

KPU



Alumni Magazine

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HELLO & WELCOME

The size of my purse is a topic of ongoing conversation between me and my husband. (Spoiler alert – he can't conceive of any worldly reason why I need such a big handbag.)

Now, this may not be the topic you were expecting to encounter as you peruse this – our third edition of the KPU Alumni Magazine. But let me explain.

I spend a great deal of time out and about in what we affectionately refer to as the “KPU communities.” The opportunity to connect with people throughout Surrey, White Rock, Langley, Richmond, Delta and beyond is something I truly enjoy. Whether it is at events, as part of community-based projects and initiatives, or helping to create a new business or community connection for KPU, I have hundreds of opportunities each year to sing the praises of KPU and our alumni. I am profoundly inspired by our graduates' achievements, and it is with genuine pride and absolute delight that I share those stories at every opportunity.

One of my major objectives as Vice President, External Affairs is to enhance KPU's status in our communities, and our alumni are central to many of our reputation-building strategies. As we tell our graduates at each Convocation ceremony: Your success is our success.

Accordingly, I am always armed and ready with tales of alumni achievements: Stories about the incredible impact KPU graduates are having close to home, across the country and, yes – around the world.

So if your ears have been ringing, it might well be because I have been bragging about you.

But in the last couple of years, something amazing has been happening. You see, it seems that no matter where I go, I now run into someone who is very proud to say, “I'm a KPU alum!” Sometimes they come up and introduce themselves; other times people in my network will introduce me to KPU grads that they have hired. And each and every one has spoken proudly about their experience at KPU, and how their alma mater was instrumental in setting them on their next path – either a rewarding career or further academic studies.


These encounters have become so frequent that I have begun carrying with me wherever I go a number of our coveted KPU Alumni business card holders. That way, when I meet a member of our alumni community, I can give them a small gift – a token of our gratitude for the ambassadorial role they play in their community and in their work.

It's now become a personal challenge to ensure that every KPU grad I meet receives one of these elegant cardholders. And because these encounters are growing in frequency, I am probably going to need a bigger purse soon. (Just don't tell my husband.)

Thank you to all our alumni for being such wonderful ambassadors for KPU!

Marlyn

P.S. If you would like one of those business card holders, send me a message on LinkedIn, and I will be sure to get it to you.

 Marlyn Graziano



Marlyn Graziano
Vice President,
External Affairs



It is probably unnecessary to tell our alumni, who are working in every sector of the economy, that the world of work is changing, especially with respect to digital transformation and all kinds of automation.

There have been many significant reports and books written in recent years about these changes, about what impacts they will have, and how to prepare for such a future.

In May 2019 we had the honour to host the Polytechnics Canada Annual Showcase at KPU Richmond. It was a huge success, but the highlight for me was the opportunity to hear from and to engage with Joseph Aoun, the President of Northeastern University in Boston (which now has a campus in Vancouver).

Dr Aoun's book *Robot-Proof* (MIT Press, 2017) is probably the best overview of the changes that face workplaces and society because of digitization and advances in artificial intelligence. He outlines the literacies and the capacities that we need to imbue in our graduates for the

FUTURE SKILLS

future. These include data, technical and human literacies (which collectively he calls humanics), and capacities in systems and critical thinking, entrepreneurship, and cultural agility.

Of course, we believe that KPU graduates (and you are proof of that) exemplify how thought meets action and are well-prepared for the world of work, but we all will need to do more to stay current and to build on our skills, likely for the rest of our working lives at least.

Many countries, including Canada have taken this to heart and have established policies and programs to support the necessary continuing education (such as the Canada Training Benefit and the Future Skills Centre).



Dr. Alan Davis
President and
Vice-Chancellor

Our response to this challenge includes:

- Ensuring all programs include outcomes that align with the future of work and society.
- Enhancing our work-integrated learning experiences and applied research to focus on developing future skills.
- Building the capacity for students to create an e-portfolio that links their studies to the skills and competencies needed in the workplace.
- Offering short, stackable micro-credentials for our alumni and others to return to KPU in flexible and affordable ways to develop new skills. These micro-credentials will be digitally badged to allow any employer to click through to demonstrations of competencies.
- Developing ways to link these micro-credentials to any learning and competencies already acquired through experience, and to ensure that they count towards KPU advanced credentials.

It is an exciting time in higher education in Canada, and our alumni are proof of the importance of the work we do.

Perhaps we will see you back at KPU in the future!

Alan Davis



FULFILLING A CHILDHOOD DREAM

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTO BY MATT LAW.

Growing up, Amelia Reigstad thought she was going to become a high school English teacher.

She took a few university courses, but “got stuck on math and science,” so she tried the Public Relations Diploma program at what was then Kwantlen University College.

“I was off and running,” says Amelia. “It was such a great program.”

Amelia continued her education earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in PR, media and communications. She spent time working in the corporate sector, but didn’t stay away from KPU for long before returning – this time as an employee, working in the Marketing and Communications Department to help plan KPU’s 25th anniversary celebrations.

In 2007, Amelia launched her own PR firm Crosspoint Communications, and one of her very first clients was KPU. While running her business, Amelia also got to fulfill her childhood dream of teaching. Dean Barbara Duggan offered Amelia a faculty position in the PR program.

“I had always kept in touch with Barbara,” says Amelia. “She was the Dean when I was in the program and I asked her to keep me in mind if any teaching positions opened up. So she called and said, ‘I have an event planning class in the fall. Would you be interested in teaching it?’ And that was the beginning of my teaching career.”

Today Amelia is a Lecturer at the Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Minnesota. Previously she taught a variety of PR and communications courses at the University of Wisconsin River Falls, the University of Victoria, and the British Columbia Institute of Technology. She has also guest lectured internationally at universities in Austria, Scotland and Croatia.

“As a teacher, to take what I learned in the KPU PR program and come back full circle and teach up-and-coming professionals was fantastic,” says Amelia. “I had this great education and now as faculty could give back.”

One of Amelia’s KPU students Cathy Yeomans (Dip ’08 PR) even ended up working for her at Crosspoint Communications.

“Building those relationships with students and being a mentor for them during their years at school and then seeing them entering the industry is incredible,” says Amelia. “It’s so great seeing where the students end up working and to know I had a hand in that.”

In addition to teaching, Amelia is pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of Leicester. Her doctoral dissertation is on gender differences in communication styles and their influence on workplace communication and the practice of PR. She has presented at numerous conferences and post-secondary institutions on her findings and received media attention in both the U.S. and Canada.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

“My Ph.D. dissertation. I’m going through a 222-page document. It’s due at the end of April so I’m really close. My dissertation is all about how men and women communicate in the workplace and how this influences the practice of public relations. The results I found most interesting is that personality traits and not necessarily gender influence the end goal of a PR campaign and that practitioners are ‘performing’ in their day-to-day roles. What I found significant is that women take on male characteristics in order to be successful and have a seat at the leadership table.”

ACHIEVING THE DREAM

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTO BY MATT LAW.

Santiago Arcila came to Canada as a refugee at the age of 14.

His family fled Colombia after his parents lost their construction business and the country grew politically unstable.

“It was extremely difficult,” says Santiago. “We came here as refugees and Canada to Colombia was a shock. It was so different, but it was harder for my parents.”

While Santiago and his two sisters already spoke English, which they had learned at school, his parents did not and the teenagers had to translate for them. They went from owning a successful company to his father working as a janitor and his mother at Costco.

Despite the cultural and financial hurdles he and his family faced, Santiago diligently pursued higher education and graduated from Kwantlen Polytechnic University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Interior Design in 2012. Five years later he launched his own interior design business O|NINE Design + Photography – a dream he didn’t expect to fulfil so soon in his career.

“Running my own company was much earlier than planned, but hey you can’t plan life,” says Santiago.

For the past several years, he has successfully grown his business designing commercial spaces, and this past year delved into designing several medical offices near Surrey Memorial Hospital.

Santiago’s first interior design job grew out of an internship at SSDG Interiors, which he completed as part of KPU’s interior design program. He continued to hone his skills with SSDG for six years before starting his own commercial interior design firm.

“I’m really grateful to KPU,” says Santiago. “Where I am now, I don’t think it would have been as easy without the contacts I made at school and the experiences I had there.”

One of those pivotal experiences happened during the final year of his degree when Santiago applied for and was awarded the NEWH Hospitality Industry Network Icon of Industry Scholarship. NEWH is an international networking resource for the hospitality industry. Santiago is the first Canadian to receive the scholarship.

“I had a lot of costs and debt,” says Santiago. “Even though I’ve always worked, usually two jobs all through high school and college, I needed money. So I applied to a lot of scholarships. This one in particular required financial need, which I had; good grades, which I had; and just to tell my story. When I saw a random number from the U.S. and they told me I was the recipient I was trying not to swear at the lady on the phone, but I was like, ‘Are you freaking kidding me?’ I was so excited. I called my family right away.”

The scholarship provided \$5,000 and a trip to New York City to give an acceptance speech at the Icon of Industry awards ceremony. Santiago now sits as the Scholarship and Education Chair for the Vancouver Chapter of NEWH.

In addition to his volunteer work and running his own business, Santiago teaches interior design courses at the British Columbia Institute of Technology and twice a year visits KPU’s Wilson School of Design to guest critique the work of the next generation of KPU designers.

BEST KPU DAY?

“My first day. My first class I got in there and there was 15 of us and I was just surrounded by my classmates asking a thousand questions. It felt right that I was there in that moment. It validated that I moved across country away from my family back east [Toronto, Ont.]”







SURVIVING AGAINST ALL ODDS

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC.
PHOTOS BY MATT LAW.

Harriet Ronaghan's story is not your typical alumni tale.

A week before she was set to start classes at KPU in 2007, Harriet was in a devastating car crash. Her mother was driving her and her brother to H&M when their car was t-boned by a dump truck. Harriet suffered a traumatic brain injury and required immediate emergency neurosurgery. She was given a five per cent chance of survival.

Against the odds she survived surgery, but remained in a coma for three months. When she woke, it was to a nightmare. She couldn't move. She couldn't speak. The neural pathways that carried information in her brain had been completely severed.

To recover, she had to build new pathways to control all her functions. At 18 years old, she had to relearn how to blink, swallow, talk, walk, and care for herself – skills doctors told her she might never reclaim. Undeterred by the devastating diagnosis, Harriet began the gruelling process of her rehabilitation.

"I had to relearn everything: to stand up, walking, talking," says Harriet.

After 10 months in the hospital, Harriet was sent home in a wheelchair; she only used it three times. Less than a year after the accident, she went back to Royal Columbia Hospital to visit the nurses and doctors who had treated her. Lying in the same bed she had been in just a few short months before, was a teenage boy. He had been in a motorcycle accident the night before and was now in a coma. His father stood by his bed watching over him. With Harriet standing quietly by, a nurse told the father that Harriet had been in that same bed. The father asked how long ago it had been for Harriet.

“Five years?” he guessed. The nurse told him that it hadn’t even been a year.

“The way he thanked me and called his wife right away and told her about me,” says Harriet. “That was the moment I decided I needed to write a book. The accident was awful, but my story can help people.”

Harriet had already been documenting her therapy as a method of processing her thoughts and feelings.

“I went to physio three times a week, but it was exhausting. So when I got confused, I would sit and write down my feelings, how I was doing, and share it with the physiotherapists.”

She compiled her experiences into a book entitled: *You Are My Sunshine: The Journey through My Recovery of a Traumatic Brain Injury*. In the book, Harriet describes the accident, her life before, and the hard work she put into her recovery. After just 16 months, she was able to walk unassisted, and three months after that she went on her first date with the man she would later marry. In June of 2017 the couple celebrated the birth of their first child, Charlie.

“My dream ever since I was a little girl was to get married and have a baby and be a mom.”

Harriet worked hard to get to where she is today. She still works hard to achieve small victories that many take for granted. She has a different walking gait than she used to and she’s slower of speech than she once was, but the hardest part for Harriet is her fatigue. Every action no matter how small such as brushing her hair or eating breakfast takes tremendous amounts of energy.

“At the beginning I thought I was going back to school to pursue my writing, but I realized after years of recovery and therapies that I can’t do that,” says Harriet. “My fatigue is too severe and that’s something I’ve had to come to terms with.”

Harriet has shared her story with physiotherapy students and patients at rehabilitation centres and consulted with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC). She was the 2019 recipient of the Coast Mental Health Courage to Come Back award in the physical rehabilitation category.

“Whenever I was told I wouldn’t do something or accomplish something, I worked three times as hard,” says Harriet in her acceptance speech. “To everyone facing adversity and challenge, I want to tell you to never stop trying, don’t give up. Your story isn’t over. Keep pushing and striving for those dreams.”

Harriet will be recognized in 2020 as an Honorary Alumna at KPU’s June Convocation ceremonies. Her accident may have disrupted her ability to attend KPU, but her journey through recovery personifies that of a “tireless runner,” which is the meaning of the word *Kwantlen*. This award acknowledges Harriet’s determination and strength of will, and it will make her an official member of the KPU family.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

“I would like to get my book published by a traditional publishing house, but if that doesn’t happen in three to five years, I’ll self-publish. Obviously, I’ll keep writing. It’s just finding a time to write now that I have Charlie. We’re hoping to have another baby eventually; maybe we’ll wait until Charlie is at least three. I’m really just focusing on being a mom.”



MAKING CHANGE

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTO BY AMBER BRACKEN.

Listening to the story of a young Indigenous man's experience with restorative justice after he spent 10 years in prison changed Isabel Scheuneman Scott's life.

The young man had committed a horrendous crime, but he didn't talk about it or what he did. He spoke about taking responsibility and participating in a mediation circle with the family of the person he harmed. The family not only forgave him, but also ended up treating him like a son.

"I used to believe that people who commit crimes deserve to be punished," says Isabel. "Hearing that story completely changed my life. There is hope. There is a chance to be forgiven for the things you've done, even if it's a terrible offence. You can make change in a positive way."

Isabel participated in Canada's first Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, in which 13 criminology students from Kwantlen Polytechnic University were selected to attend one semester of classes inside a medium security federal institution with 13 prisoners.

"That experience stands out for me from everything else that I've done and still stands out to this day," says Isabel. "It was one of the best and most memorable experiences in all my schooling."

The KPU criminology program aims to provide a deeper understanding of notions of crime, punishment and related social issues, in part through the Inside-Out program that brings together imprisoned "inside" students and university "outside" students.

Isabel has guest-lectured on her experiences with the program at several universities and a high school, and is an active advocate for change to the criminal justice system.

After graduating from KPU with her Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in criminology and minoring in psychology, Isabel obtained her Masters of Arts degree from the University of Ottawa and is currently pursuing her PhD at the University of Alberta. Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Isabel's doctoral dissertation explores incarcerated Indigenous women's story telling practices. Specifically, she's studying how Indigenous women resist through their storytelling in the Prison for Women (P4W) newsletter *Tightwire*, which was written and produced entirely by female prisoners. The newsletter is remarkable in its criticism

of the penal system and was published consistently over a 20-year span from 1973 to 1993.

"*Tightwire* was unique in how critical it was of the very system that had to approve it in order for it to be produced, copied and circulated," says Isabel. "People were talking about patriarchy and colonialism. These stories are of people that have been continually oppressed not just in the criminal justice system, but also before their imprisonment. In light of this context, their stories are acts of resistance."

After she completes her PhD, Isabel plans to become a university professor, inspired by her Inside-Out instructors Jane Miller Ashton and Hollis Johnson.

"Honestly, I've met some of the best teachers at KPU," says Isabel. "It's a dream of mine to come back to KPU and be a professor. To work in a place that prioritizes real-life experience is what I want to do with my life."

Isabel remains close to Jane and sees her former instructor often when she returns to her hometown of Surrey. Hollis also made a deep impression on Isabel. She describes him as "one of the most caring and compassionate people I've ever met," and credits him with starting a tradition among her criminology cohort of bringing brown paper bag lunches to people living on the streets.

"In one of our classes, he asked us, 'Does anyone want to get together with me and make sandwiches and give them to people who are hungry and just hanging out on the street?' recalls Isabel. "We used our own money to buy a bunch of food. We made sandwiches and put them in brown paper bags with juice boxes, cookies, and fruit at school and then carpooled to the strip in Whalley and the Downtown East Side and handed them out to anyone who wanted them. As a group of students, we continued on that tradition five or six times. Even individually, we kept on that tradition."

The hands-on experiential aspect of Isabel's undergraduate education opened doors she might never have walked through otherwise. As part of an upper-level sociology class at KPU, Isabel had to volunteer 100 hours. She chose Hyland House, a shelter in Surrey, and continued volunteering there for a year after her required hours were fulfilled.

"That was an eye-opening experience to step through the front doors," says Isabel. "I expected to see tattered clothes and shopping carts, but that's not what I saw.

I learned to see people for people and not the stereotypes I had believed in and subscribed to. I saw the similarities between myself and the people much of society looks down on.”

Years later, Isabel returned to Hyland House as a shelter worker and also spent time as a youth worker at Covenant House’s drop-in centre in Vancouver. Many of the youth she met were Indigenous and had aged out of care from the child welfare system. Her work in both shelters directly impacted her academic career.

“During my Masters, it seems so silly now, I didn’t really reflect on how race affects incarceration,” says Isabel. “Indigenous women in particular are more criminalized than other groups. When I learned that storytelling through art is very important to a lot of Indigenous and prisoner communities, these little pieces of the puzzle came together for me in my doctoral work.”

A final piece of the puzzle in Isabel’s academic journey was the opportunity to teach prisoners at the Edmonton Remand Centre, Canada’s largest prison. As a contract instructor through Norquest College, Isabel taught personal development courses on the prevention of family violence, release planning and anger management.

“People need to hear the truth about the criminal justice system from people who have actually been in the system themselves,” says Isabel. “Criminalized people are not inherently bad people simply because they’re criminalized. We need to shift our gaze and questions from individuals to the state.”

WHAT DO YOU TELL PEOPLE ABOUT KPU?

“It drastically impacted my life in academia and my personal life. We always sat in a circle in the [Inside-Out] program. One of my professors at U of A was so inspired by my experiences with Inside-Out, she got training for a similar program.”







GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTOS BY BOBBIE MITCHELL.

The rusty old hull of a ship was an early point of inspiration for artist Amy Duval.

She passed the Lonsdale Quay Historic Shipyards in her hometown of North Vancouver for years while commuting various places.

“For the longest time the shipyard had this huge sliced hull of a ship that was this industrial symbol for power, but as it became rusty and weathered by nature and age it became softer and organic,” says Amy, a graduate of Kwantlen Polytechnic University’s Bachelor of Fine Arts program in 2017. “This was just part of the landscape that I grew up around so I was painting dumpsters, rusty, gross stuff. I found it such an interesting and duplicitous surface that resided in so many worlds.”

Amy came to KPU to be a painter, but she left as a ceramicist after meeting the head of the ceramics department Ying-Yueh Chuang.

“Ying-Yueh was amazing and it was in her class that things really shifted for me,” says Amy. She was very much my mentor. She made a lot of space and a lot of time for me.”

Amy likes to work big. She paints big, but it was challenging to work big on a pottery wheel. Then in a KPU arts studio she discovered slip casting, a ceramic forming technique that takes found objects and makes plaster molds of them in order to recreate the object again and again in clay. She could make bigger, bulkier and unusual-shaped ceramic objects that can’t be created on a wheel, such as car axles and bolts, and accumulate them to make larger art pieces. Amy had an epiphany; she could use ceramics as a form of three-dimensional

painting attached to a large and stable canvas – a wall.

“Clay exists in the same space as us,” explains Amy. “What if I can translate these ideas I have for painting and translate them into a physical space with ceramics?”

The result was multiple site-specific installations at exhibits across the Lower Mainland that portrayed mechanical elements juxtaposed against organic elements. Amy’s hybridization of painting and ceramics depicted growth and transformation in relation to machinery and the human body while using the wall as a canvas to bridge the gap between the two art forms.

In recognition of her unique and thoughtful work, Amy was accepted as an Artist-in-Residence at Harbourfront Centre in 2017 as soon as she graduated from KPU. A hub for art, culture and community in Toronto, Harbourfront is open to the public as was Amy’s studio space; part of her residency included interacting with the public and answering questions about her work. She stayed at Harbourfront for two years, creating new ceramic pieces and an installation for a solo exhibition in 2018.

While still at Harbourfront in 2019, Amy was offered a position as the Studio Technician with the Shaw International Centre for Contemporary Ceramics, commonly referred to as Medalta, located in the Medicine Hat Clay Industries National Historic District.

“I jumped at the chance,” says Amy. “It’s kind of the clay mecca of Canada. People have come to Medalta from all across Canada and all over the world.”



Medicine Hat's Historic Clay District was once home to some of Canada's most important clay factories. Today, in addition to an international ceramics studio, the district boasts a museum, historic china factory and decommissioned brickyard.

"The industrial space here is large; we have 14 kilns here all together," says Amy. "This is just a place where so many artists come to make work. We have the space and the equipment and a library, and we're here to help them discover what they're here to do."

In her new role Amy works directly with many of the artists, answering technical questions about the equipment and ensuring safety measures. Amy is already intimately familiar with Medalta and the needs of visiting artists because she completed a month-long student artist residency herself during her third year in the KPU fine arts program.

"I got to do my first salt and soda kiln firings in Medalta so that was really special," says Amy. "It's a big process. It takes 48 to 72 hours and you basically need a team so it's very community-focused. I feel like the clay community in Medicine Hat is very special. There's so much history. There are people that were working in the factory that still live here in the city."

Community is something Amy has always valued throughout her work and education in ceramics. It was at KPU that she first found a community of like-minded artists.

"KPU just has this crew of badass female ceramic artists doing amazing, different types of work and I wanted to be a part of that," says Amy. The size of KPU was really beneficial, the intimacy of the fine arts program. Other programs you can disappear or remain anonymous in. At KPU you can really create community."

As part of her contract, Amy devotes 10 per cent of her time at Medalta to her own art. She is currently making new forms for slipcasting mechanical objects. A technique she first discovered at KPU, improved upon during her student residency at Medalta, and is now mastering as a working artist in the clay capital of Canada.

"Working here I feel like I've come full circle in a lot of ways," says Amy. "There's a lot of vulnerability with being in the arts, but the further I went with my BFA, the more doors started opening. The ultimate dream is to be a full-time artist. I thought if I can do that with each opportunity that comes by I'm going to do that, so that's kind of what ended up happening. The more I said yes to things and the more hours I put in the more doors started opening."

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE KPU MOMENT?

"I was having a lot of technical difficulties in my third year with my glazed work. I was throwing out kiln after kiln of garbage. The first time I opened the kiln and it wasn't a pile of garbage was a beautiful moment."



SHIMPO

A LIFE ON THE HIGH SEAS

STORY BY TATI ANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTOS BY CONOR MURRAY.

A life of travel is something many people only dream about, but for Tim Juren, that dream is a reality.

Tim has spent the last decade living and working aboard cruise ships, travelling extensively throughout the Caribbean, South America, Europe and Asia. He is the Information Technology (IT) Manager for Royal Caribbean International's Spectrum of the Seas and is responsible for all IT systems aboard.

Tim enrolled in the Bachelor of Technology, IT program at KPU based on a friend's recommendation. Alison Seto (née Hobbs) graduated from the IT program in 2005 and suggested Tim try it when he was at a career crossroads after a series of jobs including realtor, bank clerk and even scuba instructor weren't the right fit.

"My really good friend Alison was at KPU taking the IT degree program," says Tim. "She said, 'You're really good at this stuff, why not take the same program?' She was really successful; she was 20-something and owned her own apartment and it sounded like a good degree and I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life so I thought, why not?"

Tim's program offered a co-operative education option and it was during a co-op work term at the Vancouver International Airport that he was invited to a presentation that changed his life.

Brent Hunter with Royal Caribbean gave a presentation to YVR staff on how to meet people from all over the world. The talk was intended to prepare staff for the wave of international visitors expected to fly in for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. After the talk, Tim approached Brent and asked him to go for a coffee to learn more about working aboard cruise ships.

"I saw an opportunity and I took it," says Tim. "It was too cool to pass up. I never thought a Canadian working on a ship would meet all

these people. By the end of that coffee I was set on getting the job."

That coffee chat emboldened Tim to email Brent his CV, which was passed along to the Vice President of IT, the Director and eventually to the person in charge of hiring IT personnel. Shortly after that, Tim got an interview. He prepared "like crazy" learning the names of all the ships, researching what life aboard a cruise ship was like, and put on a suit for a 5 a.m. local time Skype interview. The interview lasted only a few minutes.

"This guy was sitting on his couch in Miami and he said you've come highly recommended, you have a degree from a North American University, you're hired," says Tim. "My degree from KPU proved to them I had the education, and my experience at YVR showed them I have the business experience with people from around the world."

In 2010, after finishing his degree, Tim worked his way up the chain of command at Royal Caribbean thanks not only to his education, but also to his personality. Tim is gregarious and adventurous. He recognizes opportunity and doesn't hesitate to seize it.

The opportunity to live and work on cruise ships opened up entire continents to Tim. He's been able to experience many different cultures and meet people from all over the world. One of the places that made a big and early impression on him was Brazil.

"Brazilians are energetic and boisterous," says Tim. "We spent a night in Sao Paulo during Carnival. That was quite an eye-opener. It seemed like everyone in Brazil would go out in the evening and enjoy nightlife."

When asked about other parts of the world, Tim doesn't talk about the sights or the scenery; he talks about the people.

"Mediterranean people are very food focused, going out for coffee and fresh food. In Turkey, you're bordering the Middle East; it's very





different and religion plays a huge part in people's lives there. People in Shanghai are extremely integrated with technology," describes Tim. "My first contract really opened my eyes. As long as you travel wanting to learn and wanting to experience, it changes you inside."

Tim has spent the last 10 years living aboard technologically advanced billion-dollar cruise ships. "I've been really happy on ships," says Tim. "But at Royal, you're either a ship person or a land person. I like being on ships, but IT Manager is as high up the rank as I can go here. Thus I'm advancing my career by going back to land. I'm really excited to continue my career on land again and to be with my partner, get a dog, maybe even grow some vegetables." If all goes to plan, he'll be leaving the waters for a post on land with his British partner, who also works for Royal Caribbean.

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST BENEFIT OF YOUR KPU EDUCATION?

"The thing that I absolutely loved about KPU was that everything was hands-on. It was actual stuff that we did. Our projects, our assignments, the co-op terms were applicable to an actual career in IT. I felt so prepared for a career. At Royal, I felt confident I could do the job."



BIGGEST BENEFIT OF YOUR EDUCATION?

“That there was an incredible sense of freedom because KPU’s art degree program is relatively young and you didn’t have that sense of legacy in the art field. A legacy can be overbearing.”

FINDING A NICHE

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTOS BY ANDREW SIEDENBURG.

What does an art piece that merges a rickshaw with a 1980s Cadillac say about culture? What does it say about the artist?

Kenneth Yuen graduated from Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in May 2018 and is pursuing a Master's degree at the California Institute of Arts (CalArt) in Los Angeles. He is putting together a new body of work that reflects his cultural experience as a Chinese-Filipino Canadian living in the U.S.

"What does it mean to be an artist of colour working in a country that is considered Western?" asks Kenneth. "And how can I reflect that duality?"

The rickshaw sculpture Kenneth is building has elements of 1980s Cadillacs with black paint, wide wheels, a velvet interior and faux leather top. To Kenneth the rickshaw has been "weirdly fetishized" almost to the point of being humiliating given the history of labour trauma. In juxtaposition, the Cadillac is a remnant of a bygone era – the American dream.

"That idea of the American dream, is it a farce?" asks Kenneth. "Maybe not. My parents moved to Canada in the '80s for a better life."

Kenneth was born in Singapore. His parents moved there after living in Canada for many years. Kenneth's father is originally from Hong Kong and his mother is Filipina. Kenneth grew up in Singapore and Hong Kong, inheriting Canadian citizenship from his father, who had landed immigrant status. After graduating high school, Kenneth chose to pack up and move to Richmond, B.C. by himself. He got a job in a custom auto-body shop and worked there for a year before enrolling at KPU.

Kenneth quickly found his niche in the fine arts department and draws parallels between his work on cars and his art installations and sculptures.

"I wanted to make things with my hands and KPU has a very hands-on pedagogy and impressive studio spaces," says Kenneth. "I was already familiar with tools because I worked in a custom car shop. It's way closer to art than many people may think. Customizing cars, there's a special kind of creativity there."

While at KPU, Kenneth took advantage of two art field school opportunities led by art historian instructor

Dorothy Barenscott. They first travelled to New York City and Venice, and later to Paris and Germany. Kenneth describes both international field school trips as the most formative experiences of his academic career.

"We visited the Venice Biennale," says Kenneth, which is a preeminent international art exhibit founded in 1895. "To get exposure to the highest level of the art world made me see that this career was an option. I wasn't just going to go and become a barista. This could amount to something."

Kenneth and Dorothy stayed in touch after his graduation and co-curated the first-ever KPU BFA alumni exhibition *Conflux*, which was mounted in the fall of 2019. The exhibit showcased the work of fine arts alumni from the past eight years to coincide with the eight-year anniversary of the fine arts program as a fully accredited degree program.

This wasn't the first time Kenneth curated an art show. In his final year of the KPU arts program, he created a pop-up exhibit in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to showcase his and other KPU students' work after his application for a number of shows and grants was rejected.

"I was fearful I wouldn't get into any shows and that impacts future education and your career as an artist; it could delay everything else. So I thought I'll put on my show with my friends," says Kenneth. "I exhibited in it. I organized it. I curated it. I ran it. I had never curated a show and I had a financial stake in it, but I learned fast and I learned hard. It fostered a drive and independence that helped me get to where I am now."

In the relatively brief window of time between curating his first show and now, Kenneth has gone on to exhibit in L.A. and at multiple shows across the Lower Mainland, including last year's *Parallel* exhibit organized by the Burnaby Arts Council. He is also the Graduate Assistant to the Director of the sculpture studio at CalArt, a position usually reserved for a second-year student. His art continues to change and evolve based on his environment and the people around him.

"What I do now, it has changed after going to California. Context and the people you're around really dictate your work," says Kenneth. "Art isn't 100 per cent about self-expression. I'm interested in how art is a reflection of cultural experience."



FRESH OFF THE RUNWAY

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC.
PHOTOS BY MATT LAW.

An internationally celebrated fashion designer, edgy photographer and staple at Vancouver Fashion Week for the better part of a decade, Sam Stringer has achieved a level of success that makes it hard to believe she's only 25.



Known for her elaborate and luxurious evening gowns, Sam's collections have graced the runways at Tokyo Fashion Week and Vancouver Fashion Week, as well as the pages of *British Vogue* and *British Vanity Fair*.


The independent couture designer offers both custom and rental options out of her Chinatown studio, which she shares with fellow Kwantlen Polytechnic University design alumni Elisa Medina '14 and Eugenie Lin '15.

"It's like a mini KPU there," Sam laughs. "When we're in there sewing at the same time, it's an 'aww...!' moment like being back in school."

Sam graduated from the Design, Fashion and Technology degree program at KPU's Wilson School of Design in the spring of 2016. The four years she spent there prepared her so well for the fashion world that when the founder of Vancouver Fashion Week Jamal Abdourahman personally invited Sam to show her first full collection— she was ready. Jamal was familiar with Sam's photography coverage of Vancouver Fashion Week, but had no idea she was a designer until he came to the university's end-of year fashion show at which Sam previewed her first collection, which was also the capstone project for her degree.

"Jamal has always gone to KPU's fashion shows, but he only knew me as a photographer so when he came to my fashion show he was like, 'Oh my God, what are you doing here? Why aren't you on the other side of the stage?' He sponsored me, so literally the next day I started working on my collection for Vancouver Fashion Week," remembers Sam who grew her collection from three to 15 dresses in just four months. "Thank God I was in the program that got me ready. I had all my research, all my fabric. I was ready to go."





Sam is an advocate for KPU's polytechnic advantage and the importance the university's programs place on relationships with industry. For her, the biggest benefit of her education was the connection to the design community.

"KPU is very hands-on. It's a great cross-over between academics and the creative," says Sam. "I learned a lot from alumna bridal designer Joanna Delaney [KPU BFD '11] who I interned with during my second year on my own and then for my formal practicum at KPU in my third year."

Another alumna who was also a big influence on Sam is faculty member and interim Dean Andhra Goundrey. Andhra was the Coordinator for the Fashion and Technology program for the last three years of Sam's degree and her instructor during her fourth and final year.

"She was my biggest supporter," says Sam. "My go-to motto is 'What would Andhra do?'"

Sam still sees Andhra regularly. After graduation Sam was hired by KPU as a Program Assistant for the fashion program and then promoted to Divisional Lab Coordinator for the \$36-million Wilson School of Design building, which opened in January 2018.

"I can't shut up about the building," enthuses Sam, who has already photographed some of her latest gowns in the modern space. "It's so beautiful. In terms of inspiration for my designs I was always inspired by people, but architecture has become an inspiration for me by being in that building."

As Lab Coordinator, she has the opportunity to see how professionals in other design departments operate, including interior designers, graphic designers and product designers.

"It's really opened up my design brain," explains Sam. "I'm doing new stuff every day. I get to work

with really cool technology. I never thought I'd learn so much about laser cutters. I'm not even a student and I'm still learning."

Sam is a chameleon when it comes to the fashion world. She shifts seamlessly between working behind the scenes in post-secondary education to designing and sewing couture clothing – conceptualizing and then executing high-end photo shoots – to marketing her clothing line from a savvy social media perspective.

Last year she wrapped up her third and, by her own admission, most personal collection yet – Reign. Inspired by "badass women" who excel in their fields, Sam reached out to three different and inspirational women. First Sam got in touch with singer/songwriter Gabriela Geneva over social media and in collaboration with Gabriela designed a gown for the artist to wear to the 2018 Junos. For her second piece she worked with Olympic swimmer Hilary Caldwell, whom she had met at a United Nations conference for women, creating a strong and regal dress for the athlete to wear to formal events. The third look was created for Instagram influencer and personal trainer Nicole Wong, whom Sam praises as a "connector." The fourth and final gown Sam designed for herself.

"The fourth I made for me," says Sam. "It's a deconstructed dress with the bottom half connected to the top by chains. It's weird; I don't know anyone else who would wear it so I wore it to the Deighton Cup."

This up-and-coming designer knows her clientele; she works in the niche of galas and bridal couture, creating one-of-a-kind sumptuous gowns for strong, driven women, a descriptor that, not coincidentally, fits her as well.

WHAT DO YOU TELL PEOPLE ABOUT KPU?

"One of the reasons I love working at KPU is that they support me. They support me in my business. The people at KPU are my biggest fans."



LOOKING BEYOND LAW

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTO BY LISA KING.

Lilián Cazacu knows what it's like to start over.

Born in the Republic of Moldova where he completed his law degree, master's and doctoral studies in law and jurisprudence, Lilián came to Canada with his wife and baby in 2005.

"I was a young parent and as a lawyer, I was making just a little more than covering for my rent," says Lilián. "The situation in Moldova wasn't good and I had to think outside of the box in order to support my family."

Given the opportunity to immigrate to Canada, Lilián renounced defending his dissertation for his PhD, and he chose starting a new life in Canada. The family packed for British Columbia, although they didn't have any friends or family who could help them navigate their early days as immigrants.

Lilián couldn't speak any English, so despite his university education, he had to spend a year learning the language while working odd jobs that didn't require a high level of English proficiency.

"It wasn't easy working in these unskilled jobs, but when you have a family to feed, you don't need a better motivation to persevere because you know you're doing this for your family," says Lilián.

Once he had a strong grasp of reading and writing in English, Lilián enrolled in Legal Administrative Studies at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) so he could become familiar with the Canadian legal system and continue to improve his English in an academic

setting. It was during the certificate program that Lilián first learned his Moldovan legal education wasn't recognized in Canada.

"I was disappointed to learn that I couldn't be a lawyer in Canada," says Lilián, "but it was a favourite quote that kept me going: 'It is not the strongest or the most intelligent of the species that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.' So, in a way the world was open to me and I was looking through thousands of careers to see what I could do and how I can use my transferable skills in any other professions here in Canada."

Far from being deterred, Lilián adapted. During his studies at KPU, he interned for a large law firm in their commercial litigation department, and after graduation worked as a paralegal. Due to his extensive legal background, Lilián was given increasing responsibilities. One of the lawyers he worked with suggested Lilián look into a career as a B.C. notary public because they can provide many of the same services that lawyers can, but don't require a law degree. B.C. notaries are a specialized type of notary who can offer non-contentious legal services and provide legal advice on real estate transactions, wills and estates, and various notarizations.

In 2014 Lilián became a B.C. notary and started his own company - Lilián Cazacu Notary Corporation - in Langley after going back to school and completing a Master's Degree in Applied Legal Studies at Simon Fraser University.

"I started my business all by myself and now we're at eight staff, three of those being also KPU alumni," says Lilián.

In addition to hiring KPU alumni, Lilián stays connected to the KPU community through his volunteer work on the advisory committee for the Legal Administrative Studies program and was a recent guest speaker on the legal requirements for a successful retirement as part of the Third Age Learning at Kwantlen (TALK) lecture series.

Recognized for his entrepreneurial spirit and contributions to the local business community, Lilián is the recipient of multiple awards, including Small Business B.C.'s 2017 Best Immigrant Entrepreneur of B.C., the Langley Chamber of Commerce 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year and 2019 Business Person of the Year, and KPU's 2019 Distinguished Alumni.

"My success is mainly due to my challenges in life," says Lilián. "We normally don't like challenges. We want miracles in our life, but we want to be comfortable too. There are a lot of successful people, immigrants or not, but I find a lot of successful people are those who push against their current situation and try to improve it somehow. You can learn swimming in the pool, which may take a year or so, or you can learn swimming in just a few minutes in the ocean from falling from the boat. For me, leaning English and adapting to a new country was like surviving and learning swimming in the ocean."

WHAT DO YOU TELL PEOPLE ABOUT KPU?

"I tell people it's a local university that's affordable and that has a lot of hands-on programs that are useful and practical...and the university keeps growing and improving. A lot has been achieved in the past 10 years."



GIVING BACK

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTO BY MATT LAW.

When Vikram Bubber was just five years old, he began to have issues with his right ear. It turned out to be cancer.

A life-long battle with health issues followed, which deeply impacted Vikram both personally and professionally. Despite this, or more likely because of it, he chose a life of giving back. Vikram has been a cancer advocate for more than 20 years, a philanthropist, and board member of the Kwantlen Polytechnic University Alumni Association (KPUAA) for five years.

"I'm happy with the way things are right now," says Vikram. "I spend my time volunteering and giving back."

Vikram has volunteered with numerous organizations. In addition to KPU, he has given his time to the Terry Fox Foundation, BC Cancer Agency, BC Children's Hospital, and most recently, Make-A-Wish Foundation BC & Yukon. Much of his volunteer work is as a motivational speaker. He has a story to tell and it's not always an easy one to listen to.

After two years of radiation and chemotherapy treatments as a child, the cancer in his ear was eradicated, but there was a cost. He has profound hearing loss in his right ear and partial hearing loss in his left. The same radiation that cured his childhood cancer caused a bone tumour

to develop years later in Vikram's right cheekbone. Once again, he underwent chemotherapy treatments, and eventually had surgery to remove much of the cheekbone. For three years, Vikram was unable to open his mouth more than a centimetre. A piece of his leg bone was grafted into the space during reconstructive surgery and fat was injected to make his facial contours more natural. Eventually Vikram was able to open his mouth fully and enjoy eating once again.

Despite the medical hardships Vikram faced, he was committed to pursuing higher education. After recovering from his second bout with cancer and determined to get a degree, Vikram enrolled in the Bachelor of Business Administration in Entrepreneurial Leadership at KPU. He already had a Diploma in Computer Systems Technology from the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) and was working as an administrator at a local grocery chain and his father's business.

Vikram's father, Arvinder Singh Bubber, was installed as KPU's first Chancellor and was pivotal in the evolution of the post-secondary institution becoming a fully accredited university during his tenure as Chair of Kwantlen University College's Board of Governors.

"Once KPU became a university, my dad became Chancellor," says Vikram. "Once that happened it gave me the inspiration to go back to school and get a degree."

Suffering from poor short-term memory as a side effect from cancer, Vikram struggled through the Entrepreneurial Leadership program, but persevered through determination and grit.

"Sometimes I would take a class and not do well, but I'd take it again and do better the second time," says Vikram. "What drove me to finish the degree was to cross the stage with my father as Chancellor."

Vikram achieved his goal and in 2013 not only crossed the stage, but did so walking towards his father and breaking with protocol, forgoing the traditional handshake for a hug.

"I don't think anyone in my family understood just how difficult it was going to be for me," says Vikram. "When I approached my dad I gave him a hug and you know you don't normally do that, but it was a great honour. I am happy and feel satisfied that I have a degree."

During his studies and after graduation Vikram worked for his father's accounting firm and then started his own bookkeeping business when his health once again took a turn for the worse. In 2017, he had a transient ischemic attack, commonly known as a mini stroke. The stroke, along with his short-term memory loss, prevents Vikram from continuing to work a traditional nine-to-five job,

but it hasn't slowed down his community work. He has become one of the most engaged patient partners, by speaking at different post-secondary institutions and working on several committees within different health authorities locally and nationally.

Vikram has served on the KPUAA Board for five years, two of them as treasurer, and continues to spend a great deal of time at KPU both in his capacity as a Board Director and as an advocate for cancer patients. He regularly gives talks to KPU nursing students on his experiences. He has spoken at BCIT to radiation therapy students and at the University of British Columbia to dental students in a patient education program.

"I tell them it's so important to treat your patient as a human and not an object," says Vikram. "I want to change the status quo because I feel like that was why I was given a second chance at life. I just feel like this is my niche, where I belong. I don't belong in a nine-to-five behind a computer. I've had a few bumps along the way, but that's life."

Vikram has also been supporting KPU philanthropically since 2015. First he gave to the Distinguished Teaching Award fund, then, in 2016, he established an endowment fund in his father's name. The fund awards approximately \$2,000 every year to a KPU student who has volunteered in the community and has demonstrated financial need. Vikram's monthly donations to the fund are matched by the KPU Foundation. The Bubber family has been giving to KPU since 2002 and it was in recognition of his father's philanthropy that Vikram created the Arvinder Bubber Award.

"Well, for a long time my father and our family donated and created these annual awards and endowments, so I figured it was time to actually honour him," said Vikram. "That's why I decided to create this award in his name to recognize him and his achievements."

"It makes sense in our society to give back and encourage that cycle of giving back. Any little bit helps. A few alumni can have a big impact this way."

FAMILY LEGACY OF GIVING

"My father was on the KPU Board of Governors in 2002. He spent the next six years helping KPU become a university. We raised money for a program called the SPARK Education Foundation which gave high school students a chance to go to post-secondary school. As the son I'm pretty much there helping him out whenever he needs it. You could say I've been involved with KPU for a couple of decades and I don't plan on slowing down."

NEVER SAY NO TO OPPORTUNITY

STORY BY TATIANA TOMLJANOVIC. PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT LAW.

Film location scout, photographer, sports writer, climate change activist and political candidate – Stephen Kronstein is a man who never says no to an opportunity.

“I have a personal philosophy that if someone offers something to me, unless I’m really against it, I go for it,” says Stephen. “This has gotten me into some really interesting jobs and places.”

Saying yes is what landed Stephen in politics, running for the Green Party in Richmond in 2004 and again in the Vancouver-Point Grey riding in 2009. He lost, but became interested in journalism after being interviewed numerous times by reporters.

“While in politics, I got to see one side of journalism by being interviewed,” says Stephen. “The world wasn’t ready for the Green Party, but I saw journalism as a way to affect change.”

Stephen enrolled in journalism at what was then Kwantlen University College. During his two-year diploma program, he interned at the Richmond News, which turned into a brief temporary position. During his summers off, Stephen worked in TV commercial production as an assistant in the locations department. After graduation, Stephen’s summer employer offered him a management position that was double his salary at the local Richmond newspaper. The offer was too good and Stephen left the Richmond News to work full-time as a film scout.

The skills Stephen developed in the journalism program at KPU were put to good use in the film industry and helped Stephen stand out from the competition.

“My journalism education prepared me really well for film,” says Stephen. “I’m interacting with the public, which uses PR skills. As a scout, I go to different locations, knock on the door, talk to

the people and take photos. So my photography education gave me a huge advantage.”

Most film scouts are not professional photographers and it was instructor Jean Konda-Witte’s photojournalism class in particular that helped Stephen on his career path. An award-winning photojournalist, Jean taught photography theory.

“She had a hard-hitting style that I really connected with,” says Stephen. “That class changed my life. Now I’ve got a scouting career. I’m just so happy doing what I’m doing, I wouldn’t be able to do what I’m doing without that class. I’m a way better photographer today from getting that theory from KPU. I guess I owe all that to Jean.”

Stephen also credits instructor Chad Skelton for teaching him research skills, how to dig into certain areas, find details and contact information to “go down the rabbit hole,” and Mark Hamilton for drilling him in grammar. This led to Stephen becoming very hard-nosed about grammar when he was editor of the *Kwantlen Chronicle*.

Stephen’s passion for grammar and writing was reignited this past summer when he began writing for *The Canuck Way*, a fan-driven website. The editors invited him to be a volunteer contributor after noticing his frequent and popular commentary on many of their articles. A die-hard Vancouver Canucks fan, Stephen is in his element writing about his favourite hockey team and is now a regular contributor to the site.

“I’m a volunteer writer, so I don’t have deadlines and I can write what I please,” says Stephen. “It’s a pretty unique spot for me to be in and from the comments section it seems like the readers like what I’m doing. It’s nice to be a volunteer and do a little bit of writing.”

IF YOU WENT BACK TO SCHOOL AT KPU, WHAT WOULD YOU TAKE?

“Agriculture. Food security is our main issue as a society, but I don’t think we can make enough change in time. I’ve spent hundreds of hours on YouTube studying wild edibles. I can walk out my front door in East Vancouver and in any direction, I can find food.”



ALUMNI

> in touch

ADRIANA NEELS » BSc '18 Horticulture

During Adriana's first semester in the Bachelor of Plant Health program, she was hired at Qualitree Propagators Inc. in Chilliwack, B.C. Adriana began her career as a pest scout and has since moved on to the role of section grower, producing a variety of woody ornamentals and shrubs. She has had the opportunity to make many new connections and increase her knowledge about growing plants by visiting industry partners and attending conferences and tours. After a trip to the Netherlands this spring to visit nurseries and greenhouse operations, Adriana has begun to focus on learning about crop nutrition and health at a more detailed level. Horticulture is a great industry to work in and she looks forward to seeing what the future brings for her and the amazing people she works with!



AMITOKH KHRAL » BA '14 Criminology

Amitokh began her career with John Howard Society as a Residence Worker at Hobden House CRF in 2015 shortly after graduation. The John Howard Society is a federal halfway house where parolees serving their conditional releases reside. After holding various positions for five years while working at Hobden House CRF, Amitokh began her career as a parole officer at the Vancouver Parole Office with Correctional Services of Canada.



ANDREW HALE » BA Psychology '17

Since Andrew graduated from KPU he has been primarily working as a behaviour interventionist with Arcus Community Resources. This has been an incredible experience for Andrew and he feels that he has "evolved" as a person during his time at KPU.

Andrew recently started his Masters of Counseling Program at Adler University and intends to pursue a PhD once he has completed his current program. Looking back at KPU, he is thankful for his time there, as he feels the faculty has had a positive influence in guiding him in a direction that's granted him many moments of fulfillment. Andrew hopes everyone looks back on their time there as positively as he does.





ANEIL MANHAS » BSC '16 Applied Psychology

Aneil is excited to call himself a KPU graduate. While completing the program in 2016 and doing his practicum, he had a chance to work in a federal penitentiary with Correctional Services Canada. Aneil worked with offenders in the intermediate mental health care unit alongside psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and a host of correctional and health team members. It was an incredible experience.

Following graduation Aneil secured a position working at KPU in the Career Development Centre, where he supported students in the Co-op program, while aiding the development of the department. He then moved to the Future Students' Office where he had a chance to work with a phenomenal team dedicated to recruiting students to KPU. Aneil would have loved to continue working at KPU, but he was lucky enough to secure acceptance to the Michael G. Degroote School of Medicine at McMaster University.

Aneil is now in his first year of a three-year medical education program striving for a career as a physician, likely specializing in Psychiatry or Neurology. Aneil is grateful for both the educational experience at KPU and for the opportunity to work there. He is thrilled to be a KPU grad and continues to wear his KPU psychology hoodie and lanyard in Ontario.

ANGELA LEVY » BSN '17

After graduation in 2016, Angela started working with a private travel medicine company. Travel Medicine and Vaccination Centre, where Angela is currently employed, gave her amazing opportunities to advance in her career and do what she loves. Angela became the Seasonal Flu Nurse Coordinator for two years while also training to become a Travel Nurse Consultant. She has since been promoted as the Travel Nurse Coordinator at the head office working under the company's Nursing Director.



ASHLEY MANKY » Cert '16 SETA



Since graduating, Ashley has been working in an elementary school just minutes from her home. She works as a special education assistant who took the part-time Special Education Teaching Assistant (SETA) course and was hired right after. Ashley generally works one-on-one with students and loves to help them learn and grow. Three years into her career, she is now looking at pursuing a teaching career. The education Ashley received at KPU was excellent and she has since continued her studies in other areas as well. Psychology has been her favourite subject. Each class she has completed has helped her learn and grow as an adult.

BRENIE CLAMER » Cert '18 Education Assistant

Upon graduation Brenie started working at Surrey Christian School as an Education Assistant supporting students to achieve their individual goals.

Later on she received a teaching position as a Spanish Teacher.

The certificate has opened many doors for Brenie and has helped her grow in many ways. She enjoys her workplace and loves the community that she is part of. Brenie is excited to continue her journey in the education field.



CARISSA KASPER » BA '15 Creative Writing



Carissa combined the many skills she learned at KPU to launch a business, Seed & Nourish, where she creates and cares for kitchen gardens in private residences and businesses across Vancouver and the North Shore. The seasonal nature of her business is perfect for her, as she utilizes the winters for her writing. Carissa is currently working on a book-length memoir entitled "The Leavings," of which she published an excerpt, "Flight Path," in the Lonely Planet Travel Anthology. She finds that gardening often seeds itself into her writing, and writing supports her growing business!

CHAD NEHRING » BBA Entrepreneurial Leadership '18

Since graduating from the ENTR program in 2018, a lot has changed! Working alongside completing the program, Chad's career suddenly changed paths from Operations to IT in 2017. Chad struggled to fit into a large corporation, and found that he was not as fulfilled as he'd hoped. Using the ambition Chad found in the ENTR program, he decided it was time to make a change. In November 2019, he moved to a much smaller company, working on developing and improving warehouse software. He is much more comfortable where he is today. But more importantly, his wife and he welcomed a beautiful baby girl into their lives; Georgia was born in May 2019!



DAWN MCCONNELL » BA Criminology '13

After graduating in 2013 with her BA from KPU, Dawn moved to Kamloops and started Law School at Thompson Rivers University. From there she moved to Smithers, B.C. Dawn now works for the Parents Legal Centre ("PLC"). The PLC is a program run through legal aid that helps parents who are in contact with social workers and the Ministry of Child and Family Development. The PLC is Indigenous focused although it helps anyone who qualifies financially. The program was created to help address the fact that there are more Indigenous children in foster care today than there were in the height of the residential school era.

Dawn is enthusiastic to be able to help parents navigate this stressful and emotional time in their lives. Their aim is to work collaboratively with the parents to address MCFD concerns and their goal is to find solutions that keep the file out of court and keep the children with their families, extended families and communities wherever possible.



EMILY BUCYK » Cert '15 in NGO & Nonprofit Studies and BA '16 Anthropology

Emily was immediately hired at Weston Foods after graduation, as their Operations Administrator for their Langley facility. This opportunity provided her with a wide range of responsibilities and experiences.

After about a year, she received a job offer from Delta Controls that she could not refuse. Delta Controls is one of the largest manufacturers of building automation systems with a global reach across multiple vertical industries. Her role at Delta Controls has progressed to Executive Administrator for the President and Executive Team.

Emily is very grateful for the path that she is on, and sees a very prosperous career ahead thanks to the NGO program and overall breadth of knowledge gained from her KPU Anthropology degree.



GABRIELLE LAKUSTA » BA '18 Journalism

After graduation, Gabrielle was hired on as a staff writer for an online investor news publication. After a year she moved to Australia on a Working Holiday Visa to do some travelling and see the world. To keep up with her passion for journalism and writing, she started a travel blog. Gabrielle's blog Gab Travelling (gabtravelling.com) is another way she can apply her education and work experience to something she loves. Developing her website was a combination of what she studied at KPU, her internship and professional work experience. Gabrielle feels empowered to know what she learned is so functional in the real world. Gabrielle's education is really what shifted her understanding of the world and how to be a successful journalist and writer.





JANNA RUDETSKY » BBA'12 Accounting Co-op

After graduating, Janna started working towards her Chartered Accounting (CA) designation while articling at PwC (Fraser Valley Office). Once obtained, Janna moved to Los Angeles, California and gained experience as a Finance Consultant. She worked with a variety of clients ranging from a tech start-up to a Fortune 500 asset management company. After three years of living in LA, she moved to Singapore and is now working at a multi-national financial services company in Business Analysis and Transformation. Janna has really loved having the opportunity to live and work in several cities around the world since graduating from KPU.

JUSTIN BIGE » BA '19 Creative Writing

Since graduation Justin has led multiple arts and reconciliation workshops with Community Arts Council of Vancouver's Reframing Relations, working with youth in the Lower Mainland. He bridges his practices in writing and poetry with actionable acts of reconciliation in collaboration with different settler-identified artists. He also competed in the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word with KPU's very own slam poetry team, gracing the finals stage with two other KPU students, another KPU alumni, and a local youth. Representing KPU at the National Spoken Word competition was an honour and grew Justin's network of arts contacts along with showcasing his work via performance and chapbook sales.



JUSTIN RUBINSTEIN » Cert '05 Interdisciplinary Design Studies

Since graduation the sky has been the limit for Justin's sales career. When he was still studying, Justin was not sure in which direction he wanted to go; however, he did know that he loved business and tapping into his artistic side when possible. Today, Justin is the Lead Sales and Marketing coordinator at Shearwater Marine Ltd. Every day holds a new challenge that he looks forward to. Next, he will work on his Bachelors degree and could be running a whole division one day. Justin thanks KPU for helping build the foundation for him.

KEVIN LAMBERT » BSN '11

Since graduating from KPU's nursing program in 2011, Kevin has been working as a registered nurse in the emergency department at Peace Arch Hospital. Over the past 10 years, Kevin's role has expanded to where he is responsible for mentoring students, overseeing the department (on an interim basis), as well as working in triage and trauma capacities. He will be forever grateful to the instructors of KPU's nursing program for the mentorship and training that they provided; they gave Kevin the tools he needed to succeed in his varied and rewarding career. Kevin would advise anyone considering a career in nursing to attend this excellent program.



LAURIE LUZ » BSc '15 Nursing

Since graduation Laurie has worked as a Registered Nurse, and went back to school to obtain a nursing specialty certification. Throughout these years, Laurie found the passion to go back to school, be a mentor for the upcoming new nurses by being an educator, and is currently teaching nursing. Laurie is in the process of going back to school again to get her Master's Degree in Nursing.



LILIA CHONG LAI » Dip '17 Marketing

Lilia returned to her home country shortly after graduating and after one month she received an invitation to join the workforce at the prestigious Chancellery, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama. It was a surprise to her, since Lilia did not apply nor ever thought that she would be interested in politics. However, this was a grand opportunity for her to help the community and have a great new learning adventure by challenging herself. This later led her to the government position of International Relations Analyst and Polyglot Translator at the Chancellery under the Presidency of Juan Carlos Varela. After a year Lilia started working at the second-largest bank in Panama (Banistmo) as a Premier Official, putting into practice her knowledge in business, accounting, sales, marketing, finance and languages. She is above all grateful for what she has, helping others do the same, and hopefully inspiring others to never give up.

Lilia is proud and grateful to be a part of the KPU community.

NICOLA DAVIES » Dip '14 Music

Since finishing a diploma in Voice Performance at KPU, Nicola went on to study collaborative piano at the University of Manitoba, completing a Post-Baccalaureate diploma and a master's degree. Nicola's experience at KPU gave her a wider perspective for her studies there. She now lives in Winnipeg, teaching piano and voice, music directing the musical theatre at the University of Manitoba and the Manitoba Theatre for Young People, working with several choirs, and playing recitals with instrumentalists and singers. A year and a half ago, Nicola founded Living Room Live, a non-profit organization that creates classical house concert tour routes, something that didn't previously exist in Canada, and is now the Executive Director. Living Room Live has grown to approximately 120 concerts this season on three tour routes across western Canada. One of their focuses is reaching smaller and more remote communities, particularly when access to classical music performances is limited. Through house concerts, they bring people and communities together to experience great music in an intimate and social setting.



RAVJOT NAGRA » BA '17 Criminology

Rav graduated from KPU with a Bachelors of Arts Degree in Criminology. After graduating, she continued to volunteer for various non-profit organizations within her community while simultaneously preparing for the law school admission process. Rav is now in her first year of law school at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, BC!

SALMA HUSAIN » BBA '17 Human Resources

After graduating Salma worked at KPU in the Assessment and Testing Department. Currently, Salma is a Testing Administrator where she works directly with students and faculty to guide and book students for make-up examinations, and conducting admissions testing. She works closely with the Accessibility Department, to provide essential space and accommodations for students who need a barrier-free testing environment.

Every day on the job Salma uses deductive reasoning and problem-solving skills to identify where and how to guide students to the path of success. It gives her great joy to see students succeed and further their education.



SARAH SANGHA » BA '17 General Studies

Since graduating, Sarah has founded her own wellness brand called Vellum Wellness, which provides high-quality personal care products for men and women. Vellum was created after Sarah saw how she and fellow students struggled to balance their workloads and personal lives, and she thought it was time to make self-care a priority. Vellum Wellness products help unite the mind and the body, and make self-care simple. They are sold online, at Bed, Bath and Beyond, and select retailers across North America.



SHANNON JOHNSTON » BBA '09 Human Resources



After graduating with a Marketing Management Diploma in 2007 and a BBA in Human Resources Management in 2009, Shannon combined her skills and experiences to grow her career in sales and marketing leadership. She is now the founder and chief consultant of SBMO Consulting, a boutique sales and marketing consulting firm based in Fort Langley. SBMO, standing for Small But Mighty One, was a nickname given to Shannon early in her career. At only 5 feet tall, it not only represents her but also the organizations that Shannon loves to help.

Shannon held several sales and marketing leadership positions in industries, including contract manufacturing, consumer packaged goods, logistics, and marketing, experiencing both the pathways to success and major roadblocks that small- and medium-sized businesses can face. She now consults for owner/operators and business leaders of SMEs, helping them develop meaningful mighty objectives, and then setting the plans, systems, tools, and teams to help them achieve those objectives.

SHEA THOMSON » Dip '17 Public Relations

Shea started working at the Hard Rock Casino Vancouver as a Marketing Coordinator right after graduating. A year later she got an offer to be a Marketing Specialist with one of the largest produce distribution companies in the world, The Oppenheimer Group. Shea has been with Oppy for over a year and loves it! She has broadened her experience to include design, communications, trade show coordination and B2B marketing. She even gets to create recipe videos that showcase all the produce that Oppy sells. The internal culture at Oppy is award-winning!



TABITHA SWANSON » Dip '13 Fashion Marketing and BBA '16 Marketing



Since her days at KPU, Tabitha has been focused on learning, exploring, and self-started projects. She co-founded an agency called Forte Marketing, moved to Berlin and worked with Reebok, Zalando, Jagermeister, Sonar +D, and Rakuten, where she worked as both a designer and a market researcher. This year, her work creating a digital avatar with a digital outfit was shown in Paris Fashion Week as part of a commentary on digital fashion. Tabitha also just participated in her first TEDx talk.



ALUMNI STAY CONNECTED AND GET INVOLVED! >>>

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

YOU'RE INVITED!

KPU Chancellor's Alumni Evening

Save the date for an entertaining and informative evening with KPU Chancellor George Melville and special guests Rick Hansen and Nancy McKay.

JUNE 23, 5-9PM

STAY TUNED FOR TICKET AND VENUE DETAILS

This is your opportunity to rub shoulders with three globally recognized business leaders, who will speak on the power of philanthropy, inclusivity and networking.

- › George Melville is chairman and owner of Melville Global Investments Inc. He has donated many millions of dollars to charities. He also co-founded and previously owned the T&M Group, which included Boston Pizza International Inc. He is currently serving his second term as KPU Chancellor.
- › Rick Hansen is Canada's Man in Motion and the founder of the Rick Hansen Foundation. Since the end of the Man In Motion World Tour in 1987, Rick has dedicated his life to creating a world that is accessible and inclusive for all by removing barriers for people with disabilities.
- › Nancy MacKay is the founder and CEO of MacKay CEO Forums. Focused on populating the world with inspiring leaders, she founded MacKay CEO Forums in 2005, after seeing first-hand the value of having CEOs come together to learn from each other.

MORE DETAILS: alumni.kpu.ca



Story Telling for Leaders

The KPUAA is dedicated to providing alumni with opportunities to continue to learn and network. Last year, we hosted the successful Story Telling for Leaders workshop, with Diana Pavlovska a facilitator from The Humphrey Group. Be sure to stay posted to alumni.kpu.ca for details on events like these.



KPU Foundation Golf Tournament

The KPUAA is a proud supporter of all things KPU. Their annual support of the KPU Foundation Golf Tournament over the years is just one way your alumni association has given back.



Long Long Table

The KPUAA is dedicated to enhancing KPU's reputation as ambassadors at community events. The annual Long Long Table networking evening in Downtown Surrey is one such event.



Convocation

The KPUAA hosts the fun photo booth at convocation for graduates and their families to celebrate their success.

MEET THE TEAM



KPU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Back row (L-R):

Gabby Gill, Mohammad Kallas, Kathryn Landrigan, Duncan Keist, Amanda Smith-Weston, Michael Chang, Corinne Taliunas, James Grange, Kelly Trainer

Front Row (L-R):

Fatima Zaidi, David Dryden, Kathie-Lee Olson, Nancy Armitage, Ryan Keigher, Jacqueline Tarantino, Vikram Bubber




ALUMNI CHAPTERS

Alumni Chapters are a way to stay connected with your special group of former classmates, meet new people and be involved with KPU in a way that is meaningful to you.

Chapters can organize events and activities that promote the interests of your particular group of alumni. The KPU Alumni Association is pleased to provide funding, and the KPU Alumni Affairs office is there to provide support for new alumni chapters. If this interests you be sure to check out the Chapter Handbook at alumni.kpu.ca/chapters or contact the Alumni Affairs office at alumni@kpu.ca or call 604.599.3137.

JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Keep in touch with what's happening at KPU and with our active alumni

-  Tweet with us @kpualumni
-  Like us on Facebook at KPU Alumni
-  Join our growing community of KPU Alumni on LinkedIn

MESSAGE FROM THE KPUAA CHAIR

Dear KPU Alumni,

I am delighted to now be serving as Chair of the KPU Alumni Association (KPUAA). Having been Vice Chair for two years, I was excited to step into the position of chair at our AGM in September 2019.

I want to first thank Ryan Keigher for his years of service as Chair. Ryan has stepped into the position of Past Chair and will remain active on the board for the next year.

In addition, I'm pleased to welcome our newest directors; Duncan Keist (BA '07), Kathryn Landrigan (BBA '19), Corinne Taliunas (BA '07), Jacqueline Tarantino (BA '15), and Fatima Zaidi (BA '15). The KPUAA board is now at full force with 15 directors who are active in our communities, helping to build on KPU's excellent reputation.

I'm pleased to report that much progress has taken place this past year in our efforts to create a solid foundation for alumni engagement. A new alumni website was launched early in the new year, which provides KPU alumni with a new sleek end-user experience, while streamlining the ease with which the Alumni Affairs office creates our monthly e-newsletter. Be sure to check out our new pages at alumni.kpu.ca.

There has been great activity building Alumni Chapters and, to that end, we are pleased to announce the new Human Resources Management Alumni Chapter. As well, the Wilson School of Design Alumni Chapter has been infused with new leadership and they have plans to grow their membership and activities. If you are interested in learning more about Chapters or want to create your own, be sure to visit our webpages.

The Alumni Affairs office has expanded its team and with this additional support we expect to continue to move forward with the development of our exciting three-year strategic plan. Further to this, we held a professional networking event with The Humphrey Group at the newly opened KPU Civic Plaza Campus in Downtown Surrey. The event was well attended and we look forward to holding similar professional development opportunities for KPU alumni annually.

I've also been pleased to serve as chair of the Chancellor Selection Committee, as Dr. George Melville's long and effective tenure of six years as KPU Chancellor comes to an end. The KPU Alumni Association is tasked with leading the search for KPU's new Chancellor, which we hope to announce Spring 2020. In honour of Dr. Melville's time and service we will be hosting a networking evening on June 23. For details visit us at alumni.kpu.ca.

We hope you enjoy this third issue of the KPU Alumni Magazine. If you have a story to share I encourage you to connect with us.

All my best,

David Dryden



David Dryden (BBA '13)
Chair, KPUAA

KPU ALUMNI

AWARDS

2019
FUTURE ALUMNI AWARD
BESTOWED UPON

LINCOLN SAUGSTAD



Each year, KPU recognizes students who while maintaining a good academic standard also make impactful contributions to KPU and the external community.

In 2019, we were pleased to honour Lincoln Saugstad. By his own admission, one of Lincoln's greatest goals is to contribute to the development of a social and economic order in line with the earth's ecological systems and to give people from diverse backgrounds opportunities to live fulfilled and enriched lives. The desire to make the world a better place, and figuring out how to do that, has been an ongoing theme for Lincoln, which is also reflected in his many volunteer experiences and education.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

KPU Alumni are everywhere, doing amazing things. Since 2007, the KPUAA and KPU have been recognizing these exceptional individuals.

If you know of someone who has either enhanced the reputation of the university, or made contributions through their outstanding career, public or community service, athletic, arts and culture, or academic achievements, you are encouraged to nominate them now! alumni.kpu.ca/awards



KPU ALUMNI AWARDS RECIPIENTS

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

2018

Kristan Ash
Bachelor of Business Administration '02

2016

Steve Ewen
Certificate in Journalism '89

Joel McKay
*Diploma in Journalism '08 and
Bachelor of Applied Journalism '09*

2014/15

Ken Puls
*Diploma in Accounting and
General Studies '98*

Tania Dick
Bachelor of Science in Nursing '03

2013

Stephanie Cadieux
Diploma in Marketing Management '94

Baltej Dhillon
Diploma in Criminology '88

Maryanne Mathias
Bachelor of Applied Design Fashion '02

Chris McCue
*Diploma in Environmental
Protection Technology '94*

2012

Kim Baird
Diploma in Arts '92

Shane King
Diploma in Financial Management '92

2010

Scott Piccott
Diploma in Business Management '02

2009

Michael Bjorge
Diploma in Horticulture Technology '00

Michaela Robinson
*Certificate of Completion in
Access Program '07*

2008

Denise Thomas
Bachelor of Science in Nursing '01

Sendip Gill
*Diploma in Marketing
Management '04 and Bachelor of
Business Administration '05*

Jas Sandhu
Diploma in Criminology '06

Manoj Sikka
Certificate in Accounting '94

Mark Catroppa
Certificate in Accounting '94

2007

Carol Prantner
Diploma in Fashion Technology '82

Cindy Masaro
Diploma in Nursing '96

Nicholas Johnston
*Certificate of Completion in Access
Program '03*

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI

2018

Gagan Jutla
Bachelor of Business Administration '15

2017

Brittany McNeill
*BA in Psychology/Minor
Counselling '14*

2016

Hayley Woodin
Bachelor of Journalism '14

2007 -2018

BEING KPU ALUMNI HAS ITS BENEFITS!

Get your alumni benefits card now and start taking advantage of these great opportunities



- » Networking events and opportunities hosted by the KPU Alumni Association
- » Access to KPU Career Services and online job postings
- » Lifelong privileges at KPU Libraries
- » Free access to KPU's Fitness Centres

DISCOUNTS AT:

- » KPU Bookstore (excluding text books)
- » KPU Conference facilities and meeting room services
- » Commercial printing through KPU Print Services
- » KPU Sports & Recreation's fitness programs
- » KPU Tech Campus Automotive Shop (in Cloverdale). To book an appointment, call 604.598.6113

Affinity Partnerships give you prime discounts and advantages while supporting the KPU Alumni Association:

- » TD INSURANCE – provides savings through lower preferred insurance rates on your home or tenant insurance.



- » LEADER FRAMES – Leader Frames & Significant Impact is a Canadian company and a proud leader in the FRAMING Industry - dedicated to ensuring that all frames are ethically produced and environmentally friendly. Order top quality KPU branded frames for both your credential and your grad photo. Be sure to check them out at leaderframes.com and search for KPU to custom order yours.



- » ARTONA GROUP PHOTOGRAPHY – KPU's official photographer available at convocation



For more information on alumni benefits, privileges and services contact the Alumni Affairs office at alumni@kpu.ca or visit us at alumni.kpu.ca/perks

WE'VE UPDATED OUR WEBSITE



alumni.kpu.ca

Alumni
IN ACTION

Did you know your status as a proud KPU alumnus comes with great benefits?

- » Sign up to receive your benefits card and access great alumni-only perks
- » Join a local KPU Alumni Chapter and connect with friends and classmates
- » RSVP to an upcoming alumni event like networking mixers
- » Share your story and update us on what you've been doing since graduating
- » Get connected and stay connected to the KPU Alumni community

»» REGISTER TODAY!

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Alumni Magazine

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happening at KPU and with our
active alumni community:

 alumni.kpu.ca
  [KPUalumni](#)
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Interested in KPU programs and courses?
Contact the Future Students' Office:
604.599.3030 or study@kpu.ca



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