Through the dedicated work of our alumni relations team and our keen volunteers, the Alumni Association is building a highly engaged alumni community. Our goal in the past year as a Council has been to serve as ambassadors for the University of Alberta and to carry our message to the community about the many ways that the University and our graduates are making a difference in the world. I am inspired by the work we do to involve alumni volunteers in supporting students and the university. As an organization we can be proud of the high standard we set for our programs. We give alumni and families from all life stages an opportunity to connect with the cutting-edge teaching and learning environment at the University of Alberta.

AYAZ BHANJI, ’91 BSC (PHARM)
President, University of Alberta Alumni Association

Alumni Relations programs are engaging a vibrant network of interested and involved alumni. This year, alumni programs involved 68,085 participants, representing a 28 per cent increase over the previous year. At Alumni Weekend in particular, we welcomed back a record-setting 14,115 alumni. Alumni have also been getting involved and giving back to the university in increasing numbers. In 2017-18, 1,845 alumni volunteered, contributing 9,456 hours to support the university. Together with our campus partners, we are very pleased to inspire alumni to stay connected, get involved and give back in support of the University of Alberta.

SEAN PRICE, ’95 BCom, MBA
Associate Vice-President (Alumni Relations)
University of Alberta
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA ALUMNI

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.

281,926 Living Alumni
Welcoming Alumni

Alumni Weekend, which included events celebrating Canada’s 150th birthday, achieved record-breaking attendance of 14,115 participants, a 46 per cent increase over the previous year. At the centre of the activities were class reunions, lectures, as well as the Fest of All in Quad. This popular festival included family-fun activities such as zip-lining, axe-throwing, a Canadian-themed general store and musical entertainment. Participants chose from 55 events offered in coordination with faculties, University Relations, Campus and Community Recreation, Athletics, Museums, the UAlberta Ambassadors and the Office of Sustainability. Volunteers played a key role in making the event a success, with 124 class organizers contributing valuable leadership for reunions and 150 alumni and students contributing 566 hours of volunteer time.
Profiling Research

In 2017-18, the Alumni Association featured 155 University of Alberta professors and university leaders as speakers at alumni events, a 31 per cent increase over the previous year. The highly popular Edmonton-based Educated Series showcased 11 university researchers and 21 alumni experts, engaging 1,379 program participants across a number of events. The Calgary Chapter experienced significant growth in their lecture series, doubling attendance at 10 lectures featuring speakers from nine different faculties. Artificial Intelligence (AI) was one of the popular offerings, drawing more than 200 interested alumni to hear from Faculty of Science’s Dean Schaeffer. The university’s contributions to AI were also shared regionally in Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing through lectures by Professor Osmar Zaiane. These learning opportunities are critical to connect the knowledge-mobilization activities of the university to the broader community.

Lifelong Learning

The Alumni Association strives to meet the learning needs of alumni through all life stages. In the last year, all five alumni family programs sold out, drawing 2,253 participants. Kids Create at Enterprise Square Campus and Science FUNday on North Campus are just two examples of family programs that offered participants hands-on art and science experiences led by alumni and students. Meeting the needs of alumni in the retirement and senior life stages, the travel program provides a unique opportunity to travel and learn together. This year 230 participants were involved in the travel program, a 53 per cent increase. U of A study leaders added to the educational experience. Dr. Clive Coy of Paleontology joined the trip to Mongolia, Dr. Mark Nuttal led a group on the Northwest Passage and award-winning Science alumnus Dan Riskin provided educational insights for the Borneo excursion.
GOAL: ENGAGING AND INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

Volunteer Contributions

An increasing number of alumni are serving as volunteers, adding value and giving back to their alma mater. In total, 1,845 volunteers (an increase of 55 per cent) gave 9,456 hours to support alumni and student engagement. Many volunteers provided leadership in the regions outside of Edmonton, assisting with the coordination of alumni programming. In Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto, New York and San Francisco, volunteers gave 624 hours to plan and execute programs in their cities. In the Edmonton area, alumni volunteers made a difference supporting university initiatives such as the Faculty of Extension’s Community University Partnership Grocery Run, U School and the Campus Food Bank. In addition, a dedicated group of mentors with the Venture Mentoring Service gave 930 hours inspiring alumni entrepreneurs.

GETTING INVOLVED AND GIVING BACK

VOLUNTEERISM

1,845

volunteer participants

(55 per cent increase)

54%

of volunteers experiences
contributed to student engagement and mentorship

73%

of volunteers have volunteered more than once with the Alumni Association

9,456

volunteer hours donated by alumni and student volunteers

(22 per cent increase)
CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES

Community-based Learning Opportunities
A number of alumni programs feature partnerships with the Edmonton community. For example, the first-ever Grandparents Day gave grandparents and grandchildren a chance to experience Alberta Ballet’s Cinderella. The event sold out within days of promotion and attracted 62 per cent first-time attendees. Education-themed events were also held at alumni-owned businesses in the community, such as Plaza Bowling, District Café and Little Brick. These gathering places drew 40 to 60 per cent attendance among recent graduates, a higher proportion than usual for this life stage. Regional Chapters created similar opportunities to connect alumni within their home community. For example, the Toronto Alumni Chapter toured the Aga Khan Museum and heard from Professor Lee Foote about the $25 million gift from the Aga Khan and plans for the UAlberta Botanic Garden.

Reconciliation and Learning
The Alumni Association supports the University of Alberta’s goal of fostering learning opportunities that enable student, staff and faculty participation in reconciliation. In October, the Alumni Association worked with the Provost’s Office to welcome more than 20 Indigenous alumni back to campus to share wisdom with university leaders. The Alumni Association also had the opportunity to partner with the Faculty of Native Studies to feature an alumna-produced film Journey to Reconciliation. This Educated Reel event was attended by 175 people who viewed the film and participated in a panel discussion with the filmmakers on the topic of reconciliation.
Alumni Recognition

The Alumni Association endeavours to recognize the achievements of University of Alberta alumni. A new initiative, “Great Grads,” calls for alumni and community members to submit their suggestions of who could be recognized. More than 40 alumni are featured on the Do Great Things window wraps and banners at Enterprise Square and in Clare Drake Arena. In the past year, 693 alumni received handwritten cards congratulating them on professional achievements and contributions to their communities. At Alumni Weekend 2017, more than 900 guests gathered at the annual Alumni Awards to celebrate 21 of the university’s most outstanding alumni. Profiling the accomplishments of alumni inspires the next generation of alumni and the wider community to continue to Do Great Things.
TELLING THE ALUMNI STORY

Award-Winning Communications

Three times per year, the award-winning New Trail magazine, which features stories about university research and topical news items, is mailed to nearly 200,000 alumni around the world. The electronic publication Thought Box, emailed monthly to nearly 90,000 subscribers, provides an online link to these stories, as well as to other interesting editorial content. The Alumni Association’s social media is another important outreach effort with 32,455 followers across various platforms. In the last year, Instagram in particular has grown with a 28 per cent increase in followers. Overall, 627,519 connections were made in the last year through electronic outreach.

The Do Great Things Message

Do Great Things messaging communicates the alumni story by profiling alumni achievements. Alumni contributions were showcased at events by adding a Do Great Things slide deck to all presentations. The Alumni Association gathered the names of alumni vendors, artists and performers, and shared this list with campus partners to increase the profile of alumni talent. To expand our messaging potential, the Alumni Association developed an Ambassador Toolkit that outlined key messages to share with community networks. Alumni Council members partnered with the Senate to complete two community visits, an opportunity to promote the importance of the university in the greater community and celebrate the social, cultural and economic contributions of its graduates.
GOAL: IMPROVING STUDENT AND ALUMNI LOYALTY

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Student Success
Mentoring students and supporting scholarships are tangible ways alumni pay forward the benefits of their university education. Alumni Association Campus Chapters, such as the Pride Alumni Chapter and the School of Public Health Alumni Chapter, mentor their associated student groups to enrich the student experience and build leadership potential. The Alumni & Friends of the Faculty of Law Association annually donates more than $30,000 to student scholarships, bursaries and programming, and the University of Alberta Debate Society Alumni Association has created a $25,000 endowment to provide financial support to students. In addition to Campus Chapter efforts, 54 per cent of alumni volunteer experiences were dedicated to student engagement and mentorship.

FOR STUDENTS

23,918
touchpoints with students in 2017-18

$30,140
in student engagement grants awarded to 22 student groups to implement their own initiatives supporting their peers

1,018
postcards written with encouraging messages from alumni

2,500
Do Great Things T-shirts distributed to students at the Presidents’ Address
BUILDING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ALUMNI AND STUDENTS

Student Outreach
A positive student experience is one of the highest indicators of future alumni engagement. Through its outreach programs, the Alumni Association created 23,918 connections with students in 2017-18, a 20 per cent increase. A new micro-volunteering initiative, Project Postcard, allowed alumni located anywhere in the world to write messages of encouragement to students. In the three months since its launch, alumni volunteers wrote more than 1,000 postcards and distributed them as part of the Unwind Your Mind programming on North Campus, Augustana Campus and Campus Saint Jean. This outreach during exams offered support and worked in conjunction with other stress-relieving activities available to students.

From Recruitment to Convocation
The Alumni Association is an active participant at a variety of student milestones. Working with the Office of the Registrar to advance the University of Alberta’s National Recruitment Strategy, Alumni Student Council leaders spoke to 360 prospective university students at On Your Way to the U of A events in Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton, positively influencing their decision to come to the University of Alberta. During Open House 2017, the Alumni Association connected with more than 2,000 potential students and their families. To welcome students back to campus in September, the Alumni Association gave out 2,500 Do Great Things T-shirts at the Presidents’ Address and handed out 3,350 cups of lemonade during the first two days of classes. At Convocation, every graduate was gifted a specially commissioned print by alumni artist Erin Elizabeth Ross; this tradition was established in celebration of the Alumni Association’s centenary.
GOAL: ENCOURAGING NEW ALUMNI

MOTIVATING FIRST TIME PARTICIPATION

First Time Engagement
Alumni Association programming attracts new and returning participants. Involving new participants at each life stage is critical to expanding the reach of engagement programs. Many of the Educated Series programs have been successful this past year at involving new participants. An event for recent grads held at alumni-owned Plaza Bowling attracted 60 per cent first-time attendees and the family-friendly Kids Create event attracted 47 per cent new attendees. An Educated Critic event that explored the backgrounds of famous composers accompanied by live music involved a significant number of mid-life alumni and had 44 per cent first-time attendees. The travel program, which is targeted to more senior alumni, involved 126 first-time travellers. Overall, alumni programs attracted the attendance of 40 per cent first time participants.

INSPIRING ENGAGEMENT

$4,235
in professional development grants was awarded to alumni in the program’s first quarter

40%
of program participants were attending their first Alumni Association event

36%
of all program participants were graduates of the last decade

470
alumni participated in alumni career service programs
Alumni Career Services

The Alumni Career Services program launched in 2017-18 to help alumni with their careers and professional development. Nearly 500 participants attended Alumni Association events featuring the expertise of 12 alumni, including an opportunity to explore leadership skills through improvisational comedy techniques. In the first quarter of 2018, the Alumni Association awarded $4,235 in professional development grants to help alumni achieve their career goals. Alumni Career Services complements programs offered by university partners and will expand to include online and in-person mentoring, as well as other professional development activities.

Data-driven Programming

A key priority identified in the 2016 Alumni Needs Assessment was to engage graduates of the last decade and younger alumni by offering value-added services and benefits. The Alumni Association partnered with Executive Education and the Faculty of Extension to offer program discounts. In addition, an exclusive perks program launched, promoting alumni-owned businesses and providing discounts targeted to young alumni. Targeting specific alumni requires an understanding of alumni cohorts. In the past year, the Office of Advancement has been testing the use of an affinity scoring system with campus partners. As the scoring system assigns numerical points for various types of engagement activities, it assists with analysis of aggregate alumni populations, which helps inform engagement strategies.
Giving Back

Campus and community partnerships create opportunities for alumni volunteers to make a difference and give back in meaningful ways. With the Healthy Campus Unit and local group Fruits of Sherbrooke, alumni made and distributed nearly 7,000 healthy snacks to UAlberta student groups. In support of other community initiatives, the Alumni Association worked with the Senate to facilitate U School volunteer experiences and worked with Grocery Run, operated through the Community University Partnership in the Faculty of Extension. With Grocery Run, alumni volunteers contributed 404 hours to sorting, packing and delivering groceries to families experiencing food insecurity. On average, alumni volunteers distributed food to 95 immigrant and refugee families in need each week. In total, volunteers have donated 9,456 hours in support of the campus and broader community.
DEEPENING ENGAGEMENT

Campus Collaborations
Strategic collaboration is essential to facilitating outreach to alumni from all faculties and life stages. To improve coordination efforts, Alumni Relations staff hosted a mini-conference for faculty-based colleagues to learn about and share best practices. In 2017-18, joint programming activities with various campus partners reached 9,834 participants, a 31 per cent increase. An example of a multi-faculty collaboration that engaged alumni volunteers with students was the Hot Chocolate Day held at Augustana Campus, Campus Saint Jean and North Campus. The annual Faculty of Science FUNday involved more than 2,000 alumni and young guests. Alumni Weekend continues to be one of the largest ventures each year, with 55 events planned jointly by the Alumni Association and campus partners.

Volunteer-led Programming
Alumni volunteers contributed a significant number of hours to volunteer-led programs, playing an integral role in the outreach efforts of the Alumni Association. The Venture Mentoring Service involved 67 alumni mentoring 38 entrepreneurs across 22 ventures. Mentors and entrepreneurs attended structured meetings and educational events together, with many relationships evolving beyond the 930 hours of boardroom support. These experiences foster deep connections among alumni and increases commitment to the university. Similarly, Regional Chapter volunteers gave 1,051 hours within their constituencies to increase alumni engagement. For example, the Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary volunteers were instrumental in leading a program to welcome alumni new to those cities. This initiative helped expand interest in the community and build valuable connections.
The number of alumni and students engaged in programming has nearly doubled over the past five years as the Alumni Association works to create mutually beneficial and lifelong connections between the University of Alberta and its alumni and students.

The Alumni Association’s social media presence has grown by 76 per cent over the past five years. It currently has 32,455 followers across five platforms.

This graph shows the proportion of alumni program participants by life stage compared to the proportion of the total living alumni population. Participation data, survey results and affinity scores guide the Alumni Association’s efforts in aligning programming to the preferences of alumni in each life stage. New programs such as Career Services and the Perks Program increase engagement of the university’s most recent graduates.
Revenue generated through affinity partnerships directly support alumni programming. Overall, revenue increased by 9 per cent.

Attendance at alumni events is typically balanced between new and returning participants. More than two-thirds of all first-time attendees were grads of the last decade, a cohort of focus in the current strategic plan.

Satisfaction with alumni programming is consistently high. In the past year, 43 per cent of alumni survey respondents rated programs as excellent and 96 per cent rated programs as good to excellent. Of particular note, a few programs garnered exceptionally high ratings—the Educated Critic: Behind the Icons received ratings of 88 per cent excellent and the family event Kids Create received ratings of 77 per cent excellent.
Alumni continue to show interest in giving back to their alma mater through volunteerism. 1,845 volunteers dedicated a total of 9,456 hours to various initiatives.

The Alumni Association offers a variety of ways for alumni to volunteer, including opportunities to mentor students and other alumni, support student and alumni events, as well as serve both the campus and wider community.
DO GREAT THINGS

- 9,456 hours donated by volunteers (22% increase)
- 14,115 Alumni Weekend attendees (46% increase)
- 68,085 alumni and student connections (28% increase)
- 346 events and programs (22% increase)
- 32,455 social media followers (9% increase)
- 1,845 volunteers (55% increase)
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Past President
Mary Pat Barry, ’04 MA

Board of Governors Representatives
Glenn Stowkowy, ’76 BSc(ElecEng)
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Kate Young, ’07 BScN, ’15 MBA

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Andre Prefontaine, ’85 BCom, ’88 BSc(Spec)
Eli Schrader, ’12 BAI(RecSpTourism)
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