

M

The Education of Robina Aryubwal

Targeted by a warlord, her family escaped Afghanistan through determination and the help of a journalist who would not give up

Pg. 16





VIEWFINDER

The Sentinel — Arjun Yadav

The Photographer

Alumnus **Arjun Yadav** (HBA 2016, Communication, Culture, Information and Technology) was UTM's 50th Anniversary Photographer Laureate. Yadav's creative work has served as a visual ambassador for the campus in its anniversary year.

As Photographer Laureate, Yadav captured images of the U of T Mississauga campus over the 2017 calendar year. The honorary position recognized his photographer's eye for UTM's unique blend of natural beauty, inspiring architecture and diverse character; he's a particular fan and friend of UTM's resident deer population. Yadav arrived at UTM as an international student from Lucknow, India, lived for several years in residences on campus (and still lives nearby), and says he discovered and continues to find inspiration in the unique setting and wildlife on campus. Yadav, now on Instagram as @arjsun, went on to co-launch the UTM Photography Club prior to his graduation.

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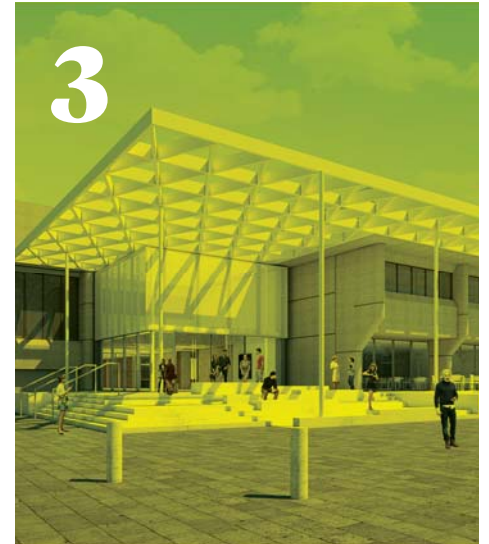
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THE EDUCATION OF ROBINA ARYUBWAL

Now a UTM student, her family escaped
the Taliban with the help of CBC's Carol Off



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Campus News



Accessible & Inviting
The new Meeting Place will expand seating and food services.

MEETING PLACE RENOS

+ BIGGER, BRIGHTER, BETTER

Revitalization of Meeting Place begins

It has long been thought of as the “living room” for the campus; the Meeting Place acts as a gathering space for student activities, social interaction, informal study and dining space. It’s where students, faculty and staff grab a coffee, meet with friends and cram before exams. But little has changed since 1972, and as the campus grows and changes, the Meeting Place needs both expansion and modernization.

Now, plans are underway to—among other things—double the area’s seating capacity, make the main entryway more accessible and inviting, and expand food services to deliver healthy choices with options reflective of campus needs. Moriyama & Teshima Architects have been retained to do this work, and the plan calls for an open, barrier-free, light-filled design, including skylights, sliding glass walls and new furniture. The project will also aim for LEED certification at the Silver level or better, featuring local materials, energy-efficient equipment, water-efficient fixtures and low maintenance native plantings. Construction is slated to begin in March 2018 and finish by August 2019.

1

Campus News

2

A NEW ERA

Professor Ulrich Krull installed as UTM's principal

UTM welcomed its newest Vice-President & Principal, Professor Ulrich Krull, at an installation ceremony in November 2017. His three-year term began July 1, 2017.

Krull had been serving as Interim Vice-President and Principal since Sept. 1, 2016; prior to that, he was Vice-Principal, Special Initiatives. In 2015, he served for six months as Acting Vice-President and Principal during his predecessor's administrative leave. Over his career, he served in a number of academic administrative roles at UTM: Associate Dean, Sciences (1994-99); Vice-Dean, Graduate (2006-08); and Vice-Principal, Research (2003-13).

In addition to demonstrating a long-standing commitment to university service, Krull sits on the Scientific Advisory Board for the Eurotrode Conference series, the Board of Directors of the Research Innovation Commercialization Centre, and as a member of the Mississauga Innovation and Entrepreneurship Committee at the invitation of Mississauga mayor Bonnie Crombie.

Past awards and honours have included the Faculty Teaching Excellence Award at UTM, the Paul W. Fox Alumni Award for distinguished voluntary service at UTM, the University of Toronto Faculty Award, the Life Sciences Ontario Community Service Award, the inaugural Outstanding Contributor Award from U of T's School



of Continuing Studies, and the McBryde Medal and the Maxxam Lecture Award from the Canadian Society of Chemistry.

A professor of analytical chemistry, Krull holds the AstraZeneca Chair in Biotechnology, and is recognized as one of the leading analytical chemists in Canada. His scholarship focuses on bioanalytical research and the development of molecular diagnostics technologies for biomedical and environmental applications. He received his PhD from U of T in 1983, and has over 200 refereed publications and eight patents.



3

CUE LAUNCH

Are cities sustainable?

UTM launches the Centre for Urban Environments

More than 82 per cent of Canadians live in cities and our planet is becoming increasingly urbanized. More than ever, a greater understanding of urban environmental concerns will have critical importance for humans and the broader health of our planet. The Centre for Urban Environments (CUE) launches in 2018 with the mission of providing global leadership in research, education and outreach on urban environmental issues. On Dec. 5, a symposium hosted by CUE and its director, Professor Marc Johnson of UTM's Department of Biology, brought together leaders in our community and world experts to understand how our environment has changed with urbanization, current challenges and opportunities for urban environments, and visions for living in a sustainable city. Twitter: @CUE_UofT

PHOTOS: STEVE FROST



4

FUNDING TO FIGHT CANCER

Janpix Inc., co-founded by Patrick Gunning, launches with \$22 million

Professor Patrick Gunning, a medicinal chemist whose lab at the University of Toronto Mississauga is revolutionizing how cancer-killing drugs are produced, has signed a \$22-million investment deal for Janpix, an oncology-focused startup that he co-founded. Medicxi, a European firm, provided venture capital funds.

“We are absolutely delighted that Medicxi has made this visionary investment in technology developed right here at U of T Mississauga,” says Gunning, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Medicinal Chemistry. “Our work has the potential to create new drugs to battle aggressive blood, brain and breast cancers, and this support will help to accelerate that research and get those compounds to the patients who need them.”

Gunning’s laboratory at UTM’s Centre for Medicinal Chemistry is developing compounds that attack various forms of cancer. Their efforts are focused on signal transducers and activators of transcription (STATs), a group of proteins that have been identified in numerous human cancers, including breast, blood and brain tumours. In particular, Gunning’s lab is developing ways to inhibit two STAT proteins, STAT3 and STAT5. Janpix, led by CEO Roman Fleck, is focused on bringing a STAT3/STAT5 drug to clinical trials within 18-24 months.

5

ANNIVERSARY WRAP-UP

FABULOUS AT 50

From cake pops to Margaret Trudeau to a dazzling gala, UTM’s 50th anniversary year has been filled with excitement, nostalgia and inspiring glimpses of the journey ahead. For 365 days, campus was transformed by anniversary banners, lectures and events, such as a workshop on Indigenous inventions, the One Million Trees Experience and SmartiGras. Another highlight was the 50th Anniversary Gala on Oct. 20, 2017, a glittering black-tie gathering that drew together students, alumni, former principals, faculty, staff and other friends of the university. And as the anniversary year drew to a close, the installation of Vice-President & Principal Ulrich Krull carried the momentum of the last 50 years forward, focusing on a successful future involving research excellence, graduate enrolment growth and global impact.



PHOTOS: LISA SAKULENSKY PHOTOGRAPHY

Campus News

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SOCIAL MEDIA

UTM in the moment

At UTM, there is something amazing happening around every corner. Here are a few of the moments that caught our eye:

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Colourful Fall Trails @UTM
#UofTGrad17#UTM50 #Canada150



Commuters.



Celebrating 50 years with UTM Student Affairs! Cake pops in The Meeting Place! #utm50



Bird's eye view of O-Week kickoff assembly.
#utmOWeek #utmproud#utmOWeek
#UofTBacktoSchool#myutmweek



Don't forget to get a picture with the Eagle! Congrats to all the grads :) The eagle will be there today and tomorrow! #utm50 #uoftgrad17



Happening now! Join prof John Lester between DV + Kaneff for an eclipse viewing event (until 3:30 pm)

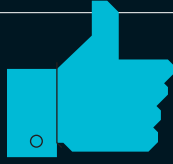


Harvesting honey from the UTM hives!

ILLUSTRATIONS: (OPPOSITE PAGE) TAYLOR KRISTAN

UTMetrics

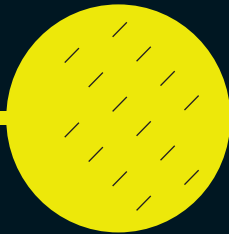
- 54,063 likes on an image of campus by 50th photographer laureate Arjun Yadav (@arjsun), featured on @explorecanada



- **85 Pounds Every 3 Weeks**
 - The amount of fresh produce harvested from the Just Vertical farm walls in Oscar Peterson Hall.

+ **10,000**

- The number of guests that the famously hospitable Principal J. Tuzo Wilson and his wife Isabel hosted at Lislehurst over a seven-year period.



Up to 6,000 50th Anniversary commemorative cake pops were consumed on campus this year

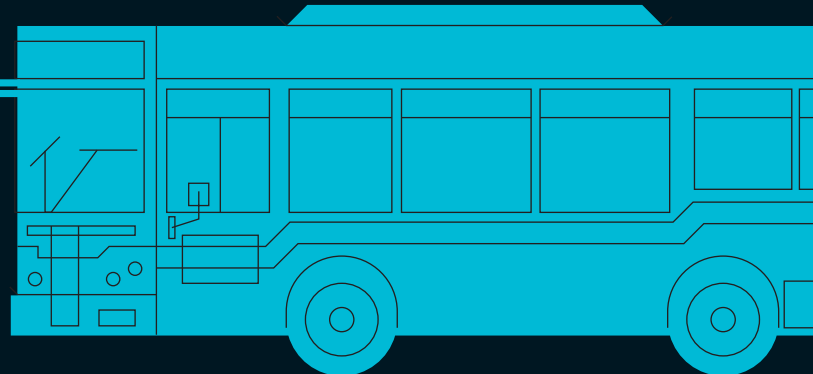


\$370k (Cdn)

- Money raised on Kickstarter by ICUBE company Nise Tech, which makes an internet-connected cooking device that allows busy homeowners to cook via smartphone.

39%

- UTM is responsible for the largest chunk of public transit traffic in Mississauga, at 39 per cent.



Snapshot



Targeting Cyber Crime

Helping others is a guiding principle for Ryan Duquette, and his professional track record in law enforcement, education and IT security proves he really does walk the talk.

Duquette runs Hexigent Consulting, which provides digital forensic and cybersecurity services to law firms, businesses and police services. He and his partner, Jason Green, do everything from examining digital evidence for litigation cases, to investigating cyber breaches, establishing security compliance frameworks and conducting cybercrime awareness training. Their cases can involve corporate espionage, intellectual property theft, fraud, identity theft and cyberbullying.

It's intrinsically satisfying for Duquette to help combat cybercrime, which is growing fast and having serious consequences for organizations. Digital security firm Gemalto reported 918 data breaches worldwide in the first half of 2017, which compromised 1.9 billion data records—an increase of 164% over the first half of 2016. The firm Cybersecurity Ventures reports

that by 2021, global cybercrime could reach \$6 trillion in costs relating to data loss, stolen money, lost productivity and reputational harm.

“These crimes are now occurring constantly, and they are becoming increasingly sophisticated, so the average person or company can't be on top of it every day,” Duquette says. “In these situations, it's rewarding to me to be able to help out to my fullest extent.”

Duquette's journey to this field began at the University of Toronto Mississauga, where he built on his interest in crime fighting by completing an honours BA in crime

and deviance and sociology. As a fourth-year student, he was given an opportunity to work as a teaching assistant to third-year students, and discovered a passion for helping youth find their way.

While at UTM, Duquette volunteered for two years as an auxiliary police officer for Peel Regional Police, and the experience confirmed policing was his calling. After graduating in 1999, he worked for nine months as the project coordinator for Child Find – Ontario, a non-profit that advocates for missing children. By February 2000, he began his policing career in Peel, first as a general police officer, then as a youth

Ryan Duquette

CLASS OF 1999



education officer. He worked his way up to fraud investigator and, finally, a senior digital forensic investigator. This last role involved the painstaking work of searching for and analyzing digital evidence on computers, smartphones and security cameras for investigations involving homicide, child pornography, fraud, missing persons and assault.

“Cases involving children were often the most challenging, because the children were often victims of horrific crimes,” Duquette says. “However, these cases were also very rewarding, because the work I, and many others, did helped to protect not only those

children, but others from being victimized.”

To better solve these complex cases, Duquette simultaneously completed a part-time master’s degree in science and digital forensics management at Champlain College in Burlington, VT. What also helped him excel at his job was his natural aptitude for using computers. This made him increasingly valuable on the force, as investigations came to increasingly rely on using software and the internet to investigate crimes.

Observing the growing professional opportunities in digital forensics outside of policing, Duquette established his

consultancy in 2012, and began running it full time two years later after leaving policing. Today, his firm is in demand by small, medium and large organizations, including Fortune 500 companies. He’s also combined his forensics expertise with his passion for teaching by creating UTM’s digital forensics undergraduate course, which he has taught as a sessional lecturer since 2015. Duquette’s involvement with UTM also includes mentoring many students and sharing his expertise at alumni events—contributions UTM acknowledged with its Arbor Award for exceptional volunteerism. —**Sharon Aschalek**

Snapshot



**Laura
Chodola**

CLASS OF 2002

**Michael
Rachmel**

CLASS OF 2001

Not your grandma's tea shop

Entrepreneurial
alumni serve
up fun, modern
Tealish

Toronto has seen an explosion in the popularity of tea, and thanks to two U of T Mississauga alumni, the Queen Street West neighbourhood was ahead of the wave. Laura Chodola, 38, and her husband, Michael Rachmel, 39, opened their “modern tea boutique,” Tealish, on Queen Street West in 2005 to share their passion for tea with others, including its culture and its rituals. Ten years later, Tealish moved to Toronto’s Roncesvalles Avenue, and, today, the shop continues to thrive, serving foot traffic, as well as online and wholesale customers.

“We were young and figuring out what we wanted to do next,” Chodola says of the decision to create a business. “I tried law school for a year and felt like it wasn’t the path for me, and Michael had been travelling. We loved cooking and trying new restaurants, and we started drinking tea and loved the ritual and all the different types.

“We realized that no one in Toronto was doing tea in a fun, modern way and saw an opportunity in the market to present tea the

way we wanted it presented. We looked for places to try different teas and couldn’t find what we were looking for, so, after travelling and doing market research, we went for it.”

Tealish definitely isn’t your grandmother’s tea shop with its dainty china cups and finger sandwiches. Bright colours dominate and the menu includes tea lattes and tea smoothies.

“People are always searching for new flavours and ways to drink tea,” Chodola says. She and Rachmel have travelled extensively in the United States, Europe, Asia and South America to see how people drink and market tea, looking for test ideas.

When David’s Tea entered the Canadian market in 2008, “it was challenging because they had a similar concept, but there are more than enough tea drinkers to go around,” Chodola says.

Tealish also places an emphasis on the wholesale market and on restaurant sales. Today, Tealish teas can be found in gift shops and eateries across Canada.

The entrepreneurial couple originally met at UTM, where they became friends and dated for a brief period. Since they had many mutual friends, they remained in touch and connected again “when the time was right.” They both studied English and psychology at UTM, with economics thrown into the mix for Chodola, who finds she draws on all of those subjects for her job. “I’m always analyzing people, using economics for the business side of things and English for all the copywriting I do,” she says.

For five years or so, the couple stepped back a bit from the business to tend to the needs of their young children, but “now, we’re interested in taking Tealish in new directions and creating more of a lifestyle brand,” Chodola says. “We’re doing a lot of brand research to nail down a new brand identity and looking toward social media and online marketing to bring our products to a wider audience. As entrepreneurs, we have lots of ideas in the pipeline.”

—Elaine Smith

PHOTO: JULIE KINNEN

HOW CAN OUR FUTURE MAKE HISTORY?

At the University of Toronto Mississauga, it's been happening for 50 years. Since 1967, UTM has nurtured students, helping them realize their potential to become tomorrow's leaders. As part of our 50th anniversary celebrations, we'll honour this legacy by creating the UTM 50th Anniversary Boundless Promise Award. Your support will enable top students, regardless of financial circumstance, to attend one of the world's best universities. You'll have lifelong impact on UTM students as your generosity is doubled through the Boundless Promise matching program.

Help the future make history by giving to the UTM 50th Anniversary Boundless Promise Award at: boundless.utoronto.ca/utm50

Find out more at annualgiving.utm@utoronto.ca or 905-569-4244.



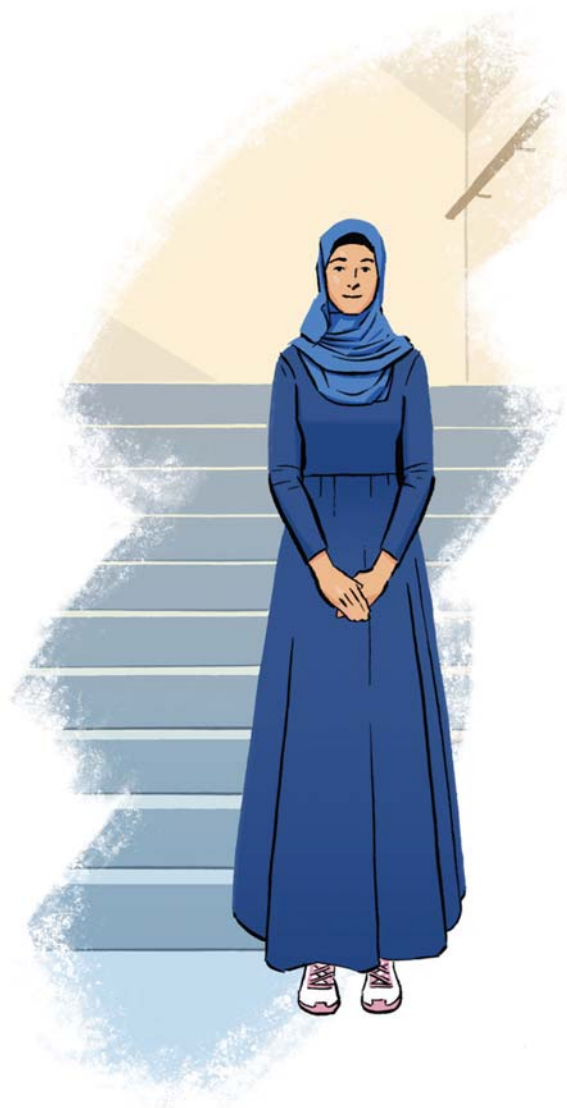
1967-2017



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO
MISSISSAUGA

BOUNDLESS

The Back



By **SAAMIYAH ALI-MOHAMMED** Illustrations by **JORI BOLTON**

*Saamiyah Ali-Mohammed's story won the grand prize
in a 50th-funded short story competition.
To read the other winning entries, go to www.utm.utoronto.ca/UTM50.*

Stair Well

The whole earth is a masjid

(place for prayer) and pure,

the Prophet Muhammad said.

Frigid winter wind seeps in through the doorway and ruffles my purple crepe headscarf. Icy mist frosts the floor-to-ceiling window. I pray for the first time in the back stairwell of the Davis Building at the University of Toronto Mississauga.

A fleece glove lies abandoned on the windowsill. A fly smacks into the window and buzzes down the glass. My toes curl on the cement. Professor Khan's voice squawks over a microphone in the adjoining lecture hall. He answers students' questions during the ten-minute break, too short a break to walk to the prayer room.

A door opens and voices echo in the stairwell above me. The door whooshes shut. Boots clunk on the stairs. The door that leads into the lecture hall thuds open against the concrete wall.

"Bipolar involves both depressive and manic episodes," Professor Khan says. "On the other hand, depression—" The door swings closed and muffles Professor Khan's voice.

I stand in *qiyām*. I learned at age three to fold my right hand over my left hand and then place them both on my chest. I learned to fix my eyes on the floor and memorized verses from the Qu'rān.

I look down, rest my hands on my chest and whisper verses into the silence. I bow down in *rukū'* and splay my fingers over my knees. I keep my back straight while I bow and after I rise.

I crouch in *sujūd* and the grain of the concrete floor digs into my forehead. In Arabic, *sujūd* means "to submit." In prayer, *sujūd* refers to prostration and the placement of seven body parts on the floor: the forehead (including the nose), both hands, both knees and the bottoms of the toes of both feet. *Sujūd* symbolizes complete submission to God in all aspects of life.

37.

"O
our
Lord!

I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your Sacred House (Ka'bah), so that they may perform prayer...

40.

"O
my
Lord,

make me and my offspring among those who perform prayer. And accept my invocation."



A

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I sit up and then prostrate again. The Prophet Muhammad sometimes recited verses aloud in *qiyām*. His companions, tribal leaders and *jinn*s (spiritual beings) stopped to listen.

When in sujūd, he only whispered.

The wind whistles. A toilet flushes in the women's wash-room across the hall. My eyelids droop. I mouth the words.

The door at the top of the staircase swings open and rattles against the wall. Dust puffs up like talcum powder. A guy and a girl walk down the stairs. Coffee sloshes onto the steps. The guy giggles, steps onto the landing and stops mid-giggle.

My heart beats faster. The floor bites into my knees. I hiss my praise of God.

I jump up, crack my knuckles and murmur under my breath. My lips fumble and I mispronounce all the Arabic words.

1. *He is Allah, the one and only*
2. *Allah, the eternal, absolute*
3. *He begetteth not nor is He begotten.*
4. *And there is none like unto Him.*

I stare at the replica of the *Ka'bah* (Muslim house of worship in Mecca) woven into the top of my dark blue *sajjadah*, a prayer mat that Muslims orient to face the *Ka'bah* before we begin prayer. My sneakers sit at its edge.

I rock on the balls of my bare feet.



The girl's heeled boots click and the boy's sneakers squelch in a musical beat as they pass. "Come on," she says. The door behind me creaks open and bangs closed. The clicks fade as they walk down the hallway. I bow down, straighten, and fall into sujūd. My glasses clack against the concrete. I sit back on my heels, praise the Prophet, then mutter, "*Assalamu alaikum* (Peace be upon you)." The angels greeted the first man and prophet, Prophet Adam, with these words. Muslims greet each other with these words. We also say *assalamu alaikum* to the angels, and to the worshippers left and right of us to signify the end of the prayer.

A blonde hair clings to the hem of my *sajjadah*. I brush off the hair, fold my *sajjadah* into a rectangle and tuck it into my coat pocket. I yank on my running shoes, run up the stairs and duck into class.

"Where were you?" asks Amanjit as I slide back into the seat next to her.

"I bought a coffee," I say.

Amanjit frowns. "I was there."

"I was...I was praying, actually," I say.

"Oh," she says. "You could have just said so."



THE JOURNAL OF



Robina Aryubwal



BY LINA LUNA

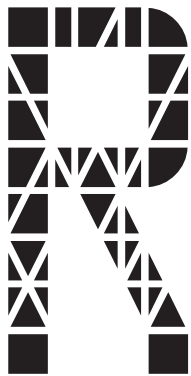
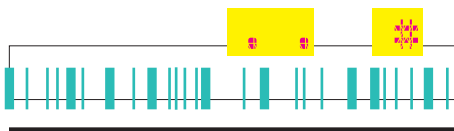
WWW

WWW

WWW







Robina Aryubwal, her parents and four siblings landed at Toronto's Pearson International late on November 12, 2015. The sky that night was clear, the air crisp and cool. When the family, refugees from Afghanistan, finally reached the arrivals gate, they emerged bleary-eyed after a 24-hour trip that began in Pakistan, where they had spent nine fraught years in a nightmarish bureaucratic limbo.

Waiting for them that evening was *As It Happens* co-host Carol Off, whose voice travels every evening into kitchens and living rooms across Canada. Many years earlier, the veteran CBC foreign correspondent had met Robina's father, Asad, on a reporting trip to Kabul, and their lives had gradually become intertwined amidst the ceaseless horror of an insurgency that refused to end. Off befriended Asad's wife Mobina and his eldest daughter, Robina, and eventually offered to support the family's application to be admitted to Canada as refugees. But the Kafkaesque process of getting them to Pearson left her seething.

When Asad came through those automatic sliding doors, pushing a cart piled high with the family's belongings, "he simply let [it] go, and it rolled away on its own momentum heading I don't know where because I was smothered in an embrace the intensity of which I had never felt before," Off recounts in *All We Leave Behind*, her newly published memoir. "Asad wept inconsolably as he released the pent-up frustration and suffering of years, perhaps a lifetime. I felt his fear, anxiety, humiliation, rage, frustration, delight and sorrow as he sobbed and sobbed."



THE ARYUBWALS AND JOURNALIST CAROL OFF WERE REUNITED AT TORONTO'S PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN 2015

Off, her husband Linden MacIntyre and several friends packed the Aryubwals into several cars and drove to a refugee shelter in Hamilton, where they had been assigned to stay upon their arrival. The facility, recalls Robina, who is now enrolled in a UTM undergraduate program, housed other refugees, but also drug addicts and some people with mental health problems. The food left much to be desired, and Robina found herself fretting about the safety of some of the women staying there.

The family passed a trying month there, but Robina, having come through much more, remained optimistic. "We knew it was temporary," she says. Indeed, they soon found an apartment and then relocated to Toronto eight months later. As Robina adds, "It's a beautiful life here."



Carol Off's book, which has been nominated for B.C.'s National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction, is a reporter's journal populated by Afghan warlords and corrupt UN bureaucrats, set against the backdrop of a geopolitical conflict that's been boiling for decades. When Off first met Asad, he stood out as a rare figure – a fearlessly outspoken man willing to stand up to the Taliban, his extended conservative family and the capricious warriors who prowled Afghanistan's forbidding landscape. It was Asad's willingness to talk to Off's camera crew and publicly denounce a local warlord that not only forced him into exile, but also prompted her to cross the invisible line that separates journalist and subject.

PREVIOUS PAGE: RAINA WILSON PHOTOGRAPHY





OFF (CENTRE) VISITS THE ARYUBWALS IN THEIR APARTMENT IN AFGHANISTAN IN 2006

But woven deeply into Off's complex tale is a remarkable parable about the power of education, and the efforts of one fiercely determined young woman and her parents to seek out learning for herself, her siblings and the countless girls who've been denied that fundamental right by religious extremists.

Robina's story winds from clandestine schools in Kabul to UTM, where she enrolled last year as an undergraduate studying political science and philosophy; her goal is to apply to law school. "Education is the most important thing in our lives," says Robina, her eyes gleaming. The opportunity to resume her studies at UTM, she adds, "was kind of like my dream come true."



Sitting at a table in the noisy food court of UTM's William Davis Building, Robina looks every inch the university student, even though, at 30, she's a decade older than most of the knapsack-toting students who stream through this space. As on most Canadian

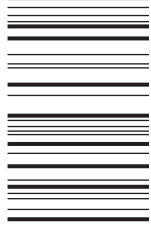
campuses today, undergraduates come from many different backgrounds, and exemplify Canada's ethnic diversity. Yet, we meet the day after the Quebec legislature has passed a law requiring women receiving public services to reveal their faces if they're wearing niqabs. The news has irritated Robina because she feels it reveals a lack of respect for her culture and the principle of equality.

Before her family fled Afghanistan in 2007, Robina—a "gold star" student bilingual in English and French—had an opportunity to spend a month studying in Paris. But the much-coveted scholarship proved disturbing as she came face to face with overt Islamophobia, including from one instructor, who decided to disparage Afghanistan when he learned of her background (see excerpt, p.21). "In Canada, everything is not perfect," she allows. "But people are so polite and welcoming and I haven't seen any discrimination."

By the time she'd taken that trip, Robina had not only completed her own high school studies in a culture that severely discouraged education for girls; she had also worked the other side of the educational equation, helping out as an English tutor in a clandestine school her mother operated at grave risk to herself and her family. (Robina actually knows six languages.)

Asad and Mobina "believed in the power of universal education," Off writes, explaining that the school allowed them to defy the Taliban by empowering young women and girls. Robina, she adds, "was gratified to hear women twice her age call her 'teacher.' Her pupils would stay late, even as she was obliged to help prepare the evening meal for her family... Ruby put them to work, peeling, chopping, frying, while she recited the alphabet and provided the English words for common objects."

After returning from the Paris trip, Robina enrolled in law school in Kabul, but she was barely months into the first year when



the Aryubwals had to flee to Peshawar in Pakistan, fearing retribution from the dangerous warlord Asad had publicly denounced. In Pakistan, with her family struggling to stay afloat and moving apartments regularly, Robina discovered that there were strict quotas on the number of Afghans who could attend law school, so she enrolled in a business administration program instead. Off sent money to help with the tuition.

At one point during the four-year program, Robina decided to organize a food festival/market on the campus, encouraging young women to set up stalls for a fee of 5,000 rupees (about \$50). Many of the participants earned back three times what they'd invested to display their wares. Robina stressed the point of the exercise, telling them that they should fight for change. "Our culture was forcing them not to be as independent as men," she recounts. "I said, 'We're women and we should be very optimistic about our future.'"

Like her mother Mobina, who is also entrepreneurial, modern and fearless, Robina stood out, and not always in a positive way in a deeply conservative society. "Some of my university teachers called me a 'white person,'" she says. "Lots of students and teachers were against my views."

Her story, of course, evokes comparisons to Malala Yousafzai, the 20-year-old Pakistani education activist who survived a violent ambush and went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize and attend Oxford. While Robina thankfully avoided that kind of harsh violence, she says she too has suffered for her outspokenness. "I had a lot of problems... Everyone tortured me: 'Why am I so bold?'" She credits her parents with instilling in her the determination to continue pushing. "I wanted to be another example for other women in my country."

Despite all of Robina's drive and pluck, the years the family spent trapped in the UNHCR's refugee vetting system wore on, seemingly without end. In Peshawar, they moved constantly, staying indoors as much as possible for safety and ducking menacing attacks. Neither Asad nor Off, trying to work



OFF AND THE ARYUBWALS IN HAMILTON, ONTARIO, ON THEIR SECOND DAY IN CANADA



the bureaucratic maze from the other side of the world, could figure out how to persuade a seemingly endless succession of officials to give the family the green light. Week after week, Asad would visit the dingy UNHCR office, hoping against hope for good news. In this twilight of false starts and shady figures offering dubious but expensive work-arounds, the family, Off reports, began to lose both their hope and, in the case of Robina's parents, their health. As Robina recounts, "We used to say, 'we'll die here.'"



On a brisk Sunday afternoon in October, Off and Robina are conversing intimately and sipping red wine after a leisurely lunch at a new bistro on the Danforth in Toronto's east end. A Greek independence day festival is going on outside, and the police are out, aiming to prevent a flare-up of the sectarian feuding (with Macedonian nationalists) that has marred these parades in the past.

While the two women are separated by a chasm of nationality, geography, profession and age, they both agree the personal connection they've forged over the years feels unique. "It's like we knew each other from some other time," Off muses. Carol, Robina says, is "a magical woman – just like a mother and a good friend."

As Off recounts in the book, she found herself trying to do anything to help this family as refugee issues increasingly crowded the international news agenda – not just the flood of desperate people fleeing the ISIS- and sectarian-fueled violence of Syria and Iraq, but also those abandoning North African and other Middle Eastern regimes, risking deadly boat journeys for a chance to trudge across Europe.

With her private and seemingly futile advocacy for the Aryubwals weighing heavily, Off doubled down on her journalistic scrutiny of Canada's track record. She brought to light details such as the federal government's practice of understaffing its immigration bureaucracy to the point where approved asylum seekers could



wallow on wait lists for years. Famously, Off grilled then-Conservative immigration minister Chris Alexander so vigorously that he hung up on her on the air – a career-killing moment. “I was shocked to see how [government-sponsored refugees] are treated,” Off says. “I think the Canadian government throws people to the wolves.” The multi-year delays, ostensibly to allow for proper security checks, are simply unjustified, she asserts. “No one leaves their home unless they have to.”

Away from the microphone, Off made calls, fired off emails, and worked her sources. She often wired survival money. At one point in her book, Off reveals something she’d never told the family: that she had toyed with the idea of sending the entire contents of her bank account to Asad and telling the clan to find their own way to safety instead of waiting for an official approval from Ottawa.

Now, two years after that emotional reunion at Pearson, their long ordeal seems remote and receding. The Aryubwals live in a townhouse in North York: they’re all working various jobs or enrolled in various educational programs. The trace marks of their struggle remain, though

now transformed into aspiration: Robina, determined to get into law school, wants to find a career in which she can advocate for vulnerable individuals, and especially women. “We should help people who need to be helped,” she says simply. “That’s my message to the world.”

It’s also evident that the improbable relationship between the Aryubwals and Off has only solidified with the passage of time. Something about that dynamic is familiar. Off recounts recently riffling through a box of old family pictures and finding snapshots of several Vietnamese refugees whom her parents had helped sponsor in the early 1980s and then befriended as they established themselves in London, Ont. Off was struck that those images had found a home in a box dedicated to her family’s memories. “I thought, ‘Yeah, these photos do belong in here.’”

It is the same with her and Robina, Off observes. “You start to bleed into each other’s lives. You realize these people are in my family.”

“Our friendship is unconditional,” Robina offers.

“Yes,” Off replies. “That’s a good way of saying it.”

From *All We Leave Behind: A Reporter’s Journey into the Lives of Others* by Carol Off, published by Random House of Canada (2017).

Excerpt (pp.163-164):

This news [of the scholarship in Paris] was delivered by phone, because the family wanted to seek my advice. The problem, as they explained, was that the organization offering the scholarship would pay to bring only Robina to France and not a male member of the family to act as a chaperone. Ruby was eighteen now and very capable of handling herself, but it wasn’t the welfare of his daughter that worried Asad – it was the reaction of his kinfolk. He was worried and, as I would subsequently learn, he had good reason.

“You have to let her go, Asad,” I said. And I suspect that he knew that’s what I’d say even before he asked. He and Mobina were looking for an ally, someone who shared their values about the modern world...

I should have understood that Ruby’s adventures in higher education might be causing trouble when I received a photo from her, posing in front of the Eiffel Tower. She was with a new girlfriend. She was smiling but there was something dark and tentative in her expression, so different from the mischievous Ruby I knew. I kept the photo on my desk for years, its full meaning dawning on me only slowly, as the family crisis deepened...

On the flight home, Robina allowed herself to think about what she would face back in Kabul. She was returning from the most memorable experience of her young life, an adventure that had the full blessing of her father. But she suspected that her Aryubwal relatives were outraged by her actions. Robina had done something that everyone should have been proud of. She had completed high school with top marks and was the only woman among four hundred men to speak at her graduation. She excelled in her courses in Paris and, instead of abandoning her culture, Ruby had been an ambassador for Afghans. She wanted to tell her relatives all of this, to share the sheer joy of her accomplishment, to describe the sensational moment when she walked into her graduation ceremony wearing traditional dress. But when she got home, Ruby learned there would be no celebration with the extended family. They quickly let her know that, in their eyes, she was little better than a tramp...

Sitting beside an aunt at a women’s party not long after she was home, Ruby was smiling broadly as she turned to speak to her relative only to be met with a hostile glare. Then the woman pursed her lips and spat directly into the girl’s face.

OFF, HER HUSBAND LINDEN MACINTYRE AND THEIR FAMILY WELCOME THE ARYUBWALS TO THEIR HOME FOR THE FIRST TIME



CHAMPIONING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT ICUBE



UTM's business accelerator offers training, mentorship
and helps steer startups towards success

Sharon
Aschaiek



W

What do a produce-growing wall, an all-inclusive education app and a high-tech sous-vide cooking device have in common? They're just some of the exciting innovations the University of Toronto Mississauga is helping to nurture through its business accelerator, ICUBE.

Each year, ICUBE accepts about a dozen startups run by UTM students, alumni or community members into its Innovation to Commercialization for Entrepreneurs (ICE) program. The three-month boot camp helps the entrepreneurs establish and validate their new business ideas by offering six workshops on topics such as researching target audiences, building a productive team, managing finances and pitching potential investors. ICE teams are mentored by successful entrepreneurs, receive a \$1,000 capital injection, can engage in peer-to-peer networking with other ICE teams and can access business-building resources from the MaRS Discovery District. Participants can also join programs offered by other business incubators in U of T's entrepreneurship ecosystem.

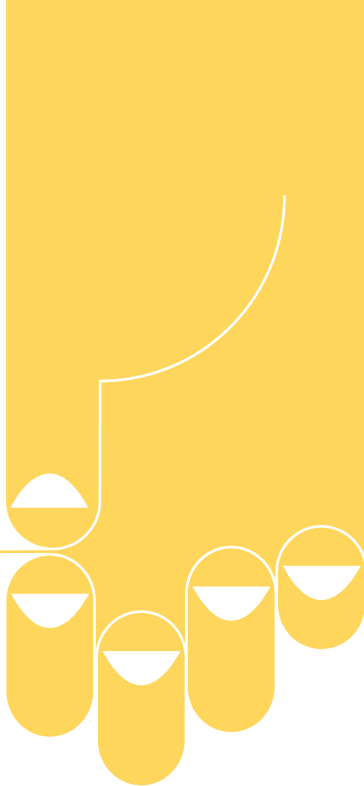
ICUBE has helped Kevin Jakiela steer his small-scale urban-farming company in the right direction. **JUST VERTICAL** allows for hydroponically growing fruits, vegetables and herbs indoors in an energy- and water-efficient way. You can purchase pesticide-free seedlings for, say, kale, strawberries or chard, insert them in the slots on a FarmWall—a specialized tower equipped with grow lights, nutrient solution and an irrigation system—and voilà, you have your own mini farm.

Jakiela and his business partner, Conner Tidd, both graduates of UTM's Master of Science in Sustainability Management program originally planned to promote their business to condo owners. But after completing a market segmentation exercise at ICUBE, they decided to target restaurants—accessing fresh food more easily

Housed at UTM's Institute for Management & Innovation, **ICUBE** helps local early-stage entrepreneurs transform their bright business ideas into viable products and services. Established in February 2015, ICUBE provides access to training, mentorship and a collaborative workspace. By offering these essential business development and commercialization services, ICUBE is fostering the next generation of startup creators while building a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship at UTM.

"We help aspiring or new entrepreneurs move from the ideation phase right through to commercialization, and give them all the steps to identify and reach the right market," says Donna Heslin, ICUBE co-operator and UTM's director of graduate programs and external relations.





and cheaply—and schools—educating students on growing plants. Another boost from ICUBE came this past spring, when Just Vertical won its business pitch competition, with a \$7,000 cash prize. Recently, ICUBE helped Just Vertical join the Impact Centre, U of T’s development hub for early-stage natural sciences and engineering startups.

“ICUBE has been very important to Just Vertical’s growth,” Jakiela says. “The biggest takeaway for us was figuring out our ideal target markets and how to cater our pitch to them.”

Rayner Mendes and Grant Hu are preoccupied with another aspect of food: making it easier to cook for those with busy lifestyles. Mendes, a Western University business graduate, and Hu, a U of T computer science graduate, developed a sous-vide cooking device, called the **NISE WAVE**, that allows for automated cooking through a smartphone application. You place uncooked food like steak or chicken in a vacuum-sealed bag, put it in a pot of water with the Nise Wave device and one of the company’s seasoning packets, and use the app to cook it at your convenience. This means you could have poached eggs waiting for you in the morning or salmon ready for you after work.

The pair has already attracted more than \$300,000 in investment for the Nise Wave through crowdfunding, but wanted to pursue other finance sources. An ICUBE workshop on pitching and finding funding helped them identify potential venture capitalists and “angel groups” (affluent investors

who pool their capital). Also critical, they say, has been the expert guidance and constant encouragement they’ve received from ICUBE program lead and accomplished entrepreneur Sam Dumcum. ICUBE helped them secure a spot at U of T’s ONRamp, its new state-of-the-art collaboration and community space for entrepreneurs.

“We hit a lot of road blocks in the production of our prototype, which was really stressful,” says Mendes, CEO of **NISE TECH**. “At those times, you really see the benefit of ICUBE. You get help with solving these problems and making sure you’re going down the right path.”

Education app company **KWE TECH** was too far in its development by the time it discovered ICUBE’s ICE program, but it was accepted as a resident team, which has provided access to office space, some training and mentorship, and the chance to network with and mentor other teams. Co-founder and CEO Ming Xia, a master of education graduate from U of T’s Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, says ICUBE has been an invaluable resource for their app, which lets parents see their children’s classwork, review school notices, pay for field trips, arrange playdates with classmates and more. ICUBE’s entrepreneur-in-residence, veteran businessman Vigen Nazarian, has been particularly helpful.

“Being part of ICUBE has been a huge benefit,” Xia says. “You gain so much in terms of mentorship, advice and connections, which helps you take the next steps in your business.” **M**



Spark



Accents, eh? From 'eh' to Drake, UTM linguist is documenting the changing nature of Canadian English

Derek Denis, who joined UTM's Department of Language Studies in July 2017, says he developed an interest in linguistics as a child. "We had a copy of the American Heritage Dictionary," he says. "The back cover page had a diagram of the family tree of Indo-European languages. It fascinated me and I wanted to know more about how languages could evolve, split apart and change."

Denis earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees at U of T and recently completed post-doctoral work at the University of Victoria where his research focused on the curious evolution of Canadian English. "From Ontario to British Columbia, our accent and dialect is homogenous," he says. "There are some differences between urban and rural locations, but if you compare the diversity within Canada to that of the United States or the United Kingdom, it's very small." This is attributed to the influence of United Empire Loyalists who settled in Ontario before pushing westward, bringing the dialect with them. "It had been observed that people from Toronto to Vancouver sounded the same, but it had never been empirically tested," Denis says.


Denis studied oral history recordings of Canadians born between 1890 and 1920 who had lived in Ontario and Vancouver Island, paying particular attention to syntactic phenomenon and discourse markers—phrases like 'eh' or 'and stuff' or 'you know'.

"I compared interviews to see how the use of those phrases changed over time," Denis says. "Over the past hundred years, we see the use of 'and stuff' rise in frequency, while 'and things' has decreased. In older data, we see phrases like 'and so on' or 'and so forth' drop off."

Denis also studied how Canadian English speakers use 'eh.' Although it is considered the quintessentially Canadian phrase, Denis' research showed some surprising results. "Across the same time span, 'eh' is used infrequently relative to 'you know' and 'right', which are close cousins," he says. Comparatively, "eh" is used just two to four per cent of the time. "It's not the one thing we use—it's not the defining linguistic marker of Canada," he says.

Denis identified three different ways that Canadians use 'eh' in everyday conversation. "One seeks confirmation of the truth of what you said: 'Oh, you got your hair cut, eh?,' which varies with 'right.'" Denis says. A second instance acts as a verbal nudge—"I got my hair cut, eh?" which varies with 'you know?', confirming with that the person you're speaking to knows you got a hair cut," he says. The third use acts as a kind of verbal punctuation. "I went down to the Tim Hortons, eh, and ran into my buddy Gord, eh?" The speaker is not looking for feedback or confirmation from the person they're talking to," he says.

Denis' current research looks to the future of Canadian English, with a focus on multi-ethnolects—how ethnically diverse



“I went down to the Tim Hortons, eh, and ran into my buddy Gord, eh?” The speaker is not looking for feedback or confirmation from the person they’re talking to.”

neighbourhoods are influencing a new direction in Canadian language. “This is distinct from English as a second language where you can hear traces of someone’s first language,” Denis says. “It has features that don’t map onto original languages. It begins in socially and economically isolated neighbourhoods, and spreads into common usage.”

One example of this is the use of first-person pronoun ‘mans’ which Drake fans may recognize from the rapper’s appearance on the 2016 *Saturday Night Live* sketch “Black Jeopardy.” Drake may have popularized the pronoun, but Denis notes that there is evidence of its use in Toronto speech much earlier. Denis says that the term is an indication of the changing nature of the language, which is increasingly influenced by the new cultures and languages spoken in Canada today. “It’s been around since 2012, but he didn’t start using it on his albums until later. He got it from somewhere, too.” — **Blake Eligh**



Every breath you take Professor finds children at risk from surprising source of air pollution

We think of schools as safe places for children, but there’s an invisible hazard lurking right outside their front doors. A recent study by Matthew Adams, assistant professor with U of T Mississauga’s Department of Geography, found that school kiss-and-ride drop-off zones are exposing children to increased levels of air pollution.

With every breath, children inhale a toxic cocktail of air pollutants like carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and ozone. Adams uses GIS—geographic information systems—to predict individual exposure to air pollution on a hyper-local scale, studying locations in Hamilton, Mississauga and other urban areas in the Greater Toronto Area. His research could help us better understand and predict our own exposure to air pollution, and perhaps take steps to avoid it.

“We wanted to know what happens when cars idle outside of schools, and we found that it creates some significant air pollution issues,” Adams says. “Under certain conditions, particularly in the winter when the air is not moving and dispersing that air pollution, cars can generate very high air pollution concentrations right where students are being dropped off.” He notes that kindergarten play yards are often located next to drop-off zones, subjecting the youngest students to concentrated exposures of auto exhaust, which can lead to a variety of negative effects like respiratory health issues, poor school performance and poor well-being later in life.

“Students spend a long time at school. They don’t really have a choice in where they’re going to school, and schools are built to last for a long time,” he says. “Understanding what’s going on in these very local sources of air pollution is important because that’s really where the exposure occurs.” The study recommends locating play structures and play yards away from drop-off zones, encouraging students to walk and bike to school and convincing drivers to turn off their engines in the drop-off location. — **Blake Eligh**

Class Notes

Connections to Counselling

When Funmilade Taiwo (Honours B.Sc., 2015) was completing his major in psychology and double minor in biology and sociology, he was impressed by the UTM Health & Counselling Centre's focus on mental wellbeing, and how it helped to remove the stigma around mental illness. Hoping to bring that effect to his home country of Nigeria, Taiwo started *PsyndUp*, a non-profit, community-based organization that aims to change the way that Nigerians access mental health care. It operates a free, online database and directory service for clinical professionals, which allows patients to find a mental health professional close to where they live. He hopes that it will someday offer not just face-to-face therapy, but even online counselling options for Nigerians in more remote locations.



Cutting Edge

Both on and off the ice, Kristen Loritz knows about hard work and dedication. At the age of 16, Loritz (HBA, 2016) began a competitive skating career as a member of the NEXXICE senior synchronized skating team. The Burlington, Ontario, team went on to nab top spot in the Canadian championships that year, and became the first-ever Canadian and North American squad to win the World Championship title in April 2009. Inducted into the Skate Canada Hall of Fame in 2016, Loritz holds two personal records as the youngest Canadian synchronized skating world champion and as the most successful synchronized skater in Canadian history. Loritz currently works as a marketing coordinator with Splash Effect, a Toronto-based branding, web design and social media strategy firm, but skating is still a huge part of her life. As a member of the board at OneTeamMVMT, a global advocacy group for synchronized skating, she works to raise the profile of the sport, connect the community with strategic partnerships, and educate coaches and skaters. In less than a year of operation, the group has reached more than 3,000 members in 15 countries. Loritz also laces up to coach and leads skating seminars across Canada, the United States, Iceland and Great Britain.



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Some of our favourite pictures of UTM have been taken by students, alumni, faculty and staff. We would love to see the campus through your eyes—send your photos of U of T Mississauga to news.utm@utoronto.ca, and we could use it in the magazine or on social media!



A Lasting Legacy

By **NICOLLE WAHL**

While still a professor of physics at Erindale College, Fraser Code's commute to the office took him through Erindale Park and over the Burnhamthorpe bridge. His yellow raincoat was easily recognizable, as was his "fishing rod"—in fact, it was a radio aerial that pulled in the BBC news broadcast while he walked. En route to his job teaching and studying nuclear magnetic resonance, he recalls taking great blue herons by surprise on the path between what is now Alumni House and the student residences.

As a faculty member between 1971 and 2003, Code split his time between Erindale/UTM and the St. George campus, combining teaching, research and participation in other campus activities. Now retired, he continues to attend physics colloquiums at UTM, but "as a professor emeritus, I felt that there were a few things I hadn't done. I'd like to make a difference to the department where I spent my career, and leave a legacy that will have a lasting impact on students."

In particular, Code hopes to make a difference to graduate students, who play a critical role in advancing research at UTM, where graduate enrolment growth is

a key part of the campus's strategic plan. "One thing I noticed was that many foreign students had thesis awards on their CVs," he says.

Hoping to give that edge to UTM graduate students, he and his wife, speech-language pathologist Jennifer Code, established an award for the Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences PhD candidate who displays excellence in research, as demonstrated by their PhD thesis and oral defense.

"It was really important to Fraser," says Jennifer. "Grad school is such a grind and it's critical to have something to keep you going. We want this award to encourage students to keep going and follow their dreams."

The first Fraser Code PhD Thesis Award was handed out in November 2017. "I hope that in the years ahead, we'll see where the future takes these bright young students," he says.

As a retired couple, the Codes chose to use equities to establish their award, something made easier by tax regulations. "With a little imagination, you can open a door for other people to walk through," says Fraser. **M**

Boundless Gratitude

Since the public launch of the Boundless Campaign in 2012, the University of Toronto Mississauga has received generous support from alumni and friends around the globe. We are profoundly grateful for the trust and confidence that they have placed in us. Donors are playing a transformative role in the life of the institution by championing our highest priorities and aspirations. The result is an unprecedented level of giving that is impacting every aspect of the campus through a range of initiatives. Philanthropy has been involved in everything from student awards to groundbreaking research programs, and the construction of award-winning facilities through to innovative experiential learning opportunities and investments in human capital. Donors are touching the lives of countless members of the U of T Mississauga community, and in turn, supporting the University as it contributes to the health and well-being of our society.

We are proud to recognize benefactors who have supported the Boundless Campaign with gifts of \$25,000 or more and those who have contributed to the King's College Heritage Society. In addition, we are pleased to acknowledge donors who have given \$500 or more in 2016-17. We invite you to boundless.utoronto.ca to view an extensive listing of donors in support of the University of Toronto's Boundless Campaign.

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Vault

In the campus's early years, Erindale College athletes charged onto the courts and fields wearing one of two emblems: men were known as the Warriors and women as Hustlers (or "Hussies"). But as times changed and demand for a more inclusive campus symbol grew, the college decided to develop a new mascot and logo for its athletic teams. In 1998, the athletic council held a contest to select a new logo. A committee composed of eight student leaders picked student Behroze Nejatie's design of an eagle as the new emblem for UTM's sport teams. The eagle represents the symbol of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, upon whose traditional lands U of T Mississauga operates. UTM's Varsity Eagles now compete in the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA), in cross-country, badminton, basketball, and indoor and outdoor soccer. Let's go, Eagles!



PHOTO: UTM ARCHIVES



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SAVE THE DATE FOR NEXT YEAR'S REUNION. MAY 30–JUNE 3, 2018

The University of Toronto is planning special events for our annual alumni weekend next spring. With more than 130 events to choose from, there's something for every U of T graduate at our 2018 reunion.

Calling all alumni to U of T Flagship Events

Wednesday, May 30

SHAKER Classic

Thursday, May 31

LGBTQ Spring Soirée

Friday, June 1

U of T Alumni 50th
Anniversary Ceremony

Stress-Free Degree lectures

Saturday, June 2

Stress-Free Degree
lectures, campus tours
and other events

U of T Alumni Celebration

Alumni BBQ

Kids' Passport to U of T

What's happening at the University of Toronto Mississauga?

Wednesday, May 30

U of T Mississauga Alumni Association
Annual General Meeting

Classes Without Quizzes

Thursday, May 31

Alumni Awards of Distinction

Friday, June 1

Flicks on the Field

Date to be announced

E.A. Robinson Science Education Lectureship

Registration opens in March 2018.

Find out more:

905-569-4924

alumni.utm@utoronto.ca

utm.utoronto.ca/alumni/events
[#uoftreunion](https://twitter.com/uoftreunion)



BOUNDLESS