbleness, and its ability to embrace and be inspired by change. This is one of the biggest tests the University community has had to face. And it’s passing with flying colours. ●

What's the Buzz?

New discoveries in the prevention of mosquito-borne illnesses

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIE KIRK

SCIENTISTS AT YORK UNIVERSITY are working on mosquito neuropeptides – small, protein-like signalling molecules produced by the nervous system – seeking to uncover their functional roles and determine if they can be targeted to control mosquitoes and reduce the spread of vector-borne diseases affecting millions of people every year.

After pinpointing a hormone unique to the deadly bloodsucking insects, York researchers say they are closer to developing strategies for disrupting the hormonal control of mosquito reproduction with the aim of reducing mosquito populations and the pathogens they carry.

“One of the leading causes of death in the world is mosquitoes, and if we better understand their underlying physiology, researchers could more effectively reduce their numbers and eliminate the number of fatalities associated with them,” says Azizia Wahedi (BSc '16, MSc '18), who studied mosquitoes – getting up close and personal with the world's deadliest of insects – during her time at York.

Earning her a prestigious Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) Thesis & Dissertation Prize in 2019, Wahedi discovered the receptor of an important neuropeptide, ACP, in the Zika and dengue disease-vector mosquito *Aedes aegypti* for her

master's thesis, providing the first meaningful step toward deducing a function for this insect-specific neuropeptide signalling system.

Most of her research took place at the lab overseen by Wahedi's then-thesis advisor, York Faculty of Science biology Professor Jean-Paul Paluzzi. Paluzzi's own research is focused on unravelling the complex neuroendocrine regulatory mechanisms that promote feeding, signal satiety and govern homeostasis, along with regulating the growth and development of tissues involved in reproductive behaviours in bloodsucking arthropods like mosquitoes and ticks.

His lab literally crawls with the creatures he and his students study, much to the delight of Wahedi, today a researcher at Toronto's SickKids Hospital. “They were my babies,” she says of the hundreds of lab-reared uninfected bugs she doted on as they buzzed about in net-covered cages on the Keele Campus. Before knocking them out with carbon dioxide, Wahedi dutifully tended to her mosquitoes with daily feedings of blood.

Watching them grow plump, she developed a fondness for the dreaded insects – even as they stung her. Those that died she then dissected, using precision forceps and high-powered microscopes to isolate the tissue and organ samples that were required for her scientific research.

“The focus on entomology at York is great,” Wahedi says. “We're highlighting how the study of insects can benefit the world.” ●

DANCING COLOURS

The body as paintbrush

THE BARELY DISCERNIBLE FORM OF A DANCER

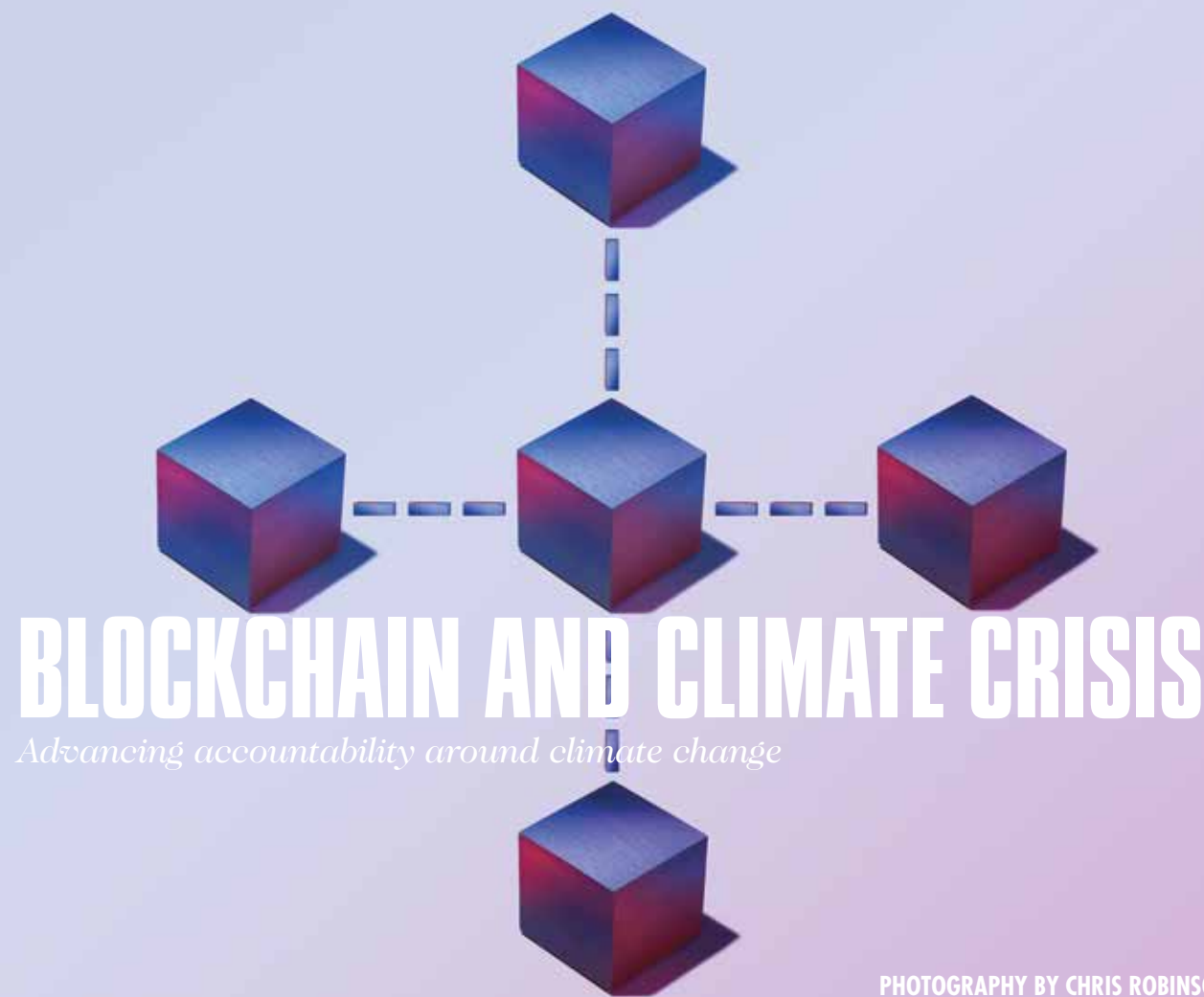
blurs across the picture frame, performing a pas de deux with the canvas.

Its creator is Nava Waxman, an established Israeli-Canadian multidisciplinary artist pursuing an MFA at York after years of exhibiting her visually rhythmic photographic canvases to critical acclaim in independent galleries in Toronto, Ottawa and Rome. Combining photography and impressionistic painting with the contemporary style of dance she practised in her birthplace of Be'er Sheva, her dreamscape works becloud art's boundaries to create a cohesive visual experience.

“Is it a painting? Performance? Dance? Photography? I guess you could say it is all of it,” says Waxman, whose thesis will draw on experimental dance films she has found through her research at the Israeli Dance Archive.

“The challenge is viewing the work as an integrated form.”





BLOCKCHAIN, THE TECHNOLOGY behind cryptocurrencies like bitcoin, is now being used by researchers at York University to facilitate climate action and emissions reduction around the world.

Essentially a shared database managed by a global network of computers, blockchain centralizes information, allowing for easy access and distribution of knowledge without the need for an intermediary.

When applied to the study of climate change, blockchain provides a transparent, public and universal ledger that can serve as a medium of exchange for emissions-reduction outcomes.

"It's a game changer," says Kam Phung, a PhD candidate in organization studies at the Schulich School of Business and a member of Blockchain for Climate Foundation (blockchainforclimate.org), an initiative based in part at York University, with co-ordinated activities in such cities as Vancouver,

Copenhagen, Berlin and San Francisco.

"It makes previously covert data and actions overt, allowing for better decision-making about environmental sustainability – a big step in the right direction."

Blockchain for Climate Foundation uses new developments in the Ethereum blockchain to help international actors "put the Paris Agreement on the blockchain" by using the system to co-ordinate their carbon mitigation processes.

Previously, strategies like the transfer of carbon credits have been hampered by cumbersome architectural features and overreliance on a central authority, Phung says.

"Climate change is perhaps one of the greatest challenges of our time, but the task at hand isn't only about finding solutions. It's also about mobilizing people, organizations and governments to take specific actions around identified solutions." ●



Skills Not Pills

Tackling the opioid crisis at its root

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROBINSON

LEIGHA COMER (BA '14, MA '17) suffers from chronic pain, and so is well aware of the problems surrounding the "invisible disability" affecting one in five Canadians.

Today's opioid crisis, identified as a public health emergency by the government of Canada, stems from a lack of understanding of this pain and how to treat it, she says.

The result is rampant addiction that affects people from all walks of life, and costs the Canadian economy an estimated \$60 billion a year in health care, lost wages and taxes, according to a recent report. While efforts to address

opioid overuse are ongoing, the pain persists, inspiring Comer to focus on how pain management is taught.

In her MA thesis, Comer finds that Ontario's pain education is scant, with "a paucity of information regarding pain theories, assumptions and medical models." Failure to understand or take pain seriously has led to a proliferation of drugs over alternative methods like art therapy or mindfulness techniques. The resulting epidemic brings another layer of shame, with addicts labelled criminals and social outcasts.

Building on her earlier research, Comer, now a PhD candidate in York's Graduate Program in Sociology, is

investigating policies aimed at people who use prescription opioids to manage their chronic pain — specifically, a controversial Ontario program that requires patients to return used fentanyl patches to a pharmacy before receiving more.

Comer's goal is to highlight the social determinants that shape chronic pain and opioid use, and to explore the damaging effects of criminalizing approaches to opioid reliance, by interviewing physicians, pharmacists and people who use opioids to understand "how legislation like this works on the ground," she says. "Otherwise, the problem will keep recurring." ●

*Electronics meets biology
in a groundbreaking
multidisciplinary program
unique to York University*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROBINSON

BY COMBINING microelectronics with microfluidics on computer chips – some as small as a nail cutting – researchers at York University have developed a radical breakthrough technology that advances drug discovery research and disease analysis.

Developed at two purpose-built labs that opened on the Keele Campus in 2018, the integrated biology and engineering systems use high-precision sensors and activators to detect different phenotypes of living cells – including cancer cells, bacteria and viruses – allowing for new and exciting scientific discoveries.

“It’s a paradigm shift to use microelectronic technology – previously used only for computers – for a life science application,” says Ebrahim Ghafar-Zadeh, a professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Lassonde School of Engineering, and graduate program member in the Department of Biology.

“There is nowhere else in the world but York where this kind of research is taking place.”

The efficacy of the biotechnology is demonstrated by a York project that used the devices to track the proliferation of kidney cancer cells in vitro. The microelectronic sensors discerned even the subtlest of variations in the cells, making them more efficient than other methods for the development of cancer treatments.

Graduate students from both biology and engineering continue to work together to develop technologies that maximize the number of tests and increase the accuracy of drug testing in vitro. Improvements to the hybrid microelectronic-microfluidic system have the potential to reduce testing periods that typically run five years to one year or less, underscoring the value of the York research.

“Our goal is to be the leader in developing this type of technology for new types of drug testing in preclinical trials,” Ghafar-Zadeh says. “Our multidisciplinary approach has already given us an advantage.” ●

Lab in a Chip

View



Creative Directions

BY DEIRDRE KELLY PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

FOUR YORK GRADUATES with different backgrounds and educational experiences have one thing in common. All are cultural entrepreneurs with a shared focus on creativity as it exists in the marketplace.

Each has a knack for turning such contemporary business principles as audience development, consumer engagement and client experience into visually charged values that positively impact the creative economy. Their expertise is broad, running the gamut from branded content marketing and visual merchandising to creative industry legal advice. They deliver on innovation, each believing that a bright idea really can light up the world.

The anti-designer designer retooling the ways brands interact with consumers

DANI ROCHE Branded

HOW TO COMMUNICATE with millennials? Ask Dani Roche (BDes '13), a new-media trailblazer whose Kastor & Pollux digital and experiences company (no, Virginia, they don't call it "advertising" anymore) speaks directly to young, in-the-know consumers, getting them to listen. At just 28 (she is her own target demographic), the York grad – who moonlights as a design prof in the York University/Sheridan College program in design, YSDN – already has a client list that would be the envy of any professional twice her age: Wealthisimple, Bumble and Converse, to name just a few.

Born in 1991, Roche grew up in Toronto's easterly Scarborough neighbourhood, where she honed her entrepreneurial chops at a young age. At 16, she launched her own vintage clothing e-commerce site, and at 19, the brand marketing agency that recently earned her a coveted spot in *Forbes's* "Under 30 Innovators You Need To Know." The influential business magazine praises Roche for wanting to empower independent creatives while boosting representation of Asian women in media. "A lot of people are afraid to be unconventional," Roche says. "But through my work, I'm looking to change people's perceptions of everything." ●



How to protect an idea?
Ask a lawyer

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

EVERY YEAR, the media multiverse in which big content creators operate becomes more legally complicated. Navigating the hazards of intellectual property – be it talent management or the production, ownership and distribution of programming – requires an understanding of how creative projects come together, and of the ever-changing laws that govern them. That’s where Peter Schneider (MBA ’90, JD ’02) fits in.

As vice-president of business and legal affairs at Canadian independent Cineflix Media, Schneider oversees everything from IP contracts and broadcast licences to distribution deals with industry partners like Netflix, Discovery, NatGeo and Britain’s ITV network.



PETER SCHNEIDER The Business of Show

After earning an undergrad degree in creative writing at the University of British Columbia in his native Vancouver – and finding some success as a playwright – Schneider enrolled in the Arts, Media & Entertainment Management program at York’s Schulich School of Business. He went on to run business affairs at CineNova Productions, a Toronto company producing non-fiction programming for world markets, before returning to York for a three-year degree at Osgoode Hall. He articulated at Gowling, a Bay Street firm with a well-established entertainment law group, and stayed for five years before joining the CBC’s business rights group in the era that launched “Heartland,” “Being Erica,” “The Rick Mercer Report” and “Republic of Doyle.” Cineflix headhunted him away from the national


broadcaster in 2008. He’s been there ever since, supporting the development of Cineflix hits like “Property Brothers” and “American Pickers,” among other projects.

“There’s a business and legal side to creativity and they come together at work,” Schneider says. “We have to pay close attention to intellectual property, because at Cineflix we option books, articles and ideas that we build projects and programs on, and the rights have to be secured. That’s where a lawyer can help – by supporting a visionary bringing an idea to the screen.” ●

A full-length photograph of Jason Cyrus standing in front of a large blue display board. He is wearing a dark blue blazer over a teal polo shirt and blue jeans. The display board is held up by a metal frame with blue clips. The background is a plain white wall.

JASON CYRUS On Display

Bringing work experience in visual retail
to bear on a study of fashion

A close-up portrait of Jason Cyrus, looking slightly to the right. He has dark, curly hair and a beard. He is wearing the same dark blue blazer and teal polo shirt as in the full-length photo.

JASON CYRUS (BA '18) had been studying marketing at York University until his part-time job as a fashion merchandiser made him think twice. In the classroom, he was learning theory. But at work, he was accumulating real experience – and getting paid for it. “It was quite the disconnect,” he says, “and so I stopped taking classes and put my full focus on crafting displays that analyzed business reports and inventory lists until I figured out what I wanted to do next.”

What was supposed to be a few months’ break stretched to almost eight years. Yet it was a productive period that saw Cyrus build up an impressive portfolio as a fashion merchandiser for the likes of Banana Republic, Le Chateau and Holt Renfrew.

When Dolce & Gabbana opened an in-store boutique at Holt’s Yorkdale Shopping Centre location, Cyrus was hand-picked to tailor a strong visual presentation to attract and retain customers. He did the same for menswear labels Paul Smith and Rag & Bone when they too opened in Toronto, creating magnetic window displays as a primary marketing tool. In his downtime, he took in fashion exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the Royal Ontario Museum, honing his eye. At one point, he made the connection between curation and merchandising – a eureka moment.

In 2016, Cyrus returned to York to study art history – another form of visual presentation. Currently pursuing a master’s degree, he is interested in questions of identity in fashion, which also drives the focus of “Re:Framing Gender,” his fashion exhibition that opened at the Goldfarb Centre in the University’s Fine Arts Building earlier this year. Comprising pieces on loan from York’s vintage fashion and costume collection, his own archives and the Fashion History Museum located in Cambridge, Ont., York’s first-ever fashion exhibition sews together his joint experience in visual retail and academe into one seamless show. “Fashion always has a story to tell,” he says. “It all comes down to how you frame it.” ●

GABRIELLE OUELLET

About Face

A fashion model pivots

IF YOU THINK the Schulich School of Business is looking particularly good these days, you have MBA student Gabrielle Ouellet (BA '19) to thank. An international high-fashion model, the 24-year-old Quebec City native is a stunner, with an unusual look emanating from wide-set green eyes that lend her a distinctly feline beauty reminiscent of a young Björk, as the influential fashion trade publication *Women's Wear Daily* once described it. "The pupils have an unusual shape that makes them unique," explains Ouellet, speaking with a French-inflected accent. "Instead of round, they fall downwards – the result of coloboma, a rare condition."

In her competitive world, rare is an advantage. Ouellet learned that early on when, in 2013, her raindrop-shaped pupils caught the attention of Toronto agent Chantale Nadeau, who spotted the then-16-year-old on Facebook and immediately offered her a contract. A model was born. Soon after, Ouellet's remarkable visage began to grace advertising campaigns for the likes of Target and

Mackage, as well as too many fashion magazine covers to mention. Accolades quickly followed. In 2014, Ouellet was recognized in the Best New Face category at the P&G Beauty Awards in Toronto. In 2016, she walked the runway in New York, where fashion reporters fell over themselves in a rush to interview modelling's next big thing. Ouellet was on the rise. But this daughter of a teacher and a doctor found herself wanting more – intellectually speaking.

After three years as a full-time model, Ouellet enrolled at York University's Glendon College, where she majored in communications with supplementary studies in French and Spanish. Last fall, she enrolled in the Schulich School's one-year Master of Management program, with a focus on marketing. Ouellet thinks such a degree will come in handy when, in the future, she opens a business drawing on her years in fashion. "I was always at the forefront of a marketing campaign for a company or e-commerce site," Ouellet says. "But now I want to be the vision behind a brand, not just the face out front." ●



BY RICK SPENCE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIE KIRK

Baby, You Can Drive My Car

Autonomous vehicles motor forward

WHAT'S BETTER than engaging cruise control and taking your foot off the pedal? And do you ever wonder how you parallel parked without a back-up camera? Your next car will be even more automated, likely offering an autopilot feature to keep your car a safe distance from everyone else on the road.

Piece by piece, the driverless vehicle is heading your way. Fully autonomous vehicles (AVs) – with sensors linked to artificial intelligence systems – are already here, albeit in disguise; self-driving vans are getting to know Toronto streets, with a human in the “driver’s seat” mainly to avoid alarming other motorists.

Think you’ve heard this before? This time, it’s true. Companies from Tesla to Google’s mobility division Waymo promised AVs by 2020 – until a fatal collision two years ago

Computers have been flying planes for years



in Tempe, Ariz., proved that mixing humans and massive mobile robots is more complex than experts thought. Still, the economics are so compelling that scientists and entrepreneurs around the world continue to work on improved navigation systems – and York alumni and faculty have their foot to the floor.

YORK GRADUATE ROD McPHAIL (Urban Studies '84) taught transportation planning at the Faculty of Environmental Studies for seven years and spent nearly four decades as a municipal transportation planner, including 16 as Toronto's Director of Transportation Planning. Now an independent consultant, he helps cities map out their futures – and he sees AVs as the catalyst for a revolution.

Automated transport is nothing new; rapid transit systems have been fully automated for decades in cities from San Francisco to Vancouver – and apart from takeoff and landing, McPhail notes, “computers have been flying planes for years.” The dream of bringing automation to our roadways is almost as old.

“Back in the '80s, we were widening expressways to get higher capacity. One of the questions we asked was, ‘What if we could get the drivers out of transportation?’” Replacing human drivers with precise electronic controls could double a lane's capacity without incurring construction costs.

Now that the technology is close,

McPhail insists driverless will win out. He cites three key reasons.

The first is safety. In 2018, Canada recorded 1,922 deaths from motor-vehicle accidents, and 153,000 injuries. The problem is not cars but drivers. A U.S. study found that human error – like speeding, distracted driving or driving under the influence – causes 94 per cent of all crashes. The AV industry is too new to produce meaningful statistics; fatalities are usually measured in billions of kilometres driven (in 2016, Canada had 5.1 fatalities per billion vehicle-kms travelled), and even industry leader Waymo has completed only 32 million kilometres of testing.

Still, New York City-based research firm ARK Invest estimates a fully autonomous system could reduce accidents by over 80 per cent. A 2017 RAND study suggests we shouldn't wait: deploying

Think what a street could look like if there's not a car at every home



AVs just 10 per cent safer than human drivers would save more lives than waiting until the technology is significantly better.

A second factor is their sustainability. Autonomous and electric vehicles work hand in glove, says McPhail. Battery-powered AVs will help cities meet carbon-reduction targets, while their simpler operating systems mean fewer repairs. And when consumers

truly embrace car-sharing, says McPhail, the land now occupied by parking lots and driveways can be repurposed: “Think what a street could look like if there's not a car at every home.”

And, finally, there's the economic incentive. Replacing drivers will save trucking firms, cab fleets, rideshare operations and their customers a lot of money. Secrecy surrounds most companies' pricing plans, but participants in a 2019 Waymo trial in Phoenix, Ariz., paid about US\$5.99 for an 8-kilometre ride – one-third the comparable taxi fare. ARK Invest estimates fully autonomous taxis could charge as little as US\$0.35 per mile, about half the “all-in” cost of vehicle ownership – a savings that could spark a lasting movement from owning cars to sharing them.

One drawback in the shift to AVs will be the loss of jobs such as truck driver and transit operator. But as McPhail notes, “the average truck driver is on the older side. The industry is finding it hard to get young people interested.” Once the AV shift is complete, the savings should fund new types of economic activity, but for now, no one knows what those benefits will be.

MEANWHILE, there are bugs to work out. AV sensors – radar, lidar and cameras – remain imperfect; some have trouble “seeing” traffic lights, others balk at left-hand turns. And A.I. control systems may be confused by random events like a swarm of pedestrians. Those on-road trials are part of the answer; A.I. thrives on endless data. But the industry also depends on new ideas.

Jinjun Shan's specialty is spacecraft design. Growing up in Harbin, China's space-research capital, he dreamed of

being an astronaut. He ended up doing the next-best thing: designing dynamic controls and navigation systems for fleets of small spacecraft, on the theory that multiple smaller (and cheaper) ships can do the same jobs as one big one. Following post-doc research at the University of Toronto's Institute for Aerospace Studies, he joined York's Department of Earth and Space Science and Engineering (ESSE) in 2006.

Interest in formation-flying spaceships has dipped, but Shan's expertise in controls and navigation has found a second

It will take millions of hours of training to get there



life in two sectors: drones and autonomous vehicles. Now chair of ESSE, Shan has received funding for a platform for academics and industry collaborating on “multi-agent systems” such as autonomous truck fleets, or drones that work together to deliver heavy payloads, monitor agricultural data or fight forest fires.

Roads are also multi-agent systems, says Shan: “Driving is often a game between you and other drivers.” He and his team are devising ways to help AVs interact more intelligently – especially at intersections – and increase system efficiency while reducing misunderstandings and accidents. Since A.I. requires massive amounts of information, they're also investigating new data sources to help AVs' software predict what other drivers will do next. “We're working on both the systems design and the programming,” says Shan, “but we're not yet at the application stage. It will take millions of hours of training to get there.”

Shan admits researchers worldwide are tackling similar ways to make AVs roadworthy. But he sees multi-agency as a niche technology to help vehicle manufacturers reduce sensor costs and solve complex interaction problems. “You never know what will happen,” he says. “You've got to think outside the box.”

RECENT YORK GRADS Raghavender Sahdev and Bao Xin Chen (both earned a master's in computer science, specializing in vision-based robotics) are betting on a different niche in the AV revolution: driverless trucks. Companies such as Amazon and the U.S. Postal Service are already testing

Driving is often a game between you and other drivers



self-driving trucks on U.S. highways (with backup drivers in the cab, usually awake). But cruising the I-75 is easy; navigating rigs through crowded city streets is hard. With their startup NuPort Robotics, Sahdev and Chen are developing autonomous controls for short-haul trucks that carry cargo from container ports to nearby distribution centres.

While many factories and warehouses have robot platforms that follow predetermined guideways, “follow-me” technology saves time and money by enabling mobile platforms to carry loads anywhere a human controller decides to go. The pair's test platform could carry up to 15 kilograms, but they envisaged industrial versions that could carry up to 100 kilos.

Sahdev and Chen fielded several offers for their vision-based controls. But they demurred, hoping to identify a bigger market to benefit from lower labour costs. After looking at shipping, forestry, even the military, they settled last fall on short-haul trucking, a \$60-billion corner of the transport sector. “There's not a lot of people working on autonomous solutions in this sector,” says Sahdev, “so we moved up from 15-kilo [loads] to 15,000.”

NuPort's systems will enable conventional trucks to haul shipping containers in autonomous convoys. They've already built partnerships with retail, automotive and shipping companies eager to cut costs and reduce accidents. “They're really excited,” says Sahdev. “This will make their whole supply chain more efficient.”

The company is looking for investors, as Sahdev expects it will take two years to start generating revenue. While he won't reveal what kind of return on investment clients can expect, he promises “they will save a bunch of money over time.”

He and Chen are also working with industry regulators, calling them “very supportive,” and predicting NuPort-enabled trucks will hit the streets within four years.

And this is why AVs are finally headed your way. Industry wants the ROI, government the safety and environmental benefits. Unlike many entrepreneurs, Shan and Sahdev and Chen don't have to sell anyone on the concept of change; customers demand it. Says Sahdev, “This market is waiting to be automated.” ●

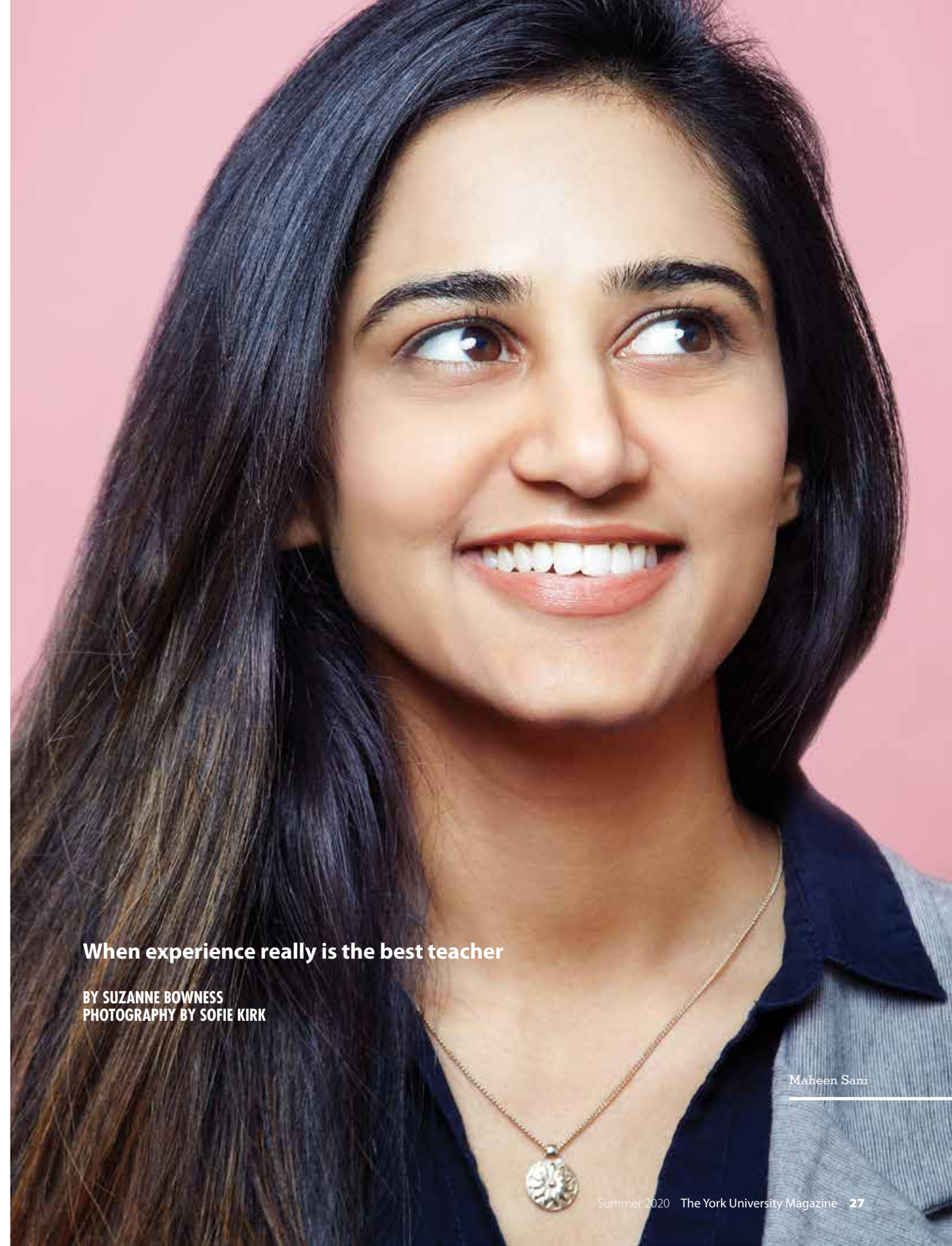
STOP LECTURING ME

MAHEEN SANI is a beneficiary of the growing movement toward experiential education at York University. A Lassonde School of Engineering student, she completed three co-ops, working at Metrolinx (the government transportation agency) for 16 months and in the rail and transit sector at Hatch (a global consulting firm) for four months. She credits both co-op experiences with providing her with a pathway into the workforce. Hatch brought her into its co-op program after noticing her at Metrolinx, where the company consults. After her term with Hatch, it extended a full-time job offer.

“Your degree signifies that you have the theoretical knowledge,” Sani says. “But co-op gives you an insight into what engineering really is and what you’re going to be doing day to day. Experiential learning helps you realize that engineering isn’t like how it is learned during school – it’s so much more fun.”

Opportunities for learning outside the classroom are on the rise at York, and cover everything from visiting guest speakers to more formalized work placements that lead to professional development and sometimes even jobs. All experiential education (EE) at York is required to connect with program learning outcomes and to include academic assessment. “Our goal,” says Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt, interim associate vice-president of Teaching and Learning at York, “is that every student at York University will have access to an EE opportunity during the course of their undergraduate degree.”

Helping to make that happen is YU Experience Hub, created in



When experience really is the best teacher

BY SUZANNE BOWNESS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIE KIRK

Maheen Sani

Our goal is that every student at York University will have access to an EE opportunity during the course of their undergraduate degree

Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt

2016 to consolidate and raise the profile of EE across the University. Led by director Kathleen Winningham, the Hub creates networking events to attract potential community partners and employers while supporting a network of full-time EE co-ordinators now established in each faculty.

“I think it’s really brought together a sense of community with respect to experiential education, and how we can support one another and make sure that our community partners and employers are serviced in the best possible way,” Winningham says.

One of the Hub’s newest initiatives is the Cross-Campus Capstone Classroom, or “C4” – a new full-year capstone course launched earlier this year at York University. The pilot project brings together third- and fourth-year students from different faculties into multidisciplinary teams focused on solving real-world challenges posed by organizations operating in both the for-profit and not-for-profit worlds. Current projects include initiatives like helping a cannabis business scale its waste-water recycling technology for wider urban food growing, and working with the Yonge Street Mission to develop a set of guidebooks on experiential trauma.

Originally designed to accommodate 20 students, the program is already oversubscribed, with 77 currently enrolled. Danielle Robinson, director of the York Capstone Network (YCN) and an associate professor in the School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design, is co-facilitator of C4, and says that capstones are motivational. “I see students light up in a way that I don’t see in any of my other classes. And I think it’s because they’re being challenged, asked to dream big, to think about the world and what they have to offer.”

Earlier this year, Robinson teamed up with Franz Newland, an assistant professor in the Lassonde School of Engineering, to co-facilitate C4 as an extension of the York Capstone Network they founded last year with integral support from the Teaching Commons and the Career Centre. The YCN, which is now bolstered by a two-year AIF grant, brings together dozens of faculty who have been, are or want to be teaching capstone courses. Network members gather for monthly cafés where capstone students, pedagogy experts and York staff allies explore the immense rewards and challenges of capstones.

“The advantage of this approach to capstone teaching is that

students get a taste of the ‘real world’ before leaving York,” says Carolyn Steele, a career development co-ordinator in the Career Centre and an adjunct professor in humanities. “The world and its challenges and opportunities are intrinsically multidisciplinary, but many degrees are not – they are typically disciplinary in focus. C4 gives participants the opportunity to collaborate with students from other majors, as well as with professors and professionals outside their departments. In this way, they come to know what they have to offer the world, as well as the value of their discipline and their York degree.”

Experiential education initiatives thrive at Glendon in a variety of courses that offer students the opportunity to enrich their academic experiences through placements in organizations whose work dovetails with course content. The YU ROC! (York University Research on Campus) program, for example, gives students hands-on environmental experience in association with two large international wildlife monitoring networks. Led by Laura McKinnon, assistant professor of biology at York, the program takes students out of the classroom and into the natural environment of Glendon’s 34.3 hectares of ravines, parklands and gardens as part of a pilot project to document biodiversity in the area.

At the Keele Campus, Melanie Belore, associate director of experiential education in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies (LAPS), co-ordinates an equal range of EE opportunities in her faculty, from Health & Society students completing work placements in public policy to Disaster & Emergency Management students engaged in disaster response simulations. In LAPS, more formal internships are offered through 10 professional programs, including accounting, economics and communications, while other programs invite community members into the classroom – for instance, at the School of Social Work, where experts help to practise difficult conversations.

Future goals include growing the EE offerings in disciplines that don’t traditionally include as many experiences, such as humanities and social sciences, since the opportunity for outside connection is valuable for everyone.

“What we’ve heard from our students is that these experiences help reaffirm program choice or course selection,” Belore says. “They push them out of their comfort zone and build confidence.” ● *With resources from YFile.*

Alumni

Going Deep

York alum Jill Heinerth is exploring
the world's last great uncharted wilderness:
underwater caves

BY DANIEL OBERHAUS

AT THIS POINT IN HER CAREER, Jill Heinerth and death are on a first-name basis. After nearly three decades as a professional cave diver, Heinerth (BFA '88) has been pinned beneath icebergs in Antarctica and incapacitated with the bends in the jungles of Mexico. Most people might take these experiences as signs that it's time to change professions. But Heinerth accepts the risks of her calling with a hard-won stoicism forged by recovering the bodies of friends and strangers from the depths.

"When an emergency occurs, there's suddenly a million conversations happening in your head all at once, and you just have to take a deep breath and turn off the emotions," she says. "After the danger has passed, you have to make time to honour those emotions, recognizing that some of them might hang on for weeks or a lifetime. It reminds you that this thing you're involved in is truly life and death."

Cave diving has claimed more lives than Mount Everest, but Heinerth isn't risking life and limb for the adrenaline rush. At 55 years old, she is on a mission to document the world's underwater caves, the last great wilderness and one of the least-understood ecosystems on the planet. By fostering what she calls "water literacy" through visual storytelling, Heinerth hopes to illustrate our intimate connection with this precious natural resource.

"You can only protect what you know about and understand," says Geary Schindel, president of the National

Speleological Society. "Cave divers like Jill help bring caves and groundwater resources to the public's attention. Otherwise, they would be out of sight and out of mind."

Heinerth first fell in love with cave diving while a student at York University, where she pursued a bachelor's degree in fine art with a focus on visual communication and design. In between a busy schedule as president of the student council and a member of several intramural sports teams, she found time to get her scuba certification by completing dives around shipwrecks near Tobermory, off the shore of Lake Huron.

On her final certification dive, Heinerth's instructor took the group to a location known simply as The Cave. Going into overhead environments is typically considered an advanced skill that is off-limits to beginners. But as soon as Heinerth ventured past the cavern's underwater threshold and into the airy anteroom on the other side, she was hooked.

"Beneath the rock ceiling, a single turquoise light ray sliced diagonally through the water ahead of me," Heinerth recounts in her new book, *Into the Planet*. "Like a tractor beam, it pulled me forward and upward to float in the flickering light of a large open room. Somehow, I knew then that diving would be something I'd do for the rest of my life."

Heinerth graduated from York with a Murray G. Ross Award, an honour bestowed on students for outstanding participation in undergraduate life, and soon found work at a graphic design office in Toronto.

National Geographic's
exploration and outreach project
at Dan's Cave on Abaco Island.
Photography by Jill Heinerth

Alumni

Heinerth got a rare permit to photograph this cave in Bermuda. Nobody had been in this location for 35 years.
Photography by Jill Heinerth

Heinerth descends into Ice Island Cave #4 in Antarctica.
Photography by Wes Skiles

Heinerth shooting with her Nikonos film camera when she was living in the Cayman Islands.
Photography courtesy of Jill Heinerth



Heinerth and her colleagues on a mission to recover a stalagmite for a paleoclimatologist.
Photography by Jill Heinerth



Jill Heinerth.
Photography by Jacqueline Windh

She quickly parlayed her artistic talents into her own design company. Her business attracted high-profile clients like Nike and the Toronto Festival of Festivals, precursor to the Toronto International Film Festival. But despite her company's success, Heinerth found herself unfulfilled. She belonged in the water and was determined to do whatever it took to turn her passion for diving into a career.

After taking night classes to become a scuba instructor at a dive shop in Toronto, Heinerth cut ties with her design agency and decamped to a dive resort on Grand Cayman Island. She spent a few years there cutting her teeth as a professional dive instructor before moving to the U.S., where she met cave-diving legend Bill Stone.

At the time, Stone was searching for the world's deepest cave in the jungles of Mexico, a treacherous pursuit that often involved diving in flooded passages deep below the Earth's surface. In 1995, Heinerth accompanied Stone's team to Mexico, where she helped set the record for the deepest cave explored up to that point.

"Jill came into that project as green as they come, but she came home impressing all of us, not just with her technical skill and cool head, but her overt enthusiasm for the entire endeavour," says Stone. "It's infectious when you work with such people. She was instantly on my radar as a rising star we could count on for future projects."

Heinerth's trip to Mexico was her first real exploratory cave-diving expedition, and ultimately shaped the rest of her career. Since then, she has led the first team to dive into an iceberg, and was part of an elite group of Stone's divers that became the first to create a 3D map of Wakulla Springs in Florida, an underwater cave system known as "diving's Everest." Along the way, she has written technical books on diving, produced several documentaries, and explored dozens of miles of unmapped terrain. And, in 2016, she was selected as the first explorer-in-residence at the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

Heinerth's early career as a cave diver was defined by the exploration of uncharted waters, but these days, she is focused on telling the human stories behind better-known underwater destinations. Widely recognized as one of the world's pre-eminent underwater filmmakers, she recently returned from a documentary shoot at Truk Lagoon in Micronesia – the largest ship graveyard in the world, where thousands of Japanese soldiers perished during an Allied air raid during the Second World War. Next up is an expedition to document the wrecks off the coast of Newfoundland. "I want to focus more of my efforts on telling Canada's underwater stories," she says. "There's a hidden geography there and I want to go deeper." ●

Classes

1971

WYLIE, MICKY

(BA Political Science and French - Glendon)

After graduating from York, Micky took a master's degree in political science at the University of Alberta. She then

worked for a year in Toronto doing market research before applying to the Faculty of Library Science at the University of Toronto, where she trained to be a special librarian with a concentration in law. Today she works as a consulting librarian for five Toronto law firms in addition to helping her husband, Bill Wylie, at Wylie Mycologicals – an



KRISTIN BLAKELY (BA Sociology '00) A former Chair of the board of the Canadian Women's Foundation and past member of the Consultative Committee for the Gender Equality Network Canada, Kristin received her master's in sociology from York in 2002. A co-investigator at the Ryerson Diversity Institute and a frequent speaker on gender issues, she teaches undergraduate courses in sociology at Glendon. Kristin presently serves on the board of the Canadian Women's Foundation and chairs the Foundation's Teen Healthy Relationships Advisory Committee. She lives in Toronto with her lively family and her pup, Joey.

organic specialty mushroom facility located in Georgian Bluffs, Ont.

1988

LI, JANE

(BA Political Science)

After a successful 31-year career in commercial real estate across Ontario, Jane recently retired to return to her lifelong passion: painting. But this isn't a casual hobby to fill her spare time. Jane is steadily working away to finish a new painting every one to three days. To date, she's created over 100 paintings in the span of six months. "If I continue at this pace, I will complete 1,000 paintings in another three and a half years," she says, "allowing time for relaxation and light socializing."

1989

RORAI, GINA

(BFA Visual Arts)

After graduating from York, Gina began exhibiting with prominent Toronto art gallery Sable-Castelli (now defunct), where she was included in seminal exhibitions that led to her appearance in some of the country's leading art institutions. Today represented exclusively by Corkin Gallery in Toronto, Gina recently unveiled an exhibition of her latest collection of paintings, "Where One Finishes the Other Begins," to critical acclaim.

1998

SCOTT, RYAN

(BA Kinesiology and Health Sciences)

Ryan is the clinic director, chiropractor and certified strength and conditioning specialist at Advantage 4 Athletes in Markham, Ont. His clinic was the first in Ontario to introduce a new medical device called the Portable Neuromodulation Stimulator (PoNS), which is currently being studied as a potential new option for the treatment of chronic neurological symptoms of disease or trauma.

2001

CLARKE, CURTIS A.

(PhD Sociology)

After graduation, Curtis accepted the position of associate professor and co-ordinator of the Criminal Justice program at Athabasca University. After seven years in that position, he transitioned to the Alberta Provincial Government, where he held various positions, including assistant deputy minister of Correctional Services, associate deputy solicitor general and, as of this year, deputy minister of Advanced Education. During this time, Curtis has been involved with numerous outside organizations, such as INTERPOL, the Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC) and the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. Curtis recalls his memories of York fondly.

EVANS, VIRGINIA A.

(BA Liberal Studies)

After graduating from York in her mid-sixties, Virginia founded the Macedonian Film Festival in Toronto in 2006 – the world's first and longest-running international film festival dedicated to Macedonian culture and heritage. Since then, various iterations of the

festival have opened in New York, London and Melbourne. The festival's 15th anniversary in Canada is scheduled to take place at Toronto's Carlton Cinemas in October. Previously, Virginia ran a community theatre group, called Theatre Five, in the city's Willowdale neighbourhood.

2002

DURANTE, ANGELA

(BA/BEd History)

After completing a master's degree in 2005, Angela took a PhD in history, specializing in visual culture and the body, in 2015 – her fourth degree from York University. Today a professional portrait photographer, she assigns herself an annual "heart project," which has so far taken her to India and Tanzania, where she photographs non-profit groups and orphanages in search of clean water. "My passion for travel, service and working through language and cultural barriers has made my international humanitarian work the most fulfilling of all my projects," Angela says.

2003

MISHRA, ANKIT

(BA Mathematics - Glendon)

Following graduation, Ankit headed to Europe to complete his master's in international economics at Sciences Po in Paris. "The Glendon experience was a key factor in my decision to move to France," he says. He has since parlayed his education into numerous international postings, including the OECD/IEA in Paris and the NATO Parliamentary

Assembly in Brussels. After returning to Canada for a brief stint with the Ontario Ministry of Energy, Ankit relocated to San Francisco to become head of growth and data analytics at Pngme, a mobile lending platform for financial institutions in emerging markets.

RASHKOVSKY, KARINE

(BSc Psychology; BEd Science)

Recipient of a PhD in education from York in 2010, Karine is the founder and director of Brain Power, an after-school enrichment program for bright and gifted students from grades one through 12. As the co-author of the Brain Power series of educational workbooks, she's the recipient of numerous accolades for her progressive leadership in the field of education, including the 2018 Top Entrepreneur Under 40 in the City of Vaughan and York Region's 2018 Passion into Practice award.

2005

OKO, JOLANTA

(BFA Dance)

Jolanta is the founder and director of Canada's National Academy of Dance Education. In addition to holding her BFA and MA in dance from York, Jolanta is a graduate of the teacher training program at Canada's National Ballet School. She travels across Canada facilitating dance educator conferences and workshops for school boards, dance studios and teachers, and is the author of over 10 dance resources, in both English and French, designed to help teachers deliver 21st-century dance education to their students. She took an MA in dance at York in 2013.



CURTIS A. CLARK (PhD Sociology '01)

2008

MALDONADO, ANABEL

(BA Psychology)

A fashion journalist and entrepreneur, Anabel has contributed to numerous international lifestyle publications, among them *T Singapore: The New York Times Style Magazine*, *The Business of Fashion* and *Marie Claire*. After graduating in 2008, she moved to London, U.K., where she launched *The Psychology of Fashion*, a media platform dedicated to exploring why we wear what we wear. Anabel is also the founder of *PSYKHE*, a shopping platform that makes style recommendations using psychology and A.I. She and her husband were married in Seville, Spain, last year.

2012

SANTO, ANA LUISA

(MA Music)

Ana Luisa is a senior behaviour therapist at Surrey Place in Toronto. Together with that of her colleagues, Ana Luisa's

work on how to select a behaviour analyst for children with autism was recently published in *Hospital News*, Canada's healthcare newspaper. "We collaborated with an ethicist from the University Health Network in order to have a wide reach at this very important time in Ontario, when autism services are changing for families," she says.

2013

ZHOU, TIAN JIAO

(BA Culture and Expression)

Tian Jiao is a Toronto-based director and film editor. After graduating from York, she was a finalist on "China's Got Talent," which aired on Chinese Central TV. She appeared in the 2014 film *Transformers: Age of Extinction*, and was the bilingual host at the film's gala appreciation night and premiere in China. She edited the 2019 film *Miller & Son*, which was shortlisted in the Live Action Short Film category at the 2020 Oscars. The film also won the BAFTA Student Film Award for Best Live Action Film in 2019. A proud alumna, Tian Jiao

Classes



CHRISTINA-LAILA VLAHOS (BA Mass Communications & Political Science '10) is a television presenter and producer at “Star Foodies” on Canada’s OMNI 1 channel. Additionally, she is a presenter and content creator for The Weather Network (Canada), where she is dedicated to broadcasting messages of hope during the COVID-19 pandemic. Inspired by astronaut Chris Hadfield’s moving video on isolation, Christina-Laila is currently reaching out to acclaimed Canadians asking for self-recorded videos of hope and inspiration, which will be broadcast on The Weather Network during this time of social distancing.

is grateful for the university education and experience she had at York.

2015

ADHIKARI, INDRA
(MDEM Disaster and Emergency Management)
Indra recently returned to Toronto after spending 26 months in Yemen with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), where he helped support those needing protection and assistance. “Managing food, non-food items,

water and medicine was challenging, [but] I did my best with IFRC to serve the purpose of disaster or emergency management,” he says. He continues his advocacy work to engage the international community to help Yemen, save lives and promote human dignity.



University Press, called *Jackson’s Wars*,

HUNTER, DOUGLAS
(PhD History)
Douglas is currently completing a new book for McGill-Queen’s

on the formative years of World War One soldier and artist A.Y. Jackson, a founding member of the Group of Seven. Douglas published *Beardmore: The Viking Hoax That Rewrote History* in 2018. He won multiple awards for his doctoral dissertation, “Stone of Power,” including the 2016 Canadian Association of Graduate Studies award for the best dissertation in humanities, social sciences and art history. A version of this dissertation, incorporating additional research, was the source of his 2017 book, *The Place of Stone*.

2019

BRADBURY, NICOLE
(BSCN Nursing)
After graduating, Nicole passed her licensing exams to become a Registered Nurse in Ontario, and joined the Nursing Resource Team at St. Michael’s Hospital. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, she has been working at the hospital’s COVID-19 assessment centre in downtown Toronto. “I find a lot of my job has been providing health education and reassurance to many who come in with anxieties and fears about COVID-19, which has been a real privilege during this uneasy and stressful time,” she says.

MORRIS, MOLLY
(MLCE Leadership and Community Engagement)
As Molly was completing her master’s degree in leadership and community engagement at York University, she began contributing to 929.org, an international online initiative of Jewish Biblical scholarship. She’s currently a featured writer, posting weekly essays focused on Biblical leadership. Molly’s

day job is at York University, where she is a manager of communications and marketing with the Division of Students, and her downtime is happily spent playing, in person and virtually, with her seven grandchildren in three countries.

In Memoriam

SCOTT, RANDY
(Professor Emeritus)
Randy served at York University for 45 years, beginning in 1972, when he was both a sessional instructor in the Department of French Literature and the assistant to the dean in the former Atkinson College. Professor Scott was perfectly trilingual in English, French and Italian, and also conducted research in Latin, Old French and Provençal. He passed away on November 6, 2019.

HOGG, PETER
(Dean Emeritus, Osgoode Hall Law School)
Peter was appointed a professor of law at Osgoode Hall Law School in 1970 and became dean in 1998, serving until 2003, when he joined the Toronto law firm Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP as a scholar in residence. As dean emeritus and professor emeritus at Osgoode Hall Law School, he was one of Canada’s leading constitutional law scholars. Peter died February 4, 2020. He was 80 years old.

WANT TO BE IN CLASSES?

Have you received a promotion or an award, published a book, married or had a child? Email us at magnotes@yorku.ca

Noteworthy

York alum Penny Wise is 3M Canada’s new president
BY DEIRDRE KELLY

Sticking to Success

GROWING UP in Port Elgin, Ont., Penny Wise (BA ’89, MBA ’91) despised math and couldn’t wait to get out of high school to escape the suffocating boredom of fractions, decimals and integers. She applied to Glendon College at York University to study French and history, thinking it was the perfect escape.

To test her decision – and ensure she was making the right move in becoming a humanities student – she added a calculus course to her first-year timetable. It was supposed to be loathsome. But to her shock, she ended up loving the math elective more than her study of languages, and all because of the professor, Jean-Paul Bouhenic, who teaches at Glendon still. “He was so influential,” Wise says. “He made me fall in love with math.”

Switching her major to math for commerce, she realized she had a flair for numbers and head for business. After getting her undergraduate degree, she immediately applied and was accepted to the Schulich School of Business, where she specialized in marketing.

Her first job upon graduation was with 3M Canada. She’s been there ever since, rising through the ranks to become president of a company that makes far more than sticky notes. Surgical tape, building and construction, fire retardant and automotive parts made through its innovative 3M Science division represent only a fraction of what the company can do.

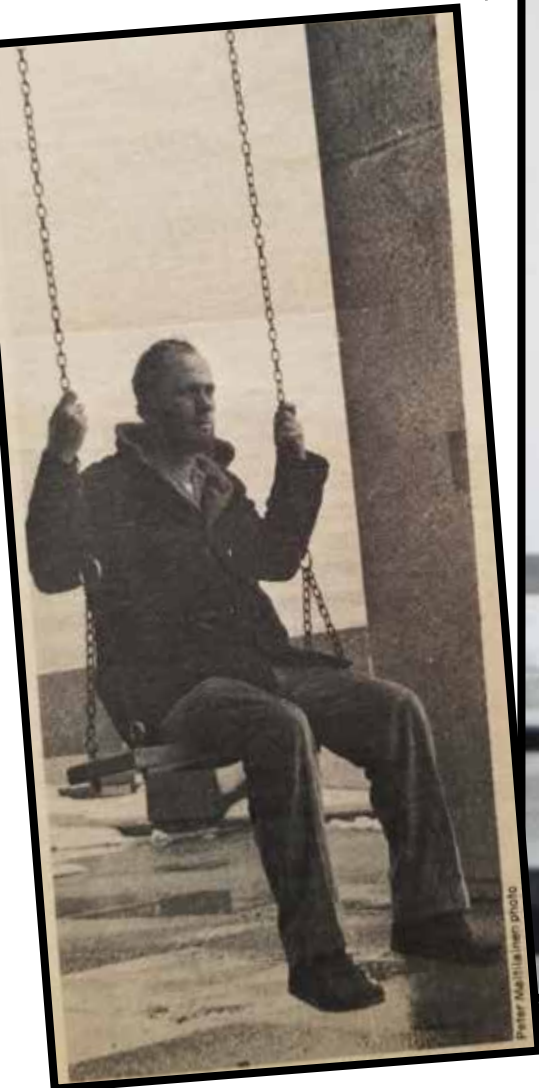
“It’s been quite the journey,” says Wise, whose 20-year career at 3M allowed her to excel at several leadership roles, most recently in St. Paul, Minn., where the company is headquartered. Her new position, announced earlier this year, has



brought her back to London, Ont., where she started her career at 3M before relocating to the U.S.

She remembers her first day at work, walking down the main corridor, whose walls were lined with photographs of 3M presidents past – all of them men. “I remember thinking, ‘One day my picture will be on that wall.’ And now it is,” she says with a glimmer of pride. “I’m the company’s second female president, but its first in Canada. The company has always been about diversity and inclusion, and I am proof of that. I’ve always had great mentors.” Starting with her math prof at York. ●

Flashback



DESIGN CLASS, February 1973. Professor George Manupelli (founder of the Ann Arbor Film Festival) proposes that students reinterpret a part of the University and do it on a large scale. Taking up the challenge, Wendy A. Thomas (BFA '75, MA '84) homes in on the imposing Ross Humanities Building, which, at the time, loomed over the wide-open spaces of the

Keele campus like a fortress, complete with an enormous ramp and what resembled a portcullis separating its two towers. Calling it the Humanities Building seemed ironic, thought the student, who then set out to make it a little more human with the addition of an 18-foot swing she had installed at the building's south end. Everyone enjoyed it, including a laid-off worker who came to sit on it, dangling his legs. His photograph appeared in *Excalibur*, catching the eye of security, who determined the swing was a safety hazard and had it removed. End of swing – but not of the original idea. Years later, and thanks to that York design class, the student continues to engage in art that reinterprets her environment. Visit wendythomas.ca to see recent examples of her work. ●

Have a great photo from your days at York?

Email us at magnotes@yorku.ca

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MAKING A GLOBAL IMPACT

UNIVERSITIES HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT as catalysts for positive change. We live in a world filled with incredible innovation but also one facing serious and complex challenges. We need globally educated citizens able to work across traditional boundaries to build their own success and that of their communities. We are very pleased to be recognized by *Times Higher Education's* Impact Rankings as a world leader in building multisector partnerships and pioneering new educational approaches. From confronting climate change to building more inclusive and equitable communities, York is leading the type of community engagement needed to tackle society's most pressing concerns.

[YORKU.CA/THEimpactrankings](https://yorku.ca/theimpactrankings)

