

University of Alberta Alumni Association

# 2015-16 ANNUAL REPORT

Highlights of Strategic Advancements

## ACHIEVING OUTSTANDING RESULTS



It's been an honour to serve as president during the Alumni Association's 100th Anniversary. Centenary events were inspiring. Hearing Rick Hansen describe his journey while encouraging us to "be a difference-maker" at the Leadership Lecture was thoughtful and motivating. Afterward, Alumni Council colleagues and U of A friends participated in The Leadership Summit. The capstone event illustrated how easy it is to make a difference. We built bicycles we gave to U School students. Where will those bikes, the experience, and time, take those children?

Unveiling the *Visionaries* sculpture – a gift from the Alumni Association – was a particularly proud moment. An honour to our past, the sculpture is a campus legacy anticipating the endless possibilities future generations of students will pursue.

Beyond celebrations, Council has been productive and accomplished. Our 2016-18 strategic plan is complete with key areas of focus articulated. We remain committed to providing high value programming, strengthening community connections and collaborating with our partners. We enter the coming term enthused, focused and committed to enhance our strategic support to the University of Alberta as we continue to grow one of the world's great universities for the public good.



**MARY PAT BARRY, '04 MA, ABC**

President, University of Alberta Alumni Association



The Office of Alumni Relations, in partnership with the dedicated volunteers on Alumni Council, work together to create meaningful opportunities for alumni to remain connected with the University. In the past year, we've engaged 31,000 alumni and friends, a six per cent increase. Our centenary celebrations drew more than 15,000 guests and involved young and old alike. In fact, more than half of program participants were grads of the 2000's, representing an important shift as we engage an increasingly younger population. New programs such as eResources that provide alumni access to the University Library online, our corporate engagement program and the many faculty partnerships that have created innovative programming, are all helping to advance a strong outreach strategy. The completion of the Do Great Things challenge this year saw alumni volunteer more than 2,300 times with the university, of which more than one-third involved mentoring students. Because of the dedication and enthusiasm of so many alumni volunteers, we continue to build a strong and dedicated alumni community working in support of the University of Alberta.



**SEAN PRICE, '95 BCom, MBA**

AVP Alumni Relations, University of Alberta Alumni Association



## OUR VISION OF THE FUTURE

A proud and inspired community of alumni and students engaged in the life and success of the University.

## THE MISSION WE PURSUE

To build one of the world's great universities for the public good by creating mutually beneficial relationships and lifelong connections between the University of Alberta and its alumni and students.



## GOAL

### Celebrating our 100th anniversary

#### Centenary Outreach

**Leadership Lecture** — At the Centenary Leadership Lecture, Rick Hansen, '11 LLD (Honorary), inspired 625 alumni and guests to be difference-makers in the lives of others. Held in May, the official anniversary month of the Alumni Association, this event brought local and regional volunteers together to hear a moving keynote address.

**Volunteer Summit** — Celebrating 100 years of volunteer service, 146 alumni volunteers and community members participated in a one-day workshop that offered leadership skill-building opportunities such as facilitation, improvisation, storytelling and mentoring. The summit culminated in a collaborative bicycle-building activity, which concluded with U School students receiving the bikes at an emotional presentation.

**The Next 100 Years** — A TED Talk-style event at Alumni Weekend showcased four past Alumni Award recipients. The diverse panel of alumni shared their thoughts on advancements of the next century and how humanity will be transformed in 100 years.

**Kids Create & Great Things** — The final Edmonton-based centenary activities drew 563 guests in one day. Coordinated with University of Alberta Museums, 130 alumni works of art and innovation were displayed. The family-focused afternoon event, Kids Create, provided creative fun with arts, crafts and discovery experiences. Three alumni artists gave presentations during the Great Things evening reception, describing the inspiration for their work. All guests made prints of themselves and contributed to a display wall of the "next 100 faces."

**Outstanding Results** — Signature events attracted 15,174 attendees, of which 55 per cent were first-time participants. Centenary events received extremely high satisfaction ratings on follow-up surveys. The Leadership Lecture received ratings of 77 per cent excellent, The Next 100 Years talk received ratings of 80 per cent excellent and Kids Create received ratings of 78 per cent excellent. High-quality programming elevated the profile of the Alumni Association within the alumni community and increased outreach to new participants during the centenary.



## GOAL

Leaving Lasting  
Legacies for our  
Alma Mater

### History, Traditions and Reputation

**Sculpture Unveiling** — In September, the Alumni Association gifted a 10-foot bronze sculpture to the university in honour of the Association's 100th Anniversary. *The Visionaries* depicts Henry Marshall Tory, the University of Alberta's founding president, and Alexander Cameron Rutherford, Alberta's first premier and is set in the Presidents' Circle on North Campus near Quad. The sculpture is part of the University of Alberta Museums' public art collection and is just one of many gifts made by the Alumni Association to the university during its 100 year history.

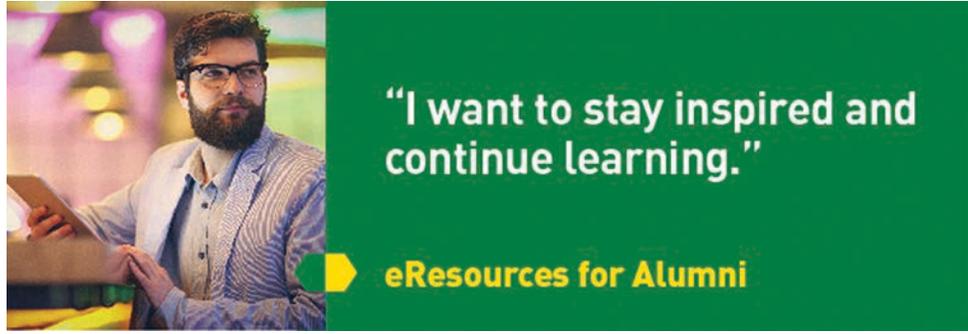
**Inspiring Students** — New chrome panel portraits of Distinguished Alumni Awards recipients featuring a summary of their achievements are being installed on the walls of the Alumni Lounge in the Students' Union Building. This display profiles alumni who serve as role models for future graduates. Donated by the Alumni Association, this glass-walled room overlooking Alumni Walk is a popular study space for students.

## GOAL

Raising Reputation  
and Profile

**Alumni Awards** — Since its inception in 1994, the Alumni Awards program has recognized 773 alumni for outstanding achievements and contributions to society. In the fall of 2015, the Alumni Association honoured 28 alumni at the annual ceremony. For 2016, the Awards Committee reviewed 119 nominations and selected 25 recipients. Seventy-five per cent of all Alumni Award recipients become donors to the university.

**Recognition** — In the past year, more than 400 recognition cards and letters were sent to alumni who "Do Great Things." The program recognizes significant job promotions, professional awards or milestones, athletic achievements and notable community contributions. Recognition also results in social media activity, which raises the profile of the Alumni Association, its alumni and their impact on our professions and communities.



## GOAL

Inspiring alumni pride & support for the university

### Innovative Outreach

**New Trail Magazine** — The University of Alberta’s alumni magazine is a primary method of outreach to 187,931 graduates around the world. In addition to receiving numerous awards in the past few years, *New Trail* was named Magazine of the Year by the Alberta Magazine Publishers Association in 2016.

**Thought Box** — The editorial-based electronic publication from the Alumni Association celebrated its first year with two awards from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Emailed monthly to 69,712 alumni, it has helped drive 43 per cent more online traffic to the *New Trail* website.

**Electronic Media** — The Alumni Association produced a video for the centenary which received 26,177 views in the past year, contributing to a 32 per cent increase in YouTube views and a 65 per cent increase in subscribers. A new social media strategy, focused on bringing awareness and excitement to Alumni Association programs, bolstered Facebook likes by 16 per cent and Twitter followers by 14 per cent. Overall, social media connections increased by 28 per cent in 2015-16.

**eResources** — The Alumni Association partnered with University of Alberta Libraries on a pilot project that allows alumni off-campus, online access to a number of electronic journals and databases. Since its launch in June 2015, 3,345 alumni have registered. This alumni benefit supports lifelong learning and responds to student survey results indicating “access to the library” as a priority. Data shows that 56 per cent of eResources for Alumni registrants have graduated within the last ten years.



## GOAL

### Increasing volunteer involvement

#### Volunteerism

**Do Great Things Challenge** — The Do Great Things volunteer challenge, which began in 2013, successfully achieved its final goal at the close of the centenary, culminating with 2,015 volunteer experiences in the 2015 calendar year.

**Community Service** — Summer of Service volunteers participated in 14 community service projects in eight communities across the country. These community-based initiatives benefited from 254 volunteers donating 1,057 volunteer hours. Alumni worked at six Habitat for Humanity Builds, five community clean-up events and three social service support projects. Since 2013, the number of community-based initiatives has quadrupled.

**Campus Partnerships** — A variety of partnerships were established as a result of the volunteer challenge, creating diverse ways for alumni to give back their time. Alumni volunteers supported elementary and junior high students in the U School program, contributed to scientific research by assisting in the Dino Lab and made final exams a little less stressful by helping the Healthy Campus Unit with Unwind Your Mind events. Alumni were panelists during Career Centre Career Forums and hosted students during Job Shadow Week. Mentoring activities now represent 34 per cent of annual volunteer activity, a jump of 17 per cent in three years. In addition, alumni programs benefit from volunteer involvement. In September at Alumni Weekend, 90 volunteers donated 338 hours of time, assisting in a variety of ways from driving alumni between faculty events on the Campus Shuttle golf-carts to helping with family fun activities.



## GOAL

Building community  
by engaging alumni

### Regional Engagement

**Regional Chapters** — In 2015-16, the Alumni Association engaged 2,988 alumni and guests through 58 events held in different cities across the province, nation and world. At various events, ten University of Alberta faculty shared their research and six notable alumni were profiled. The final centenary event of 2015 was held in Hong Kong with 105 in attendance. With 75 per cent of all alumni living in Alberta, the Alumni Association focused on increasing engagement in Camrose, Calgary, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray.

**Presidential Farewell and Welcome Events** — The Alumni Association hosted farewell events for outgoing president Indira Samarasekera and welcome events in Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto and London for incoming president David Turpin. The welcome events followed a Q & A format giving alumni the opportunity to address questions directly to the president. Event messaging tied back to the Alumni Association's centenary celebrations. In total 1,164 alumni participated in presidential events in 2015-16.

### Edmonton Engagement

Approximately half of all alumni live in Edmonton and the surrounding area. The Alumni Association provides a broad range of programming to appeal to this large audience. The addition of centenary programming throughout 2015-16 increased Edmonton-based program participation by 27 per cent and drove 205 per cent more visits to the Edmonton events website.



**GOAL**  
Building community  
by engaging alumni

**Profiling the Academy and Alumni** — Across all Edmonton-based programs, there were 21 events featuring 12 University of Alberta faculty and 13 alumni experts.

**Educated Programming** — The Educated series regularly reached capacity for attendance. Programming engaged 1,868 Edmonton-based alumni. In 2015-16, a set of two special lectures were planned to reflect timely social topics. The Alumni Association invited Cindy Blackstock to lecture in Edmonton and Calgary, speaking on “The Best Hope for a New Generation of First Nations Children.” Both events reached capacity and one-third of participants were graduates of the last decade, a demographic typically more challenging to reach.

**Family Programming** — Family programming provides alumni opportunities to share the fun and nostalgia of campus with their children. In this fiscal year, two Easter family events attracted 800 attendees each. The Family Fun portion of Alumni Weekend attracted over 500 guests of all ages. A new collaboration with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra allowed 110 alumni and their families to learn about research featured by the Department of Anthropology and enjoy a special version of the CBC documentary *The Great Human Odyssey* produced and narrated by University of Alberta post-doctoral fellow Niobe Thompson.

**Alumni Weekend** — The centenary Alumni Weekend attracted 9,680 participants, 592 more than the previous year. The Alumni Association partners with faculties, departments and student groups to offer a variety of faculty-based and centrally-planned events that appeal to alumni at all life stages.



## GOAL

### Building community by engaging alumni

## Faculty and Chapter Engagement

**Faculty Engagement** — The Faculty Engagement program facilitates stronger communication and collaboration with faculties. Efforts focus on identifying shared engagement priorities, obtaining leads for faculty speakers and distributing a monthly newsletter to keep faculty stakeholders informed about alumni programs. In its second year of operation, the program established 31 partnership programs that engaged 5,141 participants, an increase of 24 per cent. A partnership with Athletics is one example of a successful joint program. At a special ceremony, 58 former Pandas from 1930 to 1969 received Block 'A' sweaters. Prior to 1989, female athletes did not receive sweaters, so the presentation was an important move toward inclusion. Another example of collaboration is support for multi-campus programming such as the Augustana Easter activity, Alumni Weekend and Last Lecture. The Alumni Association works with each faculty to determine their specific needs and align programming to positively affect the alumni experience.

**Campus Chapters** — Campus Chapters create peer-to-peer engagement opportunities for interest-based and faculty-based chapters. The 14 chapters engaged 1,706 participants through 74 projects and events in 2015-16. Chapters build relationships with the alumni community, students and other Chapter groups. For example, the Dental Alumni Association and the Dental Hygiene Alumni Chapter jointly held an event to broaden professional networking opportunities and share resources. The Pride Alumni Chapter collaborated with the LGBTQ+ student social group OUTreach during UAlberta Pride Week to deliver an interactive art event featuring student and alumni artists. The Pharmacy Alumni Association added value to their already successful mentorship program by including a coaching skills session for alumni. The Law Chapter funded six new scholarships and supported two summer students at the Edmonton Community Legal Centre. The Alumni Association supports Campus Chapters by providing resources such as access to an online registration system, event toolkits, staff liaisons and volunteer recognition.



## GOAL Engaging Students

### Student Engagement

**Perception Study** — In the fall, the Alumni Association surveyed students to collect market research and establish a baseline of awareness about the Alumni Association, which assists in aligning programming with student needs. Results showed students are most interested in accessing library services, gaining career support and receiving discounts and benefits after they graduate. In 2015-16, the Alumni Association engaged 13,937 students in a variety of ways.

**Supporting Student Life** — Building community among students is a priority of the Alumni Association. Throughout 2015-16, Alumni Student Council adjudicated three student scholarships and awarded \$30,040 in Student Engagement Grants to support student group initiatives such as The Landing and TEDxUALberta. At the beginning of fall term, Alumni Council members welcomed first-year students at the annual Pep Rally and handed out Do Great Things t-shirts. The Alumni Association had a strong presence in Celebration Plaza during Week of Welcome and assisted with the Graduate Students' Association orientation. Throughout the year, events such as the International Students Hockey Night and Last Lecture created opportunities to connect with students and raised the profile of the Alumni Association on campus.

**Milestone Gift** — In honour of the Alumni Association's centenary, each new alumnus received a specially commissioned print by local artist Jason Blower, '00 BEd, in their convocation package. Gifting an alumni artist's print to each graduate will become a yearly tradition.

**Engaging Leaders** — To develop strategic relationships with future alumni leaders, the Alumni Association partnered with the Faculty of Arts Lister Centre Arts Leadership Cohort Floor to provide focused engagement opportunities and support their participation in prospective student tours. The Alumni Association sponsored the Alberta Student Leadership Summit and recruited student leaders to participate on the Alumni Student Council.

**Preparing for the Future** — As part of the commitment to support students as they begin their careers, the Alumni Association provided a "Skip the Selfie" photo booth at the Career Centre Summer Job Fair where students could get a free, professional photograph to use in their online profiles.



## GOAL Engaging Leaders

### Leadership

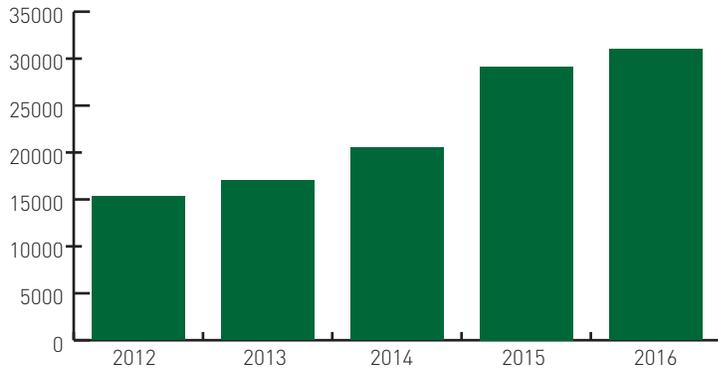
**Venture Mentoring Service** — The Venture Mentoring Service (VMS) deepens relationships with highly engaged alumni and supports the development of new entrepreneurs. In 2015-16, VMS had 17 active alumni ventures and 43 mentors. Since its inception in 2013, the program has supported over 130 mentorship meetings and over 1,400 volunteer hours through mentoring activities. Entrepreneurs gave the program a satisfaction score of 4.2 out of 5 and mentors rated the program 4.1 out of 5. In March, the program welcomed four new entrepreneurs and three new mentors.

**Corporate Alumni Relations** — Launched in early 2015, the Corporate Alumni Relations program engages key corporations that have a longstanding relationship with the University of Alberta and employ a significant number of students and alumni. This outreach provides opportunities to highlight the research excellence, innovation and collaboration between the university and corporate partners. In 2015-16, the program engaged 721 alumni and their colleagues across 10 professional development, mentoring and learning sessions customized to their specific workplace needs and interests.

**Council Committees and Strategic Planning** — Council committees advanced a number of key initiatives in the past year: selecting alumni award and student grant recipients; reviewing affinity partners, alumni benefits and plans for Alumni Weekend; contributing ideas to educational programming and volunteer management; as well as considering how best to engage student and alumni leaders. In addition to the work of the committees, the Alumni Association developed and approved the 2016-2018 Strategic Plan in consultation with the campus community. The plan provides strategic direction for the next three years and aligns with the institutional plan and priorities of the Office of Advancement. Combined, the 38 volunteers on Alumni Council dedicated more than 2,000 hours of volunteer time throughout the year.

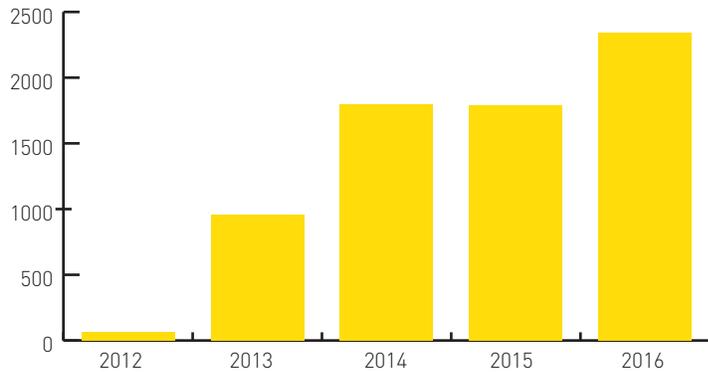
# MEASURING SUCCESS

## Alumni Engaged in Programming



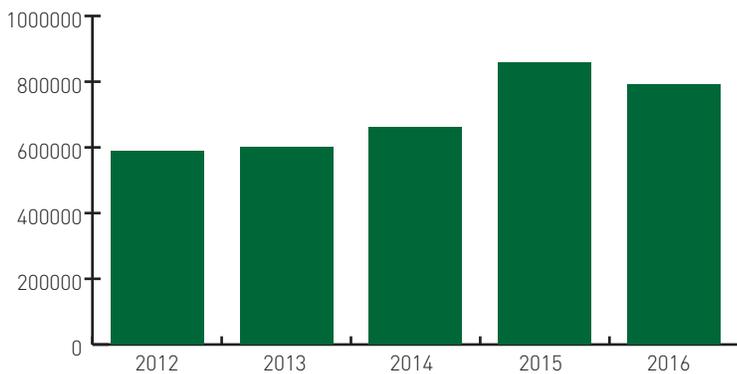
The number of alumni engaged each year in programming continues to increase. Centenary celebrations in 2015 bridged two fiscal years, promoting event attendance in 2014-15 and 2015-16.

## Number of Volunteer Experiences



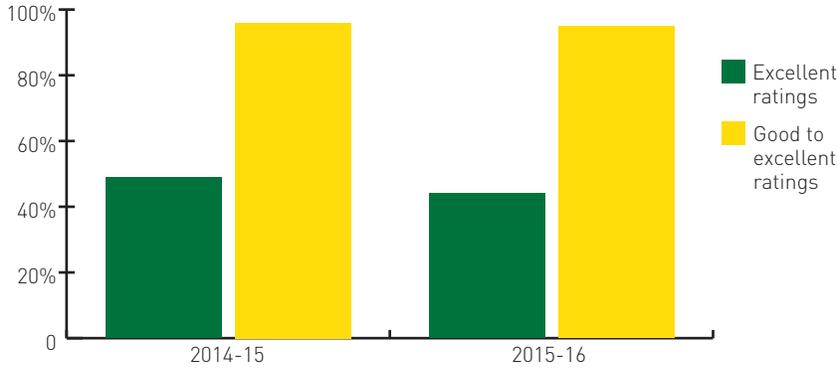
Alumni volunteered 2,345 times in 2015-16, contributing to the completion of the Do Great Things Challenge. Mentorship particularly increased, jumping by 6 per cent in 2015-16 and by 17 per cent in the past three years.

## Total Electronic Engagement



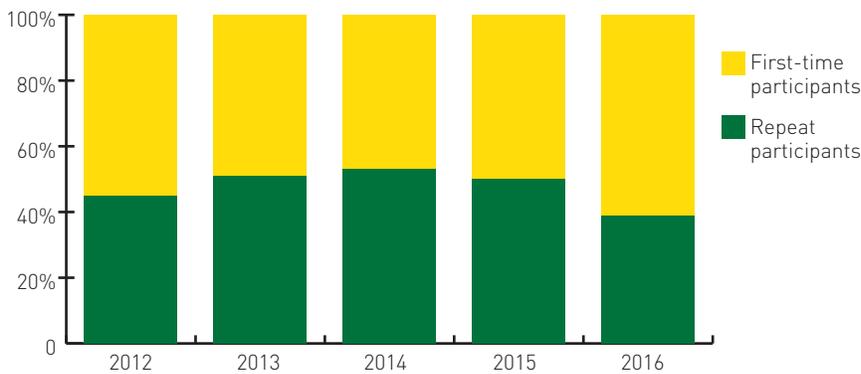
The Alumni Association engages with alumni through electronic newsletters, websites and social media. New visitors accounted for 60 per cent of the traffic to the alumni webpage and 69 per cent of the traffic to the *New Trail* webpage.

### Event Survey Satisfaction Results



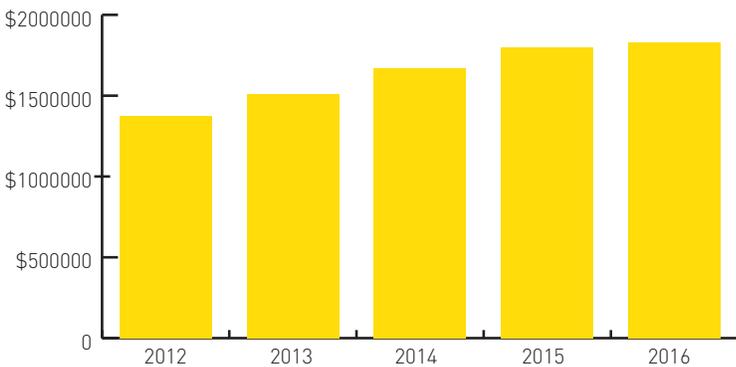
Satisfaction with alumni programming remains high. In the past year, 49 per cent of survey respondents rated programs as excellent, with 96 per cent rating them as good to excellent. Our volunteer program exceeds this benchmark, with 59 per cent of volunteers rating their experience as excellent and 98 per cent rating it as good to excellent.

### Retention vs Acquisition of Participants



Attendance at alumni events is typically balanced equally between new and returning participants. In the past year, 61 per cent were first-time participants, an increase of 11 per cent. Centenary events, presidential welcome events and efforts to target programs to alumni in particular life stages have all garnered new attendees.

### Affinity Revenue

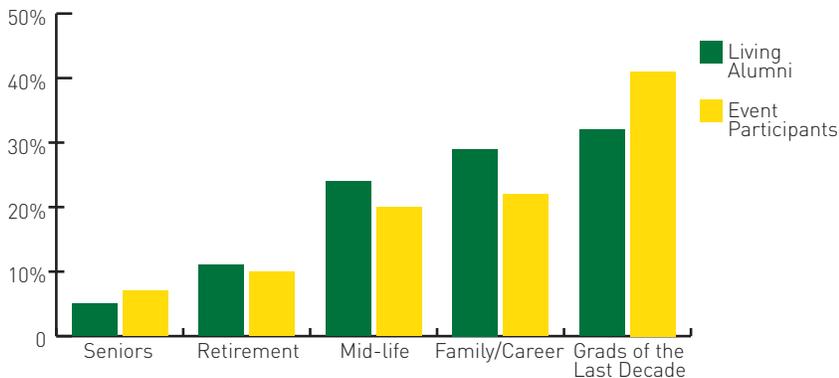


Affinity partnerships include life and health insurance, home and auto insurance and an alumni credit card. These services account for 89 per cent of our revenue. The remaining 11 per cent derives from degree frame sales and the travel program.

## OUR ALUMNI COMMUNITY

### Proportion of Living Alumni and Event Participants by Life Stage

#### Life Stage and Program Reach



The Alumni Association targets programming by life stage, and the proportion of participants closely mirrors the proportion of graduates by life stage. In 2015-16, there was a significant increase in participation of Grads of the Last Decade.

## ENABLING ALUMNI GIVING

**\$115,344,438**

Total Gifts to the University

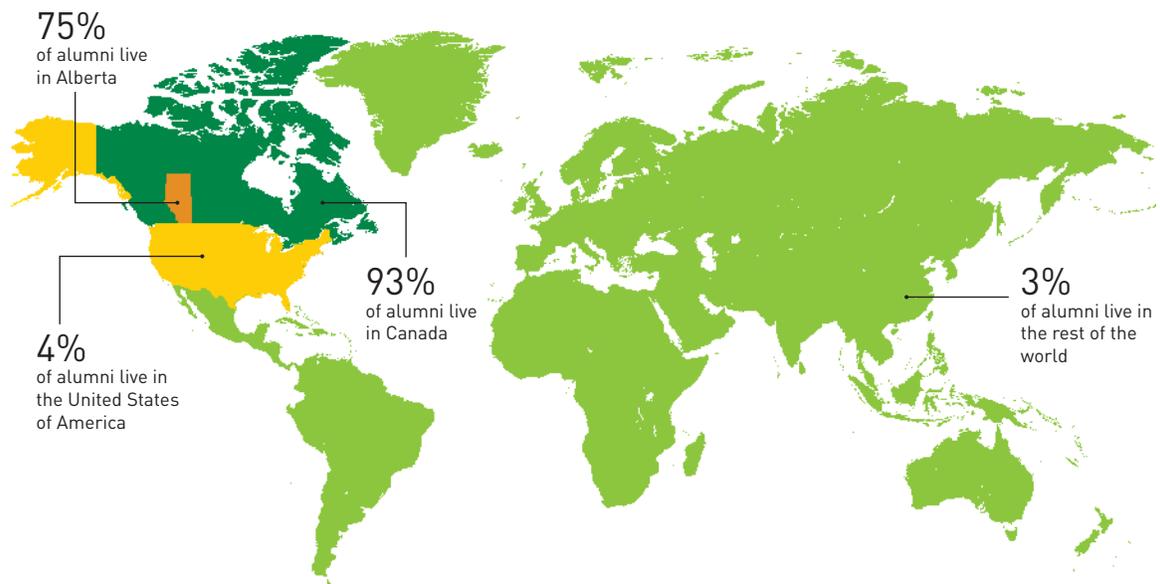
**\$27,682,665**

24% of total gifts  
10,746 alumni donors

**14%** of program participants gave in 2015-16

**45%** of program participants have given in their lifetime

On average over the last five years, alumni program participants are more than four times more likely to give to the university than the general alumni population.



**268,796** Living Alumni

# ALUMNI COUNCIL 2015-16

## Executive Committee

### President

Mary Pat Barry, '04 MA

### Past President

Glenn Stowkowy, '76 BSc(ElecEng)

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Rob Parks, '87 BEd, '99 MBA

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Ron Glen '89 BA(Spec), '04 MBA

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### Vice-President: Awards

Sheena Neilson '06 BSc(Pharm)

### Vice-President: Council Experience

Jason Acker, '95 BSc, '97 MSc, '00 PhD, '09 MBA

### Vice-President: Edmonton Programs & Outreach

Ayaz Bhanji '91 BSc(Pharm)

### Vice-President: New Program Development

Charlene Butler, '09 MBA

### Vice-President: Student Awards & Grants

Steven Dollansky '09 BSc, '12 JD

## Faculty Representatives

### Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences

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### Arts

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### Augustana

Sandra Gawad Gas, '12 BSc, '15 MSc

### Business

Charlene Butler, '09 MBA

### Campus Saint-Jean

Vacant

### Dentistry

Judy Clarke, '87 Dip(DentHyg), '04 BSc(DentHyg)

### Education

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### Engineering

Tony Valente '01 BSc(MechEng)

### Extension

Nikki Van Dusen, '96 BA, '10 MA

### Graduate Studies

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### Medicine

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### Native Studies

Carolyn Wagner, '06 BA(NativeStuHons)

### Nursing

Keith King, '04 BScN

### Pharmacy

Sheena Neilson, '06 BSc(Pharm)

### Phys Ed & Rec

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### Public Health

Paul Childs, '05 MPH

### Rehab Med

Linda Miller, '89 BSc(OT)

### Science

Fred Johannesen, '84 BSc(Spec)

### Academic Representative

Jason Acker, '95 BSc, '97 MSc, '00 PhD, '09 MBA

### Members at Large

Jessa Aco, '14 BCom

Ken Bautista, '99 BEd

Ayaz Bhanji, '91 BSc(Pharm)

Rayan Bou Farraj, '13 BSc(Spec), '14 MA

Nick Dehod, '11 BA

Steven Dollansky, '09 BSc, '12 JD

Kevin Higa, '85 BCom

Darryl Lesiuk, '87 BA, '91 BCom, '07 MBA

Julie Lussier, '11 BCom

Charity Slobod '10 BA, '10 BA(Cert), '15 MA

River Wilson '01 BA, '06 MScRS(SLP)

## Ex Officio

### Honorary President

Dr David Turpin

### Vice-President (Advancement)

Heather McCaw

### Associate Vice-President (Alumni Relations)

Sean Price, '95 BCom, MBA

### Acting Dean of Students

Dr Robin Overall '92 BA(Spec), '94 MEd, '98 PhD

### Graduate Students' Association

Alphonse Ndem Ahola

### Students' Union

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