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Message from Dean Usha George

As my years as the dean of the Faculty of Community Services are coming to a close, I thank all our faculty members, administrative staff, students, alumni and community partners for their unwavering commitment to the mission of the Faculty of Community Services at Ryerson University. Through our determination and hard work we have raised the profile of our faculty from good to great. We have stayed on the leading edge of teaching and learning, achieved greater heights in our scholarly, research and creative activities and have made significant and positive impact on policy and practice. Certainly, we continue to promote the values of social justice, diversity and inclusion as we address the health and social needs of Canadians. We have been innovators within and outside the university.

In moving forward and looking ahead, the faculty’s new academic plan, based on the university’s academic plan “Our Time to Lead,” is visionary, bold and action oriented. Our nine schools have embraced the values of excellence and social justice as their guiding principles.

As a faculty preparing its graduates for employment in the social and human services, the schools endeavour to stay relevant and responsive to community needs and the changing context of professional practice by offering challenging curricula to our students. Our faculty continues to integrate research and practice experience into their teaching, leading to better learning outcomes for our students. Through structured opportunities for active learning, our schools provide transformative education to prepare our students to be changemakers of tomorrow. The Social Innovation Initiative and the social innovation minor at FCS will orient and prepare our students to understand and initiate systemic changes through the novel application of ideas to address deeply embedded societal challenges.

We believe in the transformative power of higher education. The stories in this magazine capture our efforts to promote critical thinking and innovative action to effect positive outcomes for individuals and communities around us.

Sincerely,
Usha George
In November 2015, Ryerson University announced an $8-million gift from the Jack Cockwell family and the Brookfield Partners Foundation.

With the donation, the Cockwell family’s generosity to Ryerson now exceeds $28 million, making the family one of Ryerson’s most generous private sector benefactors.

In recognition of the Cockwell family and Brookfield Partners Foundation’s generosity, the Faculty of Community Services (FCS) will name its new development on Church Street the Daphne Cockwell Health Sciences Complex in honour of Jack Cockwell’s mother, who dedicated her life to helping others.

Designed by the internationally acclaimed architectural firm Perkins+Will, the building is comprised of an eight-storey podium with a tower at its north end. It’s set to open in fall 2018. The podium will house four FCS programs: the School of Nutrition, the School of Occupational and Public Health, the Midwifery Education Program and the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing. The multi-storey tower will be home to more than 250 new residence beds for Ryerson students; 10 state-of-the-art clinical experience suites, teaching labs and modular labs for research initiatives; and a fabrication zone with 3-D printers, robotic arms, a laser cutter and CNC lathes for prototyping.

Group chairman of Brookfield Asset Management, Jack Cockwell has a remarkable history of strengthening support for Ryerson University. He has played a leadership role at Ryerson for years. First appointed to Ryerson’s Board of Governors in 1995, he has served as vice-chair of the board and chair of the Finance Committee, and he is currently chair of the Audit Committee. He also chaired the Building Fundraising Committee for The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education and has led Ryerson’s Real Estate Advisory Committee. Previous gifts from Cockwell and Brookfield Partners Foundation include support for The Chang School, the Campus Master Plan and the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing.
New John C. Eaton Chair in Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship announced

Melanie Panitch was named the John C. Eaton Chair in Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship in November 2015.

The position, housed in the School of Child and Youth Care, was created to provide social innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities for students to reshape the world by producing positive changes in the lives of at-risk youth, their families and their communities. It was introduced in 2013 and was made possible in part through a $1-million gift from Canadian businessman and philanthropist John Eaton and his wife, Sally Horsfall Eaton.

Panitch has been a social innovator and changemaker throughout her career. She has been a long-time activist and advocate in the disability rights movement, and was the founding director at the School of Disability Studies from 1999 to 2011.

“Social innovation in our faculty starts with a strong commitment to social justice. We are uniquely positioned to encourage students to see themselves as agents of change in relation to deeply embedded social challenges and to improve life for those living in marginalized, disadvantaged or peripheral circumstances,” says Panitch, now a professor in the School of Disability Studies.

As chair, she is excited about collaboratively developing and offering a diverse array of transformative learning opportunities that will engage students, faculty and social innovation practitioners across disciplines among the nine schools in the Faculty of Community Services (FCS) and across the university.

Panitch spent the last three years as academic co-lead, social innovation and strategic outreach at FCS, where she unlocked the powerful synergy between social innovation and entrepreneurship in the faculty’s academic and extracurricular activities. In collaboration with colleagues from FCS and the Ted Rogers School of Management, she has launched Community Transformational Cafés on change-making and social justice and co-taught a Super Course on social innovation. She also helped create the new minor in social innovation.

Panitch aims to build on this foundation and, through social innovation education, prepare students to drive and lead change that addresses entrenched social challenges. “I want to use the position to create unique opportunities for student engagement and success through enriched learning experiences. Traditional academic training, based on disciplinary divisions, prepares students to enter the world as it is rather than as it could be. Engagement in the emergent field of social innovation equips students to see themselves as changemakers with the capacity to become leaders and take action to change the world for the better,” she says.
Lynn Factor is chair of the board at Children’s Aid Foundation and child witness advocate with Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre.

Dean’s Advisory Council Member
Lynn Factor receives Ryerson Alumni Award

When asked what influenced her most during her time at Ryerson, alumni award recipient Lynn Factor, Social Work ’80, is quick to remember. “What I recall really enjoying about my time there is the combination of both theory and practice. By having a very hands-on approach, it was significantly beneficial for me to apply my skills from school to the working world.”

A 35-year veteran of social justice and children’s welfare issues, Factor is chair of the board at Children’s Aid Foundation. She also serves as the child witness advocate for Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre, where she prepares child victims and witnesses to testify in court. But it was at Ryerson where she discovered her future career, after serving three placements at institutions for three different age groups.

“For me, having that practical experience really helped me hone in on my passion. I didn’t have child welfare experience when I got my first job, but I did have experience with children and youth. It was all helpful in terms of transferring what I was learning.”

Since 2009, Factor has also been an active member of the Dean’s Advisory Council in the Faculty of Community Services. “Because I had such a great experience at Ryerson, I wanted to try to contribute, if I could, to a university that gave me so much. It gave me the basis for my social work career.”

Factor received an Alumni Award of Distinction in February 2016. “It’s certainly an honour and a privilege,” she says. “I have only good memories of my experience at Ryerson. I found it extremely helpful in my profession as a social worker, and I am honoured. It means a lot to me.”

Director appointments announced at the Faculty of Community Services

The Faculty of Community Services announced the following director appointments, beginning July 2016:

1
Kathryn Church
School of Disability Studies
Re-appointment

2
Cecilia Rocha
School of Nutrition
Re-appointment

3
Henry Parada
School of Social Work

4
Chris De Sousa
School of Urban and Regional Planning
Re-appointment

Director appointment announcements for the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, the School of Early Childhood Studies and the School of Occupational and Public Health were not available at the time of publication.
Child and Youth Care to launch master’s program in fall 2016

The Faculty of Community Services will launch a Master of Arts in Child and Youth Care this fall. The program will educate and promote leadership in child and youth care, with an emphasis on children’s rights and the daily experiences of youth within institutional and community-based services. This one-year program will focus on theoretical and practical approaches related to young people facing adversity and will cover issues and themes such as trauma-informed care, resilience, life-space intervention, critical and anti-oppressive perspectives, and management and policy development in child-and youth-serving settings.

FCS in Action: collaborating with communities

In March 2016, the Faculty of Community Services hosted the inaugural FCS in Action Conference. The theme of this year’s event was the refugee crisis. This annual conference highlighted the strength of our scholarship and expertise at Ryerson University and our long history of engagement with communities in addressing complex societal challenges. It is our intent to foster innovative thinking and action to enhance community involvement and spur meaningful social change through inclusive participation and ongoing discussion.
Research

Building healthy lives and communities through community-engaged scholarship

Research at the Faculty of Community Services transforms lives and communities by addressing social and health inequities through innovative, evidence-based research and actions that have a real-world impact. Our community-engaged scholarship has enabled us to drive changes in policies, programs and systems to optimize the health and social well-being of individuals throughout their lifespans and of communities at every level. **BY MARK WITTEN**
Christopher De Sousa
Urban and Regional Planning

Brownfields redevelopment: transforming old industrial sites into vibrant urban communities

Christopher De Sousa’s research focuses on making cities better places to work, live and play through sustainable brownfields redevelopment. For a decade at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, he was a research collaborator involved in transforming a large derelict industrial district in central Milwaukee into an award-winning example of urban revitalization and redevelopment.

“The Menomonee Valley project created sustainable, living-wage jobs for people in the community and was one of the most successful brownfields reindustrialization projects in the U.S.,” says De Sousa, director of and professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning.

Since returning to Toronto and joining Ryerson in 2011, De Sousa has been studying brownfields redevelopment trends in Ontario with the goal of improving Canadian urban environments. “The redevelopment of brownfields offers communities a triple benefit in terms of remediating pollution, removing neighbourhood blight, and providing new development and employment. Rebuilding, cleaning up and reusing urban spaces produces a better result than building in undeveloped areas,” he says.

In a 2015 study funded by Ryerson’s Centre for Urban Research and Land Development, De Sousa interviewed private sector stakeholders, identified key barriers and proposed facilitation strategies to foster further brownfields redevelopment in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

His research tracked more than four thousand cleanup and redevelopment projects in Ontario between 2004 and 2014. In the city of Toronto alone, 995 brownfields projects between 2004 and 2011 repurposed over 2,867 acres of land. “The vibrancy of Toronto has largely been built on the city’s industrial legacy. These projects are valued at $37.1 billion in property assessment and resulted in 83,000 new residential units. If the objective is to put growth back in the community, that’s a lot of people and a lot of tax revenue,” he says.

The study results also suggest that the “easy” brownfields projects in strong GTHA markets have been redeveloped, so continued success in primary and secondary markets will require a streamlining of the regulatory process and more collaboration between stakeholders to unlock both private and public returns in the future.

De Sousa is now doing a larger, three-year study, funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada grant, that will examine the scale and character of brownfields remediation and redevelopment projects in Toronto, Waterloo and Kingston, and the role of government intervention. “This research will give public and private stakeholders a better sense of the value of what’s been happening and how to overcome the obstacles to making more of it happen,” he says.

Learn more about Ryerson’s Brownfield Research Group: brownfieldsresearchgroup.com
Thomas Tenkate, director of and professor in the School of Occupational and Public Health, is leading the $1.2-million Sun Safety at Work Canada project, with partners from across the country, to better protect more than 1.5 million outdoor workers in Canada against the occupational hazards of both skin cancer and heat stress. Phase 1 of this study – funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer – includes the development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive sun safety program that engages management and workers in 17 workplaces in British Columbia, Ontario and the Atlantic provinces.

Phase 2 will enable workplaces throughout the country to implement effective and sustainable sun safety policies and practices on their own, by adapting resources and tools delivered through an interactive website to their own needs and their current stage of policy and practice. “Our initial findings show that a very high proportion of outdoor workers are not as well protected against solar UVR and heat stress as they should be. They are consistently identifying this as an issue they want employers to address. Ultimately, we want to have sun safety more clearly articulated in government policy as are other workplace hazards, such as asbestos or lead,” says Tenkate.

Tenkate’s nationwide project is innovative in that it tackles both sun and heat protection, and it builds on the successful results of his previous Australian sun safety study. For that project, 14 small- and medium-sized workplaces across four outdoor industries in Queensland, Australia, worked with the project team to develop tailored sun protection action plans. After the 18-month intervention, outdoor workers reported substantial increases in workplace support for and personal use of sun protection. They sought out natural shade more often and wore more personal protective equipment, including broad-brimmed hats, long-sleeved collared shirts and long trousers, and reported fewer cases of sunburn.

“Our study showed that workers are able to make these changes when workplaces are supportive and have processes and procedures that value and encourage sun protection. Having management support and a very engaged workplace champion are critical for success,” Tenkate says.
Championing children’s rights and action research against child exploitation and violence

Tara Collins, a professor in the School of Child and Youth Care, is a champion for children’s rights locally, nationally and globally. Since 1996, she has been presenting well-researched arguments and advocating for policy-makers and governments in Canada and internationally to uphold and fulfil their commitments under international child rights law, particularly the 1989 United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The CRC is regarded as the most successful human rights treaty ever, with 196 states as parties. “It’s important that we understand children’s rights as much more than a legal concept. Children’s rights should guide state policies and programs and influence society and individuals in various ways. For instance, child poverty is an issue around the world, including in Canada, where almost one in seven children live in poverty,” says Collins.

Collins co-authored the case study Not There Yet: Canada’s Implementation of the General Measures of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, a comprehensive research report on best practices and challenges in putting the CRC into action in this country. This study, commissioned by the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC), identified progress on many fronts but found that – compared to other affluent nations – Canada has a large proportion of children in care and in the justice system, high rates of childhood obesity and mental illness, and insufficient legal protection of children from violence and exploitation.

In a recent study funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Collins and University of Ottawa collaborator Mona Paré showed the limitations of current approaches and responses to bullying and cyberbullying. They argue that a holistic approach embedded in children’s rights could make anti-violence efforts in schools more effective. “Research has shown that violence against children goes down if children have a good understanding of their rights,” she says.

Collins has also conducted innovative research on the relationship between children’s rights and business. This work inspired her, in collaboration with other professors at the university, to organize a major conference in May 2014 that focused on human rights and business in the Canadian context. “The conference included the objective of informing and engaging participants about child rights and business. The event was live-streamed and had contributions from as far away as India, and has already influenced federal government policy,” says Collins, who received the 2015 Ryerson Knowledge Mobilization & Engagement Award. “I don’t just talk to other academics, but share the results of my research to move children’s rights awareness as much as possible across sectors.”
Josephine Pui-Hing Wong
Nursing

Reducing HIV and mental illness stigma in immigrant and racialized communities

Through community-based action research, Josephine Pui-Hing Wong is reducing the stigma of HIV and mental illness to advance health equity in marginalized communities.

A professor in the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, Wong found that self-stigma and social stigma were barriers that created an unsafe environment for disclosing and addressing HIV infection in Black, Asian and Latino communities in the GTA.

Wong’s CHAMP (Community Champions HIV/AIDS Advocates Mobilization Project) study, published in 2015, applied and evaluated the effectiveness of two types of stigma-reduction training for people living with HIV and for community leaders not living with HIV. Results showed the two interventions – Acceptance Commitment Training (ACT) and Social Justice Capacity Building (SJCB) – changed people’s attitudes and actions individually and collectively.

People living with HIV had less self-stigma after the interventions. Community leaders had reduced stigma against and felt more empathy toward people living with HIV. “Some people who had never disclosed their HIV status to their families told their families. Community leaders who didn’t know much about HIV started volunteering and speaking out against HIV-related stigma and discrimination. In the nine months after the interventions, 62 participants had completed 1,090 social justice and stigma-reduction activities that transformed their lives and communities,” says Wong.

Wong’s success in using these interventions in CHAMP has led to Strength in Unity, a larger $3-million national study, funded by the Movember Foundation, to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness in Asian communities. Along with Ryerson nursing professors Sepali Guruge and Souraya Sidani, Wong is working with a national team to engage Asian men in Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. The team is applying and evaluating two interventions – ACT and Context-Based Empowerment Education (CEE, led by Guruge) – to lessen the stigma of mental illness.

The aim of the study is to mobilize over two thousand Asian men, aged 17 and older, in the three cities to become mental health promotion ambassadors. This initiative is expected to help more Asian men and their families seek and have timely access to mental health services.

Wong is also leading weSpeak, a $1.5-million, five-year, multi-city research program – funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) – that aims to reduce vulnerability for HIV and promote resilience among heterosexual African, Caribbean and Black men in Ontario through meaningful engagement and capacity building. “The goal of my research in this and other projects is to address health inequity and promote resilience and collective empowerment in real life,” concludes Wong.

For more information about this mental health project, visit strength-in-unity.ca
Harnessing the health sector to stem an epidemic of intimate partner violence against women

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a global public health issue, with one in three women worldwide at risk. In Sri Lanka, the prevalence rates of IPV vary between 25% and 80%, depending on the socio-demographical and geographical context.

Sepali Guruge, research chair in Urban Health and professor in the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, led a recent study, funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, that examined this topic in the Western and Eastern provinces in Sri Lanka, with community leaders and women participants who had experienced IPV. The findings highlighted multiple barriers in caring for women, and the important role health-care professionals can play in helping women. As a follow-up, she conducted a project that examined the role of nurses in caring for Sri Lankan women experiencing IPV. “Our findings revealed an urgent need for the health-care system to respond to nurses’ educational and training needs as well as the importance of interprofessional collaboration in improving care for Sri Lankan women facing IPV,” says Guruge.

These studies led to her current project, funded by the International Development Research Centre, to strengthen existing research networks and build new relationships with community, academic and policymaker partners in Sri Lanka and Canada. “Our aim is to generate new knowledge to inform practice and policy changes to improve IPV-related care and services to women in Sri Lanka,” she says. The research findings have been published in Tamil and Sinhala, making them accessible to nurses, midwives and doctors, as well as other women who may not necessarily be fluent in English.

Building on her clinical background as a mental health nurse and researcher in the areas of gender, violence and immigration, Guruge is now leading a study, funded by the Movember Foundation, to reduce mental illness stigma among immigrant men in Asian communities in Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. Guruge, with Josephine Wong and Souraya Sidini, also Ryerson nursing professors and principal investigators, are assessing the effectiveness of two anti-stigma interventions: Acceptance Commitment Training and Contact-Based Empowerment Education. “The stigma of mental illness is prevalent across all communities and societies, but the prevalence and the impact of stigma are more in marginalized communities. Our study aims to reach more than two thousand immigrant men and is the first to address mental illness stigma among immigrant men in Canada at this scale,” Guruge says.

For more information about intimate partner violence in Sri Lanka, visit addressingipvsrilanka.ca
Taking a bite out of food insecurity

By Sharon Aschaiek

Forward-thinking initiatives on campus and worldwide helping to eradicate hunger

The global movement to promote equal access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food continues to gain momentum, and Ryerson University is among the academic institutions leading the way. The university’s Faculty of Community Services (FCS) is taking a proactive approach to better understanding and addressing food security issues through research initiatives, programming, knowledge dissemination and community action. As a result, significant insights are leading to newer and better ways to grow, process and distribute food, which allows for more informed public dialogue and policy-making about food security. At the same time, the faculty is educating the next generation of changemakers who will help tackle food insecurity in order to improve quality of life for people around the world.

One of the most prominent authorities on food security is Cecilia Rocha, director of and professor at the School of Nutrition, and a past director of Ryerson’s Centre for Studies in Food Security. Rocha has extensively researched and published articles about Belo Horizonte, a city in Brazil and her place of birth, which has virtually eradicated hunger through centralized food programs such as community gardens, school meals, publicly subsidized restaurants, farmers’ markets, food banks and healthy nutrition education. Since 2003, she has been leading an
experiential learning course involving
a one-week study tour to the city to
give students a first-hand under-
standing of its pioneering approach
to urban food security.

“This course reflects my belief in
food as a basic human right, and the
responsibility of governments to
uphold this right,” Rocha says. “It
allows me to put into practice my belief
that we enrich our lives by living and
learning in the world, by exchanging
views, experiences and cultures.”

Rocha’s efforts to advance the
cause of food security have included
helping the City of Toronto formulate
its food strategy, directing a food
security capacity-building initiative
in Brazil and contributing to a
Council of Canadian Academies
panel on food security in Northern
Canada. Currently, she is serving
on the prestigious International
Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food
Systems, an independent group
working to inform public policy on
food system reform.

Next on Rocha’s agenda is leading
a three-year initiative to improve the
health of malnourished children in
low-income regions in Vietnam. With
$1.16 million in funding from the
International Development Research
Centre and Global Affairs Canada,
Rocha, and Ryerson researchers
Fiona Yeudall, Andrea Moraes,
Yvonne Yuan and Thomas Tenkate,
will work with Vietnam’s National
Institute of Nutrition to increase
local production and distribution
of fortified complementary foods
and ready-to-eat therapeutic foods,
including micronutrient-enriched
pastes, bars, flours and pablum. In
addition, more than fifteen hundred
mothers will receive counselling on
child-feeding practices, and female
farmers will be trained to participate
in the supply chain for these foods.
The initiative is expected to directly
benefit 15,000 children.

“This project intends to help our
partners in Vietnam reduce levels of
food insecurity and chronic malnutri-
tion in women and children,” Rocha
says. “It will enhance the integration
of food security analysis into public
policy and programming.”

Tackling food security challenges
such as these is among the topics
being taught in the faculty’s
Certificate in Food Security program,
delivered by The G. Raymond Chang
School of Continuing Education.

Students in the program learn
about food policy, food health and
education, environmental sustain-
ability and human rights, and take on
projects such as critically assessing
food initiatives in their communities.
Graduates have pursued impactful
work, such as addressing food
security, poverty, education,
employment and HIV/AIDS in
impoverished regions of South Africa,
and establishing a community
kitchen to serve homeless people.

“Our students gain the skills
needed to help bring about policies
and changes that ensure people can
access the food they need to ensure
their nutritional health,” says
Reg Noble, academic coordinator.

Achieving food security on
Ryerson’s own campus is the priority
for Rye’s HomeGrown (RHG), an
initiative featuring eight rooftop
and ground-level edible gardens
operated by Ryerson students, faculty
and staff. The gardens run on a
“grow to throw” waste-free model, meaning crops are grown using heirloom seeds from the previous year’s harvest, the resulting food is made available to the Ryerson community and food waste is composted into rich fertilizer to build next year’s soil. This urban agriculture initiative is part of Ryerson’s commitment to promote sustainability, well-being and community building on its campus, and to raise awareness about food sovereignty and responsible ecology.

Growing in the quarter acre of gardens are more than a hundred varietals of 30 different crops, including eggplants, okra, beans, chili peppers, tomatoes, kale and peas. RHG also uses an indoor greenhouse on campus for propagating plants, seedlings and microgreens. Last year, the gardens yielded almost 3,000 kilograms of produce. This fresh, wholesome food is then made available to Ryerson Eats campus kitchens and at Ryerson’s weekly farmers’ market. A community-supported agriculture arrangement lets individuals purchase food baskets for just $5 in exchange for volunteering during the harvest.

RHG also provides opportunities for hands-on learning for Ryerson undergraduate and graduate nutrition students, who complete course assignments, volunteer projects and practicum placements at the gardens. As well, members of the public can participate in drop-in volunteer events at the gardens, and take workshops on gardening, harvesting and composting.

“It’s a great educational opportunity for people to learn about how farms are managed, and to participate in that culture, right in the city,” says RHG core advisory member Fiona Yeudall, director of the Centre for Studies in Food Security and an associate professor in the School of Nutrition. “It helps people connect to the food system in a real way.”

Another dimension of food security is being explored through the Good Food Café, a healthy cafeteria initiative at St. Joseph’s College School, a girls’ Catholic high school in downtown Toronto. A joint project between Toronto-based food justice organization FoodShare and FCS’s Centre for Studies in Food Security, the initiative involves senior undergraduate and graduate nutrition students volunteering at the café as a way to better understand a food-service operation. Yeudall, who oversees these experiential learning placements, says students learn how to meet the tricky challenge of preparing food that meets legislated nutritional standards, is cost effective for students and tastes good.

Finally, Yeudall is also working to better integrate food security priorities into municipal decision making. Municipal Food Policy & Practice project is a collaboration between Ryerson’s Centre for Studies in Food Security; the City of Toronto; Canadian NGO Rooftops Canada; the Mazingira Institute in Nairobi, Kenya; the City of Almere in the Netherlands; and the University of Cape Town and City of Cape Town in South Africa. Funded by an International Development Research Centre grant, the project develops and implements workshops for municipal decision-makers in the partner cities that focus on how to consider food security and the role of food systems when developing municipal policies and programs.

“Whether the participants are in economic development, public health or solid waste management, it doesn’t matter, because food issues are interconnected,” Yeudall says. “They need to work together across silos, so they can think about how food is a key part of all municipal practices.”
These Things Prey on One’s Mind
— Jennifer Lapum

three vanishing scars
Forcefully remind me
of my mortality

The Art of Learning

Art advances research, scholarship and understanding

By Abigail Cukier

Poetic excerpt and image from The 7,024th Patient (the7024thpatient.ca) by Jennifer Lapum (Lapum et al, CMAJ. 2013 Oct 1; 185(14): E693–E697).
Earliest childhood studies professor Marni Binder remembers when teachers in elementary school would say “When you are done your work, you can go and draw a picture.” “[Art] was, and often still is, considered an extra, when it should be infused into everything – as a way of being and knowing,” says Binder. As a teacher with the Toronto District School Board, Binder taught primary students, including English language learners and children with disabilities, using the arts as a way to learn and express themselves. She still uses this approach at Ryerson.

During the last class of the Transformative Literacy course, using bricolage, Binder has her graduate students create a representation using materials such as pipe cleaners, paper, Plasticine and ribbon to demonstrate their understanding of the course.

In her recent cross-cultural research exploring the arts in the lives of children, Binder interviewed six Bali artists from art forms such as dance, wayang (shadow puppetry) and topeng (mask dancing). While there, Binder carved a mask with a master carver. She feels her rediscovery of artistic creation is an important part of instilling creativity in her teaching. She inspires students to use creativity in their work to allow their artistic voices to come through.

Binder is not the only one fusing the arts with academics.

“We are recognizing more and more, that to appeal to a diversity of learners, infusing arts into education in a way to communicate across different types of learning styles,” says Samantha Wehbi, Faculty of Community Services (FCS) learning and teaching chair and a professor at the School of Social Work. “When you infuse arts, it works students’ emotions and intellect in different ways as they forge a more emotional, personal connection to the material.”

Jasna Schwind, a professor at the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, uses Narrative Reflective Process (NRP) in her teaching and research. NRP, which she developed, is a data collection tool and a professional development instrument. This method includes storytelling, metaphor, drawing, creative writing and reflective dialogue. Schwind believes that we know more than we can articulate verbally, and that through creative self-expression, we can access the knowing, which informs our interactions with others. In her graduate interprofessional course, she engages the students in NRP, using the metaphor of self as instrument of care, to help them discern what they bring into their therapeutic relationships.

Schwind also uses NRP in her research. For example, in a study with senior South Asian women with heart disease, she found that when interviewed about their experience, the women reported no issues. However, when asked to draw their experience of illness, their stories revealed loneliness and lack of family support. She believes that by using creative self-expression along with the traditional interview, we obtain a fuller, and perhaps a truer, picture.

Faculty members of FCS are also using art in how they conduct research. Social work professor Lynn Lavallée’s latest research project, Telling a Different Story, involved youth, ages 14 to 24, to battle stereotypes about Regent Park and confronts media portrayals of the neighbourhood. Instead of being the focus of the study, the young people generated the research through art. Experts taught the youth how to express their thoughts using visual art, rap, spoken word poetry and photography. The presentations tackled subjects such as interactions with police and the stigma associated with social housing.

Master’s students in the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, participating in the seminar and practicum in Professional Nursing Advancement, use aesthetic ways of knowing how to explore course content. “We are asking students to use all of their senses to engage in critical reflection. Faculty use an active learning approach to promote authentic engagement. Active learning uses creative expression as a way of bringing students’ embedded knowledge to the surface,” says professor Karen LeGrow.

Students have created art installations to reflect their understanding of the course content. These installations are shared with peers to promote further dialogue and
discussion. Students also engage in colouring and walking meditation to further promote self-reflection. “These approaches resonate with students in helping them understand core concepts related to advanced nursing practice. Many graduates go on to use these methods as nursing leaders in the health-care system,” says professor Sherry Espin.

In the Midwifery Education Program, the elective course Birth and Its Meanings explores representations of pregnancy and birth in society, including popular culture and the media, film, literature and visual art. The final project is to create an artistic representation of birth and write a paper about it, and then students exhibit their work. “Using creative practice offers us another way to think about the work of midwifery,” says professor Nadya Burton, who teaches the course. “Different parts of us are at work when looking at or creating art, often helping us to connect to people and to experience empathy.”

Activism through art

In social work professor Ken Moffatt’s classes, though the criteria for evaluation remains the same as in traditional coursework, the modalities with which the students can express themselves have changed. In Critical Perspectives on Marginalization and Queer Theory and Identities, students have presented using video, oil painting, spoken word and audio podcast. “In such a pervasive culture of fast images, I think arts-based work can slow a person down to think reflectively, to think about how image is created and to think about how it ties to their own identities,” says Moffatt.

Moffatt has also co-curated, with Heather Bain, field education coordinator at the School of Social Work, a show on multiple forms of masculinity for Social Justice Week last fall. Off-campus with Videofag in Kensington Market, Moffatt and Bain co-curated a show on New York artist Arturo Vega that included 25 artists, including some students, alumni and staff from the School of Social Work. “Activist work can be very text based,” Moffatt says. “To create something that is arts based can invite different people in and still get at issues of justice, values and ethics.”

Changing how we look at art

At a recent play in Toronto, an American Sign Language interpreter learned the script and translated and performed beside the actors. Rather than being an accommodation, the interpreter added to the experience and became part of the aesthetic of the play. It is this type of work that Eliza Chandler is studying during her two-year Ethel Louise Armstrong Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the School of Disability Studies, which is intended for a female scholar with a disability, in order to advance her career and the field.

During her fellowship, Chandler has delivered lectures, published scholarly articles and organized conferences. She also designed a course, Cripping the Arts in Canada, which the school will offer as a liberal arts elective beginning in fall 2016. Chandler is also artistic director of Tangled Art + Disability, a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to enhancing opportunities for artists with disabilities to contribute to the cultural fabric of our society.

She is studying the history of disability arts – whether there is a distinct disability aesthetic and what that looks like. She is also exploring how to curate art in an accessible way. This could include using audio description at a play or hanging art in a gallery at a lower level, with a wheelchair-using audience member in mind. How does that allow the audience member to experience art and does it influence the aesthetic of the art?

“Disability arts is a priority funding group for federal and provincial funding, so there is a lot of interest in it now. In the last few years, the number of audience members has increased exponentially,” Chandler says. “This fellowship is an uncommon and fortunate opportunity to reflect on these things in a considered way. It has allowed me to document things at a time when it needs to be documented, as it is gaining popularity. I can slow down a little bit and reflect on it.”
Transforming lives and communities: promoting social well-being around the world

Research by faculty members is driving transformative change for citizens in local and global communities

By Sharon Aschaie
Committed to building a more just and equitable world, the Faculty of Community Services (FCS) is keen to address society’s most pressing problems. Its conduct leading-edge community-based research to understand the complex dynamics of many social ills.

The resulting insights contribute to more progressive policies, programs, practices and attitudes, which enable meaningful social change. In the process, students graduate with the knowledge and inspiration to positively change society. At Ryerson, we demonstrate how the faculty’s scholarly and research activities are transforming individuals and communities in Canada and worldwide. “The faculty’s mission is to create a better society for all,” says Dean Usha George. “We value educating the next generation of changemakers who can meet the social care needs of people in Canada and internationally.”

Among those benefitting from the faculty’s forward-thinking research are Canada’s youngest citizens. Rachel Langford, director of and professor in the School of Early Childhood Studies and a registered early childhood educator (ECE), recently explored the successes and failures of the Canadian childcare movement from 2001 to 2010. Partnering with Patrizia Albanese of Ryerson’s Department of Sociology and a sociologist from the University of Manitoba, Langford studied the movement at the national level and in three provinces. She studied Ontario, because it is the largest province and it recently introduced full-day kindergarten; Manitoba, because it introduced several new childcare initiatives during the 2000s; and Alberta, because it has the highest proportion of for-profit childcare centres and relatively low entrance requirements for ECEs.

With funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the team interviewed childcare advocates, elected government officials and civil servants, and reviewed the messaging of social change campaigns conducted by advocates. They learned that advocates emphasized childcare as a social investment to resonate with Liberal government priorities at that time, an approach that achieved some policy success until 2006, when the federal government changed parties. The team also learned that the professionalization of the ECE profession during that time period, through stronger regulations and higher qualification expectations, may have softened ECE workers’ advocacy in comparison to the advocacy of parents, women’s rights groups or other communities. This was reflected by the ECE workers’ program- or local-level advocacy versus provincial- and national-level advocacy, and their relatively more conciliatory messaging.

“Understanding the history of the movement provides important lessons for future efforts to achieve a national system of early learning and childcare for families,” says Langford about the research, which will be published in an edited volume called Caring for Children: Social Movements and Public Policy in Canada.

Kim Snow, School of Child and Youth Care professor, is concerned with a specific population of children, one whose members face significant obstacles in transitioning to adulthood: Crown Wards. Youths who grow up in state care are less likely than others to graduate from high school and participate in higher education. In adulthood, they are more likely to become homeless, young parents, unemployed and dependent on social assistance. It all amounts to a transitional crisis for those leaving state care, one Snow is trying to alleviate with a peer-centred social
innovation initiative called The Voyager Project.

Working with the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto and other GTA children’s aid societies, Snow and her team provide current and former Crown Wards in Toronto with support related to post-secondary education and employment, advocating for themselves and for improvement of the care system, and strengthening their social networks. They also research how to optimize care-leavers’ educational outcomes and encourage program participants to rally other foster and group care youths to pursue their educational goals. Now entering its 10th year, this widely acclaimed program has helped many participants earn a high school diploma or a post-secondary preparation credit, certificate, diploma or degree from Ryerson.

Snow’s Voyager-related scholarly research has revealed the value of promoting peer connections to increase the educational attainment and social mobility of care-leavers. She has also explored the stigma faced by Crown Wards and the techniques they can use to challenge stereotypes, foster belonging and become agents of social change. Snow has involved Voyager participants in her research by including their perspectives on their care-transition experiences.

Youths are also the focus of research being conducted by Karline Wilson-Mitchell – in her case, pregnant adolescents in Jamaica experiencing structural or systemic violence during pregnancy and following the birth of their babies. A Midwifery Education Program professor and a practising midwife since 1982, Wilson-Mitchell is completing the study as part of a larger global research and development project led by social work professor Henry Parada called Rights for Children and Youth Partnership: Strengthening Collaboration in the Americas. With this first-of-its-kind $2.5-million SSHRC grant at Ryerson University, the initiative involves 55 Ryerson and international researchers investigating the barriers and enablers of child and youth rights in the Caribbean and Central America.

Wilson-Mitchell’s research results are consistent with findings from her previous studies in Jamaica: one in five adolescent mothers is a survivor of sexual violence, while others have experienced psychological, structural or family violence in their communities. She has observed that adolescent mothers face stigma, discrimination and the derailment of their education. To better understand the dynamics of these types of violence, Wilson-Mitchell is interviewing and conducting focus groups with midwives who care for these youths. Eventually, she will expand her research to the study’s other six participating countries: Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Trinidad.

She hopes that exploring and highlighting the valuable role of midwives in these countries will lead to public policies and cultural practices that will protect and support young pregnant women.

“My goal is to provide research that informs policy, improves institutional procedures and empowers midwives, who care for these vulnerable adolescents,” Wilson-Mitchell says. “The hope is that we can use respectful maternity care from a critical human rights perspective to empower and equip youths to manage conflict and make their own reproductive decisions.”

Addressing the care and support needs of immigrant women experiencing various forms of violence is a priority for Sepali Guruge, research chair in Urban Health at the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing. Her research on intimate partner violence has revealed that changes in gender and sexual relations, the loss of social networks, and the de-skilling or de-professionalization that immigrant women and men experience increase women’s vulnerability to post-migration...
partner violence. Guruge has also led projects on this topic in several other countries, including Ethiopia, Brazil and the U.S. “Understanding post-migration changes, their outcomes and the pathways that link them can inform effective interventions to address this serious problem,” Guruge says.

Her recent study on where, when and how immigrant women seek care and services to deal with violence identified that instead of conventional care settings, such as emergency rooms, immigrant women typically seek out help at social service and settlement agencies – a finding that can shape program and funding decisions for this population. Currently, Guruge is studying elder abuse in immigrant communities. She has held several symposiums with researchers, policy-makers, older immigrants, health-care providers, and social and settlement workers from several provinces to develop a national program of research on this topic.

David Zakus, a professor of distinction in global health at the School of Occupational and Public Health, has developed his own, novel action plan for a different health problem: the relatively high rates of malaria and diarrheal diseases and associated deaths among impoverished villagers in northern Ghana. Working with a researcher at the University of Alberta, with an NGO group of youth workers and musicians, and with village chiefs and health officials in Ghana, Zakus and team, developed two live music and dance drama shows with the theme of promoting public health behaviours to prevent the transmission of sanitation-related diarrheal diseases. Actors representing local villagers and chiefs performed a story demonstrating how behaviours such as washing hands with soap and avoiding openly defecating can prevent cholera and other diarrheal diseases, and how sleeping under a bed net can thwart malaria. The play was performed in several rural communities. Through surveys, focus groups and testimonials, the team determined that attendees were more likely than non-attendees to list the diseases’ causal, preventive and transmission factors. Zakus says their public health intervention, which was backed by funders such as the Killam Foundation and Global Affairs Canada, worked because it was culturally sensitive and resonated with the region’s strong tradition of oral communication and lively performance. As well, he says, it is sustainable – because it is cost effective, can target large groups and can be easily replicated by the communities themselves.

Says Zakus: “We’re hoping this project will catch the attention of people and organizations working on the ground with these populations, because the intervention fits well into local culture and it really works.”
Usha George leaves a legacy of excellence

Departing dean has been a force for dynamic and positive change at the Faculty of Community Services

Usha George is serving her 10th and final year as dean of the Faculty of Community Services (FCS), but thanks to her forward-thinking ideas, inclusive leadership style, strong work ethic and extensive experience in academia and social work, she has been able to usher in many initiatives that will continue to positively impact the faculty long after she leaves.

Upon joining the faculty in 2006, George created a bold, progressive vision that involved increasing and enhancing the diversity and impact of its teaching, research and community engagement activities. Under her leadership, the faculty has significantly increased its research endeavours – reflected in more internal and external funding for projects, more published articles and more partnerships with community and academic institutions – leading to evidence-based solutions to the world’s social problems.

“Prioritizing research has been important for our faculty because it enables us to fulfil our core mission, which is to enhance the quality of life and social well-being of individuals, families and communities,” George says.

At the same time, George has focused heavily on promoting interprofessional experiential learning opportunities within curricular and community contexts. She has supported the development of faculty-based initiatives to encourage faculty success in their academic roles, across the career continuum, such as mentorship circles, a faculty professional development program, community-engaged professional development events, an online teaching development resource and technology for better organizing teaching assignments. She has also encouraged and supported faculty members to bring their research into their teaching activities within the classroom and in professional settings. The overall goal of these initiatives is to enhance the capacity of faculty members and instructors to inform, engage and inspire their students so as to optimize their learning experiences and outcomes.

Early in her tenure, George embraced a concept that was still new to academic institutions: social innovation. With its emphasis on using education, skills, entrepreneurial savvy and novel strategies to solve real-world problems, social innovation struck George as a perfect vehicle to make FCS programs more relevant and impactful, and to transform students into changemakers.

“I saw that we could use social innovation to better educate our students to use their knowledge and skills to become system changemakers,” George says.

George chose to integrate social innovation ideas, concepts and strategies into curricula in programs across all nine schools, so that students in all disciplines could become empowered to achieve social change. She was then able to secure a $1-million donation to establish the faculty’s John C. Eaton Chair in Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship. This momentum eventually led to the development of a six-course minor in social innovation, which launched last fall.

Altogether, these activities have enhanced Ryerson’s status as a global leader in social innovation.

There has been a common thread across all of George’s pursuits as dean of the Faculty of Community Services: promoting excellence in teaching, research and creative activity. Her legacy of excellence has ultimately strengthened the faculty’s role in improving how we meet society’s health and social care needs. In recognition of her contributions, she was awarded the 2015 Errol Aspevig Award for Outstanding Academic Leadership.
Building a better community

From curriculum to research to service, the Faculty of Community Services is improving lives through social justice

By Abigail Cukier
The Faculty of Community Services (FCS) is committed to teaching, learning, research and community engagement that initiates real social change. Faculty and students transform lives and communities by engaging those who seek innovative solutions to social issues and developing the processes, models and content needed to bring change.

“Our students will be assisting in challenging situations. The more awareness they have in reading the world from their own experiences, the better they will be in connecting the dots. The personal is political,” says Winnie Ng, Ryerson's Unifor CAW Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy.

Members of the FCS don’t just teach about social justice, they live it. Akua Benjamin, a professor at the School of Social Work, has helped establish policies supporting ethnocultural services for new immigrants and refugees, and fought for equitable access to public services and against racial discrimination in the workplace. Benjamin is part of the Anti-Black Racism Network, comprised of professors, students, lawyers, social workers, activists and community leaders. In February 2016, the network held a conference, Anti-Black Racism: Criminalization, Community and Resistance, with a mandate to advance the scholarship on social issues facing Black Canadians and to find sustainable ways of addressing these problems. It kicked off with the Inaugural Akua Benjamin Annual Public Lecture.

Esther Ignagni, a professor at the School of Disability Studies, co-led the planning for Making Space for Intimate Citizenship, a workshop last September that brought together disability studies researchers, students, community advocates and self-advocates labelled with intellectual disabilities from Canada, South Africa, Australia and the U.K. to speak about intimate citizenship in the lives of disabled people. The aim was to share knowledge and experiences related to the extent to which intimate citizenship is realized and accessed by people labelled with intellectual disabilities. Intimate citizenship refers to our entitlement and access to intimacy, such as love, friendship, sexual identity and expression, and parenthood. Shaped by public policy and structural divisions, intimate citizenship concerns our rights and responsibilities to make personal and private decisions about our intimate lives.

Nadya Burton, a professor in the Midwifery Education Program who teaches the mandatory first-year course Working Across Difference in Midwifery, believes that along with mastering clinical skills, it is essential for midwives to work competently and compassionately with clients, no matter their race, ability or other differences of identity.

“Midwives need to be able to find a fetal heart tone and do an episiotomy and support someone through delivery, but they also need to work effectively and skillfully across differences,” says Burton, adding that many former students report that they hear the lessons from this course in their head as they work, and the course gives them the tools they need to meet these challenges and opportunities.

After 16 years as a midwife in Toronto, Manavi Handa has seen an increasing number of clients without health insurance, due to changes in immigration policies and a rise in refugee claimants.

Although midwives received government funding to care for residents of Ontario, regardless of immigration status, they did not receive funding to perform diagnostic tests or transfer of care to an obstetrician (OB). If midwives had referrals from community health centres, they would be covered. However, most uninsured clients come to midwives without these referrals and have limited financial means. “As a result, if the woman developed complications, we would have to consult an OB and then tell them ‘Sorry, it is unlikely you will get paid,’” Handa says. “This was difficult, when we were trying to get midwives more accepted within the hospital system.”

A professor in the Ryerson Midwifery Education Program, Handa wanted to develop a business case to change referral patterns so that low-risk women would be referred to midwives, and higher-risk women to OBs. She looked at 200 pregnant women referred to her clinic without insurance and what their care ended up costing. Costs per patient ranged from just $100 for an ultrasound to $8,000 for a patient with complications. Handa figured out what the costs would be if the same women saw an OB. The study found that treating the 200 women by a midwife cut costs by half.

She was invited to present a proposal to the Ministry of Health and Social Justice Week

“Social Justice Week seeks to transform campus into a hub of social justice and solidarity by bringing together community members, students, staff and faculty from departments across the university,” says Winnie Ng, Ryerson’s Unifor CAW Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy.

The theme of the fifth annual event in 2015 was Social Justice and Democracy: Arts, Activism and Academy and it included lectures and workshops on issues related to indigenous solidarity, decent work, migrant workers’ rights, and Black Lives Matter. “It’s about getting students to look up from their course text and connect it with the larger political, economic and social context,” Ng says. “How can we break down the silos in different programs to create opportunities and sharing where we can work together to address the issues of inequities and inequality?”
Long-Term Care for direct midwifery funding for uninsured patients. The ministry used Handa’s research and proposal as the basis for funding every midwife in Ontario for diagnostic tests and transfers of care to an OB. This new policy was adopted in April 2015. “This speaks to the power and potential of research to make very real changes,” Handa says.

The Province of Ontario has introduced recent policy changes in early childhood education and care, and Kathryn Underwood wants to understand how these changes affect children with disabilities and their families.

Underwood, a professor at the School of Early Childhood Studies at Ryerson, is principal investigator of the Inclusive Early Childhood Service System Project (inclusive earlychildhood.ca). Funded by the County of Wellington and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the partnership is also working with the Timiskaming District, City of Hamilton, City of Toronto, and policy and community organizations, as well as collaborators and investigators from Ryerson University, University of Guelph and McMaster University. The project is designed from the perspective of mothers and guardians to understand how service sectors are supporting or shaping the experience of disability in early childhood.

Researchers are interviewing 56 families over three years about their experiences with services such as childcare, early intervention, health care, social services and services that are informed by indigenous cultural values. The team is mapping how these systems function for families in diverse communities whose children are experiencing disability. The goal is to understand how family viewpoints can inform practice and how childhood disability can be valued as part of diversity in our society, and Underwood says this information may inform policies as Ontario develops a special needs strategy.

Near the beginning of her doctoral studies, Annette Bailey, a professor in the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, saw a woman on the news whose 16-year-old son had been shot and killed at a Toronto school. “I watched how the media operated, and they treated this woman who was in obvious grief,” Bailey says. “She collapsed in front of the cameras and they kept filming. I thought about what happens to these women after the camera stops rolling.”

Bailey focused her research on traumatic stress and resilience among Black women who have lost a child to gun violence in Toronto. “Because gun violence is so stigmatized, these women lose social support, friends, family… They are very resilient. They use their situation to carve out their place as an activist. They are growing out of the chaos of their lives and saying ‘My child will not die in vain. I am going to create supports for youth in the community to help them make better choices.’ ”

Bailey is now researching youth who have lost friends or family members to gun violence. She wants to help their mothers and society to understand their plight. “Social change is required, but we have to start at the individual level and then move out to the political and societal level,” she says. “We need to help these young men understand their value and their place in the world and that they serve a purpose more than just picking up a gun.”
Teaching

Taking learning to the next level

Teaching touches lives forever. That’s why, in the Faculty of Community Services, we’re constantly searching for new ways to engage students and enrich their learning. Real-world experience – whether working with experts in the field or travelling abroad – helps students make a real impact in our local and global communities.

BY DANA YATES
Must have experience

REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCES SUPPORT LEARNING AND ENABLE STUDENTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD

As hubs of innovation and discovery, Canadian universities support the kind of learning that changes lives and transforms the world. But learning doesn’t happen in a vacuum; the best learning happens when students are offered a broad range of hands-on experiences. Universities create those knowledge-enhancing experiences by linking with private-sector partners, communities, governments and other educational institutions across the country and around the globe.

At Ryerson University, experiential learning is an integral part of the academic journey, offering students different and perspective-changing opportunities for growth. The outcome: students who are uniquely prepared for the future.

LENDING A HAND WITH LITERACY
Ryerson’s School of Early Childhood Studies (ECS) and the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) have partnered to offer a unique educational program for young readers. For nearly a decade, ECS students have participated in the We Will Read (WWR) initiative as part of their third-year placement. Over time, the program has expanded considerably, and this past winter, 70 full-time ECS students were involved in the initiative.

For 11 weeks, from January to April, ECS students help improve the reading skills of Grade 1 students in schools across Scarborough and North York. The children, who are identified by their teachers as not reading at grade level, participate in one-on-one sessions with the Ryerson students four times a week.

Often, says ECS Director Rachel Langford, teachers don’t have the opportunity to offer children individualized instruction. “So working with the ECS students provides children with a powerful jump-start into literacy.”

ECS students also benefit from the experiential learning provided by the WWR program, says Laura Schein, an ECS faculty advisor who works closely with WWR placement students. “They must develop a relationship with the child that supports teaching and learning – friendly and caring, yet professional and authoritative. The students must also observe, experiment with techniques and create activities for teaching specific skills – while maintaining the child’s interest and attention.”

For example, David Cameron, ECS ’16, developed literacy-based games that matched each student’s interests. And by the end of the program, he says, all the children had experienced major improvements in their literacy skills. “Some students were even taking home extra books on the weekend simply because they were starting to read for pleasure,” he says.

CONNECTING TO CHANGE ABROAD
Valuable learning opportunities are sometimes found more than 13,000 kilometres away from the classroom. That’s what five Faculty of Community Services (FCS) students discovered last summer while participating in international learning experiences.

Four of the students – Kimberley Slimming, Brandon Arkinson, Sharla Everd and Heather Norris – spent a month in Kerala, India, through the Live-in-Lab program at South India’s Amrita University. The Live-in-Lab, which exposes international students to issues in
rural Indian communities, will be part of the FCS’s new minor in social innovation, scheduled to launch this fall.

The students’ trip to India was a pilot project for the new partnership between Amrita and Ryerson, and in 2015, FCS Dean Usha George and Amrita University Chancellor Mata Amritanandamayi visited each other’s campuses.

“We were quite impressed by the level of the university’s involvement with the community, its commitment to social change and the use of technology to address everyday problems,” says George. “They work respectfully with the community to change things. I was very motivated to have our students participate in that life-changing mission.”

While in India, the FCS students lived in a village to study problems – related to water, health and education, for example – and devise solutions. They also taught math, English, tablet-based learning and alcohol/substance awareness education to Indian schoolchildren.

“It was important to take what I have learned at Ryerson and not only apply it in the field, but also in a different culture. I want to do more volunteering abroad and I know it’s on me to share my knowledge,” says Slimming, a fourth-year Child and Youth Care (CYC) student.

Tanitia Munroe, one of Slimming’s classmates, experienced a similar shift in perspective. A front-line child and youth worker for 16 years, Munroe travelled to Cape Town last July with CYC Director Kiaras Gharabaghi to attend the 20th anniversary conference of the South Africa National Care Association. In addition to spending one week working in local group homes for children and youth, Munroe learned more about SHAWCO, a student-run social innovation initiative based at the University of Cape Town. The FCS is exploring the possibility of a future partnership with SHAWCO.

While in South Africa, Munroe explored the philosophical concept of ubuntu. Referring to the universal bond that connects humanity and the importance of helping others, ubuntu had a significant impact on Munroe’s view of her work.

“[Personal] development often happens best through participation in causes bigger than oneself,” she wrote about her experience. “So my focus will remain around the opportunity that I can create from the interactions I have every day with youths that I may encounter. ‘You are a part of us, Miss T!’ said a bright-eyed teen to me on the last day of the conference, and I smiled and nodded because I got it. It is about ‘we’ not ‘me.’”

WITH FILES FROM WILL SLOAN
Going the extra mile for their students

PROFESSORS RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

Professors Jennifer Martin, Child and Youth Care ’04, and Sharon Wong hail from different schools in the Faculty of Community Services (FCS), but they share one thing in common: they’re both award-winning teachers.

Specifically, Martin and Wong are the FCS recipients of the 2016 Deans’ Teaching Award, which recognizes excellence in instruction.

A professor in Child and Youth Care (CYC), Martin is a leading expert on some of the field’s most challenging themes and issues, such as sexual abuse treatment, trauma-informed care and online images of child sexual abuse. While addressing those subjects in the classroom, Martin is sensitive to the fact they could cause some students to experience vicarious trauma. Therefore, to help students safely absorb course content, Martin integrates innovative stress-reduction approaches into her teaching. For example, she leads mindfulness exercises, initiates discussions about self-care and encourages students to explore their thoughts in a private journal. “I’m trying to create a safe classroom,” says Martin. “My hope is that students will internalize and apply those lessons so they can create safe places for children and families.”

Martin’s commitment to students’ well-being comes as no surprise to Kiaras Gharabaghi, director of the School of CYC. When nominating Martin for the Deans’ Teaching Award, Gharabaghi praised her passion, sincerity and “incredible heart.” He also noted her interest in teaching students how to connect with vulnerable children and youth using leading-edge interventions, such as cyber counselling and the therapeutic and safe use of social media.

“I have a wonderful opportunity to follow my dreams, do research and create new knowledge at Ryerson,” says Martin. “It’s such a joy to bring all that to the classroom.”

Like Martin, Wong is also keen to provide students with a high-quality learning experience – especially because she teaches a required upper-year course on research methods that involves statistics, a topic many students initially find daunting. A dietitian and a professor in Nutrition, Wong also teaches students how to use the software program SPSS Statistics. “Many students aren’t fond of working with numbers. It can seem intimidating at first,” admits Wong. “At the end of the term, though, students send me emails that say ‘I never thought I’d like research and statistics, but I do now.’ ”

So how does Wong help students overcome their aversion to statistics? By creating a warm, welcoming atmosphere in the classroom and by using “vivid examples” that are relevant to their lives, her students report. Wong is very aware of the need to find creative ways to explain complex concepts. She developed and teaches Knowledge Translation, the first graduate-level nutrition course of its kind. Knowledge Translation is a growing area of importance in nutrition communication. “Rather than just giving out information, it’s more powerful for dietitians to take a user-centred approach and help clients effectively apply their knowledge,” says Wong.

Cultural differences, for example, can affect what a client does with nutrition information. Therefore, Wong says, dietitians must be aware of their clients’ unique needs and tailor information accordingly. That philosophy also applies to Wong’s work in the classroom. “I start classes by asking students how they’re doing and what’s happening. I want real answers. How are they finding the course so far? What concepts are they struggling with? We can’t start learning until we know where each person is at,” she says.

The FCS encourages and empowers its faculty members to find new ways of engaging with and educating students. In acknowledgement of our professors, the FCS offers special awards that celebrate the faculty’s many dedicated educators. For more information, please visit ryerson.ca/fcs/teaching/awards
A smooth transition
NEW INITIATIVE HELPS FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS ADJUST TO UNIVERSITY LIFE

A student’s first year of university is a time of enormous change. They attend a new school and meet new classmates – some move to a new city. The adjustment process can be stressful, so to help students adapt to post-secondary life, the Faculty of Community Services (FCS) has developed the FCS Student Connect initiative.

“Ryerson is unique because many first-year students do not live in residence, where information about on-campus resources is more readily available. So first-year students may experience difficulties navigating and accessing resources that could help foster a positive transition experience,” says Janice Waddell, associate dean of the FCS.

To respond to some of the concerns of first-year students and their family members, the FCS looked at successful transition programs at universities across North America to identify best practices that could be adapted to meet the needs of students new to Ryerson. The FCS Student Connect team also made certain the transition program could be easily integrated into Ryerson’s existing suite of supports for first-year students.

The goals of the program are twofold. First, to offer students a one-stop shop for information about university resources, such as student groups, learning strategists and counselling services. Second, to provide students with opportunities to engage with the FCS’s schools and ensure that, from the moment students step on campus, they experience a sense of community and belonging within their faculty.

While the full rollout of FCS Student Connect is expected to be completed by fall 2017, work is underway now. Future plans include a networking program that will enable first-year FCS students to connect online and in person with upper-year mentors. Parents of first-year students will also be given opportunities to get to know the university. They will be able to tour the campus, attend a sample lecture and be given access to publications, such as the university’s internal e-newsletter, Ryerson Today, and the FCS’s monthly newsletter and annual magazine.
A unique learning opportunity

URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING STUDENTS GAIN PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND VALUABLE CAREER INSIGHTS WHILE WORKING WITH COMMUNITY-BASED CLIENTS

To bridge the gap between theory and practice, the School of Urban and Regional Planning (URP) offers innovative courses that enable undergraduate and graduate students to address current planning issues. Each academic year, almost 30 student-consulting teams work under the supervision of a faculty member on “client-based studio” projects to respond to the needs of outside agencies and firms in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. “Studio is at the core of our program. It involves group projects based on the practical application of the planning process,” says URP Director Christopher De Sousa.

In fall 2014, professor Steven Webber supervised a team of graduate students who partnered with York Region’s Human Services Planning Board (HSPB) to conduct research on rental housing. The group, which was mentored by housing policy expert Randy Hodge, consisted of Samantha Biglieri, Paul Grove, Rajaram Lamichhane, Michael Lee, Stephanie Mah, Vanessa Simpson and Ray Ziemba, Master of Planning ’15. The team identified incentives that York Region and local municipalities could offer the private sector to encourage the development of rental housing. The students also recommended ways to evaluate, process and deliver those incentives. “We got into the nitty-gritty of how to implement something new and fit it into existing policies,” says Biglieri, now a PhD candidate at the University of Waterloo.

In spring 2015, the students presented their findings to HSPB members and senior York Region staff, and now their report is being used to develop the region’s affordable housing strategy. “The students far exceeded the client’s expectations. I’d put their work up against any professional report,” says Webber.

In fall 2015, undergraduate students participated in a studio class that was designed to provide an advanced understanding of the theory and practice of planning for sustainable communities. The class was created by Ken Greenberg, a visiting professor at Ryerson’s City Building Institute (CBI), and De Sousa, who also supervised the class. The FCS-based CBI is a multi-disciplinary centre that focuses on issues relevant to city regions across Canada and around the world. Students worked with a CBI expert to conduct an assessment and develop a plan for 20 local neighbourhoods in which SmartTrack stations are proposed. A regional express rail surface line, SmartTrack was proposed by Toronto Mayor John Tory, and Ryerson students presented their plans for five stations to him last winter.

Earlier this year, a team of undergraduate students supervised by faculty member Jaclene Begley worked with Ryerson’s CBI for the studio class City Building: Planning for Complete Communities. The students were asked to recommend planning strategies to retrofit suburban developments in the Greater Toronto Area. At the end of the semester, the students’ work was displayed at a CBI event that also included a panel discussion on the benefits and challenges of transforming suburbs into walkable, transit-oriented communities.
Putting it all together

WITH GUIDANCE FROM EXPERT EDUCATORS IN THE FIELD, STUDENTS APPLY CLASSROOM LESSONS TO REAL-WORLD SITUATIONS

Canadian universities are committed to delivering high-quality educational experiences. That’s why educating students in the field has long been a method of teaching in the Faculty of Community Services and an essential part of its programs. Preceptors play a vital role in field education. They provide important training and valuable feedback, and prepare students to excel in their careers.

HEALTH MATTERS
Preceptor Juannittah Kamera, Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing ’09, wants nursing students to focus on preventive measures just as much as treatment protocols.

“Nursing students spend a lot of time focusing on bedside nursing,” says Kamera, health promotion programs coordinator in Ryerson’s Health Promotion Unit. “But what can nurses do to help patients at other times? How can nurses constantly think in terms of promoting health and preventing disease?”

It’s a mindset that guides Kamera’s own work. As the 2015 recipient of the Viola Desmond Staff Award, which recognizes the contributions of Black Canadian women on campus, Kamera helps Ryerson students understand the link between health and academic performance. She also serves on a number of university committees, advocating for policies that are mindful of student health and well-being.

As a preceptor for third-year Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing students, Kamera shines a light on the importance of health promotion activities. During their placements, for example, Kamera’s interns explore how to encourage Ryerson students to engage in healthy behaviours. By creating a new health promotion program or managing an existing initiative, the interns hope to prevent their fellow students from developing health problems in the future.

The process of making a long-term impact, however, involves a significant amount of work. Through assessing the need for a health promotion program, marketing it and evaluating the results, students strengthen their teamwork and project management skills – and, say previous interns, they gain “invaluable practical knowledge.” Students also come to see the critical role that nurses play in health promotion.

“Students learn ‘the why’ behind their work, which helps them understand the goals and purpose of the program. Once they understand the meaning behind what they’re
trying to accomplish in health promotion, they work harder and take pride in their work,” says Kamera.

**PUSHING BOUNDARIES**

Jay MacGillivray helps students in the Midwifery Education Program (MEP) see their field in a new light. An interprofessional placement preceptor, MacGillivray is co-founder of the Positive Pregnancy Programme at St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto. She started the unique initiative with obstetrician Mark Yudin 10 years ago to reduce the discrimination faced by pregnant HIV-positive women and to provide them with expert clinical care.

The clinic, which offers full reproductive care and access to a broad number of supports, enables MacGillivray to work with a variety of professionals and organizations, including obstetricians, nurses, infectious disease experts, pediatricians, agencies advocating for cultural issues, community agencies, HIV-positive peer supports, settlement agencies and professionals in the social work field. The clinic’s team cares for people who have HIV and those who are at increased risk of acquiring the virus, including people affected by trauma, significant substance use, coerced sex work, severe mental illness and marginalization.

“I’m trying to offer students a broader picture of midwifery. It doesn’t only involve clinical experiences,” says MacGillivray. “I want students to see what happens when you’re deeply integrated into the community. It’s a gift to deliver the baby with someone who has no community and has struggled with substance use. To say ‘I’m here, I see you. Your baby is beautiful.’

During their placements, students assist MacGillivray with research and outreach initiatives. Those activities include delivering workshops and
Jay MacGillvray (centre) on-site with midwifery students at St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto, ON.

Supporting educators in the field

Being a preceptor is an important job. Along with managing their daily responsibilities, preceptors must train and evaluate students. In recognition of preceptors’ many contributions to students’ learning, the School of Nutrition has established a Dietetic Community of Practice at Ryerson – an environment of collective learning and excellence in dietetic training – to foster ongoing relationships among students, preceptors and the school.

“Our preceptors are essential to the success of our graduate program and the program for internationally educated dietitians,” says Judy Paisley, graduate program director in the School of Nutrition. “Preceptors provide supervision for the practical training components that are crucial elements of our programs. We want to add value to a preceptor’s experience and we want them to see us as a resource for professional development.”

In addition to currently sending preceptors a biannual newsletter with updates about events and training opportunities, the school will launch a Ryecast channel this fall that will enable preceptors and graduates to access education and training videos. The school has also introduced “open classrooms” in some courses. These custom workshops are created and presented by external experts, and are attended by preceptors, alumni and current graduate students. In 2015, workshops were offered on media training, social media, knowledge translation and conflict resolution. The school’s Developing Preceptor Excellence Committee also offered a workshop last fall to help preceptors learn how to provide students with constructive feedback on their practicum performance.

“These educational events are helpful,” says Ashley Dart, a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator at LMC Diabetes & Endocrinology in Oakville. “They have a wealth of experience and strategies,” she says.
Spotlight

The changemakers of today and our future

The transformative impact of teaching and learning within Ryerson’s Faculty of Community Services is most evident in the many meaningful accomplishments of its community members. With an eye to promote progressive social change, our students, alumni and faculty lead innovative projects that enable individuals and communities to thrive and excel. Their achievements reflect our faculty’s commitment to advancing education that solves real-world problems, promotes social justice, embraces diversity and empowers communities. **BY SHARON ASCHAIK**
Jordan Tustin
Occupational and Public Health Faculty

**Levelling the playing field in health care**

When the Ebola virus was ravaging West Africa in 2014, claiming thousands of lives and devastating families and communities, the situation appeared hopeless. But Jordan Tustin, an infectious disease epidemiologist and an assistant professor in Ryerson’s School of Occupational and Public Health, knew she could make a difference. Later that year, she boarded a plane for Guinea, the area’s hardest-hit country, to join a World Health Organization team trying to contain the disease. She helped to identify new cases, then find and monitor their possible contacts to prevent further spreading.

“We were able to break chains of transmission, and that helped save lives,” says Tustin.

For Tustin, her work in West Africa wasn’t only a fight against Ebola, but for social justice. As a deeply impoverished region without basic infrastructure and with a population that didn’t understand Ebola and denied its existence, the area was poorly equipped to deal with the disease. Despite these facts, she says, the global community’s response to the outbreak was slow and insufficient, which exacerbated its toll. Indeed, it evolved into the worst Ebola epidemic in history, with 28,000 cases and 11,000 deaths. Those factors resulted in a desperate, time-sensitive situation, which motivated Tustin to act.

“I strongly believe in health equity, and a responsibility to lend my expertise to more vulnerable populations,” Tustin says.

It is an ethos she has embraced throughout her epidemiology career, which has included assisting with outbreaks of H1N1 flu in Mexico City and Nunavut, and food-borne illnesses across Canada. It is also one she emphasizes to her students, so they will better appreciate the socio-economic dynamics of disease outbreaks. She encouraged her students to help in the war against the Ebola virus, which inspired them to form the Ryerson University Public Health Student Organization, and to organize a symposium that raised more than $3,600 for Doctors Without Borders.

“We talk a lot about the social determinants of health,” Tustin says, “and how we need to address them in order to improve health equality.”
Annu Gaidhu
Child and Youth Care
Student

Student’s philanthropy powered by yoga
Life is becoming more hopeful for some Tibetan refugee children in India, thanks to the passion, ingenuity and drive of fourth-year Child and Youth Care student Annu Gaidhu.

Last summer, as a means to fulfill her program’s internship requirement, and to make a difference in her capacity as reigning Miss India Canada 2014, Gaidhu spent five weeks teaching English and yoga to children at the Dirru Monastery in northern India. Typically from Nepal or Tibet, these 90 young monks are either orphans or come from exiled families that have been religiously repressed. Often, without any source to pay for their cost of living, education and medical care, sponsors must be found. Due to its limited resources, the monastery struggles to provide sufficient nutritious food, a clean living environment and safe places to play.

“These children have so little, but they have so much gratitude for what they do have, and they want to learn,” Gaidhu says. “I wanted to figure out how to make sure they have access to basic necessities.”

Upon returning, she established the nonprofit Healing Hearts Project to help the monastery undertake development projects related to food, shelter and recreation. What’s innovative is the fundraising approach: Gaidhu, an avid yoga practitioner and instructor since 2010, teaches karmic yoga classes, wherein all proceeds collected support monastery projects or individual monks. Donations can also be made via the organization’s website, healingheartsproject.com, and on their crowdfunding page.

Gaidhu’s first target project was a playground, so the children would have a “constructive and safe place to just be kids.” By last December she had raised $3,000, which the monastery is now using to build a multipurpose basketball court. Future funds will be used for initiatives such as diversifying crops, managing waste, planting trees and repairing dilapidated dormitories.

“The community has more hope now,” Gaidhu says. “They feel like their voices are being heard.”
Empowering communities to heal themselves

Driven by a commitment to social justice, a nurse can help whole communities heal and thrive—and that’s exactly the goal of registered practical nurse and post-diploma bachelor of science in nursing student Bronwyn Lapp.

Lapp has pursued volunteer nursing work in Peru, Honduras, Guatemala and Ethiopia, where poverty causes many challenges in accessing quality health care.

In each country, she partnered with the ministry of health, non-governmental organizations and/or local public health professionals to improve maternal-child health care for marginalized populations. Early on, she focused on providing direct service, but she eventually realized she could make a bigger impact by helping communities help themselves. So she joined initiatives to enhance midwifery education programs that provide childbirth simulation tools and training.

“It was really meaningful for me to work with these communities,” Lapp says. “Those experiences taught me a lot about collaborative partnerships, cultural sensitivity, empowerment and capacity building.”

Understanding and addressing the social determinants of health is something Lapp is learning at Ryerson. Outside the classroom, she helped establish and was associate director of public relations for Ryerson’s Planetary Health Commission, which is working to promote planetary wellness. Last October, with the support of the Faculty of Community Services (FCS), the group held a public event in which Stephen Lewis, professor of distinction at FCS and co-founder of the Stephen Lewis Foundation and AIDS-Free World, and Alan Whiteside, Centre for International Governance Innovation chair in global health at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, discussed the current state of the global AIDS pandemic.

Currently, Lapp is completing her final program practicum at Stanton Territorial Hospital in Yellowknife, in order to learn about the health issues affecting indigenous people in remote areas.
Arianna Cancelli
Urban Development ’10
Alumni

Breathing new life into Toronto’s laneways
Ariana Cancelli is strengthening and beautifying communities in Toronto by applying her urban planning expertise to the most unexpected of places: laneways.

Most of the city’s approximately 2,400 laneways are nothing more than utilitarian passageways for accessing garages, parking cars or making deliveries. Most are isolated, neglected places, making them easy targets for garbage, graffiti and crime. Cancelli is trying to unleash the social, economic and environmental potential of these neglected back alleys and corridors by transforming them into people-friendly green spaces featuring public art, patios, pop-up shops, micro-businesses and community events.

“I want to make these forgotten urban spaces more multifunctional so they can better serve the city and its people,” Cancelli says.

Understanding the importance of including community members in the urban planning process was a key part of her Ryerson education, Cancelli says, and it’s a guiding principle behind The Laneway Project (thelanewayproject.ca), a first-of-its-kind nonprofit she established in 2014 with architectural and urban designer Michelle Senayah. The duo collaborate on laneway rejuvenation projects with local business improvement associations, residents’ groups, municipalities and nonprofits, working with them to help them realize their visions for their alleyways. Among their current projects is O’Keefe Lane, on campus, where they are working with the university and other local partners to turn the lane into a more welcoming pedestrian and cyclist passageway, a canvas for local culture, and an appealing stopping place for workers, students and other community members.

Some laneway improvement projects are funded by government or foundation grants, and others are paid for by the communities themselves, but the goal is always the same: to create safe, vibrant and attractive spaces that connect citizens and enrich neighbourhoods.

“People are forming new relationships with each other and understanding how to create positive change in their communities,” says Cancelli.
When it comes to making affordable, quality childcare available to every child in Ontario, Carolyn Ferns is well prepared for the challenge.

As head of the nonprofit Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, Ferns is working to make childcare more accessible to families – both in terms of price and spaces available – and more equitable for its workers. Ontario has the highest childcare fees in the country; although subsidized spots are available, underfunding means many kids are on wait-lists. Altogether, there is only one spot in licensed childcare for every five children. Meanwhile, early childhood educators, she says, earn relatively low wages, face precarious work and have limited opportunities to advance.

“What we have right now is a childcare market, instead of a childcare system based on universality, quality and comprehensiveness,” Ferns says.

It’s an idea that first resonated with Ferns at Ryerson, where she embraced the program’s emphasis on social justice. It developed further when she worked at Toronto’s Childcare Resource and Research Unit, where she co-authored reports on early childhood care in Canada.

Ferns is also a board director of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada and a member of the grassroots collective Advocates for Progressive Childcare Policy.

Ferns is continuing the coalition’s tradition of lobbying government, conducting public awareness and mobilization campaigns and publishing reports. Its latest report, Child Care Matters to Everyone: A Snapshot of Child Care in Ontario, weaves current data with personal perspectives to powerfully illustrate the system’s gaps. Last spring, the coalition joined childcare advocates countrywide in a national week of action to influence the election.

“It’s important to make the childcare crisis visible, because often it’s a silent struggle families face alone,” Ferns says. “We needed government intervention, because otherwise we’re never going to have the right balance.”
Jake Pyne
Social Work '11
Master of Social Work '12
Alumni

Exploring how to better support transgender children
As we learn that more youths want to change their gender, Jake Pyne wants to ensure society responds in ways that respect their human rights.

Building on his master’s research, which began at Ryerson, on the then-new phenomenon of transgender children, Pyne wants to determine how family members and health-care providers support underage youths wanting to suspend puberty to facilitate an early gender switch. He believes that a better understanding of young gender transition and the attitudes of decision-makers can help improve ethical, social and medical responses to their situation.

“There are young people who are ready to transition genders but they can’t make that decision for themselves,” says Pyne, now a Social Work and Gender Studies PhD candidate at McMaster University. “I’m interested in the power relations involving those who get to make this decision.”

It’s an experience that resonates with Pyne personally, since he himself underwent a gender transition, and he says he found it “sobering and illuminating” to observe how the actions of professionals and institutions shaped his future. For the last 14 years, he has worked as an advocate and researcher to better understand Toronto’s transgender community, and improve access to emergency services, health care and family law. Recently, he studied the challenges faced by transgender parents and developed resources for families with gender-independent children. He has published and presented his research widely and has earned several awards, including a prestigious Trudeau scholarship.

Pyne’s new research process involves interviewing clinicians working with gender nonconforming children in Canada, the U.S., the Netherlands, England and Norway.

“By promoting new conversations about identity, meaning, health and human rights,” says Pyne, “this research might support better outcomes for these kids.”
Development News

Endowed awards create a legacy of support for future generations

Students choose Ryerson because they want to make a distinctive mark in their field – and they need real-world skills and experiences to do that. This is where our donors make a difference. With their generous support, students obtain the learning experiences today that will enable them to transform communities tomorrow. Here, we share three inspiring stories from the Faculty of Community Services – while each charitable gift has a unique story to tell, they share a common theme: the impact of philanthropic giving and its power to change students’ lives.

BY DANA YATES

Activism lives on

Before her death from lung cancer last year, former Toronto Star columnist Helen Henderson, Disability Studies ’15, used the written word to advocate for people with disabilities.

It’s fitting, her sister says, that an award has been established in the School of Disability Studies to support the next generation of disability activists.

“Helen wrote with honesty and integrity, and she gave a voice to people with disabilities,” says Lindsay Campbell, who established the endowed award. “It’s important to find writers who will fill the gap left by her absence.”

The Helen Henderson Award in Writing for Disability Activism has received financial contributions from Henderson’s friends and colleagues, including John Honderich, former publisher of the Toronto Star. The award will recognize an undergraduate student in disability studies or journalism whose writing eloquently conveys the complexity of disability issues. Reflecting Henderson’s understanding of the financial costs of disability, priority consideration for the $1,000 award will be given to a disabled student.

When Henderson began her career at the Toronto Star in the 1970s, she was the newspaper’s first female business journalist. After being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, she started writing a groundbreaking column that brought mainstream attention to the issues facing people
with disabilities. She continued to cover the disability beat after retiring in 2008 and her last column appeared in 2012.

Henderson, who was awarded her degree posthumously, loved being a disability studies student and this award in her name will leave a lasting mark on the school, says director Kathryn Church. “Student awards recognize achievement, but they also remember the large-scale project of change to which we belong. As we give them out, we celebrate our community and recommit ourselves to the work.”

WITH FILES FROM CHELSEA JONES

Planning for the future

In summer 2015, the School of Urban and Regional Planning (URP) alumni association established an endowed award to support URP undergraduate and graduate students.

Although URP’s Ryerson Planning Alumni Association (RPAA) has a long history of funding annual awards through special events and pub nights, the group wanted to make a lasting difference. “We liked the idea that – even if we weren’t around as an association – the award and the financial support would be. The endowment is a way to invest in students permanently,” says incoming RPAA president Christopher Dunn, URP ’00.

In addition to supporting financial awards, the RPAA creates opportunities for students to network with, and be mentored by, URP alumni. “It’s nice to remain connected,” says outgoing president Taras Sakac, URP ’07. “I am fortunate to have received the education I did. Volunteering and giving back feels right, and is my way of saying thank you.”

By supporting student awards, he continues, alumni can leave an important legacy. “We are removing financial barriers for the most talented and dedicated students. They will solve issues faced by cities and regions around the world,” he says.

WITH FILES FROM DAVID KINAHAN

Showing their gratitude

Retiree Jeff Edmunds made a big impact when he was a student coordinator and adviser in the School of Social Work.

“Jeff is warm, friendly and reassuring,” says fourth-year student Henry Luyombya, recalling how Edmunds guided him through the process of applying to the advanced-standing program in Social Work at Ryerson.

But Luyombya isn’t alone in his appreciation for Edmunds. To express their gratitude for his 30-plus years of service, Social Work alumni, faculty and staff raised $25,000 to create an endowed award in his name – with Luyombya being named the award’s first recipient.

After immigrating to Canada from Uganda a decade ago, Luyombya studied politics and international development at the University of Toronto before attending Ryerson. Today, fuelled by a desire to fight inequality, discrimination and injustice, he conducts community-based research to explore ways of reaching people living with HIV, and combating the stigma that discourages those living with the virus from self-identifying.

Also a peer facilitator with the Ethno-Racial Treatment Support Network, Luyombya focuses on treatment literacy for people living with HIV/AIDS. He conducts outreach and awareness sessions on sexual health, HIV, leadership and communication skills through Toronto Public Health, the Prisoners HIV/AIDS Support Network and other Toronto-based organizations.

“Leadership should be about how many people you’ve invested in,” he says. “We see that in people like Jeff. He left [in 2013], but he is still at Ryerson because of the students, faculty and staff he has influenced.”

WITH FILES FROM RYAN CHURCHILL
A look back at our achievements and external research grants in 2015.
External competitive research grants

The following is a list of external competitive grants awarded to our faculty members between January and December 2015. Many of our researchers collaborate with co-investigators from within and outside Ryerson University; however, due to space constraints, only principal and principal co-investigators are listed.

**Child and Youth Care**

**Tara Collins**
Sonja Grover (Lakehead University), Monica Ruiz-Casares (McGill University), E. Kay M. Tisdall (University of Edinburgh)
Facilitating Child Participation in International Child Protection
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Partnership Development Grant $189,908

**Judy Finlay**
Community Wellness Index for Neskantaga
Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines $114,565

**Cross-Over Youth: Care to Custody**
Department of Justice ($1,214,190)
Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services ($149,538)
$1,363,728

**Kiaras Gharabaghi**
Stefan Koengeter (Universitat Trier), Doug Magnuson (University of Victoria), Wolfgang Schroer (University of Hildesheim), Maren Zeller (Universitat Trier)
Learning as Intervention: A New Approach to Residential Care for Children and Youth
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Partnership Development Grant $189,908

**Jennifer Martin**
Grant Charles (University of British Columbia), Ethel Quayle (University of Edinburgh), Andrea Slane (University of Ontario Institute of Technology)
Child Sexual Abuse Images Online: Identifying and Addressing Knowledge Gaps and Multilevel Barriers to Cross-Sectoral Responses
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Partnership Development Grant $142,707

**Early Childhood Studies**

**Sejal Patel**
Patricia O’Campo (University of Toronto), Janette Pelletier (University of Toronto)
Reducing Inequities in Children’s Educational Success and Well-Being: The Role of the Built Environment
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Connection Grant $24,997

**Kathryn Underwood**
Kathleen Brophy (University of Guelph), Elaine Frankel (Ryerson University), Martha Friendly (Childcare Resource and Research Unit), Arlene Hache (Temiskaming Native Women’s Support Group), Magdalena Janus (McMaster University)
Inclusive Early Childhood Service System Project
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Partnership Development Grant $199,85

**Midwifery**

**Vicki Van Wagner**
Remote Midwifery: Perinatal Outcomes and Policy Implications
J.W. McConnell Family Foundation $8,000

**Nursing**

**Heather Beanlands**
Developing Capacity for Patient-Centered Care in Nursing Students: Implementing and Evaluating an Evidence-Based Intervention to Decrease Stress and Support Emotional Well-Being
National League for Nursing Nancy Langston Research Award $17,968.50 USD

**Elizabeth McCay**
Annette Bailey (Ryerson University), Henry Parada (Ryerson University)
Poverty Reduction Strategies for Urban Youth in Canada
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Connection Grant $24,432

**Donald Rose**
Claire Mallette (York University)
Exploring the Concept of Caring in Nursing Curricula in Ontario: A Provincial Nursing Education Initiative
Associated Medical Services Inc. Phoenix $100,000

**Janice Waddell**
Pamela Robinson (Ryerson University), Samantha Wehbi (Ryerson University)
Bridging the Theory/Practice Divide: Experiential Learning for a Critical, People-Centred Economy
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Knowledge Synthesis Grant $18,012
Nutrition

Nick Bellissimo
Role of White Potatoes on Subjective Appetite, Food Intake, Glycemic Response, Mood, and Memory Performance in Normal Weight and Overweight/Obese Children
Alliance for Potato Research and Education: Research Grant $118,151 USD

Enza Gucciardi
Screening of Food Insecurity in the Diabetes Population by Diabetes Educators
Ryerson University Health Research Fund $7,000

Cecilia Rocha
Scaling Up Small-Scale Food Processing: A Strategy to Promote Food Security among Women Subsistence Farmers in Rural Vietnam
International Development Research Centre: Canadian International Food Security Research Fund $420,920

Fiona Yeudall
Food Fit Evaluation
Community Food Centres Canada $3,725

Social Work

Akua Benjamin
Jennifer Clarke (Ryerson University), Wesley Crichlow (University of Ontario Institute of Technology), Lynn Lavallée (Ryerson University), Rinaldo Walcott (University of Toronto)
Anti-Black Racism: Criminalization, Community and Resistance
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council: Connection Grant $25,000

Dawn Onishenko
The Experiences of Sexual and Gender Minority Youth in State Care: A Retrospective Exploration of Former Child Welfare and/or Youth Justice Service Users
Ryerson University: Internal SIG $7,000

Urban and Regional Planning

Shelagh McCartney
Maamawi-abiit-Bawajigay-win: Visioning Our Future Dwelling Together
Ryerson University: Internal SIG $7,000

Raktim Mitra
An Exploration of Cycling Patterns and Potential in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area
Metrolinx $49,984
The following is a sampling of the external recognition and achievements of our students, staff, faculty, alumni and friends of the Faculty of Community Services from January to December 2015.

Early Childhood Studies

Carolyn Ferns, MA ECS ’09
Toronto Star’s 10 to Watch in 2015

Nursing

Faith Donald
Faculty
Excellence in Teaching Award
Council of Ontario University Programs in Nursing

Karen LeGrow
Faculty
Senior Research Consultant
VHA Home Healthcare

Nancy Walton
Faculty
Chair
Women’s College Hospital Research Ethics Board

Josephine P. Wong
Faculty
Community Partners Award
Ontario AIDS Network

Six Ryerson nursing students are recipients of the 2015 Registered Nurses’ Foundation of Ontario Award:

Judy Buchan, Prenatal & Parenthood Services
Educational Scholarship

Karen Campbell, Maternal
Child Nurses Interest Group
Scholarship – Masters

Bronwyn Lapp, Toronto General Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae Association Scholarship

Heather Lithgow, Miriam Bracken Award

Hareem Siddiqui, Jennifer Award

Holly Smither, Toronto General Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae Association Scholarship

Disability Studies

Kathryn Church
Faculty
Award of Distinction
OCUFA Status of Women Committee

David C. Onley Award for Leadership in Accessibility
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade

Kimberlee Collins, DST ’15
Recipient
First place Student Paper Award, by the Canadian Association for Disability Studies, for How Do We Tell Our Children?: Keeping the History of Huronia Regional Centre through Radical Children’s Literature

Catherine Frazee
Professor Emerita
Honorary Doctorate
McMaster University

David Reville
Instructor
Honorary Doctorate
Queen’s University

Ryerson University received the prestigious Canadian Helen Keller Award from the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons in honour of the university’s contributions in support of the disabled community.

Kimberlee Collins, DST ’15
Recipient
First place Student Paper Award, by the Canadian Association for Disability Studies, for How Do We Tell Our Children?: Keeping the History of Huronia Regional Centre through Radical Children’s Literature

Sachitha Baduge, Chris Pinto and Jennifer Chang
3rd Place
Ontario Mission Impulseible Competition

Melissa Baker
Graduate Award
Dietitians of Canada

Food ee of the Year Award
Vacay.com

Kerry Miller
Applied Physiology, Nutrition and Metabolism Undergraduate Research Excellence Award
Canadian Science Publishing

Schools of Nutrition CAFP Award and Bursary recipients:

Mike Bidenko
Lynch Foods Bursary

Melissa Danchak
Sysco Food Services of Toronto Bursary

Carmen El-Khazen
CAFP Educational Program Fund Award

Sarah Ermias
Sysco Food Services of Southwestern Ontario Bursary
Aramark Gold Plate Award

Helen Feng
Danone Inc. Bursary

Zahra Hosseinian
Kostuch Media Ltd. Bursary

Olivia Kordos
ZINGOVATION Top Management Night Sponsor Award

Iana Mologuina
CAFP Toronto Branch Award
Senior Management Advisory Council Award
Occupational and Public Health

**Jordan Tustin**
Faculty
Inaugural recipient of the Outstanding Mentor Award
Dalla Lana School of Public Health – Public Health Alumni Association

**Kathryn Woodcock**
Faculty
Public Safety Award
Technical Standards & Safety Authority

**Social Work**

**Purnima George**
Faculty
Excellence in Equity Award for Racial Justice
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians

**Anna Amy Ho, SW ’15**
Alumna
2015 Victim Services Awards of Distinction
Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General

**Teriano Lesancha, SW ’12**
Alumna
YWCA Young Women of Distinction Award

**Iana Mologuina**
Student
2015 Women in Food Industry Management Scholarship

**Margo Timmins, SW ’86**
Alumna
Inductee
Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame

In print

**Journey to Healing: Aboriginal People with Addiction and Mental Health Issues: What Health, Social Service and Justice Workers Need to Know**
Edited by Lynn Lavallée, School of Social Work, and Peter Menzies

**Natal Signs: Cultural Representations of Pregnancy, Birth and Parenting**
Edited by Nadya Burton, Midwifery Education Program. With chapters by midwifery professors, Elizabeth Allemang and Mary Sharpe; instructor, Cherylee Bourgeois and students Brescia Nember Reid and Kory McGrath; and midwife Claire Dion Fletcher.

Alumni awards

2015 Alumni Award Recipients at the Faculty of Community Services:

**Theresa Agnew**
Nursing ’81, ’90, ’00
Executive Director, Nurse Practitioners’ Association of Ontario
Agnew has made a sustained and exemplary contribution to the development of the Nurse Practitioner role in Ontario, as an expert clinician, leader, advocate, educator and policy-maker. As an intelligent lifelong learner, passionate about the advancement of the profession as well as enhanced quality of and access to health care in Ontario and Canada, Agnew is an inspiration to and role model for her fellow alumni and indeed all nurses and NPs.

**Margo Timmins**
Social Work ’86
Co-founder, Pirate Radio & Television
When Margo Timmins graduated from the Social Work program in 1986, she probably had no idea just where her career was headed. Just one year earlier, she had formed the Cowboy Junkies with her brothers Michael and Peter, along with friend Alan Anton. Their first album, *Whites Off Earth Now*, was produced in their garage. A year after graduation from Ryerson, in November 1987, Timmins recorded *The Trinity Sessions* with the band in Toronto’s Church of the Holy Trinity. That critically acclaimed album sold over 1 million copies worldwide. With Cowboy Junkies, she has toured North America, Europe, Japan and Australia. In 2009 she released a solo album of covers. The band continues to tour extensively and is working on their 22nd studio album.

Honorary doctorates

2015 Honorary Doctorates at the Faculty of Community Services:

**Ed Clark**, recently retired TD Bank Group executive, capped a distinguished career in the banking sector with a 12-year stint as president and CEO TD Canada Trust, from 2002 to 2014.

**Catherine Zahn** has been at the helm of Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) as president and CEO since 2009. The centre is Canada’s leading mental health hospital and the largest academic health science centre in Canada focused on mental illness.

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“We are on a journey of pursuing excellence and enabling change for the better. We derive strength from our past and confidence from our present as we plan for a brighter future.”

– USHA GEORGE, DEAN, FACULTY OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
Food Secure Canada’s 9th Assembly
October 13 – 16, 2016

Resetting the Table, Food Secure Canada’s 9th Assembly, promises to be our most exciting, diverse and largest yet, nested in a city where the food movement thrives in every neighbourhood. Whether you are a chef, a farmer, a student, a community health organizer, a policy maker, an activist or a business person, Resetting the Table will have a place for you.

foodsecurecanada.org/resetting-the-table

The 6th Annual Ryerson Social Justice Week

Save the Date!
October 31 – November 4, 2016
A week of events, speakers, exhibits, and cultural events that will transform Ryerson into a hub of social justice and solidarity in Toronto.

ryerson.ca/socialjustice