

UNTANGLING LORD DAL'S LEGACY • THE DRIVE TO WIN • BREAKING BARRIERS AT 30 • THE BLUE WHALE PROJECT

# DAL MAGAZINE

## You can't make it alone

*Dr. Michael Ungar on the surprising truth about resilience*



# CONTENTS FALL 2019

## FEATURES

**UNTANGLING A LEGACY** How was Dalhousie's founder entangled with slavery, and what impact did his views and actions have on the university, the province and African Nova Scotians?

By Ryan McNutt with files from Matt Reeder  
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**THE SCIENCE OF BOUNCING BACK** Grit. Determination. Perseverance. Those are the factors many believe determine who survives—and thrives—in the face of adversity. But Dalhousie's Dr. Michael Ungar says we've got it wrong. By Dawn Morrison

page 18

**BREAKING BARRIERS, 30 YEARS LATER** Three decades ago, a landmark report on racism at Dal coincided with the Marshall Inquiry report, and together they formed the basis for a critical shift in the university's approach to serving the needs of the region's Black and Indigenous peoples. Today, at the reports' 30th anniversary, the impact of that shift is evident—but work remains to be done. By Ryan McNutt

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# DALMAGAZINE

**MASTHEAD**

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

Brian Leadbetter, Hope McCallum,  
Ryan McNutt, Julia Watt

**CONSULTING EDITOR**

Kim Pittaway

**ADVERTISING MANAGER**

Patty Baxter, Metro Guide Publishing

**ART DIRECTOR**

Paul Williams

**PUBLICATION DESIGN**

Watkins Communication and Design

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT**

Jane Lombard

.....  
**CLASS NOTES** [classnotes@dal.ca](mailto:classnotes@dal.ca)

**IN MEMORIAM** [alumni.records@dal.ca](mailto:alumni.records@dal.ca)

**ADDRESS CHANGES**

Tel: (902) 494-6855; 1 (800) 565-9969  
Email: [alumni.records@dal.ca](mailto:alumni.records@dal.ca)  
Alumni Records, Office of Advancement,  
Dalhousie University, PO Box 15000,  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4R2

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**CONTRIBUTORS**

**FALLON BOURGEOIS** is communications manager with Dalhousie's Office of Advancement. With a background in English and public relations, Fallon spent her early career working with several local non-profit organizations before joining the Advancement team in 2015.

**DAWN MORRISON** has held several communications roles in higher education, including at Dalhousie University, and is currently senior communications and marketing manager for the Faculty of Health. She enjoys hanging out with her husband James and twins Olivia and Max, hiking, traveling and writing creatively.

**RYAN MCNUTT** is a senior communications advisor with Dalhousie Communications and Marketing and a freelance music journalist whose work has been featured in *Maisonneuve*, *The Walrus*, *Exclaim!* and *AUX*.

**PHILIP MOSCOVITCH'S** work has appeared in *The Walrus*, *Reader's Digest* and *The Globe and Mail*. His book *Adventures in Bubbles and Brine* was released in September.

**EDITORIAL**

## TRAUMA'S LEGACY

One of the first stories across my desk for this issue was *The Science of Bouncing Back* (p. 18). In it, writer Dawn Morrison explores what it takes to survive trauma, a question that has been at the core of Dr. Michael Ungar's decades of research on resilience, culminating in his latest book *Change Your World: The Science of Resilience and the True Path to Success*. Perhaps surprisingly, given our world's focus on self-improvement and bootstrapping, Dr. Ungar's work shows that it isn't rugged individualism that helps us survive and thrive—it's an ecology of personal and societal supports that help us move towards wholeness after we've been harmed. We may survive in isolation—but we thrive because our communities support us.

Dr. Ungar's research was echoing in my brain as I turned to the other two features in this issue, *Breaking Barriers, 30 Years Later* (p. 24), about how Dal has been enriched and strengthened by its engagement with the African Nova Scotian community and Mi'kmaw nation in the aftermath of the Marshall Report, and *Untangling A Legacy* (p. 10), about the facts and impact of Lord Dalhousie's views and actions on slavery. The scholarly panel on Lord Dal, under the leadership of Dr. Afua Cooper, has powerfully illustrated that trauma and its impacts can't be fully addressed if harms are not acknowledged, and that once acknowledged, action is necessary to forge new and better relationships.

We thrive as communities when we support each other, engaging with the past honestly and looking to the future with a commitment to do better. Dal's legacy is complicated. But our future is ours to build.



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## FUTURE ALUMNI

## Competing and completing

Ryan O'Neil hopes to spend 2020 competing and completing. The competition: suiting up for Canada in karate at the Tokyo Olympic Games. The completion: his fifth year as an Industrial Engineering student at Dal.

"It would be a dream to go to the 2020 Tokyo Games," says O'Neil, originally from Halifax. "Once I heard karate was added as an official Olympic sport, I was like, 'My focus is karate and trying to get to the Olympics.'"

Competing in karate at the 2020 games may be O'Neil's goal for the future, but the 22-year-old has already seen martial arts success on the world stage, recently winning his third consecutive gold medal at the 2019 International Taekwondo Federation World Championships in Inzell, Germany. His work ethic extends from his martial arts training to his studies at Dalhousie. "My dad taught me to work hard for what you want. Hard work is useful in everything. I learned that first in taekwondo, but it translates to school."

Balancing being a full-time engineering student and competing in both karate and taekwondo globally isn't always easy for O'Neil, but he says his hard work is paying off in the long run. "I get home, I study and then I go train. Then I study some more and after that I go to sleep. Some might think that it's not a whole lot of fun, but for me training is fun."

To qualify for the Summer Games in Tokyo, O'Neil needs to place in the top three of his weight class at a qualification tournament in Paris. O'Neil says the secret to balancing his studies with competing is simple. "Time management is key. Make sure you know what you want to do, then set up a map on how to get there." —*Lucas Mancini*



# DAL NEWS

## JUST THE FACTS

### Pride in STEM

Dalhousie PhD student Landon Getz has made impressive strides in his academic career, publishing papers in world-leading journals and earning prestigious awards for his work in microbiology. And while the Vanier Scholar and Killam Laureate has felt supported professionally in his field, he hasn't always seen himself reflected personally.

"I don't have a lot of LGBT role models within science," says Getz. Determined to change that for himself and for others, Getz conceived and launched Queer Atlantic Canadian STEM (QAtCanSTEM), which will provide an inclusive and welcoming space for other 2SLGBTQ+ researchers across the region to find resources, role models and community.

The group's initial push will centre around a series of online profiles asking people how



they identify and then questions about their research, their day-to-day life in STEM and some of the changes they'd like to see. Longer term, the group has plans to launch an event called the QAtCanSTEM Colloquium. The one-day conference will feature keynote talks, oral presentations, poster presentations and panels, all centred around 2SLGBTQ+ people doing science in Atlantic Canada. —Matt Reeder

## THE LIST

### \$1M+ for Dal researchers

Eight researchers from Dal are receiving new funding to acquire the cutting-edge tools needed to conduct world-class research, part of a federal investment of more than \$61 million for 261 projects at 40 universities across Canada. Dal researchers will receive a total of \$1,066,597 in funding for their innovative research projects.

**DAVID KELVIN**, Professor, Faculty of Medicine. Project: Synthetic Influenza Vaccine Infrastructure

**SANDRA MEIER**, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine. Project: Social Interaction and Youth Mental Health

**FRANCESCA DI CARA**, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine. Project: Peroxisomes as signal platform in innate immunity

**DENYS KHAPERSKY**, Assistant Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Faculty of Medicine. Project: Functional characterization of RNA granules in cellular stress responses and innate immunity

**ERIC OLIVER**, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Science. Project: Coastal Labrador Ocean Modelling and Observing System

**RITA ORJI**, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Computer Science. Project: Persuasive and Adaptive Systems Infrastructure

**QIANG YE AND ISRAAT HAQUE**, Faculty of Computer Science. Project: Mobile and Software-defined Network Infrastructure

For details on their projects, see [dal.ca/CFInews](http://dal.ca/CFInews)



## RESEARCH

### 2ND CIHR INSTITUTE FOR DAL

A Dalhousie researcher and recognized leader in managing children's pain has landed a prestigious new role with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

Dr. Christine Chambers, Canada Research Chair in Children's Pain and a Killam Professor in Dal's Departments of Pediatrics and Psychology & Neuroscience, has been appointed as the scientific director for the CIHR Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health (IHDCYH). This will be the second CIHR Institute hosted at Dalhousie. The University of Calgary is the only other university in the country to host two Institutes.

As one of the 13 CIHR Institutes, IHDCYH supports research that ensures the best start in life for all Canadians and the achievement of their potential for optimal growth and development. As scientific director, Dr. Chambers will work with her community to identify research priorities, develop funding opportunities, build partnerships and translate research evidence in policy and practice to improve the health of Canadians and people around the world. Dr. Chambers' new role becomes effective on January 1, 2020. —Michele Charlton

WHY I DO IT

## OCEAN ADVOCATE

**NAME:** Anya Waite

**POSITION:** Associate Vice-President Research (Ocean) at Dal, and Scientific Director for the Ocean Frontier Institute (OFI)

**HER BACKSTORY:** Inspired by a childhood growing up near the ocean in Nova Scotia, Anya Waite completed an undergraduate degree in oceanography at Dalhousie and a PhD at the University of British Columbia. “I loved going to sea,” she says. “I loved being on ships, studying the ocean.” Post-doctoral degrees in the U.S. and New Zealand followed before she secured a professorship at University of Western Australia in Perth, where she spent 17 years doing ocean research and teaching environmental engineering to undergrads. “I think the whole engineering mindset is hugely beneficial for us as scientists, when we reflect on our research and ask, ‘How can I be useful?’”

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Dr. Waite eventually moved into a position as section head of polar biological oceanography at the prestigious Alfred Wegener Institute in Germany. In that role, she pushed for and achieved a full assessment of gender equity at the institute, which had become somewhat conservative and insular in its hiring practices. “As soon as you open up to international competition, you bring in all sorts of new blood. People who don’t look, act, sound or even speak the same way. And that’s where you break open. What they found out is when you open up recruitment, you can get gender equity—50-50, women and men.”

**WHY SHE DOES IT:** One of OFI’s mandates is to help researchers apply their knowledge. “As the world moves into the next stage of awareness of what humans are doing to the planet, we need solutions. We need to be able to understand the ocean well enough to do that, and to reach out to society in a deeper and clearer way. That’s something I can get really passionate about.” —Matt Reeder



**“Going deeper into the ocean we have to move into water thinking. The densities are different, the motion is different.”**

# DAL NEWS



Tractor rides, meet-and-greets with the animals, facility tours, yummy BBQ fare and free ice cream were among the many highlights of the annual summer open house at Dal's Agricultural Campus. More than 1,200 people took in the sights, sounds and activities at the Faculty of Agriculture.—*Matt Reeder*

## #

BY THE NUMBERS

### Convocation heads downtown

As of the Fall Convocation ceremonies in October, and continuing during the expansion and renovation of the Dalhousie Arts Centre, Dal's Halifax Convocation ceremonies are being held at the recently opened Halifax Convention Centre on Argyle Street in the city's downtown.

"We know how much Convocation means to our community and our students," says Adam Robertson, university registrar, whose team in the Registrar's Office oversees Dal's Convocation ceremonies. "We're excited to bring this same spirit of celebration to a new venue."

Based on a robust analysis of several on- and off-campus options, the Halifax Convention Centre was selected by a Convocation Steering Committee, with an eye to accessibility, flexibility and capacity. —*Ryan McNutt*

## 1971

The year Dal Convocations began being held at the Cohn

## 20

# of Dal Convocations held at the Cohn annually in recent years

## II-13

# of larger Convocations to be held at the Halifax Convention Centre

### COMMUNITY CONNECTION

## Hurricane help for the Bahamas

Though this is his fourth year in Halifax, third-year Civil Engineering student Chaz Garraway still calls Nassau, Bahamas home. That's why he's joined with other Bahamians across Nova Scotia to collect aid for those devastated by Hurricane Dorian—the strongest hurricane ever to make landfall in the Bahamas. "It's a very helpless feeling, watching all the videos and seeing all the devastation and the destruction that has happened to people that you know, people that you care about." Garraway says. "So, I had to do something about it. I had to get involved and contribute to the rebuilding."

Garraway's family and friends are safe, but he knows the country will have a long road to recovery. He and his fellow organizers set up collection boxes for donations such as medical supplies, hygiene products, baby formula and more at all the major buildings on campus and enlisted help at other Nova Scotian universities. Some of the students are involved with Dalhousie Caribbean Connections, which has offered to help with shipping and logistics. For contact and donation information about relief efforts in Halifax, please follow [instagram.com/dorianreliefhfx](https://www.instagram.com/dorianreliefhfx) —*Stefanie Wilson*

INNOVATOR

## GRAHAM GAGNON

AVP Research, Director of Centre  
for Water Studies

**INNOVATION:** Graham Gagnon's research focuses on how to protect one of the world's most vital resources: water. His work on lead-pipe removal transformed how Halifax detects harmful nano-sized lead particles in water, later spurring the municipality to offer a subsidy to homeowners for removing problematic pipes. His team at the Centre for Water Studies has also worked to develop ultraviolet LED technology that can be used to disinfect water, a tool that holds the potential to help some of the most vulnerable populations in Canada, particularly those in Indigenous communities, and abroad to access clean water.

**FOUNDATION:** Two years after Dr. Gagnon arrived at Dal in 1998, tragedy struck in Walkerton, Ontario when seven children died and thousands of residents were left ill because of drinking water tainted with *E. coli* bacteria. "Prior to Walkerton, water technology was very slow, largely because communities accepted that water was safe. It wasn't something that they contemplated in a deep way."

**INSPIRATION:** Dr. Gagnon aims to provide policy makers and community leaders with clear evidence on water-quality issues so they can make the best-informed decisions possible for the communities they serve.

**IN HIS OWN WORDS:** "With the LED work that we've done, the technologies are commercial-based products. The problem is how do you actually install it, how do you safely apply it, how do you use it. Those areas of research are really important for that end user to know."

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Quite simply, communities need clean, safe drinking water to be healthy. "It's astonishing that you could see a daycare that has had a boil-water advisory for 100 days. It is awful for Indigenous communities. As a country, we shouldn't tolerate that. I'm pleased that our government is saying 'Collectively, how do we get to a solution?'" —Matt Reeder



**"Our ability to detect contaminants is improving, our ability to communicate environmental risk is improving."**

## DAL NEWS

### NOTES

### Book to Tweet to TIFF

A year ago, Ingrid Waldron noticed something surprising on Twitter. A post using the hashtag for her book, *There's Something in the Water*, had received thousands of likes and shares, almost overnight. Dr. Waldron, an associate professor in Dal Health's School of Nursing with a cross appointment to the Department of Psychiatry, tracked the attention back to a social media post from Oscar- and Emmy-award-nominated actor-director Ellen Page, who enthusiastically endorsed the book.

Page had read *The Mill: Fifty Years of Pulp and Protest* by Joan Baxter, about environmental issues in Pictou Landing First Nation, and when she went looking for more information about environmental racism, she found Dr. Waldron's book. About 10 months later, that tweet had turned into a powerful documentary based on Dr. Waldron's book of the same name.

*There's Something in the Water*, co-produced by Dr. Waldron, Ellen Page, Ian Daniel and Julia Sanderson, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and at the Atlantic International Film Festival in Halifax in September. "My hope for the film is to amplify the voices and stories of Indigenous and Black communities on the front lines of environmental justice organizing and activism in Nova Scotia and Canada," said Dr. Waldron. "I want it to engage and touch the hearts and



Actor-director Ellen Page (centre front with cap) co-produced the documentary *There's Something in the Water*, based on the book by the same name by Dal's Dr. Ingrid Waldron (far left front). Both are shown here at the Toronto International Film Festival with others involved in the documentary.

humanity of viewers, including politicians, in ways that incite them to act on environmental injustices and other social injustices happening across this country and the world." —Terry Murray Arnold

### New equity and inclusion leadership

Theresa Rajack-Talley has been appointed as the university's first vice-provost of equity and inclusion. Dr. Rajack-Talley most recently served as professor of Pan-African Studies and associate dean of international, diversity and community engagement in the College of Arts & Sciences, University of Louisville. A new role at Dalhousie, reporting to the provost, the vice-provost of equity

and inclusion will be accountable for the progress and continued development of Dalhousie's Diversity and Inclusiveness Strategy. Dr. Rajack-Talley will also provide leadership to the Human Rights and Equity Services team and advise the executive and other administrative and academic leaders on issues of human rights, diversity, inclusion and equity.

"An experienced academic and senior leader, she brings expertise in equity, diversity and inclusiveness that will benefit us across a broad range of activities—including strategic planning, curriculum design and program implementation, as well as helping us make Dal a place where people truly feel they belong," says Teri Balsler, interim president.

Dr. Rajack-Talley will also collaborate with senior leaders on

strategic planning processes, ensuring that the university's strategic work succeeds in advancing institutional EDI goals. "To have a position focused on equity, diversity and inclusion at this level is an indication to the community, both on- and off-campus, that Dalhousie is treating this as equally as important to all the other crucial aspects of the university administration," says Dr. Rajack-Talley, who began her new role on August 1. —Ryan McNutt

### Dal science podcast

Looking for something to add to your podcast playlist? Check out Sciographies, a podcast about science and the people behind it. Produced in partnership by the Faculty of Science and CKDU

88.1 FM, each episode features host and oceanography professor David Barclay interviewing other Dal scientists about their lives, career paths and the research they are working on now. All episodes are available on Apple and Android podcast apps. To learn more, visit [dal.ca/sciographies](http://dal.ca/sciographies).—*Jocelyn Adams*

## Top honours for Dal researchers

Two world-renowned researchers from Dalhousie have been honoured by the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) for their outstanding achievements.

Jeff Dahn, a professor in the Faculty of Science, has received the 2019 Henry Marshall Tory Medal. Established in 1941, this medal is awarded for outstanding research in a branch of astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics or an allied science.

Dr. Dahn is a world leader in energy storage technologies. He has made important discoveries of new electrode materials and electrolyte components which have incorporated in lithium-ion batteries. His recent work, concentrating on increasing the energy density, improving the lifetime and lowering the cost of lithium-ion batteries, led to the development of high-precision coulometry—enabling the decades-long span of modern Li-ion cells to be ranked in several weeks.

Ford Doolittle, professor emeritus in the Faculty of Medicine, has received the 2019 McLaughlin Medal. Established in 1978, this medal is awarded for important research of

sustained excellence in any branch of medical sciences.

Dr. Doolittle is internationally celebrated for his field-shifting contributions to comparative genomics, considered foundational to biomedical research. His bold and sometimes controversial hypotheses have served to stimulate deep conversations and debates. Not only has he changed how we look at the world, his ideas are widely accepted as core tenets in how we understand and study the very building blocks of life.

This is the first time ever researchers from Dalhousie have received these medals.

“We are extremely proud of Dr. Dahn and Dr. Doolittle on receiving this well-deserved recognition from the Royal Society of Canada,” says Dr. Alice Aiken, vice-president of research and innovation at Dalhousie University. “Their research is profound and wide-ranging, and has fundamentally changed the way the world looks at both energy storage and evolutionary biology.—*Michele Charlton*

## NS invests in 16 new medical spots

Dalhousie Medical School is welcoming 16 additional undergraduate medical students over the next year, earmarking the positions specifically for individuals from Nova Scotia. The seats are for students from rural areas and for those with African Nova Scotian and Indigenous backgrounds.

“This announcement will build on what Dalhousie has been doing, continuing to make

sure that the institution reflects the population of Nova Scotia,” said Premier Stephen McNeil in making the announcement.

Four of the 16 students started their studies in 2019/2020, with the remaining 12 joining the medical school next year.

The investment comes at a time when access to family physicians is top of mind for many Nova Scotians, and the addition of 16 undergraduate medical school seats over the next year is a big step in addressing those needs.

—*Jason Bremner*

## Senate Medal for Social Work prof

The Government of Canada has recognized the work of Jeff Karabanow of Dal’s School of Social Work. Dr. Karabanow received the Senate 150th Anniversary Medal, awarded to those who are “actively involved in their communities who, through generosity, dedication, volunteerism and hard work, make their hometowns,



Jeff Karabanow (left) receives his Senate 150th Anniversary Medal from Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard.

communities, regions, provinces or territories a better place to live.” He received the award in recognition of his community-based research and initiatives. Senator Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard made the presentation.

Dr. Karabanow says he was surprised to receive the medal. “I was honoured to know that my research and work with the Dalhousie Social Work Clinic and the Out of the Cold Shelter were being discussed and recognized at Senate,” he says. “It was very meaningful to me that both were mentioned, allowing for Dalhousie and even Halifax and Nova Scotia to be celebrated. I was really humbled by the recognition, but the work has long been a collective effort. Everything we have done has been through strong teamwork and partnerships.”

The medal recognized his work in community-based research over the past 20 years, specifically in homelessness and trauma. His research is highly participatory, not just shining a spotlight on problems, but actively partnering with others to find solutions. The work involves Dal Social Work and other students, faculty, service providers, policy makers and research participants themselves, including homeless youth.

“We’re not doing research ‘on’ people; we are doing research ‘with’ people,” he says, adding that the work has included videos, animated shorts and comic books that have been distributed to schools and others across Canada. “I want my work to expand to the field and the streets,” he says.—*Dawn Morrison*



# *Untangling* **A LEGACY**

How was Dalhousie's founder entangled with slavery, and what impact did his views and actions have on the university, the province and African Nova Scotians? Under Dr. Afua Cooper's leadership, the university applied academic rigour and research to understanding the context and legacy of Lord Dalhousie—and to recommend a path forward.

*By Ryan McNutt with files from Matt Reeder.*

*Portrait by Daniel Abriel.*

LEFT: Dr. Afua Cooper, seen here with a portrait of Dal's founder and namesake, chaired the university's Scholarly Panel to Examine Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race.



OPPOSITE PAGE: The cover of the panel's report features a memorial of Gabriel Hall of Preston, a Black Refugee who emigrated to the colony of Nova Scotia during the War of 1812. THIS PAGE, RIGHT: Dalhousie College at the Grand Parade site, 1875. ABOVE: James R. Johnston, the first African Nova Scotian to be admitted to Dalhousie College, earned a Bachelor of Letters in 1896.

Sometimes, self-reflection is forced to occur with great velocity. The committee behind the 1989 *Breaking Barriers* report (see *Breaking Barriers*, 30 Years Later, p. 24) was given a mere four months to engage with the community and assess the state of Black and Mi'kmaq education at Dalhousie—no easy feat. Which is why, more often than not, self-reflection takes time—especially when the historical record being reflected upon is controversial or unclear.

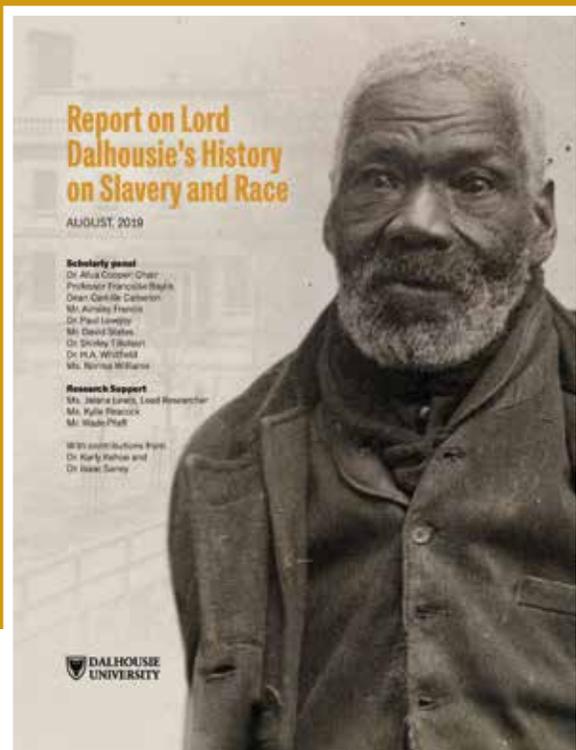
Afua Cooper knows this better than most. When she agreed to serve as chair of the Dal-commissioned Scholarly Panel to Examine Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race back in late 2016, she knew it was not a project to be rushed. Still, she didn't expect it to become a nearly three-year commitment. "But looking back, I think it was the right chunk of time for that research and this report," says Dr. Cooper, a faculty member in the Departments of History and Sociology & Social Anthropology and former James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies. "And that's because our report is based in history and founded in historical research—research that took place locally, nationally and internationally. That takes time."

The result of that time and effort by Dr. Cooper and a scholarly panel of experts was

released in early September of this year. At more than 130 pages and roughly 50,000 words, the Panel's report offers a thorough accounting of the various intersections—"entanglements," as the report calls them—between George Ramsay, the Ninth Earl of Dalhousie who commissioned the founding of Dalhousie University in 1818 while serving as Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, and the institution and legacy of slavery.

The report's story is focused on the experience of Black Refugees from the War of 1812, who fled slavery for freedom in Nova Scotia and formed the largest immigration group of what would become the province's African Nova Scotian communities. It tells how the views and policies of colonial leaders of the time towards the Black Refugees helped institutionalize anti-Black racism and created systemic barriers with legacies that still resonate more than 200 years later. And though there were no slaves in Nova Scotia at the time, the report shows how deeply intertwined the province's economy and ruling class still were to the global slave trade, and how these connections are inextricable from an understanding the history of 19th century Nova Scotia—including Dalhousie University's earliest years.

At a September 5 event to recognize the report, Dalhousie Interim President Teri Balser



*“Our report is based in history and founded in historical research—research that took place locally, nationally and internationally. That takes time.”*

—DR. AFUA COOPER

delivered a joint response from the university, co-signed by Senate Chair Kevin Hewitt and Board Chair Candace Thomas. She thanked the panel for its work, apologized on behalf of the university for the views and actions of Ramsay and their impact, and pledged to work to address the panel’s recommendations.

“Today, on behalf of Dalhousie University, I apologize to the People of African Descent in our community,” said Dr. Balsler. “We regret the actions and views of George Ramsay, the ninth Earl of Dalhousie, and the consequences and impact they have had in our collective history as a university, as a province and as a region. Further, we acknowledge our dual responsibility to address the legacies of anti-Black racism and slavery, while continuing to stand against anti-Black racism today. The recommendations from the Scholarly Panel are important and they, along with our upcoming African Nova Scotian strategy, will be critical in informing our path forward.”

Dr. Hewitt, who commissioned the Panel in 2016 together with then-President Richard Florizone, calls it a historic document. “This is a body of work that will inform the work of scholars and activists for generations,” he says. “It allows us to move forward with the difficult but important conversations and work that will tell us what kind of people we are,

what reconciliation looks like, and what world we want to live in—hopefully creating a more welcoming, just and equitable place for all.”

Slaves by habit & education... their idea of freedom is idleness and they are therefore quite incapable of industry.”

Those words about the Black Refugees from the War of 1812 come from a letter written by Lord Dalhousie to Colonial Secretary Lord Bathurst in December 1816, less than a year into his tenure as Lieutenant Governor of the British colony of Nova Scotia.

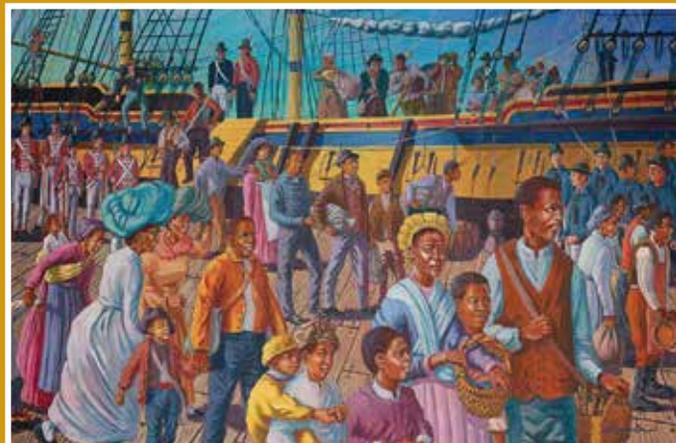
More than any other historical document, that letter—available online from the Nova Scotian Archives—is what sparked the mandate of the Scholarly Panel. For many in the African Nova Scotian community aware of the letter, those words have long stood out as a shadow on Nova Scotia and Dalhousie University’s history. It’s those words that the Black Faculty and Staff Caucus brought to then-Dalhousie President Richard Florizone’s attention when they met with him in 2016, and which eventually led to the idea of applying scholarly rigour to a full accounting of the relationship between Lord Dalhousie and the institution of slavery.

“At Dalhousie, we should tackle this complex discussion in the same way we would address any complicated issue: through scholarly

*“Our history makes this an area for considered inquiry, conversation, and respectful dialogue in exploring how we can better support a diverse and inclusive community on campus.”* —FORMER DAL PRESIDENT RICHARD FLORIZONE

*“We couldn’t divorce the Refugees of the War of 1812 from the larger story of British imperial history and the history of American slavery.”*

—DR. AFUA COOPER



ABOVE: *Black Refugees Landing in Halifax, 1814*, by contemporary Halifax artist Richard Rudnicki. OPPOSITE PAGE: The letter from Lord Dalhousie to Lord Bathurst, 29 December 1816, containing his reference to the “idleness” of the Black Refugees from the War of 1812.

inquiry and community engagement,” wrote Dr. Florizone and Dr. Hewitt in the Panel’s terms of reference. “Our history makes this an area for considered inquiry, conversation, and respectful dialogue in exploring how we can better support a diverse and inclusive community on campus.”

To complete their work, Dr. Cooper and the research team on the panel crossed the Atlantic to comb through relevant archives in both Canada and the United Kingdom. They examined letters, formal proclamations, immigration reports and accounting documents to better understand Ramsay and his views. “When we looked at George Ramsay, and his writings and letters, we realized that it was part of a larger story, part of a larger context,” says Dr. Cooper. “From that phrase—‘slaves by habit and education’—we discovered these entanglements that Dalhousie University and George Ramsay had with slaves and slavery and anti-Blackness.”

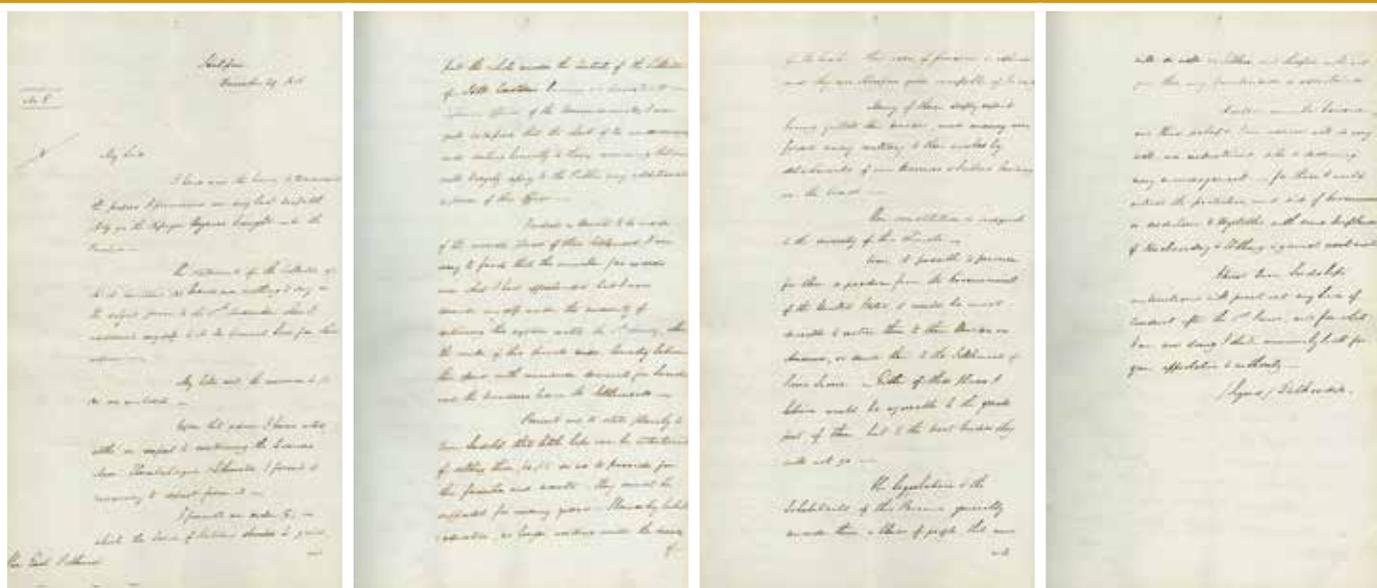
In choosing “entanglement” to describe the intersections between George Ramsay, Dalhousie University and slavery, the Panel’s report is noting how complex this history is—that even though slaves weren’t present in early 19th-century Nova Scotia, and there’s no evidence that Ramsay himself was ever a slave-owner, there are still a multitude of connections and links that can be made (economic,

political, social and cultural), directly and indirectly, to slavery and its legacies.

“I think of it as yarn of wool that gets tangled up,” says Dr. Cooper. “We couldn’t divorce the Refugees of the War of 1812 from the larger story of British imperial history and the history of American slavery.”

The first of these entanglements, and the one most directly tied to Lord Dalhousie personally, is the one illuminated by the letter to Lord Bathurst: that along with other Lieutenant Governors of Nova Scotia, Lord Dalhousie expressed views and enacted policies that explicitly and intentionally marginalized the Black Refugees of the War of 1812. These constraints, such as providing insufficient farmland and, at one point, considering deporting the settlers to former slave masters in the United States, essentially treated Black settlers as unwelcome second-class citizens. “Dalhousie, like Sir Sherbrook before him and Kemp after, embarked on policies, laws and regulations that marginalized the Black Refugee community for the next 200 years,” says Dr. Cooper.

The second entanglement is Lord Dalhousie’s participation in the Franco-British wars, where he enacted orders that enacted orders returning enslaved rebels to their masters following the overthrow of a revolutionary government on the Caribbean island of Martinique. “This



experience of conquest and re-enslavement,” says the report, “helped influence [Lord Dalhousie’s] subsequent views and perceptions about African peoples.”

The remaining three entanglements are less about Lord Dalhousie, personally, and more about the broader society in which Dalhousie University was initially founded: that much of the economy and wealth in 19th-century Nova Scotia was dependent on the West India trade routes, leveraging resources harvested from continued slavery; that prominent Halifax families with links to Dalhousie University’s earliest years received financial compensation when the British government ended slavery in the Caribbean; and that some of the university’s early leaders expressed racist ideas: Inaugural President Thomas McCulloch, though a staunch abolitionist, used racist ideas at times in his satirical writing, while Hugo Reid, who served as Dalhousie College principal briefly in the 1850s, wrote a tract against abolitionism.

Dr. Cooper says she hopes the report’s findings help show how the issues of today are built on legacies of yesterday. “The world we see now didn’t just happen by an act of magic—something came before, and often times that something that came before was wrong to certain communities, to certain individuals. And that led to systemic barriers that continue

through today,” she says, referring to the recent report on police street checks in Halifax as one contemporary example of anti-Black racism’s continued impact.

The Scholarly Panel that set about considering Lord Dalhousie’s legacy was a mix of scholars of various backgrounds: law, ethics, sociology and, of course, history. They were tasked not only with identifying the historical facts and placing them in context, but with making recommendations for Dalhousie University to address this legacy.

Those 13 recommendations fall under three broad categories: expressing regret and responsibility for the institution’s and its founder’s connections to slavery and to anti-Black racism; showing recognition for the historical realities of Black people’s lives in Nova Scotia and the valuable contributions they have made; and embarking on repair, taking concrete steps to address the legacy of slavery, particularly through teaching and research. The recommendations include encouraging renaming of campus and community spaces in honour of individuals of African descent; enhancing, expanding and supporting teaching and research of Black Studies; and strengthening Dal’s relationships with the African Nova Scotian community and building stronger educational links to the Caribbean.

*“We cannot change the history detailed by this Scholarly Panel, nor change how it has informed our present, but we do get to decide how it shapes our future.”*

—DALHOUSIE  
INTERIM PRESIDENT  
TERI BALSER

*“We have a responsibility to ensure that as we write our next chapter, that we embrace the values of inclusion and diversity.”*

—CANDACE THOMAS,  
CHAIR, DALHOUSIE  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS



ABOVE: Senate Chair Kevin Hewitt, Interim President Teri Balsler, Board Chair Candace Thomas (first and second from left and far right, respectively) with members of the Scholarly Panel to Examine Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race, including Chair Afua Cooper (middle).

“I think it’s important for the readers to know that the committee doesn’t want this to be another report that goes on the shelf and gathers dust,” says Dr. Cooper. “One of the objectives of this report, in a way, is to help right this broader wrong, and enacting these recommendations would be a major step in repair.”

Candace Thomas, chair of Dal’s Board of Governors, is a descendant of those early African Nova Scotian settlers, and believes the university has a moral obligation to consider this history and those who were part of Dalhousie’s story through the years of racial injustice and slavery and beyond. “We also have a responsibility to ensure that as we write our next chapter, that we embrace the values of inclusion and diversity that will make future generations proud of what we’ve accomplished and proud to be a part of this community,” she says.

Much of this work will take time; “systemic change does not happen overnight,” as Dr. Balsler notes. But some of it is happening with higher velocity, like the university’s apology, the in-development African Nova Scotian strategy and the recent naming of a street on Sexton Campus after Mathieu DeCosta, a colonial-era French translator who was the first named African in Canada—exactly the sort of recognition and celebration of individuals of African descent called for in the report.

Nor is it work starting from a blank slate: Dalhousie has a long history of initiatives—sparked by calls to action from the community—that seek to live up to its obligations to African Nova Scotian communities. Several of these, like the Indigenous Black & Mi’kmaq initiative, the James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies, the Black Student Advising Centre and the Transition Year Program, directly intersect with the legacy of the *Breaking Barriers* report 30 years ago.

Dr. Cooper hopes this new report will lead to a similar legacy; that rather than an admonishment for what happened 200 years ago, the report shows how Dal—through its efforts in teaching, research and community engagement—can make a big difference in helping right the wrongs of the past. “Dalhousie is a major influencer in the Atlantic Provinces. Universities can, and do, make a difference in the lives of individuals and in communities. You don’t necessarily have to be a student in that institution for that institution to make a difference in your life, and our recommendations focus on the positive difference Dalhousie can make.”

“We cannot change the history detailed by this Scholarly Panel, nor change how it has informed our present,” says Dr. Balsler, “but we do get to decide how it shapes our future.”

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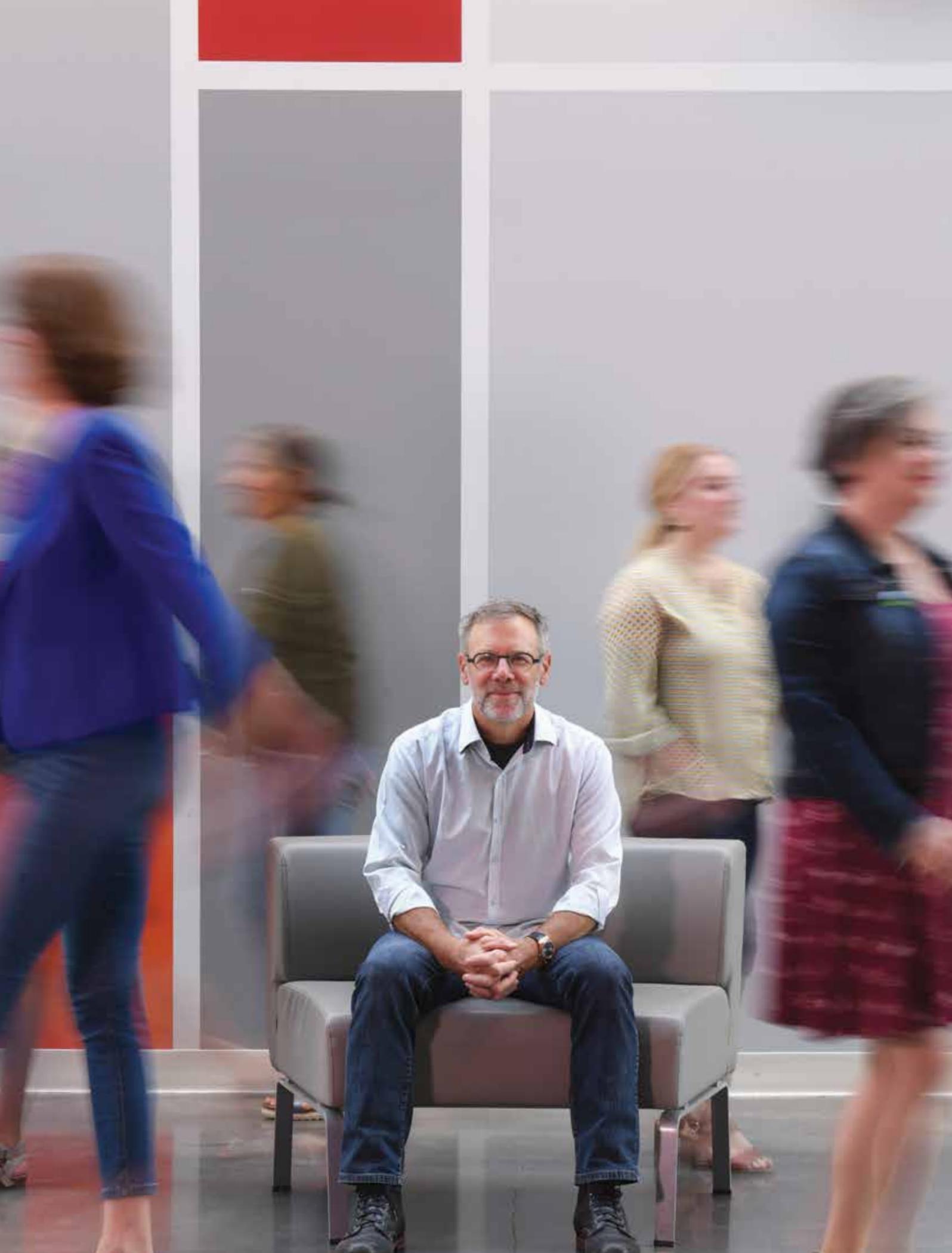
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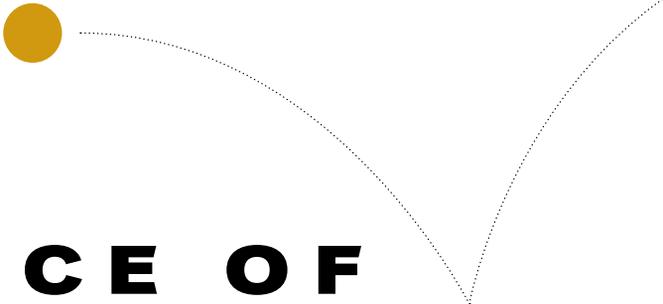


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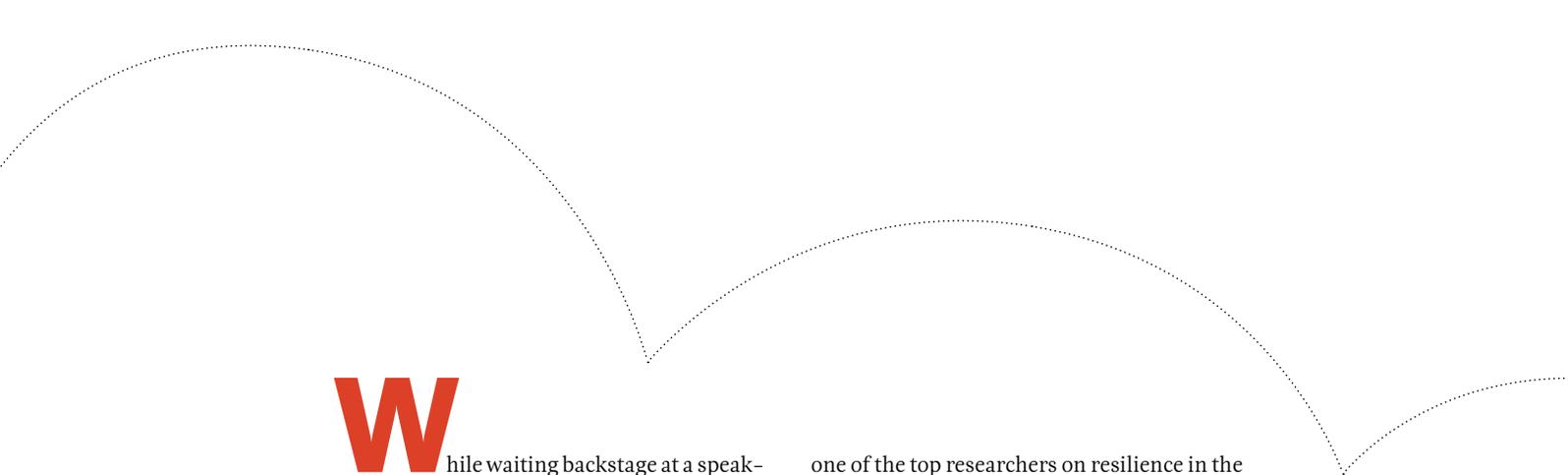






# THE SCIENCE OF BOUNCING BACK

Grit. Determination. Perseverance. Those are the factors many believe determine who survives—and thrives—in the face of adversity. But Dalhousie’s Dr. Michael Ungar says we’ve got it wrong: when it comes to bouncing back, the support we get matters as much—or more—than our individual ability to tough it out. His findings have important implications for individuals and policy makers as we grapple with how to create healthier, happier communities. *By Dawn Morrison with files from Colleen MacDonald and Sutherland House. Photography by Daniel Abriel.*



**W**hile waiting backstage at a speaking engagement in Australia a few years ago, Michael Ungar of Dalhousie’s School of Social Work listened to the speaker before him and was shocked by what he heard. “The speaker told the audience, ‘All you have to do to change your life is to change your brain, to think differently. If you do that, everything in your life will change,’” Dr. Ungar says. “It just wasn’t true. The person who relies on themselves only succeeds if they have very few challenges. When the odds are stacked against us, the people who do best are those with the most supports.”

The statements put forward so confidently by the speaker in Australia stayed with Dr. Ungar, all the way back to Canada. That incident—and decades of his own research in the field of resilience—were the catalyst for his latest book, *Change Your World: The Science of Resilience and the True Path to Success*. In it, he takes a fresh look at the concept of ‘self-help,’ the reasons why it often fails and the research behind what really works. “The book was sparked by the science,” he says. “The idea that if you just think differently you can rewire your brain and change your whole life didn’t make sense to me. I wanted to challenge those ideas.”

The Australian presenter’s views were not unique. They echo a larger narrative on what it takes to be happy: that individuals can and should just ‘pull themselves up by their bootstraps’ to overcome hardships and achieve success. Dr. Ungar, a family therapist, social work professor in Dal’s Faculty of Health and

one of the top researchers on resilience in the world, knew differently. It’s the emphasis on the ‘self’ in ‘self-help’ that’s the problem with the bootstraps theory.

Certainly, a positive attitude is important, he notes—in fact, his research shows that positive thinking is one of the 12 resources resilient people tap into. But things like determination and grit are not enough to create lasting, positive changes in people’s lives. “There’s much more to the story than that.” He offers a simple question to underscore the point: “We’ve never had more access to self-help manuals, podcasts, books, TV shows and so on. If self-help really works, why is it that nearly all of the statistics show that our physical and mental health and well-being in North America is getting worse? The self-help industry says that if we’re not making positive changes in our lives, it’s because we’re not working hard enough. Whether we succeed or fail is completely on our shoulders as individuals.” And the worst examples of this individualistic approach, according to Dr. Ungar, “blame people for their failures when there can be several other factors at play.”

### **The science behind resilience**

Dr. Ungar knew from decades of research that those who thrive do so largely because of their environment and the resources they have been able to access. “What’s clear from the studies is that most of what changes us are things like good social policies, workplace safety, the relationships we’re in, having safety and security in terms of where we live, good employment and training opportunities, finding a place within your community,” he says, countering the idea of the rugged individual who succeeds due mainly to personal drive and determination. “We know that ‘resourced’ individuals tend to do far better than ‘rugged’ individuals.”

The perspective may come as relief to anyone who’s tried and failed to change their

“When the odds are stacked against us, the people who do best are those with the most supports.”



## *It's the emphasis on the 'self' in 'self-help' that's the problem with the bootstraps theory.*

careers, health, attitude or appearance by consuming the latest self-help podcast or book. It turns out that personal traits like grit and perseverance can only take you so far—to succeed and overcome obstacles, you need far more than that. “The environment around us and the resources we’ve been given play a huge role in whether or not we’re successful. Grit and individual motivation is one thing, but it’s not usually enough to create change. You need an environment that makes it possible for you to change and grow.”

He also takes issue with the idea that ‘You can do whatever you want, if you just put your mind to it.’ Think of the person who writes and fails the medical school entrance exams several times, refusing to give up, he says. “Would that person be happier and better served pursuing another degree in the health field? Maybe there’s a different, better path for them to gain career fulfillment and serve their community. Everyone isn’t meant to be a doctor, and that’s OK.”

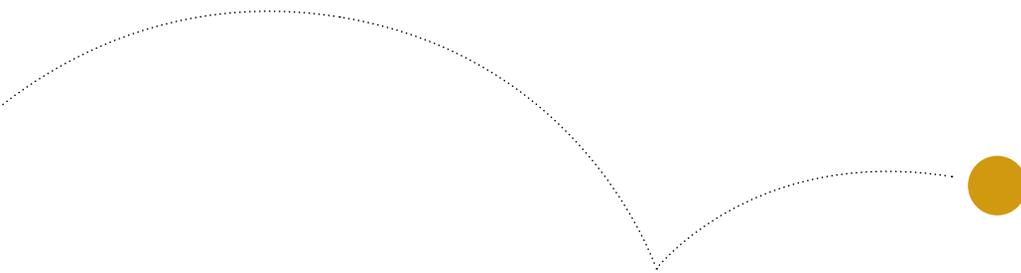
### **What really works**

While working as a family therapist, Dr. Ungar often met children who went through incredible hardship but seemed to be doing better than anyone would expect. It was something that corresponded with his own life experience. “I was emancipated quite young. I was 16 when I left home and was on my own from that point,” Dr. Ungar says. “While I was a family clinician and working on my PhD, I began to ask myself ‘How was I able to pull that off? How is it that some kids do better than expected even though they’ve gone through these hardships?’”

In his case, teenaged Michael Ungar was able to get through that difficult time through a combination of employment and academic opportunities and also because of the influence of positive adults in his life. “I was able to find work, and I had access to some academic opportunities because my grades were

good,” he says. “Also, I had a really great teacher at the time, and my grandmother was also another good support—she was a buffer in terms of conflict that was going on at the time within the family.”

Dr. Ungar went on to explore his questions about how some children thrive despite difficulty in decades of internationally recognized research in the field of resilience. His studies have focused on the resilience of children and families involved with child welfare and mental health services, refugee and immigrant youth populations and communities. He is the author of 15 books, has published over 180 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on the subject, and has conducted over 500 presentations around the world. He holds the Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience and leads the Resilience Research Centre (RRC) at Dalhousie. He created the centre to facilitate funded research projects on resilience, focusing on marginalized children and families and adult populations experiencing mental health challenges all over the world. Through international partnerships with researchers, policy makers and clinicians, the centre has built a world-renowned hub of resilience expertise and tools to support young people, families and communities in achieving psychological, social, cultural and physical well-being. Before the RRC was established, there was little research being done on the topic of resilience. In part through the centre’s work, resilience has become a critical topic of discussion across the health and social sciences fields, and Dr. Ungar’s research is shedding new



light on the science of how people overcome obstacles and thrive.

Instead of looking at resilience as being something personal, Dr. Ungar's work with youth through the Resilience Research Centre took a different approach. He looked at the external factors that influenced a young person's outcomes—whether or not they had resources throughout multiple systems. He found that the economy, politics, social services, families, peer groups and schools are all elements of the social ecologies that can help people, a theme echoed in his latest book.

His definition of resilience encompasses this shift from an individual concept to a more social-ecological framework: "In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways."

In his research, Dr. Ungar has shifted focus away from individual qualities to the coping strategies we use when facing adversity. An example from the book details a large-scale, international research program. The five-country, six-year study examined how 13- to 24-year-olds with complex needs living in stressed environments (economically depressed neighbourhoods, for instance, or homes with family violence) made use of the health and social services available to them, and whether that connected to their resil-

ience over time. "Rather than focusing our attention on individual factors like grit or mindset, we wanted to understand whether an investment in services could be a better way to nurture well-being in suboptimal environments," he says in the book, noting that remarkably few studies had asked the obvious question: "Does resilience depend on the services we receive?"

The results, based on research on 7,000 young people around the world, produced undeniable proof that "resilience depends more on what we receive than what we have." The study also showed that young people often do not take advantage of services offered in their communities, because the services are not tailored to or appropriate in meeting their needs (i.e., school meetings set up with parents who are unable to take time off from work).

### **What we need to survive—and thrive**

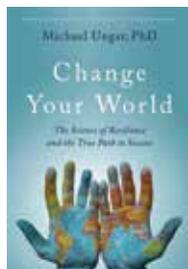
Dr. Ungar is not suggesting we stop trying to make positive changes in our lives, or simply accept difficult life circumstances. His point is that personal motivation and the will to succeed is simply not enough. "Think about families who have gone through some kind of natural disaster, and have had to relocate," he says. "You can't tell a bunch of families impacted by a huge environmental tragedy to think their way out of their situation. They need support, insurance money, other people to help them relocate, for example."

Dr. Ungar says the good news is that we really can change our world, and in fact, it's often easier to do that than to change ourselves. "The science is clear—most of the research on resilience points to external factors and opportunities that spark change, not some kind of internal fortitude. It's about altering the world around you and making it more supportive of you—the external interactions cue the change," he says. "If you're disillusioned that the diets, the weekend retreats

*"We know that  
'resourced' individuals  
tend to do far better than  
'rugged' individuals."*

and makeovers aren't working, there's a reason for that. You've been burdened by the responsibility of making these changes all on your own. Just know you're on the right path, but maybe there is another set of strategies that can help you."

These strategies involve thinking outside the box — if someone has a job that they hate, for instance, it might not be possible for them to quit and find another job but there are other ways to approach the situation. "If someone is highly stressed in the workplace, they could ask their employer for a horizontal move or a slightly different set of tasks, or maybe ask for some extra support from their family. If finances are the stressor, some find that cutting up the credit cards, destroying the opportunity to use them works to decrease the problem. A diet or fitness plan is more likely to work if you find a diet or exercise buddy," he says. "If your life or your job lacks meaning, motivation and positive thinking are very good things, but so are volunteering in the community or joining a sports activity that you love. Any of these examples can create a huge shift in the quality of your life and your well-being."



*Change Your World: The Science of Resilience and the True Path to Success* is available now from Sutherland House Press at [sutherlandhousebooks.com](http://sutherlandhousebooks.com)

## Survival mechanisms

Dr. Ungar's research on resilience shows that resilient people around the world are able to tap into 12 resources that support them in their efforts to survive and thrive.

**1 Structure:** We all do better when the world around us provides routines and expectations. During a crisis, structure is even more important, as it offers a buffer against chaos and makes us feel like our lives are predictable.

**2 Consequences:** Making mistakes is a prerequisite for success. The consequences we suffer must offer manageable opportunities to repair what we have done wrong and integrate what we have learned into future efforts.

**3 Intimate and sustaining relationships:** Having even one person who loves us unconditionally is an important foundation for resilience.

**4 Lots of other relationships:** We all need a clan, an extended family, colleagues at work or an online community in which we feel we are needed.

**5 A powerful identity:** How we are seen by others is crucial to our sense of self-worth.

**6 A sense of control:** Whether one experiences personal efficacy or political efficacy, we all do better when we are given the opportunity to make decisions that affect our lives.

**7 A sense of belonging, religious affiliation, spirituality, culture and life purpose.**

**8 Rights and responsibilities:** It is very difficult to experience success unless we experience social justice.

**9 Safety and support:** Knowing our homes and communities are safe and have the right supports in place to help us find the resources we need to cope when problems occur is a crucial component of our environments.

**10 Positive thinking:** People who succeed have a positive future orientation that is grounded in a realistic assessment of the opportunities they have been given.

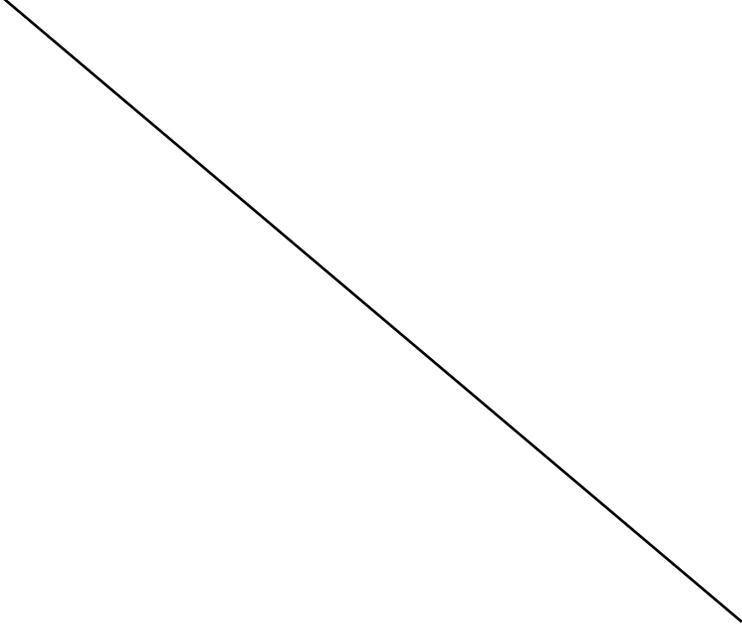
**11 Physical well-being:** Our environments can support us by providing us with everything from affordable, healthy food to sidewalks that encourage us to walk instead of drive.

**12 Financial well-being:** A strong economy, fair taxation and poverty reduction strategies can all make us financially successful and impervious to changing economic conditions.



Top to bottom, L to R:  
Michelle Williams, Wayne  
MacKay, Oluronke Taiwo,  
Naoimi Metallic, Dr. Barb  
Hamilton-Hinch





# BREAKING BARRIERS, 30 YEARS LATER

Three decades ago, a landmark report on racism at Dal coincided with the Marshall Inquiry report, and together they formed the basis for a critical shift in the university's approach to serving the needs of the region's Black and Indigenous peoples. Today, at the reports' 30th anniversary, the impact of that shift is evident—but work remains to be done. *By Ryan McNutt*

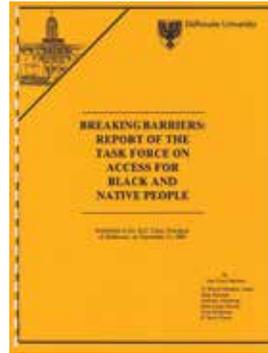
**O**n the long journey towards justice, there are often flashpoints: moments where long-burning embers of anger and frustration catch sparks, and turn into fire and smoke that simply cannot be ignored.

Thirty years ago, in 1989, the Marshall Inquiry became one such flashpoint. Donald Marshall Jr. from Membertou First Nation was convicted in 1971 of the murder of African Nova Scotian man Sandy Seale, and then acquitted in 1983. Marshall's conviction was such an egregious miscarriage of justice it inspired a Royal Commission. Its report laid bare the breadth and depth of the obstacles Indigenous peoples faced—not only in the justice system, but in Nova Scotian society more broadly.

“It was the first wrongful conviction commission in Canada, and it shone a spotlight on systemic racism problems in the entire justice system in Nova Scotia—from police investigations to the court of appeal, and pretty much everything in between,” says Naomi Metallic, the Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy at Dalhousie. “It's been an important touchstone that we continue to come back to, highlighting what's been done since, and what hasn't.”

At the same time the Marshall Commission was undertaking its work, another soul-searching report was in development—this one on campus at Dalhousie. In February of 1989, then-President Howard Clark commissioned a task force to study and report on the university's role in the education of the region's Black and Indigenous peoples. The task force was given an ambitious mandate: to review existing programs and resources on-campus, consult extensively with community, students and university leaders, and propose a strategic plan to address its findings—all in just four months. (It ended up taking six.)

The haste was necessitated by uncertainty surrounding the Transition Year Program, which since 1970 had provided a one-year pathway program for African Nova Scotian and Indigenous students. A community-inspired initiative, the TYP's existence



**The *Breaking Barriers* report exposed just how distant Dalhousie was seen as from the African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq communities it was trying to serve.**

had often been precarious, rarely more so than in the late 1980s when its funding situation was dire and two contradictory internal reviews left its future in serious doubt. “There were cynics in the university, and some in the community as well, who thought the role of our committee was simply to weigh in on the Transition Year Program,” says Wayne MacKay, the law professor tapped to lead the task force when its original chair stepped down due to other commitments. “They thought we were a cost-cutting measure. Suffice to say, it didn't turn out that way.”

Instead, the task force's report, titled *Breaking Barriers*, became something of a flashpoint moment of its own within the university's continuing story. Wide-reaching in its scope and analysis, it exposed just how distant the university was seen as from the African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq communities it was trying to serve, how deeply those communities felt like Dalhousie wasn't a place for them. Its recommendations did support strengthening of the Transition Year Program, which today remains a crucial component of Dal's commitment to expanding access to education. But its recommendations went much further. For example, together with the Marshall Commission, the committee championed the fledgling Indigenous Blacks & Mi'kmaq (IB&M) Initiative in Dal's law school as a critical measure to

**“We now have 30 years of lawyers out doing incredibly important work in their communities and really transforming the legal profession.” —Michelle Williams**

## “It shone a spotlight on systemic racism problems in the entire justice system in Nova Scotia.” —*Naiomi Metallic*

increase representation in the justice system. And it responded to students’ demands for dedicated Black student supports and space, which resulted in the establishment of the first Black Student Advising Centre on campus.

Some aspects of *Breaking Barriers* read as antiquated today (particularly its terminology of “native” and “Micmacs”). Other elements, like its heartened attempt to both explicate and educate about systemic racism, read just as true and important today as they must have at the time. Thirty years on, as the IB&M Initiative and the Black Student Advising Centre mark anniversary milestones, their legacies remain a testament to the spirit of 1989, just as their work remains as vital as ever in 2019.

**M**ichelle Williams has served as director of the IB&M Initiative since 2004—half of its lifespan now. In 2018, during Dal’s 200th anniversary, she helped celebrate the initiative’s 200th graduate. This year, she’s helping organize special events to mark its 30th anniversary, sharing with great pride the initiative’s commitment to an increasingly organic circle that binds together academia, practice and community. “We now have 30 years of lawyers out doing incredibly important work in their communities and really transforming the legal profession,” says Williams, a faculty member in the Schulich School of Law.

The process developing the IB&M Initiative in 1989 coincided with consultation for the Marshall Commission and the *Breaking Barriers* report, and both reports strongly encouraged its continued development and funding. At the time, there were less than a few dozen practising Black lawyers in Nova Scotia, and there had only been a single Mi’kmaq graduate from Dal’s law school. Since then, up to 12 aspiring lawyers have entered law school through IB&M each year. Part of the program’s success is that it provides funding and academic support to students, but Prof. Metallic says the community building and networking component of the program is every bit as critical. “There’s something really special when you create a critical mass,” says Prof. Metallic, herself a gradu-

ate of the program. “The graduates continue to have these connections to each other, a network that supports each other, raises each other up. There’s really strength in numbers.”

Fighting unfair stereotypes about its recruits through the years, the program and its graduates continue to inspire change, whether working directly on Indigenous issues or simply by being part of the legal profession. Today, 64 members of the Nova Scotia Barristers Society are Mi’kmaq or Aboriginal as of 2018–2019 (2.2% of total lawyers) and 79 are African Nova Scotian or Black (2.7%). Four IB&M alumni have been appointed to the judiciary: three to the Nova Scotia Provincial Court (including one recently appointed to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court Family Division) and one to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court.

“Meaningful, supported access to legal education is a critical aspect of access to justice,” says Prof. Williams. “It’s about developing the legal skills, training and opportunities that can lead to truly transformative change.”



Following the release of the report, social worker Beverly Johnson was appointed as Dal’s first adviser for Black students in 1990.

**B**arb Hamilton-Hinch is a faculty member in the School of Health and Human Performance whose research includes access issues in education, particularly with respect to Black communities. Thirty years ago, as a student, she was an executive member of the Black Canadian Students Association on campus. The executive was commissioned to write and present a position paper to the *Breaking Barriers* committee on how Dal could better meet the needs of growing (but still disproportionately low) numbers of African Nova Scotian students.

“The need was so great,” says Dr. Hamilton-Hinch. “If it wasn’t for the Black Student Advising Centre, I think a lot of us probably wouldn’t have finished university. We didn’t see ourselves represented in the classes as students and professors, on the varsity teams, but we at least had a place we could go and let out whatever was happening to us that day.”

When it launched in the fall of 1989, the Black Student Advising Centre (BSAC) shared a small corner of the Student Union Building with the Accessibility Centre. The space was limited, but the way it provided a “home away from home” for Black students—many of whom commuted from rural communities—made it an essential part of the university community very quickly. After graduating, Dr. Hamilton-Hinch would find her way back to BSAC, serving as its director for nearly a decade before handing over the reins to its current director, Oluronke Taiwo. Known as “Ronke” to most, Taiwo is a familiar face at Dal convocations, attending every ceremony to cheer on her students with an enthusiastic cry of, “Walk it, baby! Walk it!”

“I say that because they have cried on my shoulder, and I have known when they’re going through hardships,” she says. “All their lives, systemic racism is what they’ve gone through. When they come to campus, they can find themselves in a class where maybe, out of 500 students, there’s only one or two others who look like them. Some of the students have come to me after experiencing that saying, ‘I’m

done, I can’t do this.’ I’m the one telling them, ‘You can do it.’”

Today, BSAC shares a house on Edward Street with the Indigenous Student Centre, hosting two computer labs, a meeting room, a lounge and other offices. Taiwo organizes scholarship receptions, Writing Centre workshops, a mentoring program, birthday parties—even a special Open House-style campus visit program for Black students across Nova Scotia. “I want them to have the full university experience—not just the not-so-good things that can sometimes happen around them,” she says. “When we come together like that, we have the time to relax, to talk, to eat, to get to know each other more. It makes it about a lot more than advising—it’s where students support each other. It’s that home away from home; it’s a community.”

**C**ommunity was at the heart of the *Breaking Barriers* report. Wayne MacKay, today professor emeritus in the Schulich School of Law, remembers the extensive meetings in community halls and church basements alongside his fellow task force members Tony Johnstone (who passed away during the report’s production), Julia Eastman, Janis Jones-Darrell, Viola Robinson and Scott Wood.

“We knew early on we wanted to hear extensively from the communities, and the message we heard was very clear that this was not just an aberrant thing,” recalls Prof. MacKay, a past chair of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. “This is a systemic, ongoing problem in Nova Scotian society, in broader society, and in Dalhousie as a subset of that, and that the kinds of changes really needed to make a difference would need to be systemic. They would need to involve spending money and setting up programs.”

Looking back, he also acknowledges an obvious truth: that as a white man, his appointment to chair the panel would not be just controversial but near-unthinkable today. (“And rightly so,” he adds.) “I was mindful that I couldn’t speak to others’ expe-

**“If it wasn’t for the Black Student Advising Centre, I think a lot of us probably wouldn’t have finished university.” —Dr. Barb Hamilton-Hinch**

**“Things needed to change. It was a critical mass of change.” —Wayne MacKay**

## “They have cried on my shoulder, and I have known when they’ve gone through hardships. I’m the one telling them, ‘You can do it.’” —*Oluronke Taiwo*

riences, and to not claim anybody else’s voice, but to report what we discovered and try to be a conduit for the direct community messages we were hearing. Many within the Mi’kmaq and African Nova Scotian communities had been making these same points for years—they weren’t being listened to.

“Early in the report, I wrote about bridging the cultural divides, and that didn’t just mean mainstream white culture and the Mi’kmaq culture and African Nova Scotia cultures. It meant the university culture, which is a kind of culture unto itself. Things needed to change.”

He also acknowledges that, as is often the case with reports of its kind, not all of what was put forward was brought into action. But he’s proud of what came out of the task force’s work, and that the *Breaking Barriers* report itself continues to be cited in subsequent diversity and inclusion work at Dalhousie. “Together with the Marshall Commission, which our work intersected with, you had these two complementary processes that worked to confront racial barriers that existed, with constructive ideas about how these institutions should address them,” he says. “It was a critical mass of change.”

In another 30 years’ time, we may look back on 2019 as another flashpoint, another moment that represents a critical mass of change.

The past five years of Dalhousie’s story have been increasingly shaped by important work in equity, diversity and inclusion. Dal’s Strategic Initiative on Diversity and Inclusiveness... the *Belong* report... the *Bombay/Hewitt* report on access... work to close gaps in labour-market representation... efforts to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action... the hiring of Dal’s first vice-provost of equity and inclusion... and, most recently, the completion of the Lord Dalhousie panel, with recommendations that echo the *Breaking Barriers* report’s calls for Dal to continue to strengthen its relationships with African Nova Scotian communities.

Last year, the committee behind a new Indigenous Strategy for Dalhousie presented its work to Senate, and work is underway to help bring that strategy to

the implementation phase. Led by co-chairs Professors Keith Taylor (Mathematics and Statistics) and Patti Doyle Bedwell (College of Continuing Education), the committee published a report last fall informed by university- and community-wide consultations. Several recommendations were made regarding relationship-building, curriculum and program development, and scholarly and creative work. Some aspects are already being implemented. For example, the university is currently in the process of hiring a director of Indigenous community engagement, who will be responsible along with an Indigenous Advisory Board for addressing the recommendations suggested. Prof. Williams, meanwhile, is institutional lead on developing an African Nova Scotian strategy for Dalhousie, one that’s extra timely given Dal’s proclamation recently of the UN Decade for the People of African Descent. At the heart of that planning process, says Prof. Williams, is the recognition of African Nova Scotians as a distinct people. “And it’s about working with the community, centering community engagement,” she adds.

Dr. Hamilton-Hinch serves on the African Nova Scotian strategy committee with Prof. Williams. As someone who’s been around for both *Breaking Barriers* and Dal’s current initiatives, she sees both the challenge and the progress.

“Dalhousie is doing a better job in providing opportunities for developing a better sense of inclusion and belonging, but it’s going to take time,” she says. “In one sense, it’s disappointing that we still need a place like BSAC in university, based on the oppression and discrimination students continue to experience. But it’s heartwarming to know that students can find a space that’s safe, that’s inviting and where they belong. And it’s encouraging to see the mentoring that happens in that space; you see the impact they have on one another and how successful they can be.”

  
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# Dalhousie Alumni



## STAY CONNECTED

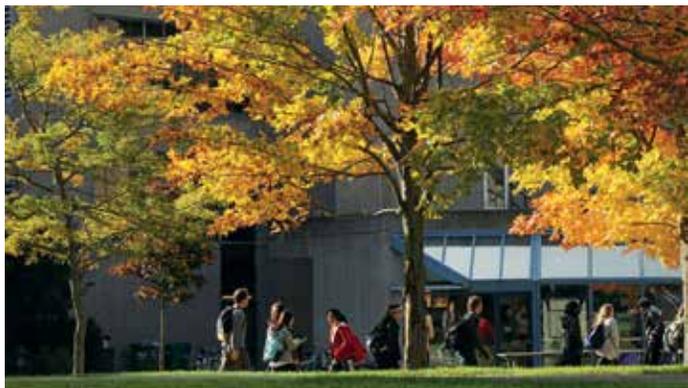
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## ON LINE

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“It’s an opportunity for others to be part of this important initiative to create a public education piece.”

**PHILANTHROPY**

# Restoring an ocean giant

The tragic loss of a blue whale in 2017 has turned into an innovative research and learning opportunity, and ultimately, will become a public education exhibit at Dal. By Fallon Bourgeois with files from Emma Geldart and Alison Auld



When a 63-foot female blue whale was found dead on the shores of Liverpool, N.S. in May 2017, Dalhousie’s veterinarian, Chris Harvey-Clark, saw a chance to turn the loss of the critically endangered species into an opportunity. His vision was to have the bones serve as a public education piece.

“Since 2014 I’ve been interested in creating marine sculptures to enhance our understanding of marine life,” says Dr. Harvey-Clark, who is also a marine biologist. When the blue whale washed up, it was a chance to have the ‘real deal.’

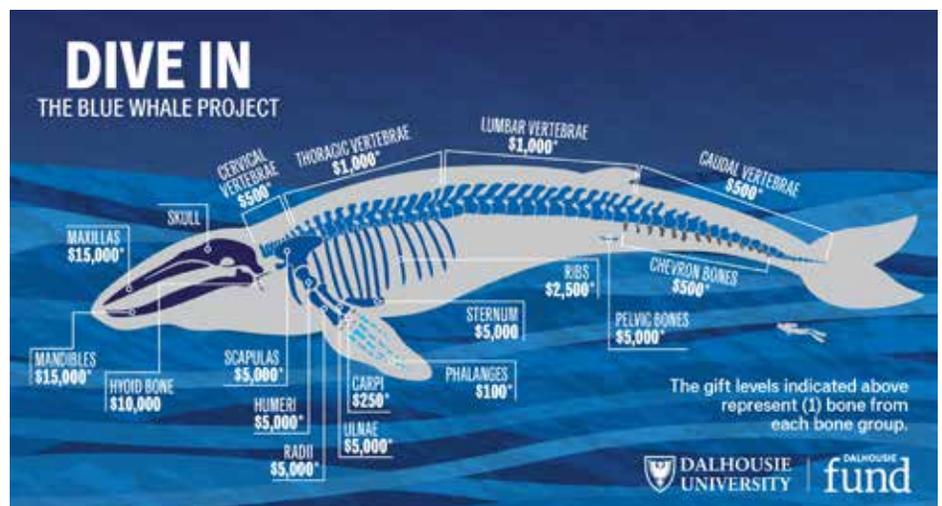
That vision has inspired Dive In: The Blue Whale Project, a campaign to raise funds to support the restoration and articulation of the bones. The project will also support the ultimate goal—displaying the skeleton of the world’s largest mammal at a compelling new exhibit at Dal’s Steele Ocean Sciences Building. Supporters have the unique opportunity to name a bone—though supporting the project runs much deeper than that. It’s a chance to be a part of an exhibit that will shine a light on ocean conservation and further the understanding of marine mammal science. The

exhibit, scheduled to open in 2021, will also be part of a larger interdisciplinary hub for research, education and community engagement around marine biodiversity.

**A MASSIVE UNDERTAKING**

When the blue whale washed up, it began an interdisciplinary innovative process that is ongoing. Dr. Harvey-Clark has worked along

with Dalhousie associate professor Gordon Price, Engineering senior instructor Chris Nelson and a group of dedicated volunteers including many students to preserve and degrease the bones to create the mounted display. When the mammal was moved from the beach, it was taken to Dr. Price’s field research site, the Bio-Environmental Engineering Centre at Dal’s Agricultural Campus, for





**ABOVE** Aerial shot of the blue whale skeleton at the Bio-Environmental Engineering Centre at Dal's Agricultural Campus **LEFT** To support Dive In: The Blue Whale Project donors can name one of the 230 bones and help bring the exhibit to life. **RIGHT** Volunteers, including many students, helped remove the bones from the compost and identify them.

composting using a technique developed by Dr. Price. It's setting a new industry standard in environmentally sustainable decomposition.

So, where does one store the bones of this great mammal? The short answer is in the ground and then in a green house, where it now rests. For the last two years the bones have been composting to remove the grease, tissue and oils that are deeply embedded in the whale's skeletal structure. Every six to eight months the bones were dug up to see how they were decomposing. And each dig created invaluable experiential learning experiences for students. "A lot of these students have taken part in Dal's Whale School, so it's further enhancing their understanding of marine mammal science," says Dr. Harvey-Clark.

When the final dig was done in June 2018, researchers began weighing, cataloging and archiving the bones to create a virtual 3D model of the whale. When the exhibit opens in 2021, it will be one of only a few 3D representations of a blue whale skeleton in the world.

### BRINGING THE VISION TO LIFE

To date, donors have sponsored 30 bones. "From the very beginning, we had terrific support in getting this project off the ground," says Dr. Harvey-Clark. "Now it's an opportunity for others to be part of this important initiative to create a public education piece."

Visit [projectdal.ca/bluewhale](http://projectdal.ca/bluewhale) and help bring the exhibit to life.

“We wanted to recognize Michelle’s enthusiastic, positive spirit.”

## PHILANTHROPY

# Lasting impact

The Occupational Therapy Class of 2019 created an award to support future OT students while honouring a beloved staff member

“Overwhelmed,” is how receptionist and website manager Michelle Mahoney describes her reaction when she heard that the Occupational Therapy (OT) Class of 2019 had created a student award acknowledging her contributions to the school and the occupational therapy profession. The class wanted to acknowledge the close bonds Mahoney had made with the students. “We wanted to recognize Michelle’s enthusiastic, positive spirit,” said Laura Power (MSc (OT) ’19), and the encouragement and support she provided to students.

“She embodies all of the characteristics that we strive to attain as occupational therapists, and encourages everyone to be the best version of themselves,” said Cynthia Osborne (MSc (OT) ’19). The Class of 2019 raised \$700 to start the fund, which is now open to public donation. In Fall 2019, the first Michelle Mahoney Prize was awarded to a second-year OT student.

Originally from Springhill, N.S., Mahoney is the youngest of five children. She graduated from St. Francis Xavier University in 1995 with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, and has worked at Dalhousie in various roles for over 20 years, including 10 spent in the School of OT. She sits on the Board of Directors for Easter Seals Nova Scotia and has recently been appointed to the national board.

Mahoney was born with Arthrogryposis, a rare physical condition—she was only the third known case in Nova Scotia. She has limited mobility in her arms, hands and knees, and doctors told her parents she would probably never walk, feed or dress herself. Today, Mahoney is an avid surfer and skier and takes part in the Drop Zone fundraiser for Easter Seals where she rappels down the tallest buildings in Halifax. She says with the help of occupational therapists throughout her life, she’s been able to learn to swim, ride a horse, drive a car and more. “Occupational therapists have helped me with everything from putting on my own socks to attending university.”

She is also a strong self-advocate with a determination to succeed. “I



Michelle Mahoney’s dedication and spirit inspired a student award.

learned from a young age to advocate for myself, and I never back down from a challenge. In fact, I love an obstacle. Just tell me I can’t do something and watch me do it.” It’s this spirit of determination, advocacy and positivity that the students wanted to recognize with the award in her honour.

“She has given us the insight and wisdom to make us the best therapists possible,” says Osborne.

Although Mahoney has started a new chapter with the Schulich School of Law, she has made an indelible impact on the School of Occupational Therapy, and this award will ensure that impact continues into the future. —Dawn Morrison

“Dal (TUNS especially) was such a great experience because the sense of community was really strong.”

## SPOTLIGHT

# Engineering restaurant success

Sarita Ekya (BEng'99) uses her project management skills to run a highly successful mac 'n' cheese restaurant in Manhattan

When Sarita Ekya (BEng'99) opened S'MAC, short for Sarita's Macaroni and Cheese, in New York's East Village, her mother's only question was 'You do use your education don't you?' "I'm from an Indian family, born and raised to know that academics are the most important thing," Ekya explains. "My dad was a civil engineering professor at TUNS (Technical University of Nova Scotia, which merged with Dalhousie University in 1997), so I followed that path."

Ekya started her career in an engineering firm in Halifax, but her heart was set on living in a big city far from her hometown of Dartmouth. Her next move was a biomedical company in Manchester, New Hampshire. "It was the size of Dartmouth, so not quite the big city move I wanted, but they were doing amazing and cutting edge work," says Ekya. Two years later, she met her husband (Caesar Ekya, also an engineer) on a plane from Boston to Toronto, and for their two-month anniversary the couple went to New York. Ekya says she fell in love with the city. "Not long after that, we started saying we had to move there."

By the end of July 2005, the couple had ditched their jobs and moved to a sublet in the East Village, with the idea that they could live off their savings while waiting to find engineering jobs that they loved. They ate their way through the city, falling in love with niche restaurants where they just served one thing really well, like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, or grilled cheese. "I said to Caesar, wouldn't it be great if there was a place that just did mac and cheese?" And so a couple of engineers with no restaurant experience (save Caesar waiting tables when doing his master's degree) set about starting a restaurant.

Ekya befriended a chef-owner of a local restaurant and worked front of house to learn the ins and out of restaurant life. The couple developed recipes with a teaching chef they met, and people in their new community told them about a space they could rent. "I know it's not what people think of New York but we immediately found a community that supported us," Ekya says. S'MAC was an immediate success and has now



Sarita Ekya is behind the popular New York City restaurant S'MAC.



been operating for 13 years.

To answer her mom's question, Ekya says that she does still use her education. "I was always more of a project manager. We got popular so fast that we immediately had to fix the process—people were waiting too long. This crazy engineering part of us got triggered," she says, as they tweaked the kitchen equipment they were using and rethought the takeout packaging, going to suppliers with spreadsheets in hand. "That first three to four years we were in business, it was all engineering." —Lola Augustine Brown

“What I’ve come to know in the context of domestic violence is that repair is possible.”

**SPOTLIGHT**

## Repairing relationships

Tod Augusta-Scott (MSW’00) is changing the conversation around intimate partner violence

As a social work student, Tod Augusta-Scott (MSW ’00) volunteered at an agency offering counselling for men with a history of intimate partner violence. He was motivated by “a social justice ethic around wanting to attend to men’s violence against women,” he says. “I just did it as a volunteer... I didn’t even know there would be jobs available.”

It turns out there were.

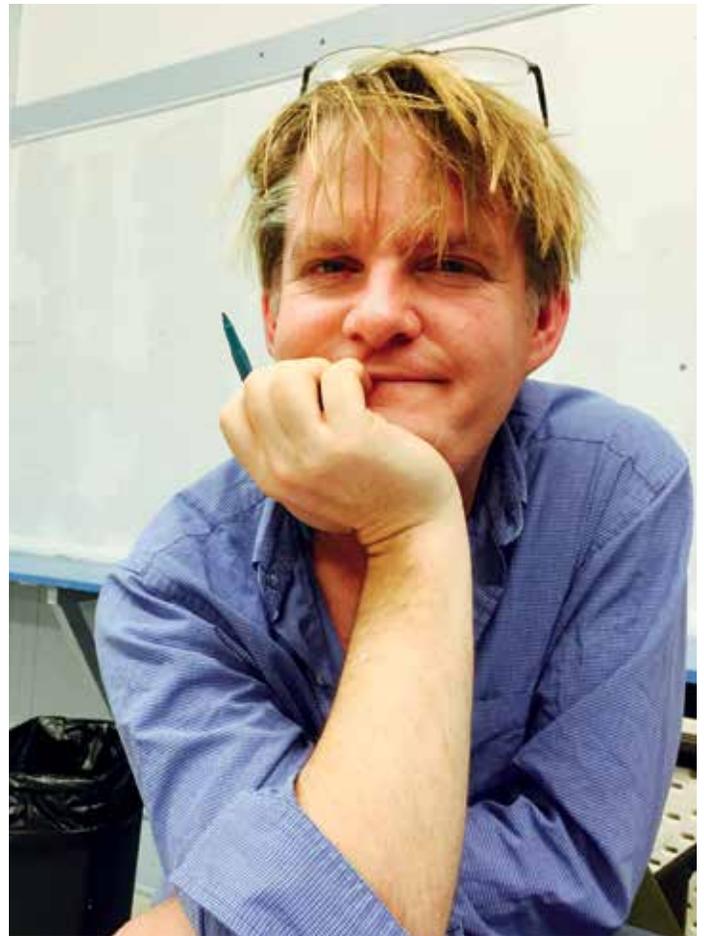
Today, he is executive director of Bridges—a Truro-based non-profit that does counselling, research and training in the area of domestic violence—where he has worked for 25 years. He is also a therapist in the Canadian Armed Forces, and co-founder of the biennial Canadian Domestic Violence Conference. (The next one is in Halifax in March 2020.)

Augusta-Scott takes a restorative approach rooted in narrative therapy. Men may have grown up seeing themselves as bad and being violent fits in with that self-image. “As a narrative therapist, I’m looking to see what other stories can be told about this person,” he says. “If a guy leaves my office with more of a sense of the kind of man, father or partner he wants to be... [that’s more effective] than coming in thinking he’s a batterer, getting stamped as a batterer and leaving thinking he’s bad.”

Over the last 25 years, Augusta-Scott has seen the power of repairing relationships damaged by violence. That requires working with (usually) men to understand what they’ve done and how they can change, and with their partners or exes to find out what they need. Augusta-Scott says, “If the process is helpful, the men feel bad about having perpetrated abuse but feel good about stopping it and repairing the harm.”

Asked how forgiveness fits into all this, he says, “I’m nervous about the word ‘forgiveness’... Often it gets pretty thinly defined as an obligation on behalf of the victim to forgive the person who harmed them.”

The narrative approach goes deeper than that. “I like staying more clearly focused on taking responsibility to stop abuse and repair the harm—and that is driven by the person who’s been harmed. What, practically, does she want him to do? Maybe renouncing violence in



Augusta-Scott started working in his field as a volunteer while still a social work student at Dal.

front of the kids, for example, and telling them that it’s wrong.”

When he started out, Augusta-Scott says some advocates for survivors of domestic violence were skeptical. But he says that’s changing.

Others are listening too. Augusta-Scott spoke at an international military forum on sexual misconduct in December 2018, and he is a member of the federal Minister of the Status of Women’s Advisory Council on the Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence.

Ultimately, individual change requires social change. “There are a lot of unhelpful ideas around masculinity,” he says. “There is a kind of trauma-influenced masculinity we all recognize: the guy who’s closed down, can’t share his feelings, tough, strong, violent.”—Philip Moscovitch

“My life has been changed completely because of witnessing this.”

## SPOTLIGHT

# Extended care

Rohingya refugees open Dr. Karen Arnold's eyes to their struggle and incredible resilience

**A**fter a week in the Rohingya Refugee Camp in Bangladesh, where a million people live after having fled ethnic cleansing in Myanmar, Karen Arnold (MD'85) had developed an uncanny skill. She could tell without asking how long her patients had been in the camp, by how malnourished they were.

“They aren’t allowed to work or receive education,” she recalls. “They couldn’t receive anything from volunteers but medical care. They were provided 25 kilograms of rice per month per family, and occasionally lentils.”

Dr. Arnold, despite her growing awareness of the enormity of the refugees’ challenges, had to focus on the immediate task of providing treatment as part of a team that included a Bangladeshi physician, a Canadian pediatrician, an American logistician and paramedic, and three family physicians from Canada, the US and Spain, as well as a photographer. Together they treated 300 people per day, some who walked two hours for assistance.

Dr. Arnold was a long way from her practice as a family doctor in Vancouver. There, she’s worked for more than a dozen years in the Downtown Community Health Centre, “a multidisciplinary clinic treating people suffering from trauma, addictions, HIV and mental health challenges” in the Downtown East Side. It’s fulfilling work serving vulnerable populations, including homeless people, and using a progressive, harm-reduction model. But she’d long wanted to volunteer internationally, and in November 2018 she found MedGlobal (medglobal.org), an organization committed to “a world without health-care disparity” that was urgently seeking a family physician. MedGlobal accepted her for a week-long placement at the Rohingya camp, which allowed her to fit the volunteer time with her continuing work and family commitments in Vancouver.

She read all she could about the Rohingya, but the news articles did not prepare her for the struggles the refugees face. “My life has been changed completely because of witnessing this,” she says. “Just getting



**ABOVE** Dr. Karen Arnold (L) with a translator (centre) and patient (R)  
**BELOW** a patient in a bamboo “ambulance”



a glimpse.” As she treated rashes, coughs, and fevers, Dr. Arnold—who has worked in mental health as well—was weighted by the knowledge that the trauma her patients experienced would have life-long impacts. She met many young women who were already widows. “I heard horrific stories every single day,” she says. “People stayed dignified, incredibly resilient. They were doing their best.”

Dr. Arnold returned to Bangladesh with MedGlobal in June as part of a team teaching a course to 200 local physicians and midwives, including 36 who will become trainers themselves, on neonatal resuscitation in resource-poor environments. More than 60 babies are born in the camp daily—16,000 between May 2018 and March 2019—in structures made with bamboo poles and tarps. Neonatal mortality rates are extremely high. “It is one concrete thing that can be helpful,” she says.—  
*Chris Benjamin*

Anniversaries, networks, pretzels and Plato

**ALUMNI EVENTS**

# Enduring ties, new connections

Recent months brought alumni together for a variety of celebrations, collaborations and continued learning opportunities



LEFT TOP The inaugural Dal Classics Alumni Text Seminar welcomed 30 alumni from across Canada to Halifax for stimulating discussions on Natal Day weekend. LEFT BOTTOM The establishment of a Dal alumni network in Nunavut was announced while celebrating 20 years of the Arctic Nursing Program, a collaboration between Nunavut Arctic College and Dalhousie. ABOVE Dal alumni filled Garrison Brewing Co. in Halifax for an Oktoberfest party to welcome the newest grads and connect over pretzels and beer.

NICK PEARCE; SUBMITTED



LEFT TOP Over 50 alumni from the Agricultural Campus gathered at the Lightfoot & Wolfville vineyard as part of the annual fall Dean's Receptions in the Maritimes. LEFT BOTTOM Dental Hygiene alumni returned to campus for their 50th reunion and toured the new dental clinic with the school's director, Dr. Leigha Rock. ABOVE The Physiotherapy Class of 1989 celebrated 30 years since graduation back at Dal.

CELEBRATING DALHOUSIE ALUMNI

# AURUM

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*Nominations close January 7, 2020*

“You have to solve some complex problems.”

## SPOTLIGHT

# Career, part two

Mark Savory (BEng'82) transitioned from work to retirement to consulting, with some help from BoomersPlus

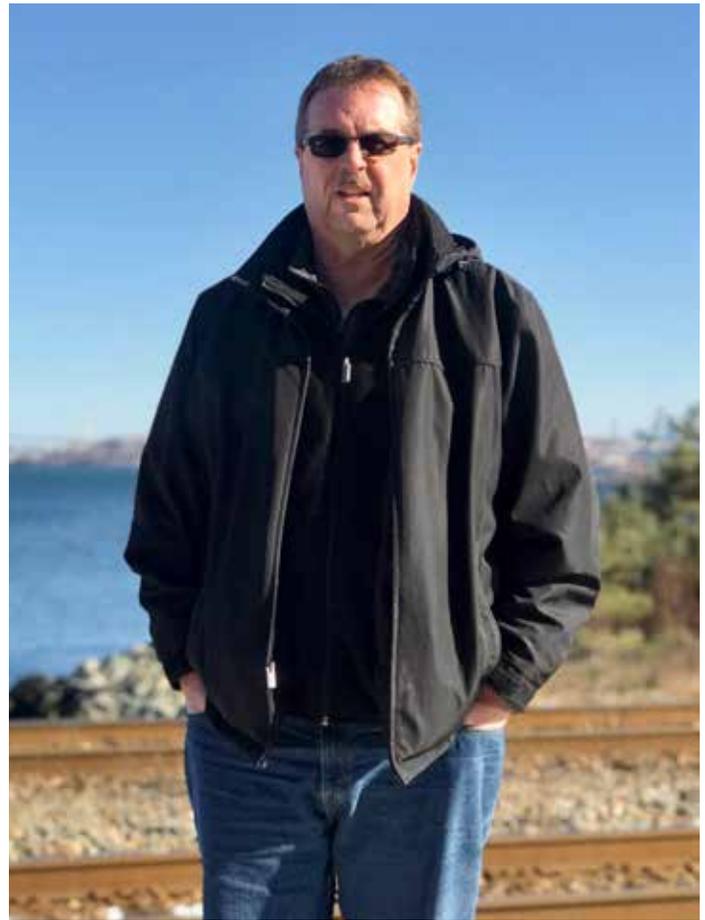
**M**ark Savory ((BEng'82) (TUNS)) knew pretty early on that he was going to be an engineer and after graduation went on to have a 33-year career with Nova Scotia Power and Emera. But he never would have guessed that he'd still be at it in his so-called retirement: despite having become a self-described golf addict in the last few years, he's also taken on a series of consulting roles since leaving Emera in 2013.

“All the skills I had acquired over 33 years, there was still a demand out there,” he said. “So that's where I've found myself now.” Savory, now 59, wasn't sure initially what he'd do when he left his full-time corporate gig, but his wife gave him a nudge. “I finished up my career with Emera and managed to get through two days before my wife said, ‘You can't stay home anymore. You haven't been around for 33 years and now you're in my space.’”

Savory, who grew up in Halifax, said it didn't take long to find a consulting job with Saint John Energy and he hasn't looked back since. He said there's high demand for those with experience in construction start-up or property and contract management, all things he did for Nova Scotia Power or Emera.

In 2014, he teamed up with Halifax-based BoomersPlus, which matches experienced retired professionals with companies needing their expertise. Savory was asked to help the Discovery Centre move to its new home on Lower Water Street in a building owned by Emera. Turns out it was a match made in heaven as he was already very familiar with the site and its owner. “I was responsible for getting engineering done, getting contracts in place, physically getting the construction part built. It was a good match and a fun project.”

Rick Emberley, who founded BoomersPlus, said Savory was instrumental in the project's success. “After wonderful careers, folks like Mark can continue to make huge impacts on our economy and community.” Savory is now busy working on the new state-of-the-art municipal waste advanced recycling system in Chester that will convert garbage



“All the skills I had acquired over 33 years, there was still a demand out there,” says Mark Savory.

into valuable products including synthetic diesel.

Savory credits his successful career to his education at the then Technical University of Nova Scotia. Thanks to the quality of his education and the practical nature of the courses, he says he was “instantly employable” once he graduated.

While Savory said he plans to keep busy for the foreseeable future, he is still enjoying the benefits of retirement, choosing only jobs that appeal to him and, of course, golfing. “I really only do things that I'm interested in.” — Pat Lee

## CLASS NOTES

### 1960s

'60

**BURRIS DEVANNEY**, BEd, has just published his second book on his decades of work in Africa. *The Gambia Saga*—a sequel to *African Chronicles*—is the memoir of his family's 38-year engagement with the smallest country in continental Africa. It has been called a modern odyssey of adventure and achievement, risk and resilience, luck and learning—"a mesmerizing story" about a fearless little country and a unique Canadian NGO.

'65

**DR. F. COLIN DUERDEN**, BSc, PhD'73, recently received the Brian Burland Award from the Bermuda Government for his novel,

*Fried White Grunts*. This award is given for the best work of fiction by a Bermudian author published in the previous five years.

### 1970s

'76

In August, **NILS CLAUSSON**, PhD, released his book *Arthur Conan Doyle's Art of Fiction: A Revaluation* with Cambridge Scholars Publishing. The book has been nominated for a H.R.F Keating Award.

'77

**JOHN MARRA**, PhD, published his book *Hot Carbon: Carbon-14 and a Revolution in Science* with Columbia University Press. There are chapters on radiocarbon dating, photosynthesis, oceanic primary production, ocean circulation and climate science, as well as the stories surrounding the discovery of carbon-14.

### 1980s

'80

**M. LEE COHEN**, LLB, O.C. has been recognized as the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society 2019 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. The honour is given to a member who has provided "significant contributions to the community" and the profession. Mr. Cohen's practice is solely dedicated to matters relating to immigration, refugee and human rights law. His selfless career has earned him several other honours, including an honorary Doctor of Divinity from the Atlantic School of Theology (2014), the Weldon Award for Unselfish Public Service (2005) from the Schulich School of Law and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Award (2002).

'89

**KAREN FERGUSON**, BScPT, along with fellow graduates of the Physiotherapy Class of 1989 from all over North America, celebrated their 30th Class Reunion in Halifax in August.

### OSCAR-WINNING FILMS OF 1977

BEST PICTURE: *ROCKY*

BEST ACTOR: *PETER FINCH, NETWORK*

BEST ACTRESS: *FAYE DUNAWAY, NETWORK*

BEST DIRECTOR: *JOHN AVILDSEN, ROCKY*

BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY: *WILLIAM GOLDMAN BASED ON THE BOOK BY CARL BERNSTEIN AND BOB WOODWARD, ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN*

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY: *PADDY CHAYEFSEY, NETWORK*

BEST ORIGINAL SCORE: *JERRY GOLDSMITH, THE OMEN*

### 1990s

'99

**MELANIE KENNEDY**, BA, was awarded a Certificate of Achievement in the 2019 Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence. Melanie teaches drama for grade 10–12. She connects with her students on a personal level, her therapy dog Karma can be found in each class with her and she is a strong supporter of LGBTQ students.

### 2000s

'04

**RON HAFLLIDSON**, BA, has published a book in which he argues that solitude is a moral necessity that we ought to work to preserve in the contemporary world. Drawing on the theology of Saint Augustine, whom he first studied as a student at Dalhousie and King's, Ron addresses an essential question: What difference does it make to the practice

of solitude if one believes that even in the absence of any human company, God is always intimately present? The book, entitled *On Solitude, Conscience, Love and Our Inner and Outer Lives*, is published by Bloomsbury.

'07

**AWATIF ABDULMAJEED**, PhD, returned to Halifax as a visiting scientist to continue work with their supervisor. It meant a lot to be back at Dalhousie even for a short time. Awatif is currently Assistant Professor and the head of the Biology Department at University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia.

### 2010s

'11

**ASHWIN MADHAVAN**, LL.M., launched an online learning platform Enhelion along with a dear friend in 2013. Enhelion provides affordable continuing legal education to students in India and Africa. You can find their webpage at [www.enhelion.com](http://www.enhelion.com).



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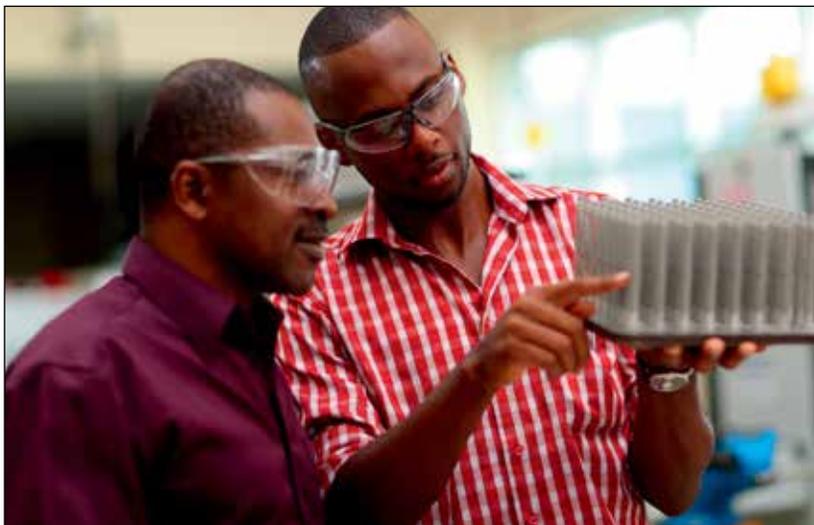
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## IN MEMORIAM

**MARIE AUDREY MACINNES,**  
BA'43, Halifax, N.S.,  
September 2, 2019

**DONALD MITCHELL,** DDip'48,  
Truro, N.S., June 21, 2019

**ROBERT MANNING  
BENJAMIN,** BEng'50,  
Dartmouth, N.S., June 17,  
2019

**GORDON MOHAMMED  
JASEY,** BSc'51, MD'56,  
Unknown, July 12, 2019

**GERALD EDWARD POTTIE,**  
BEng'51, Unknown, July 11,  
2019

**HARRY LESLIE TILLER,**  
DipEng'51, BSc'51, BEng'54,  
Winston Salem, N.C., June  
19, 2019

**MARY ELIZABETH  
FREEMAN,** BA'52, DEd'53,  
Brooklyn, N.S., June 10, 2019

**PAUL RAYMOND MUSIAL,**  
DDip'53, Unknown, July 07,  
2019

**GERALD C RAYMOND,**  
BEng'53, Windsor, N.S.,  
August 12, 2019

**GORDON HODGES  
MCCONNELL,** LLB'54,  
Kitchener, Ont., July 24, 2019

**ROSS BEVERLEY EDDY,**  
LLB'55, Cobourg, Ont., June  
17, 2019

**ADELIA VICTORIA  
AMYOONY,** BA'56, Halifax,  
N.S., July 23, 2019

**CAROL JOYCE GROVER,**  
BEd'57, Wolfville, N.S., June  
12, 2019

**MICHAEL JOHN MCGRATH,**  
BEng'57, Halifax, N.S.,  
September 13, 2019

**CHRISTOPHER DAVID  
ANDREW NOLAN,** BScPH'57,  
Mahone Bay, N.S., July 19,  
2019

**JANET MARY ROWE,** BSc'57,  
Dartmouth, N.S., September  
4, 2019

**ELIZABETH CHURCHILL  
SNELL,** BA'58, Halifax, N.S.,  
September 5, 2019

**GORDON ANTHONY,**  
DDS'59, Unknown, June 08,  
2019

**SANDRA KENNEDY CAINES,**  
BA'60, Halifax, N.S., June 20,  
2019

**GLASIER MITCHELL  
SOMERVILLE,** MD'60, North  
York, Ont., July 28, 2019

**DONALD ALEXANDER  
MACDONALD,** BEd'62,  
BComm'61, Bedford, N.S.,  
September 6, 2019

**JAMES DANIEL GRANT,**  
BEd'63, Halifax, N.S., June  
22, 2019

**JAMES RAYMOND SMITH,**  
BA'63, Mabou, N.S., June 20,  
2019

**MARILYN ISABEL CORMIER,**  
DTSN'64, Aurora, Ont., May  
24, 2019

**CHARLES ANTHONY  
MURCHLAND,** MD'64,  
Halifax, N.S., June 28, 2019

**DAVID BOYD PEDDLE,**  
MD'64, St. John's, N.L., June  
08, 2019

**CONRAD KEVIN SARTY,**  
DipEng'64, BEng'66, Halifax,  
N.S., September 15, 2019

**EARL F BLADES,** FRC'66,  
Cooks Brook, N.S., August  
24, 2019

**NORMAN JOHN HASLETT,**  
MEng'66, MBA'69 Unknown,  
August 29, 2019

**THOMAS CORNELIUS DUNPHY**, BA'66, BEd'67, Vancouver, B.C., August 6, 2019

**WILLIAM MALCOLM FULTON SNOW**, BSc'66, MD'71, Sydney, N.S., May 24, 2019

**EARLE SCOTT MACDONALD**, DDS'67, Antigonish, N.S., June 01, 2019

**ASHOK KUMAR BHARDWAJ**, DDS'69, Victoria, B.C., September 3, 2019

**JEAN MARIE DEWOLFE**, DPH'69, Upper Nine Mile River, N.S., September 16, 2019

**ROBERT MARK SIDLER**, MBA'70, Brookside., N.S., May 24, 2019

**RICHARD T H YOUNG**, BArch'70, Unknown, August 02, 2019

**BARRIE HAROLD BLACK**, BA'71, LLB'71, Halifax, N.S., September 16, 2019

**COLIN DYACK**, PGM'71, Scotsburn, N.S., September 8, 2019

**EDITH MACNEE PATTERSON**, MLS'71, Truro, N.S., August 03, 2019

**MICHAEL JESSE HARTLEY-ROBINSON**, BA'72, Singapore, June 08, 2019

**JOHN BENTLEY HALDANE FRIZZELL**, MD'73, Calgary, Alta., March 17, 2019

**GERARD MAURICE WILLIAM MORROW**, BSc'73, Sydney, N.S., July 2, 2019

**RICHARD KENNETH ROSS**, BComm'73, Unknown, July 11, 2019

**CASTOR HENRY FRANKLIN WILLIAMS**, BA'73, LLB'76, Dartmouth, N.S., May 22, 2019

**ANITA ALICE FOLEY**, MD'75, Guysborough, N.S., May 25, 2019

**MICHAEL THOMAS CODY**, BComm'76, Fredericton, N.B., September 21, 2019

**STEPHEN LE-ROY FAULKNER**, BComm'76, Halifax, N.S., September 9, 2019

**EVELYNE SONYA MELTZER**, BA'76, LLB'79, Halifax, N.S., July 19, 2019

**WILHELMINA PAULA POLSTRA**, DPH'76, Prine Grove, N.S., July 18, 2019

**GILLIAN HOPE MORROW**, BPE'77, Halifax, N.S., June 14, 2019

**HOWARD CHESTER GEORGE PITTS**, BA'77, Grand Falls-Windsor, N.L., July 25, 2019

**JANICE LAURA DOULL**, BSc'78, PhD'84, Mill Village, N.S., May 30, 2019

**FREDERIC LAWRENCE DESJARDINS**, MEd'79, Dartmouth, N.S., July 08, 2019

**HERBERT GEORGE PEPPARD**, BEd'80, Truro, N.S., June 12, 2019

**CHARLES JOSEPH POWER**, MBA'81, Unknown, September 12, 2019

**WILLIAM GRANVILLE IRVING**, BComm'82, Dartmouth, N.S., August 8, 2019

**SANJIV KUMAR MAINDIRATTA**, BScPH'83, Waterloo, Ont., September 20, 2019

**DONNA LYNN REID**, BN'85, DHSA'97, Dartmouth, N.S., September 8, 2019

**DAWN MARIA RYAN**, BN'87, Timberlea, N.S., July 12, 2019

**CHRISTINE CLAIRE WILLIAMS**, MLIS'89, Halifax, N.S., August 22, 2019

**RONALD DIETER RICHTER**, BA'91, LLB'92, Kingston, N.S., June 23, 2019

**PAUL DARRELL BLIZZARD**, BComm'92, Unknown, June 12, 2019

**ROBERT PAUL CRAWLEY**, BEd'92, Cape Breton, N.S., August 15, 2019

**LOUIS MICHAEL GAUDET**, MEd'92, Enfield, N.S., August 17, 2019

**IAN ANDREW CLARK**, BEd'93, BPE'93, Halifax, N.S., August 31, 2019

**WELDON STEVEN MYERS**, MPA'03, Musquodoboit Harbour, N.S., May 24, 2019

**ADAM CHRISTOPHER FARRELL**, DipEng'16, Dartmouth, N.S., June 28, 2019



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## RACING TO THE TOP

Nathalie Richard (BComm'97) set rally car racing records. But don't tell her she's the best woman in the sport: no man has done what she's done either.

Camaraderie, adrenaline and action: those are the three things that attracted Nathalie Richard (BComm'97) to rally car racing. That was in 1999, when she attended a race her brother was driving in. The sport, where a driver and co-driver race specially built road-legal cars on public and private roads in a point-to-point race, has been her passion ever since. First, she signed on to manage her brother's team and soon she was subbing in as co-driver, the one who, she says, "controls the driver."

A child of immigrants, Richard credits sports—she played soccer and basketball for King's—for instilling in her the confidence and assertiveness that drove her to become a 10-time North American Rally Champion and win two Triple Crowns (championships in Canada, the U.S. and North America in the same year), the only person to have done so. Co-driving requires incredible planning skills, attention to detail, foresight, navigation and instantaneous decision-making as cars race hundreds of kilometres of gravel forested roads, jumps and ditches, often in snow or rain.

"If I instruct him [the driver] late, we crash. If I'm early, he can't retain it. Driver and co-driver have to work together crazy well," says Richard.

Without checking her time, Richard ("kind of a perfectionist") always knew at the end of a racing stage if they were bang on or had a tiny error. She says she was rarely afraid; there was no time for that.

When Richard moved to Quebec in 2004, she worked part-time in financial planning and still raced. When she moved back to Halifax in 2010, racing became top priority, but she also did financial planning, substituted as a French-immersion teacher and worked as a translator.

She retired (mostly) from racing in 2015. "My brother had had a brain injury. I finished out my year. My parents wanted me to stop. My dad wanted to sell his business. I had achieved everything I could in North America. I'd finished a super-busy season. And my neck was bad."

Since then, she's co-driven a few races for the love of it. She has been described as the best woman in the sport, but she doesn't see it that way: No man has done what she has either.

After a career that took her worldwide, she is a Certified Financial Planner contentedly in the process of buying Remy Richard Securities Inc., a member of Peak Investment Services, from her father, and advising clients on prudent investments. The adrenaline charge of her new role as chief operating officer isn't quite the same as racing, but she uses the same skills. "Organization is the key. If you can't manage your time effectively everything else is affected. I'm very Type A, hyper organized. I'm still managing a team toward a goal. And I love being my own boss." —Chris Benjamin



**"If I instruct the driver late, we crash. If I'm early, he can't retain it. Driver and co-driver have to work together crazy well."**



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