YOUR UBC CONNECTION

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

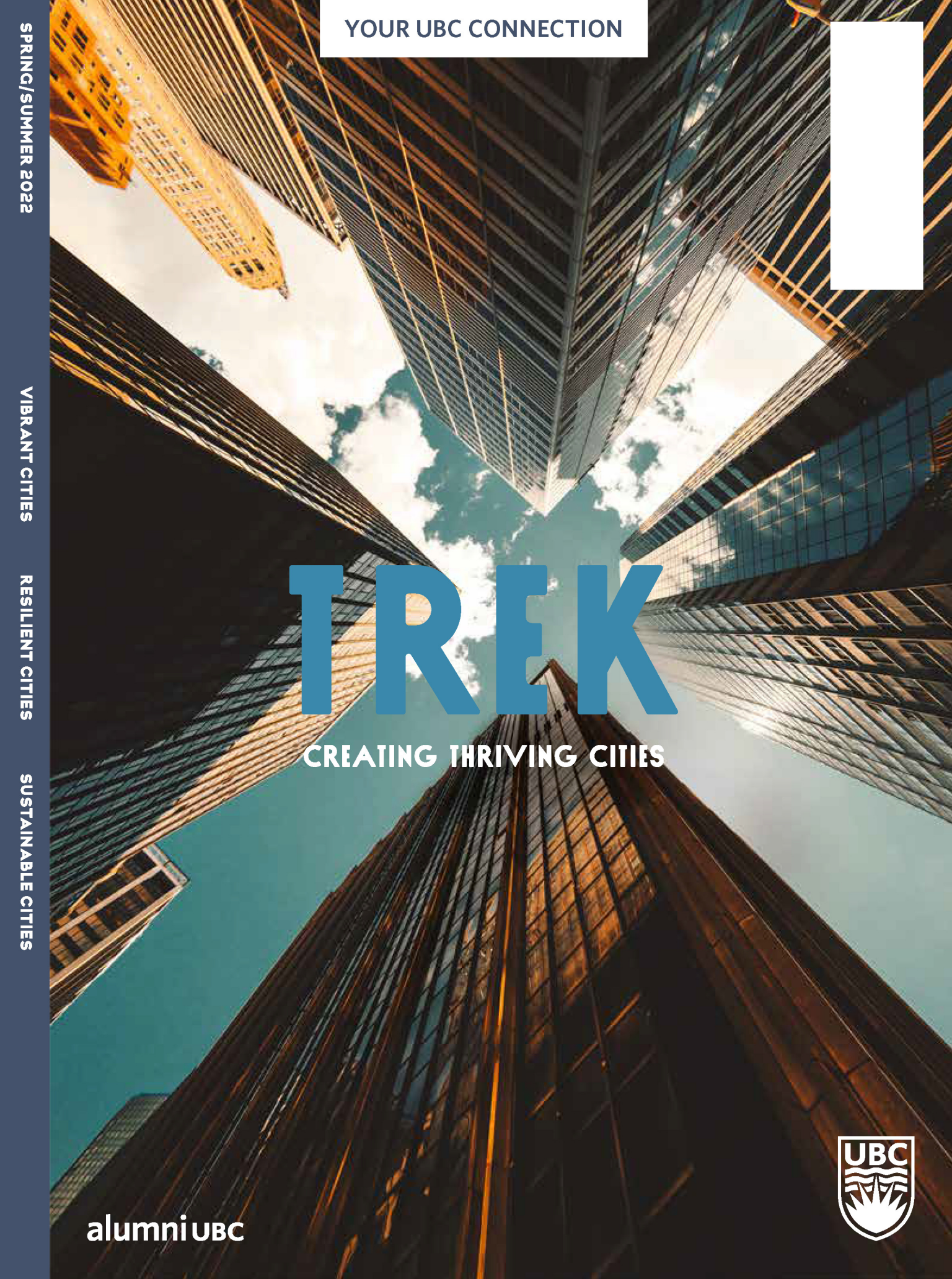
VIBRANT CITIES

RESILIENT CITIES

SUSTAINABLE CITIES

# TREK

## CREATING THRIVING CITIES



alumni UBC

UBC

# UP TO $1000 OFF YOUR PURCHASE + AN EXCLUSIVE 30-DAY FREE TRIAL

The spring season sparks enthusiasm to stay active and calls with an opportunity for self-care, to live our lives to the fullest and enjoy every moment of it.

HearingLife wants to empower you and your loved ones to choose the life you want to live by helping you hear better.

Take advantage of these offers—try the latest hearing aids for 30 days before you buy (no referral required), and be eligible to receive up to $1000 off your purchase of a pair of hearing aids.**

## Love your ears, book your free 30-day trial!

## Call 1-888-237-1723 or visit HearingLife.ca/UBC1000T

Mention the code: MAG-1000T-UBC

HearingLife | TRUSTED PARTNER OF alumni UBC

**Plus, *alumni UBC* members and their families receive an EXTRA 10% off the final purchase price of hearing aids!*****

*A comprehensive hearing assessment is provided to adults ages 19 and older at no cost. The results of this assessment will be communicated verbally to you. If you request a copy of the Audiological Report, an administrative fee will apply. Child hearing tests are conducted at select locations for a fee, please contact us for more information. Not applicable to industrial hearing tests. **This promotion is valid for select hearing aid models and cannot be combined with more than 1 promotion or discount unless stated otherwise. ***The extra 10% will be applied to the remaining balance on hearing aids and accessories after all other discounts (if applicable). Offer applies to private sales of select hearing aids and discount is applied after the grant has been deducted. Some conditions apply, see clinic for details. Please allow 45 days for Miles to be posted to your Collector Account. Some conditions apply, see clinic for details. AIR MILES available only at participating locations. ®™ Trademarks of AM Royalties Limited Partnership used under license by LoyaltyOne, Co. and HearingLife Canada Ltd. Offers not valid in Quebec. Offers expires 06/30/2022.

# Editor's Note

## CITYSCAPES

With the draw of employment, social networks, and services, cities are home to a growing majority of the global population. As a result, they are the source of most greenhouse gases and air pollutants. They are riddled with modern stressors, such as traffic congestion, noise, and block upon block of concrete jungle. And their streets are where inequality is most evident and where social unrest most often plays out. Yet their human capital also makes cities concentrated pools of creativity, capable of producing innovative solutions to mitigate the worst outcomes of modern living and improve our experience of everyday life.

Opinions on how best to design and manage our cities will differ, but some aspirations for urban life are surely universal: the desire for clean air, safe streets, and beautiful public spaces. The ability to get from A to B swiftly and affordably. A sense of belonging and opportunity. A secure future.

To achieve these goals, cities must both address the causes of climate change and prepare for its effects, cater sustainably to growing populations, implement smart technologies in an ethical and accessible way, and ensure that social assets are equitably distributed. Failure to do so could lead to insurmountable costs and greater social division.

With a mandate to innovate and advance society, universities are essential for addressing urban problems and future-proofing our cities. Researchers are developing novel building materials that promise to lessen the environmental impact of urban development; strategies to protect us from extreme weather events; smart technologies to help cities become more connected and efficient; clean energy systems; and recommendations for enhancing the wellbeing of citizens.

UBC's campuses are often described as "living labs." The Point Grey campus is particularly well positioned for this role, since it is not officially part of Vancouver and therefore not governed by City Hall. The university owns and operates all campus utilities and infrastructure, as well as determining land use and development. In 2019, it became the first 5G-enabled campus in Canada. In effect, it is a small, smart, and independent city – a testbed for new technologies and novel ideas that could potentially be scaled up and applied to real cities.

Although officially a separate entity, in reality the campus has always been an integral part of Vancouver, with a long history of partnership and collaboration across all sectors, and many alumni directly involved in the city's governance and development over the years. It remains a vital asset for securing a healthy urban future, in Vancouver and beyond.

**VANESSA CLARKE**
Editor

**EDITOR**
Vanessa Clarke

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**
Pamela Yan

**DIGITAL EDITOR**
Vicky Tran

**CONTENT SPECIALIST & WRITER**
Craig Takeuchi

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS**
Eric Davenport, Sophia Ohler, Katie Timms

**UBC PRESIDENT & VICE-CHANCELLOR**
Santa J. Ono

**UBC CHANCELLOR**
Steven Lewis Point

**VICE-PRESIDENT, DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT; PRESIDENT'S DESIGNATE**
Heather McCaw

**ASSOCIATE VICE-PRESIDENT / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *ALUMNI UBC***
Natalie Cook Zywicki

**TREK**
TREK magazine is published two times a year in print by the UBC Alumni Association and distributed free of charge to UBC alumni and friends. Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Alumni Association or the University.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**
We acknowledge that UBC's campuses are situated within the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh, and in the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation and their peoples.

**Address correspondence to:**
The Editor, *alumni UBC*
6163 University Boulevard,
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z1
trek.magazine@ubc.ca
Letters are published at the editor's discretion and may be edited for space.

**ADVERTISING**
Jenna McCann
604 822 8917 jenna.mccann@ubc.ca

**CONTACT NUMBERS AT UBC**
**Address Changes**
604 822 8921 alumni.ubc@ubc.ca
***alumni UBC* / UBC Welcome Centre**
604 822 3313 toll free: 800 883 3088

**Volume 78, Number 1**
Printed in Canada by Mitchell Press
Canadian Publications
Mail Agreement #40063528

**Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:**
Records Department
UBC Development Office
Suite 500 – 5950 University Boulevard
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z3

The TREK SPOTLIGHT is made possible with contributions from HearingLife Canada

HearingLife

**CREATING THRIVING CITIES**


**4** Model Cities

**10** Vibrant Cities

**16** Resilient Cities

**22** Green Cities

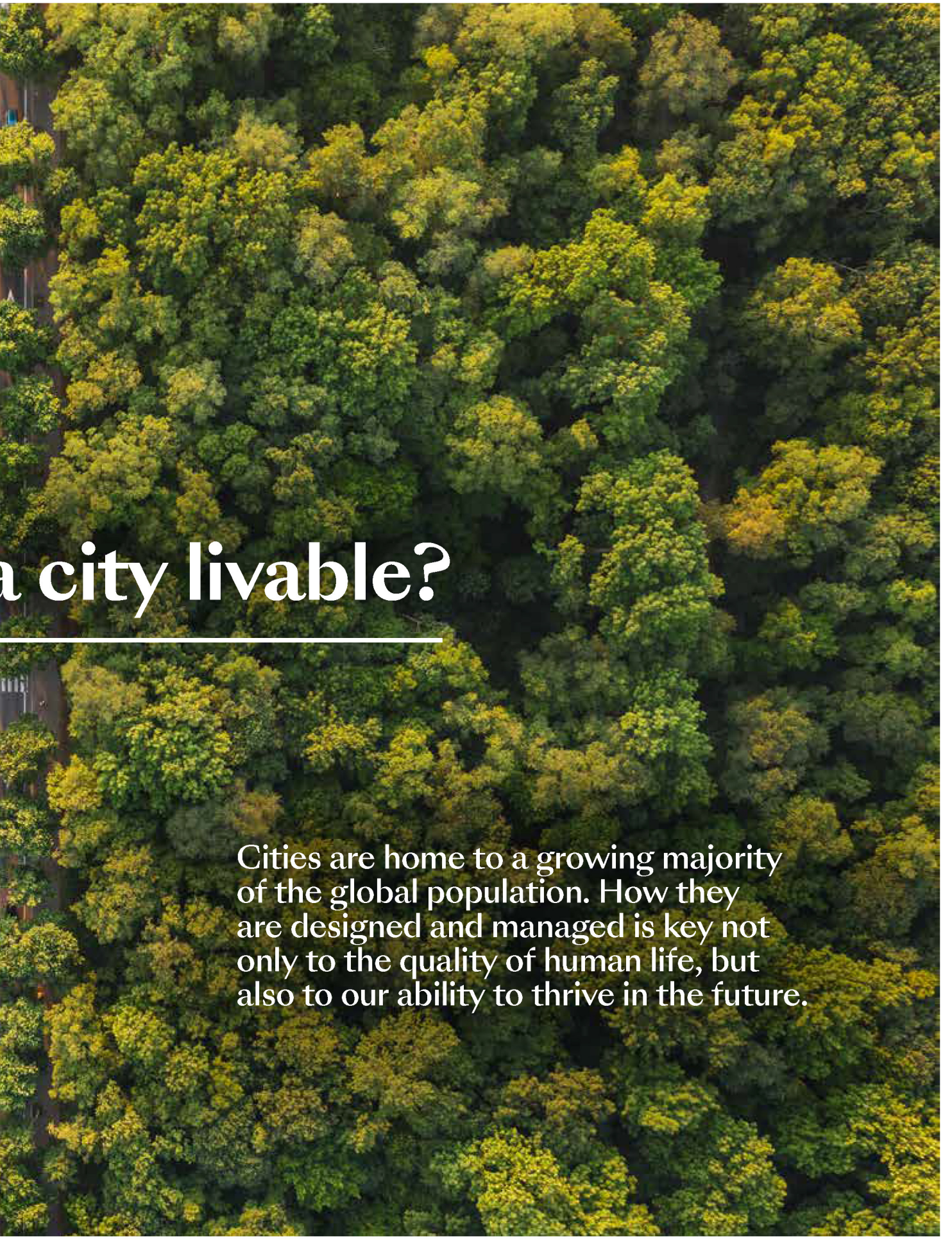
**24** Sustainable Cities

**26** Sociable Cities

**30** Equitable Cities


# What makes a

Cover: Skyscrapers in New York City. *Photo: franckreporter via Getty Images*
This page: Aerial view of an intersection in the city of Asahikawa, Japan. *Photo: Liyao Xie via Getty Images*



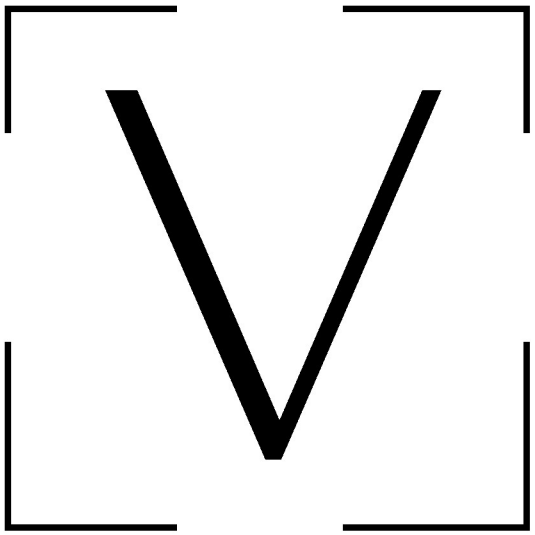
# a city livable?

Cities are home to a growing majority of the global population. How they are designed and managed is key not only to the quality of human life, but also to our ability to thrive in the future.

# The Ideal City?

There may be no such thing, but Vancouver has shown the world an admirable model.

By Richard Littlemore



VANCOUVERISM – IT SEEMS almost un-Canadian. There is a boast-worthy notion that there is something about the city of Vancouver that is so unique – and so fabulous – that it is worth imitating. And it's not just the mountains and the sea (which are difficult to emulate). It's the urban planning, the livability.

Late in the 20th century, when many North American cities were beginning to regret having built massive freeways into hollowed-out downtowns, planning theorists started to look at Vancouver as an alternative expression of the urban ideal. Here was a city centre that was unusually dense and – for drivers, at least – comparatively inaccessible. It also featured a jumble of residential and commercial developments, "conflicting" elements that planners in other cities had been carefully separating for decades. Yet, people seemed to love it – even people with children, who we once thought would never want to sacrifice their suburban back yards.

"Somewhere in the 1990s, you started to hear about 'Vancouverism.' We were creating stuff that people talked about." The speaker here is Larry Beasley, CM, (MA'76), Distinguished Practice Professor of Planning at the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP), and author of *Vancouverism*, a comprehensive textbook on the history and principles of this new planning paradigm. As a co-director of planning at the City of Vancouver during the years when Vancouverism emerged, Beasley was also a hands-on author, guiding some of the most complex planning and consultation processes the city had ever seen.

Yet today, Beasley is quick to distribute credit for Vancouver's success, even while questioning the city's status as a replicable model for innovative, sustainable, and livable urban development. "I don't think there is an ideal city," he says. "A city is the most complex invention of the human mind – an organism in a constant state of transformation." And, he stresses, anyone who tries to apply Vancouver's solutions in another city is almost certain to fail.

Before exploring the planning phenomenon, it's worth noting the grandeur, and the limitations, of the topography on which Vancouverism emerged. Vancouver's natural environment was always extraordinary – as Beasley puts it, "a nice setting in search of a city." But the mountains, the ocean – and the nearby border with the United States – do more than add drama: they compress development. While other cities spread suburbs in every direction, Vancouver has had to accommodate its rising population in a constricted space.

So, even before the late-century boom that brought such rave reviews, Vancouver's downtown peninsula featured one of the densest and most walkable neighbourhoods in the country. The tight mix of homes, services, and workplaces made it a convenient and functional "15-minute city" long before anyone coined the term. Ann McAfee (BA'62, MA'67, PhD'75), Beasley's City Hall partner as co-director of planning, did her master's thesis on apartment-living in the West End in the early 1960s, finding it a model for high-density living.

But this happy status was under threat. Vancouver's first chief planner was a big-highway fan named Gerald Sutton-Brown. In an era when City Hall thought it knew what was good for you, he pushed for automotive domination, for example, by building expensive viaducts into downtown, creating a speedway entrance that was supposed to connect to a major freeway once they paved over the low-income neighbourhoods of Chinatown and Strathcona.

It was a turning point. The community rose up, blocking the freeway and overthrowing the top-down denizens of City Hall. Working with UBC geography professor Walter Hardwick (McAfee's thesis advisor), a young firebrand named Art Phillips (BCom'53) formed a new political organization called The Electors Action Movement (TEAM). The two men won seats on council in 1968, and by 1972 Phillips was the popular new mayor, with TEAM holding eight of 10 council seats, including those of UBC professors Hardwick, Fritz Bowers (engineering), and Setty Pendakur (planning), as well as future Vancouver mayor and B.C. Premier Mike Harcourt (BA'65, LLB'68, LLD'07). They fired Sutton-Brown, cancelled the freeway, and hired an English planner named Ray Spaxman, whom Beasley and McAfee both credit as the originator of the consultative planning style that changed the face of the city. Then, they

set about answering what McAfee poses as an existential question: "If we're not freeway people, what are we going to do?"

The next transformative moment came when the provincial government bought and cleared the industrial north shore of False Creek for Expo '86, an international party that brought Vancouver world attention, followed by a burst of investment. It also opened a spectacular redevelopment site of more than 200 acres – a grand canvas for planners, architects, and community builders.

What emerged was both beautiful and livable. Leveraging McAfee's expertise in research and analysis, and Beasley's flair for consultation and negotiation, Vancouver City Hall learned to estimate how much rezoning would raise land values. Then, whenever Council approved a new development, it demanded a share of that "uplift," using the money for services, parks, and other community amenities in high-rise neighbourhoods where people then wanted to live, work, and play.

The design style was also new and reflected community appetites. Understanding how fiercely protective Vancouverites are of their views, architects and developers built tall, thin towers with maximum window space for residents and minimal obstruction for the neighbours. (These "point towers" also reduce the shadowing that can turn high-rise neighbourhoods into cold, dark canyons.) And they built those towers on three- to five-storey podiums, making space for commercial developments and townhouses for low-rise living, which enlivened the street level.

The mixed-use "tower-and-podium" style became so closely associated with Vancouverism that some planners started presenting them as one and the same, exporting the form as an all-purpose solution. Consider, for example, the Dubai Marina, where developers in the United Arab Emirates excavated a patch of desert to create a false False Creek – complete with a seawall and an array of tower-and-podium buildings that exactly mirror Vancouver's Yaletown waterfront. It worked, in the way that Disneyland works, giving tourists someplace to celebrate and expats an attractive neighbourhood in which to buy condos, but it hardly qualifies as a model for good Gulf Coast city building.

**"A CITY IS THE MOST COMPLEX INVENTION OF THE HUMAN MIND – AN ORGANISM IN A CONSTANT STATE OF TRANSFORMATION."**

**LARRY BEASLEY, DISTINGUISHED PRACTICE PROFESSOR OF PLANNING AT UBC, FORMER CO-DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AT THE CITY OF VANCOUVER**

For that, you can take the train south to Abu Dhabi, where Beasley was hired in 2006 as a special advisor to the Crown Prince, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. When planning to redevelop the urban neighbourhood of Al Shahama, Beasley recruited another City of Vancouver veteran, Michael White, now UBC's chief planner (AVP, Campus and Community Planning).

White says: "The first thing we said was, 'Let's talk to the people.'" To which the illustrious clients replied, "Why?" White explained that consulting residents is instrumental in getting a plan right the first time. Al Shahama had thousands of residents and a dearth of housing diversity, services, and transit. If planners' solutions didn't meet demand, it would be even more difficult and expensive to make corrections. As Beasley has said, "Our mission was not to implant a way of life from somewhere else, but rather to realize the cultural potential of these people in this place and at this time."

White says he came back from the experience more convinced than ever that, "Vancouverism is not about tower-and-podium; it's about engagement," a lesson that he continues to apply in building the amenity-rich neighbourhoods at UBC.

The other commonly cited Vancouverism fundamental is sustainability, a notion the city celebrated prematurely in the early 2010s as Vancouver promoted its aspirations to become "the Greenest City in the World."

Andrea Reimer, a Vision Vancouver councillor from 2008 to 2018 and now an adjunct professor at the UBC School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, says that she came to realize that "green doesn't necessarily mean sustainable." Sustainable has a literal definition: it's something you can keep doing forever. Whereas, Reimer says, often what we consider "green" development is nowhere near that superlative; it's just better than the standard of the day.

Similarly, she says, Vancouver's vaunted status as one of the world's most livable

**The mixed-use "tower-and-podium" style so closely associated with Vancouverism was emulated in far-away cities. For the Dubai Marina (top), developers in the United Arab Emirates excavated a patch of desert to create a false False Creek – complete with a seawall and an array of tower-and-podium buildings that exactly mirror Vancouver's Yaletown waterfront (bottom).**
*The Maraya Project (M. Simon Levin, Glen Lowry, & Henry Tsang) Research Documents, 2007-2015*

cities doesn't translate for everyone. "Setting aside the lucky people who own their homes and have choices – Vancouver is not working that well. It is, for example, not better than Calgary. For the average person on an average day, Vancouver is amazing. For the vulnerable, it's a grind. And a disheartening one when they're told they are living in paradise."

That, then, raises the question of what cities need now? Reimer's first prescription is that senior governments have to get more involved in helping cities solve their problems or, even better, hand over the authority to raise funds and set rules.

Canadians are flocking to cities. The most recent census shows downtown populations growing at more than twice the base rate. Yet senior levels of government have spent decades devolving responsibility for everything from housing to the management of drug addiction.

No surprise, then, that the international cities that are outperforming Vancouver – say, Vienna, Stockholm, or Amsterdam – are technically provinces or city states, with more taxation authority and regulatory powers. Malmo, Sweden, for example, has a population similar to Victoria's, but a budget four times as large. Canada's cities need resources to address their problems, Reimer says.

Vancouver's other potentially devastating weakness is what Professor Thomas Davidoff describes as "excessively low density," which has driven land values beyond the purchasing power of all but the super rich. Davidoff, director of the Centre for Urban Economics and Real Estate at the UBC Sauder School of Business, says it is perverse to celebrate the livability of our dense downtown while preserving 70 per cent of the city's land base for single-family dwellings. This consumptive and exclusionary

# "FOR THE AVERAGE PERSON ON AN AVERAGE DAY, VANCOUVER IS AMAZING. FOR THE VULNERABLE, IT'S A GRIND. AND A DISHEARTENING ONE WHEN THEY'RE TOLD THEY ARE LIVING IN PARADISE."

**– ANDREA REIMER, FORMER CITY COUNCILLOR, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR AT THE UBC SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS**

planning style "was probably never a good idea, but it certainly doesn't work now," Davidoff says, adding that if Vancouver is to remain livable, it will have to break the political stranglehold that has held all but the downtown in a 1950s planning style that serves only those who are already landed.

As Beasley says, "There is no static state of grace." In the search for the ideal, "every solution will still be unsatisfactory in the delivery, and my solutions will not be ideal for this generation."

It's wonderful that people have recognized Vancouver's success, he says, "but we were never angling to be a global model, we were just trying to fix what was broken."

And, facing a whole new set of challenges – affordability, inequality, climate change – Beasley says it would be arrogant to think we have already found the solution. "We need to get back to the grindstone to deal with our issues." Only then might Vancouverism continue to be considered ideal.

*Larry Beasley is the UBC expert study lead for* alumni UBC's *Travel Club tour this September to Copenhagen, Malmö, and Stockholm. The tour will focus on the primary themes of modern urbanism – livability, sustainability, affordability, and competitiveness.* *See page 34 /* alumni.ubc.ca/travel *for details.*

**A photograph of Vancouver taken from a helicopter above the Stanley Park area. It shows West Georgia Street, with False Creek and Science World at the end, and East Vancouver in the background.** ***Photo: Jeremy Lee (@jw.klee)***

# The Gathering Place

Communities are shaping their public spaces into social places.

BY **CHRIS CANNON** | ILLUSTRATION BY **YONI ALTER**

THE ANCIENT GREEKS called it the *agora* – "the gathering place" – a large, public venue that served as an anchor for the local populace to interact, a predecessor to the more contemporary notion of the town square. A hub of economic, political, and social activity, the agora was the heartbeat of the city-state, where one might indulge in a concert, an exhibition, a vote, a protest, a grocery pickup, and a philosophical debate all over the course of an evening stroll. The anxiety disorder *agoraphobia* – which keeps sufferers locked in their homes with the curtains drawn – literally means "fear of the gathering place."

While the prominence of central public spaces has waxed and waned over centuries and civilizations, the past few decades have seen an implosion of the very concept. The permanent, centralized agora has given way to temporary, dispersed gathering places, which have served as small-scale experiments for reimagining how urban public spaces could be used to better serve people and build pride in community.

In both formal and informal ways, cities, businesses, non-profits, and local residents are looking to make potential gathering spots more fun, stimulating, and inclusive. From plazas to pavements to alleyways, communities are embracing the connection between a society's wellbeing and the design of its public spaces.

Left to mere appearance, a public space tends to function as scenery to be witnessed in passing, a manicured no man's land with little to draw people to its grounds, much less talk to each other. But properly planned and maintained, they can be islands of respite and community-building, improving a city's quality of life by improving the interaction between its residents.

"It's where people can come together through the day," says Winki Tam (BA'17), a public spaces professional and manager of placekeeping for a business improvement association. "It's the in-between places, before you go to work or go home, the place where you sit down and have a chance to reflect or to meet up with your community, the freedom to come and go as you please."

These islands are new places carved out of the background space, transforming something you pass by into something you dip into. The interstitial public "space" becomes a public "place" – a venue for locals to take the ol' social contract out for a test drive, changing the nature of the place by changing how it is inhabited. It's not the location that's special, it's the ways people create interaction within the place, shaping the social environment of the community. "As places make sense," the anthropologist Steven Feld once wrote, "senses make place."

"Placemaking" – transforming physical landscapes to create new social landscapes – has been the mission of the Vancouver Public Space Network (VPSN) for the past 15 years. Founded in 2006 by Vancouver City planner Andrew Pask and a dozen volunteers, the non-profit group now boasts more than 2,000 members who champion the creative use of public space to improve a neighbourhood's livability. The group regularly plans and executes small-scale "interventions" in Vancouver's forgotten spaces, from alleyway activations to mobile Skytrain parties, to push the limits of what placemakers call "tactical urbanism" – essentially a guerilla-style approach to urban planning focused on testing inexpensive pop-up activations for potential scalability. The temporary installations are ways to seed thinking and pilot ideas that could lead to long-term improvements in the social arena.

"Sometimes you take these small things, and then organically they can grow into larger and better things with more collaborators, with more interest," says Pask, whose years with the VPSN has earned him a wealth of experience negotiating the complex live, work, play equation that drives the engagement process. "Just raising the awareness in the first place and showing the possibility of change, you get people thinking about how that's a really important thing."

Small groups of locals around the world have begun organizing their placemaking activities around Silicon Valley's "lean startup" mentality – fail fast and cheap so you can learn fast and cheap – that now serves as a guide for creating better public spaces through tactical urbanism. Traditionally a years-long process under the thumb of architectural firms and city planners, the design of public spaces to enhance local living is becoming the domain of the locals themselves, leading not only to community-driven initiatives, but offering a library of ideas for cities and developers to consider on a larger, more permanent scale.

"We try to make sure that the interventions themselves are well-documented," adds Pask, an adjunct professor who teaches urban design at UBC. "By showing what you can do in an alleyway for one day or a couple of days, and making sure you show the process along the way, you're creating an opportunity for other people to pick that thread up and say, 'yeah, actually there's a real interest in these alleyways.'"

If there was already real interest in the nooks and crannies of the outdoor public landscape before the pandemic, our new awareness of safe places to gather has sent it into overdrive. Over the past two years we've watched our parks, beaches, benches, and playgrounds broken down into 6x6-foot parcels, marked with signs, tape, and hula hoops to clearly indicate where our connection to that space begins and where it ends. Now, as we raise the blinds and emerge from our collective agoraphobia back into the social sphere, we do so with a new awareness of exactly how we engage – and are engaged by – the places we go to hang out with our neighbours.

"You really want to make your space as flexible as possible so groups can come in and use the space in the way they want," says Stewart Burgess (MArch'12), a Vancouver-based architect who participates in public space activations. "So it's less prescriptive and more giving them the opportunity to engage and be a part of that space in their own way."

This flexibility of the public space is a key element of a placemaker's most important duty: inclusivity. By definition, the public space is for everyone, so a carved-out place requires equitable access for every member of the community. This goes beyond such considerations as sloped curbs for the disabled and foreign-language signs for non-English speakers. The real advancement in public space design are the growing ways – ranging from informal consultations to hands-on participation – that communities are creating the spaces for themselves.

"I'm very interested in neighbourhood-scale public spaces," says Pask, "the role of making sure that neighbourhoods themselves are compact and walkable, that they have an array of public spaces that allow for a variety of different activities. Not just open fields of green grass, but different types of spaces that can meet different needs, that can help neighbours get together and build community, strength, connection, and resilience."

While the boom of localized, grassroots planning is pulling us further from the centralized agora, it is pushing us closer to each other. Just as we are drawn into a network of strangers in a planned public space, the space itself is part of a network of larger public spaces around the city, each reflecting the character of its location and residents. What is a neighbourhood but a community of neighbours, and what is a city but a community of neighbourhoods?

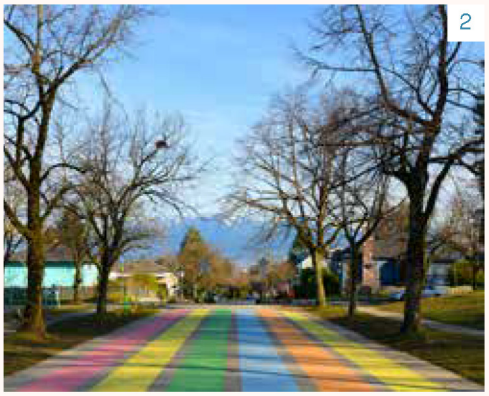
Public spaces are shared spaces, and the idea that shared spaces should be designed by the people that share them is hardly a radical one. But recent changes in how we use our technology – particularly the lean-startup movement and the advent of social media – have allowed us to come together virtually to plan how to come together physically.

"A real point of importance with the way public spaces are delivered and programmed in cities comes from community-led placemaking," adds Pask. "I think it's really important that we think about ways to enable that broadly, that we invite community members in to help define, design, and program public spaces. That broader collaborative process – from the idea stage to the design stage to the programming stage – is what makes our public spaces truly public."

**TRADITIONALLY A YEARS-LONG PROCESS UNDER THE THUMB OF ARCHITECTURAL FIRMS AND CITY PLANNERS, THE DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES TO ENHANCE LOCAL LIVING IS BECOMING THE DOMAIN OF THE LOCALS THEMSELVES.**

# Vibrant Public Spaces

The City of Vancouver and partners have initiated a number of public space projects to enliven the city, improve livability, and foster a sense of inclusive community spirit – typically involving the ideas and input of residents.



**1.** Once a humdrum alley located off Hastings Street in Vancouver, Alley-Oop is a revitalized space with murals and basketball hoops, popular with photographers and videographers.

**2.** Glen Drive greenway is part of a regional network of recreational multi-use paths for cycling and walking. On the left are bike racks that won a City contest for best design.

**3.** "Public Yoga" was a project with Mat Collective, a community group that organizes outside yoga sessions in pleasant local spots, often free or at minimal cost.

**4.** A pop-up plaza at W. 17th Avenue and Cambie Street was one of several established to help businesses recover from the effects of the pandemic, and to give residents an outdoor space for socializing.

**5.** Neighbourhood book exchanges, like this one on Jepson-Young Lane between Comox and Pendrell streets, help build a sense of community.

**6.** Helena Gutteridge Plaza is located to the north of City Hall at Yukon Street and 11th Avenue. Offering a stunning setting for friends and families to gather, it was named after the first woman elected to Vancouver City Council.

**7.** "Culturally Defined Dance Lessons" was held at 800 Robson Street, a section that was recently turned into a permanent public plaza, with instruction provided by the community group Culturally Defined Dance Family.

**8.** A "Canvas Corridor" on Eihu Lane, between Alberni and Robson streets, features 45 murals painted on doors.

**9.** Seating provided at šxʷƛ̓ənəq Xwtl'e7énk̲ Square (FKA the Vancouver Art Gallery North Plaza), a popular gathering spot for locals. It was renamed in 2018 to bring more visibility to local Indigenous languages and cultures.

**10.** Costumed revellers and a DJ get ready to kick off the Halloween SkyTrain party, organized by the Vancouver Public Space Network on a Canada Line train from Waterfront Station to Richmond and back.

Photos: 1., 2., 5., 6., 8., 9. Brett Ryan Studios / 3., 7. Alison Boulier / 4. City of Vancouver / 10. GoToVan

5

6

7

8

9

10

# TURNING SKYSCRAPERS INTO TREES

## UBC scientists take a leaf from nature's book.

BY **JARED DOWNING** | ILLUSTRATION BY **CLARE MALLISON**

AFTER YEARS OF research, a wood scientist, a mechanical engineer, and a chemical engineer have invented a new way to protect cities from climate change: turning buildings into giant trees. Or at least, their invention can make some buildings do some of the things that trees can. The team behind the "Developing Artificial Trees for Extreme Weather-Resistant Cities" project is developing a tri-layer film that can absorb water from the ground and release it into the air, the same way the roots, trunks, and leaves of trees do. When stuck to urban structures, this film could help soak up water during floods and keep cities cool in scorching weather.

"We were prompted by increasingly frequent extreme weather," says co-lead Dr. Jongho Lee, an assistant professor in the Department of Civil Engineering. "We thought, 'If only there were more trees, we could minimize the damage.'"

Lee is developing the film along with assistant professor Feng Jiang, a Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Functional Biomaterials based in the Faculty of Forestry, and associate professor Simcha Srebnik from the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering, with backing from the federal New Frontiers in Research Fund. The inspiration for the project came from Lee's previous experiments fabricating artificial mangrove trees as a way to turn salt water into fresh water.

But desalination is just one of the myriad things trees can do, Lee observes. They also absorb excess rainwater and act as natural AC units.

Thus, motivated by a year of both heatwaves and floods, Lee and like-minded scientists from three different university departments have set out to turn entire cities into forests. Their film can be applied to apartment buildings, warehouses, support columns, and pretty much any other static structure, transforming them into giant artificial trees. The film is actually a set of three separate materials, each mimicking a different natural process: The first layer, a tight membrane, acts as a root system, sucking up water from streets and gutters, while rejecting contaminants. The middle layer acts like a trunk, transporting water up the side and roof of a building. Finally, a top canopy surface allows the moisture to be evaporated through microscopic pores, just like real leaves.

"Nature is a great teacher," says Feng Jiang, who has studied the molecular structure of wood, and focuses on the structural elements of the tri-layer film. His research program aims to mimic nature and develop high-performance materials out of its abundant resources, with examples ranging from super-strong cellulose fibres inspired by spider silk and lightweight porous materials inspired by wasp nests. Revolutionary synthetic materials, such as strong and tough composites, he says, are the result of generations of studying what nature has done for eons. "If nature can make those beautiful, strong, and lightweight materials, why can't humans make them?"

In making the tri-layer film, Feng's chief challenge is materials selection. While the film can be easily fabricated out of petroleum-based polymers, this presents problems, such as plastic pollution. "We don't want to solve one problem by creating another one," he says. To avoid the issue, the team is once again looking to nature by experimenting with nature-based materials, such as cellulose, which is the structural component of actual wood and could be a way to make the film layers both durable and biodegradable.

The team believes the film could eventually be mass-produced, but there are still a few kinks to work out. For one, the film is not particularly attractive, commented Lee; people might be reluctant to stick it to their apartments and city landmarks – though it would likely be fine for existing eyesores, such as factories and water towers.

An alternative to attaching the film, says Lee, is to incorporate its functional structure into the building blocks used for construction.

The specific form their invention takes is secondary. The most important thing is to stop battling nature and start learning from it – before it's too late. Last year's Pacific Northwest heatwave killed at least 1,400 people. A few months later, in the same region, torrential rains and severe flooding caused more deaths and billions of dollars in damage. And those events may only be the start. If our cities are going to weather what is coming, we are going to have to adapt wherever we can, even if it means converting our cities into artificial forests.

"This is a crazy idea, I know," Lee says. "Nature has lots of crazy and fascinating features. It's natural that we can get great ideas from nature."

# RETHINKING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH WATER

## Protecting humanity from floods and rising sea levels requires a more collaborative relationship with nature.

BY **JARED DOWNING** | ILLUSTRATION BY **CLARE MALLISON**

HUMANITY'S GREATEST LOVE-HATE relationship has always been with water. Humans love to settle near coastlines and river valleys, lured by the flat, fertile land and opportunities for trade. On the other hand, water floods fields, swallows ships, and stirs up hurricanes that wipe out entire settlements in an instant.

"Water goes where it wants to go. It will carve out new paths and new areas to occupy," says UBC landscape architect Kees Lockman. "So we have to collaborate with water and understand what it wants to do."

Dealing with water as a living creature (at least metaphorically) is the guiding principle of the UBC Coastal Adaptation Lab, which develops sustainable innovations in irrigation and aquaculture meant to protect cities from a changing climate, where traditional and environmentally destructive infrastructure falls short.

"The conventional approaches don't provide solutions. They only exacerbate the existing challenges that we're seeing with the collapse of ecosystems and habitat fragmentation. Therefore, it's important to do something different," Lockman explains.

With funding from the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, the Coastal Adaptation Lab's projects aim to not only protect humanity from nature, but also protect nature itself. Lockman and his colleagues are currently partnering with local governments and First Nations in places like Squamish and the South Coast Conservation Lands, seeking to understand their particular needs and challenges. Some projects focus on specific concepts, such as soil-based dikes and artificial clam gardens that help maintain marine ecosystems. Others focus on specific locations, including one that explores the Port of Vancouver's vulnerabilities to climate change and develops sustainable solutions.

"What we're trying to do is understand the challenges that local municipalities, governments, and First Nations have – primarily with issues of flooding in delta communities, which are both riverine and coastal."

The lab's Living Breakwater Project aims to replace traditional seawalls, groins, and jetties – normally made of concrete slabs, steel nets, and piled-up rubble – with soil-based "living levees" that can host plants and animals. A living dike plan is currently in development for the city of Surrey in partnership with the Semiahmoo First Nation.

"Plants and wetlands help attenuate waves. The idea is to not only implement seawalls or dikes but also come up with solutions that are environmentally sustainable and don't further negatively impact our important ecosystems."

Lockman himself hails from the Netherlands, whose long struggle against the encroaching seas has resulted in a vast network of dikes and artificial islands. "We have a saying that God created the Dutch, but the Dutch created the Netherlands," Lockman jokes. He said when the Dutch and other Europeans colonized the Americas, they brought their philosophy of dominating nature, ignoring centuries of knowledge from the native peoples.

"Indigenous people have long shown how we can steward the planet, and in different ways," Lockman says. "We spent the first couple of weeks of the project having several decolonization sessions, which were led by people from the First Nations, in order for us to reflect on what it means to do research in this area."

Coming up with sustainable solutions is only the start. Another challenge will be scaling them up for a modern, industrialized society. But Lockman and his colleagues are thinking long-term: Even if it takes decades or centuries for cities to change their relationship with water, the important thing is that we start that process as soon as possible.

"There's this term called 'path dependency.' It means that once you lock into building a dike or a seawall, the only thing you can do is build the dike higher or raise the seawall. It really locks you into that specific path for adaptation. If you start to integrate things like beach nourishment, living dikes, or other types of components, you have many more opportunities to adapt – a toolbox of options, so to speak, that can reinforce and strengthen one another in positive ways."

In the meantime, human-caused climate change will only make our partnership with water more turbid. Lockman mentions the torrential rains and widespread flooding in B.C. last November, which killed at least four people and hundreds of thousands of animals, and caused billions of dollars in damage. In only a few decades, those events could be the new normal. We have to prepare while we can.

"That's the opportunity that these alternative and innovative solutions bring: not closing ourselves off from the water, but actually trying to shape our relationship with the water."

# LOST STREAM

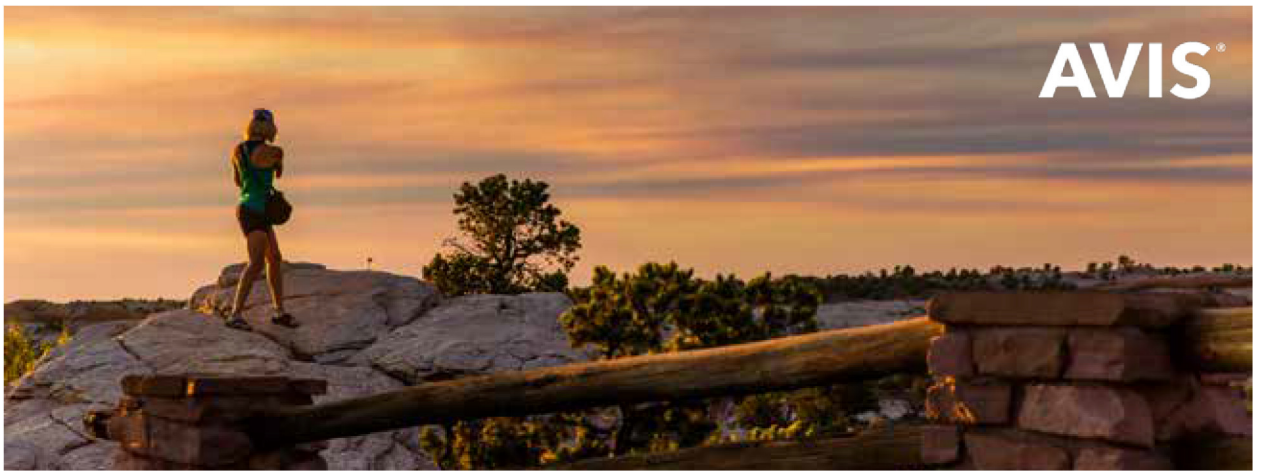
BY **FIONA TINWEI LAM**

Forgotten one, you remember what you were:
mossy banks, fringes of fern, rivulets, riffles,
cool passage for salmon. On a map
of old streams spilling out to the strait
you were one of hundreds
of capillaries threading through earth
muscled with rock, lavished with forest.
Then the city donned concrete
masks, civilized grids. Smothered
into park, you were culverted, diverted, yoked,
locked into pipes while we romped above.
But you refuse to be choked
under clearcut, brushcut tracts. Playing fields
soak back into marsh. Bog permeates playground.
One by one, oaks topple in sodden soil,
upended roots like tangled claws.
Submerged roads around you
ripple in wind. Water above seeks
water below. Deep underground,
you gurgle, chortle, ready to rise.

*Dedicated to Rita Wong and streamkeepers everywhere.*

**Fiona Tinwei Lam** (BA'86, MFA'02) is Vancouver's sixth poet laureate. Her legacy project involves community outreach to encourage the generation of new poems and poetry videos. It also aims to foster greater understanding about significant historical, cultural, and ecological sites on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, now known as the City of Vancouver. See *fionalam.net* for details.

Fiona Tinwei Lam's "Lost Stream" from *Odes & Laments*. Copyright © 2019 by Fiona Tinwei Lam. Anthologized in *Sweet Water: Poems for the Watersheds*, edited by Yvonne Blomer (Caitlin Press, 2020). Used with permission of Caitlin Press. All rights reserved. Illustration by Katy Dockrill.




# TRAVEL MORE! SAVE MORE!

Save **up to 30%** off base rates with **PAY NOW***

Visit **avis.com/ubcalumni** to Book Now!

AVIS.CA/UBCALUMNI

**Scan the QR Code to learn more!**

For full terms and conditions visit avis.com/ubcalumni.
©2022 Aviscar, Inc. All Rights Reserved. ®Avis is a registered trademark licensed to Aviscar Inc., for use in Canada.

# FUEL UP YOUR TRAVEL PLANS WITH BUDGET

Spend less, enjoy more. Save **up to 35%** off base rates with **PAY NOW***

Visit **Budget.com/ubcalumni** to Book Now!

Budget®

BUDGET.CA/UBCALUMNI

**Scan the QR Code to learn more!**

For full terms and conditions visit budget.com/ubcalumni.
©2022 Budgetcar, Inc. All Rights Reserved. ®Budget is a registered trademark licensed to Budgetcar Inc., for use in Canada.

# THE 3-30-300 RULE

ILLUSTRATION BY **MONTSE GALBANY**

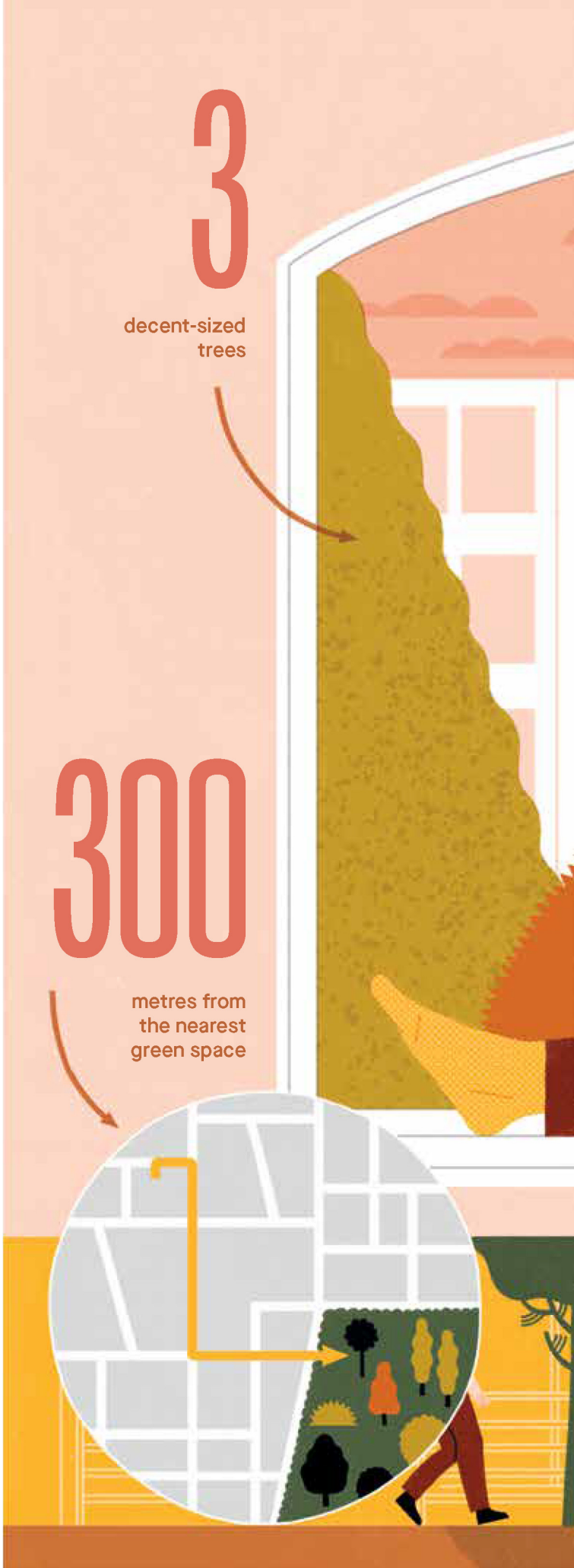
TREES AND GREEN spaces are an antidote for the stresses of modern life. Their shade and the natural cooling effect of transpiration provide respite from rising temperatures. They remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and trap the particulates that pollute our air. And their beauty is a natural tranquillizer for troubled minds.

However, the benefits of urban green space aren't evenly spread among the populace. "Leafy" is an adjective often reserved for affluent neighbourhoods, while the paved and sparsely planted areas typically inhabited by those with fewer choices are aptly described as concrete jungles.

This inequality, coupled with an urgency driven by climate change, is why forestry professor Cecil Konijnendijk launched the 3-30-300 rule last year, with the goal of creating greener and healthier cities for everyone.

The rule calls for every resident to be able to see at least three decent-sized trees from their home, and live in a neighbourhood with at least 30 per cent tree canopy cover, with the nearest public green space no further than 300 metres from their door.

Konijnendijk, who is the program director for UBC's new master's degree in Urban Forestry Leadership, concedes that 3-30-300 is more a rule of thumb than an exact prescription for every city – but it provides a clear and simple guide that everyone can relate to, including policymakers. And connecting the rule to individuals rather than cities as a whole will, he hopes, lead to a more equitable distribution of green assets.



30%

**tree canopy cover**

The Collaborative of Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP), led by professor emeritus of forestry Stephen Sheppard, provides toolkits (“Coolkits”) and workshops (“Cool ’Hood Champs”) for citizens who want to green their neighbourhoods. See *calp.forestry.ubc.ca* for more information.

# UBC's Smart Energy District

## It's about to change the future.

BY **CHRIS PETTY, MFA'86**

**Beyond renewable electricity**

There is a larger demand for chemical fuel than renewable electricity (for example, for air and surface transport and steel production). Hydrogen is the simplest and cleanest solution and can be produced from electricity and water in large quantities.

**The other electric vehicle**

Batteries may not be sufficient for large vehicles, such as ships and airplanes. Hydrogen fuel cells can link renewable electricity to these applications. The Smart Energy District includes a hydrogen refueling station to service light- and heavy-duty fuel cell vehicles.

IF YOU HAPPEN to pass the block bounded by Thunderbird Boulevard and Wesbrook Mall on UBC's Vancouver campus, take note: you are experiencing history being made.

That block is being transformed into a solar- and hydrogen-driven Smart Energy District, the first project of its kind in the world (*meridalabs.ca/research/testbed*). It will be developing and testing technologies in a real-world setting, with the goal of providing zero-emission power from sunlight and hydrogen.

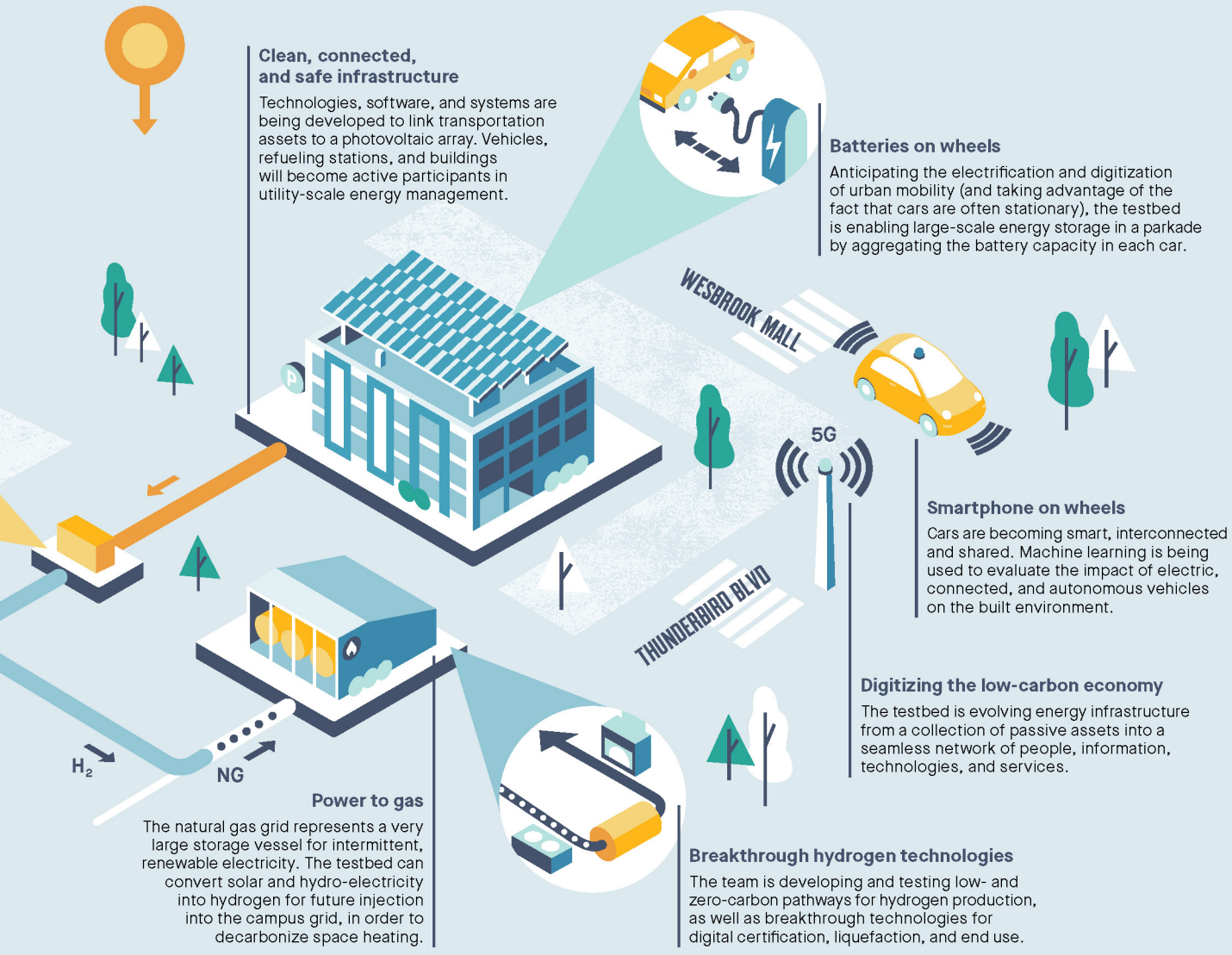
Under the direction of Walter Mérida, professor of mechanical engineering and lead of MéridaLabs, the site will include an advanced solar array on top of the existing parking garage, a water electrolyser to produce hydrogen, a hydrogen fueling station for cars and buses, and a bi-directional charging system for electric cars. The project is funded by both private and government sources, and is slated to be up and running by late 2023.

The water electrolyser extracts hydrogen from water using electricity from the solar array and stores it under pressure. This "green" hydrogen (as opposed to "blue" hydrogen, which is extracted from fossil sources) can then be used to produce electricity in a fuel cell or used directly as a fuel in space-heating or automotive applications. The emission from such uses is simply water.

Affordability, however, is an issue with using hydrogen as a source of power. While it is the most abundant substance in the universe, extracting it from water is a costly process.

"It is still expensive," Mérida says. "But, in an era of $100 plus for a barrel of oil, it's not as prohibitive as it was. Costs are coming down drastically as the technology develops. Rapid learning curves for wind, solar, and fuel cell technologies have been accompanied by dramatic cost reductions in the last two decades. The same will happen with hydrogen."

Hydrogen as a fuel is also attractive, because it can enable geopolitical stability and energy security. As the recent invasion of Ukraine has made clear, dependence on energy sources in politically unstable areas of the world can have disastrous results.




While hydrogen may well be the fuel of the future, technologies need to be developed to harness its potential. To that end, the Smart Energy District will serve as a research platform to test ideas for feasibility and potential economic development. Technologies that emerge will generate economic opportunities much like those generated by the development of renewable energy technologies.

The bi-directional charging system, for instance, which uses batteries in electric cars to both store and distribute energy, enables municipalities to use parkades for city-scale energy storage. In future stages of the project, injecting hydrogen into existing heating systems to replace natural gas has the potential to dramatically reduce carbon emissions. At UBC the natural gas boilers at the Campus Energy Centre, which was already on the project site, provide a significant portion of the heating needs of the university. Using hydrogen as part of that system would have significant impact on UBC's carbon footprint.

The digital system under development to manage the project is also revolutionary, and will take advantage of the campus' 5G wireless network. It will oversee every aspect of the project, all the way from generating and storing hydrogen to processing parking fees.

As digital, civil, and energy infrastructures become smart and interconnected, it will be possible to deliver services that minimize environmental damage, promote geopolitical stability, and enable economic diversification.

As the project proceeds, and it's shown that hydrogen can provide pathways to net-zero energy systems, Mérida sees a bright future ahead. He is in talks with municipalities and corporations around the Lower Mainland and across the country about adopting technologies that develop out of the project.

"We don't have 100 years to change our energy system," Mérida says. "We have, at most, two or three decades. This project means to accelerate the process by developing systems that are convenient, clean, and affordable."

# Alone in a crowded city

BY **MADELEINE DE TRENQUALYE, BA'07** | ILLUSTRATION BY **GRACIA LAM**

As social restrictions ease, UBC philosophers and psychologists are helping us imagine a city where people feel more connected.

YEARS BEFORE THE pandemic forced us to isolate from each other in unprecedented ways, cities were becoming worried about rising levels of loneliness. In 2012, Vancouver's mayor launched a task force to combat loneliness in the city, in response to a survey that found one in three Vancouverites had difficulty making friends, and one in four felt alone more often than desired. In 2017, the U.S. Surgeon General declared a loneliness epidemic. The following year, the U.K. appointed the world's first loneliness minister. Policymakers were coming up with creative solutions to connect people. And then the pandemic came, pushing this momentum in the opposite direction. The percentage of Canadians who suffer from both loneliness and social isolation increased from 23 per cent of the population in 2019 to 33 per cent in 2020, according to an Angus Reid poll.

As social restrictions ease, how do we create a city where people feel more connected? Should loneliness still be high on the agenda when we are grappling with crises like rising inequality, climate disasters, war, and a global pandemic?

For Dr. Kimberley Brownlee, a philosophy professor and Canada Research Chair in Ethics and Political and Social Philosophy, the answer is an emphatic yes. Social relationships are more critical to our wellbeing than political and economic rights, she says. And if our core social needs are not met, we won't be able to tackle political or economic challenges.

Brownlee, a Rhodes scholar who has advised prisons on rehabilitation programs and written policy briefings on tackling loneliness, says humans are deeply social creatures who need to be cared for and to care for others to survive and flourish. "We are so deeply social that meeting our social needs – for decent human contact, acceptance within a community, companionship, loving relations, and interdependent care – is more important than meeting almost every other need we have," she writes. Her recent book, *Being Sure of Each Other*, makes the case that social needs are a human right and that social deprivation is an injustice.

One obvious reason for prioritizing social needs is that loneliness is terrible for our health. For much of human history, belonging to a tight-knit social group was essential for survival, and being separated from the group was an emergency that triggered a fight-or-flight response. In small doses, loneliness is helpful in prodding us to seek human connection. But when it becomes chronic, it leads to reduced immunity, depression, cognitive decline, and increased risk of heart disease and stroke.

"Loneliness and social isolation carry a greater risk of early death than obesity, physical inactivity, and air pollution," says Charlotte Roddick (MA'19), a PhD student in psychology who studies the link between loneliness and health. "It's a risk equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day." Roddick adds that it's not just a problem affecting older, isolated adults; research increasingly suggests that young adults aged 16-24 have the highest rates of loneliness of any age group.

## WHY CITY DWELLERS ARE LONELIER

Urban loneliness is often linked to population mobility, cost of living (which can lead to a poor work-life balance and less time for a social life), and a high percentage of people living alone. Young adults who move to a new city for university or for work may find themselves experiencing loneliness for the first time as they leave existing social ties behind and struggle to establish new friendships. "In a large city, there is little that unifies us unless we actively seek out clusters and create sub-identities based on interests or culture," adds Brownlee.

The challenge, she notes, is that chronic loneliness can increase defensiveness and mistrust towards others, which causes people to avoid social interactions, even if they are suffering from social deprivation. Sociability is also a muscle. The less we interact with others, the harder it is to gauge reactions, and the more social situations become stressful instead of nourishing. The pandemic has exacerbated this for many people.

Brownlee says loneliness has significant knock-on effects for cities, since chronically lonely people are less likely to participate in actions that might improve their community. "COVID's actually been quite damaging to whatever tendencies we might have had before to smile at a stranger, to have that brief chat on the bus – those little moments that are nourishing and vital to our health, and are also the cradle in which we form closer ties. When we lose the chance to connect

with strangers, we're losing out on the space to be useful, to feel needed, to form tighter bonds. If people avoid offering micro-connections to strangers, avoid reassuring others that they are accepted and welcomed, there will be long-term costs."

Another reason city dwellers can be especially prone to loneliness is that it's easy not to feel needed when you're surrounded by millions of people, says Brownlee. "In a small village, if the neighbour's house is on fire, you're number one. In a city, there are 2,000 other people equally well placed to be the one who calls 911 or who gets the bucket to put out the fire. There can be a sense of not feeling special to any stranger."

Many clinicians use the UCLA Scale to measure loneliness, which asks people how often they lack companionship, feel left out, or feel isolated. Brownlee and her students have proposed a new measure: one that also considers how much a person feels needed by others. Brownlee says that feeling needed is such an effective way to break out of the cycle of loneliness that cities should find ways to help people be of service, such as incentives to participate in volunteer work or community service. In the U.K., doctors can now give social prescriptions for loneliness, such as sending their patients to volunteer or sign up for an art class.

Brownlee adds that unless cities are thoughtfully designed – for example with good public spaces for people to gather, or accessible transportation – they aren't conducive to "ambient sociability." She argues that planners and policymakers need to consider whether the decisions they make help preserve the connections we already have *and* help people make new ones.

## DESIGNING HIGH-RISE LIVING FOR SOCIAL CONNECTION

Another scholar thinking about the importance of thoughtful urban design in helping people cultivate social connections is Iris Lok (BA'17, MA'19), a UBC PhD student in social psychology. As a happiness expert, Lok understands how critical social interactions are to happiness – even when those interactions occur with an acquaintance or stranger as opposed to a close friend or partner. "There's a lot of work showing that people derive a lot of emotional benefits from talking to strangers, yet there's a social norm against talking to strangers," says Lok. "I'm passionate about finding out why people avoid talking to strangers even though it makes them feel better, and what interventions we can design that promote social interactions."

One of the interventions she is currently working on involves designing buildings that encourage social interactions among residents. High-rise buildings are a worthy target for addressing loneliness: a Vancouver Foundation study found that Vancouverites who live in high-rises report higher levels of loneliness, have a harder time making friends, and are less likely to know at least two of their neighbours' names.

In collaboration with a team of architects, engineers, and other social psychologists, Lok is developing a software that determines how much a given building design facilitates encounters and how many of those encounters are likely to result in meaningful interactions. Lok says an encounter is more likely to lead to a greeting or conversation if it occurs with a dog owner, with someone you run into frequently, or in a space where social norms encourage people to chat. For instance, a shared kitchen or mini library on one's floor will likely lead to more meaningful connections than encountering a resident on the elevator or in the parking lot. Lok hopes the project will help city dwellers cultivate more connections with their neighbours.

She acknowledges that the past two years of social distancing may have weakened our ability or desire to socialize with strangers. "People tend to underestimate other people's interest in talking to them, and COVID has added to that and made people even more cautious of talking to strangers than they were before," she notes. "On the flip side, I think COVID has made people realize the importance of their social relationships, and made them hungrier for social interactions."

One obvious reason for prioritizing social needs is that loneliness is terrible for our health. For much of human history, belonging to a tight-knit social group was essential for survival, and being separated from the group was an emergency that triggered a fight-or-flight response.

# BENEFITS THAT ARE A CUT ABOVE

Whether you're in the market for a new car, searching for the perfect home, or simply enjoy getting a great deal, you're sure to find an offer you love on our list of exclusive *alumni UBC* partners.

Bell — Save up to 30% on mobility plans

pocketpills — Fill prescriptions online. 100% free delivery

avis budget group — Save up to 25% off your next car rental

freshprep — Get 3 free plates on your first order

modo — Enjoy $50 in free drive time

HearingLife — Receive exclusive perks and discounts to help you on your path to better hearing

DILAWRI CANADA'S LARGEST AUTOMOTIVE GROUP — Enjoy preferred pricing and VIP concierge assistance when you buy or lease your next new vehicle

BROADWAY ACROSS CANADA® — Save up to 10% off select performances of the best Broadway shows in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton & Ottawa.

trip MERCHANT — Access exclusive travel offers, last minute deals & unique experiences

evo CAR SHARE — Sign up for free and get 45 minutes free drive time

Vancouver Whitecaps FC — Get special pricing at home games this season

Sparkling Hill RESORT CELEBRATING WHOLE BODY WELLNESS — Save 40% off the standard rate

ALL-PURPOSE REALTY REALTORS® Referral Service AGENTS FROM WELL KNOWN FIRMS — Earn thousands in cash rewards on your next home sale or purchase

## *alumni UBC* in the palm of your hand

App features include:

- Savings from *alumni UBC* partners
- Online journal access
- TREK magazine, webinars and podcasts
- UBC library privileges

Download now. There are monthly contests too!

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

VISIT **alumni.ubc.ca/savings**

Interested in becoming an *alumni UBC* corporate partner?
Contact **jenna.mccann@ubc.ca**

alumni UBC

Q.

COLLECTIVE WISDOM

# How do we make our cities more equitable and inclusive?

## Rethink public engagement

**CAREY DOBERSTEIN**
**Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science (UBC Okanagan)**

Public engagement as currently practiced by most governments is faced with high expectations but low satisfaction among many involved. Public consultation and engagement on housing developments and neighbourhood change can be so controversial and at times alarmist such that NIMBY ("Not in my back yard") attitudes often prevail. This is especially prominent when concerning housing for vulnerable populations, including social housing, halfway housing for those suffering from addictions, and housing for refugees. In the context of deep polarization in Western democracies, the modes by which the public is consulted take deeper importance as they may exacerbate, rather than relieve, ideological or issues-based tension.

While consultations and public hearings certainly have a place in modern governance, they privilege, and arguably reinforce, a self-oriented view of political debates that are so often concerned with public goods that have implications well beyond the self. Rarely are citizens asked to estimate or articulate the views of neighbours or members of groups other than their own, contemplate the merits of opposing arguments, or their tolerance for policies with which they may disagree. Effective public engagement that challenges, rather than reinforces, inequalities thus requires rethinking when and how we invite the public to participate.

## Understand inherited histories

**DALLAS HUNT, PHD'19**
**Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literatures**

Great question! I think we need the expansion of resources and social services to those most in need. That said, we also, collectively, need to understand the inherited histories of the cities we inhabit. What that might do, potentially, is generate a generosity and gentleness that is needed sometimes in spaces like this. Not only how did we arrive here but who do we have obligations to? Basically, who tended to this land and who has historically? I think once we start to think about these questions it might lead to larger conversations as to how we can inhabit a shared space well, and in relation to one another (this can lead to organizing, or to policy that ensures positive outcomes for all, especially the most precarious). Because, in the end, we have to find ways to commune but also be undone by one another – what else is there?

## Be mindful of unique challenges

**OLUDOLAPO MAKINDE, LLM'19**
**Liu Scholar and Doctoral Law Student**

We can make our cities more equitable and inclusive by being mindful of the unique challenges faced by various groups of people and putting in place policies or measures specifically designed to address those challenges. In the context of the Black community, equity and inclusion translate to addressing issues of systemic racism that play out in educational institutions; income and employment; access to healthcare; housing, and community; and the criminal justice system. It also entails being aware of the challenges that people with intersecting identities deal with. For example, Black females face an unemployment rate twice the national average, Black queer people struggle to find safe spaces, and Black males are stereotyped as criminally minded and get racially profiled. Active listening and engagement with marginalized groups on what they need to feel safe and included, and taking action on suggestions put forward, is essential in addressing these issues.

## Remove barriers to opportunity and success

**RICK HANSEN, CC, OBC, BPE'86, LLD(HC)'87**
**Founder, Rick Hansen Foundation**

To create truly equitable cities, we must shift our view of inclusion from simply accommodation and compliance to the minimum standards, to an elevated perspective of disability representation and expression in all places and aspects of society. We must put into action the DEIA values (diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility) we claim to embrace, by removing the physical and social barriers to opportunities and success for people with disabilities in government, business, education, athletics, and the arts – wherever they may wish to be.

As we build out new infrastructure and retrofit the old, we cannot look at accessibility as a competing stakeholder demand. We need empowered and emboldened civic, private, and public sector leaders to normalize investing in the accelerated removal of barriers, and end the permissive behaviour that allows new ones to be created.

## Expand participatory ecosystems

**ORAL ROBINSON**
**Lecturer and Honours Chair, Department of Sociology**

For cities to be more equitable and inclusive, we must expand our participatory ecosystems by including under-represented groups such as BIPOC, women, immigrants, poor, 2SLGBTIQAI+, and disabled groups in decisions and dialogue. Municipalities must invest in tangible measures to connect diverse populations and foster their engagement in new and existing policies and programs. For example, employing (more) community outreach, youth empowerment, and intercultural communications officers to "work from the ground," to hear from laypersons (not just selected elites from minority groups), and to develop and implement their ideas through participatory action is vital. We must also foster sustained intercultural contact between groups (not just symbolic celebrations such as annual ethnic festivals). There needs to be regular opportunities for cultural exchange, and for under-represented groups to be able to showcase and express their uniqueness, culture, and values with regularity (e.g., hosting events at libraries and other municipal spaces). This could help cement a culture of friendship formation and allyship, where ordinary people (privileged and under-represented) get to experience each other, and expand inter-group networks. Likewise, sustained intermingling would facilitate deeper understandings of each other's struggles. This could empower groups to work side-by-side, with the vision that when the needs of one group are not met, the entire city suffers.

## Question current processes and be ready to learn

**HEATHER CAMPBELL**
**Professor and Director, School of Community and Regional Planning**

We have to rethink our approaches to policy-making and implementation. Sounds boring? As urban planners we know there are no magic bullets to greater equity and inclusion. No one holds all the answers. Rhetorical flourishes without a commitment to the long grind of systemic institutional change deliver little. It requires posing uncomfortable questions of our governance processes and resource allocation systems. Of always asking *who benefits*?

I could have started by saying more equitable and inclusive cities are about the opportunity for everyone to have access to nature, affordable housing and utilities (water, light, heat, cooling), appropriate healthcare, fresh food, good education, dignified employment, cultural growth, a respected way of life, clean air, transport mobility, and the avoidance of the impacts of climatic variability. Such cities also require capable leadership and effective approaches to partnership and engagement. But these words are easy. The achievement of greater equity and inclusion in real time and real places is about hard choices and imperfect options, about partial improvements and unforeseen consequences, about joining up rather than perpetuating siloes. Most of all it is about the courage to act, and the humility to be ready to learn... again and again.

# Each year, more than 5,000 alumni generously share their time, knowledge, and experience with UBC.

These alumni volunteer in countless roles across our Vancouver and Okanagan campuses, and in alumni communities around the globe.

Whether you're volunteering to mentor students, help graduates get career ready, build the alumni community, or support community organizations through THE A PROJECT, your work is vital to building an exceptional UBC and a better world.

*ALUMNI UBC* VOLUNTEERS
IS PRESENTED BY
ODLUM BROWN LIMITED

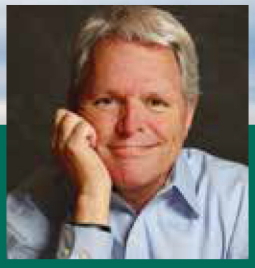
ODLUM BROWN
Investing for Generations®

Visit **alumni.ubc.ca/volunteers** to learn more about how you can get involved.

alumni UBC VOLUNTEERS

# CONTINUE YOUR PASSION FOR LEARNING

**Copenhagen, Malmö & Stockholm:**
**City-building, Sept. 14 – 24, 2022**



*alumni UBC* Study Leader **Larry Beasley, CM** is an internationally known urban planner. Formerly Chief Planner for the City of Vancouver, he is largely credited with the transformation of its downtown core along New Urbanism lines, known as Vancouverism.

✓ Tour Ready Guidelines
✓ #SafeTravels

**Visit alumni.ubc.ca/travel for tours led by exceptional UBC study leaders.**

Active & Wellness | Nature & Wildlife | Food & Wine | Arts & Culture

Travel arrangements by:

WorldwideQuest
ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH TRAVEL | Since 1970

travel@worldwidequest.com | 1-800-387-1483

alumni UBC Travel Club

BEST VALUE IN EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL | MEANINGFUL LOCAL EXPERIENCES | THOUGHTFUL ITINERARIES | EXPERT UBC STUDY LEADERS

# INSIDE


**FEATURES**

**44** Bob Lee: Mr. UBC
**51** UBC Blue & Gold Campaign Surpasses Goal

**DEPARTMENTS**

**36** Changemakers
**38** Rewind
**39** President's Message
**40** Career Corner
**48** Findings
**52** Agenda
**54** The Scoop
**57** In Memoriam
**60** The Last Word

**Sonja Thoma, PhD'17**

»

Linguistics and Language Coach

»

**Next challenge:** Amplifying Indigenous peoples' voices in their own languages

Read her story on page 37. »

Photo by Bobbi Barbarich Photography

# CHANGE/ MAKERS

# THE RIGHT TO MOBILITY

A new device for wheelchairs is helping to make the world more accessible for people with disabilities.

BY **CRAIG TAKEUCHI, BA'96, MFA'02**

A Toronto commute that should have taken Pooja Viswanathan about 45 minutes wound up lasting three hours. That's because she was using a wheelchair on the transit system, where she encountered inaccessible stations, out-of-service elevators, and difficulties boarding buses.

Viswanathan does not need to use a wheelchair, but as the founder of Toronto-based Braze Mobility – which creates blind spot sensors for wheelchairs and mobility aids – she undertook the trip to experience the challenges faced by people who do. She was shocked to realize how much planning people with disabilities need to do for simple excursions.

"Why do they have to travel for two or three times the amount of time than anybody else?" she asks.

Since her student days, Viswanathan has made it her mission to help people with disabilities access the world. She transitioned from a University of Toronto lab to a team collaborating on the same smart wheelchair project at UBC (which she says has "one of the best robotics labs in the world").

What was initially a "fun robotics project" became her PhD project after an eye-opening visit to a long-term care facility in 2001. She describes seeing residents slumped over in manual wheelchairs that they didn't have the strength to self-propel. They were being denied power mobility devices, she explains, because of safety concerns. She regarded it as "a violation of a fundamental human right to mobility." Yet she also recognized that staff had to choose between supporting their clients' autonomy and protecting them. It was a dilemma that needed a solution.

The semi-autonomous wheelchair technology she had been working on was designed to take over control to prevent accidents. But unlike vehicles that people get in and out of, a wheelchair is more like an extension of the body, Viswanathan points out. Accordingly, she switched to designing an alert-based system that left decision-making to the person using the wheelchair. A challenge that developers often face, she explains, is acknowledging that a technology they've been building for years is perhaps not the right solution. Her recommendation? "Detach yourself from the solution and attach yourself to the problem."

Successful problem-solving involves the feedback of end users. A year-long beta testing of the alert-based system invited the participation of people with disabilities, who tested it in both winter and summer conditions. As a result, Viswanathan's devices now offer adjustable lights for colourblind users, audio alerts, and vibration alerts that are helpful for vision- or hearing-impaired people. The alerts help counter the difficulty some wheelchair users experience with seeing the entirety of their immediate surroundings, particularly those who need headrests or have limited upper body mobility.

**Pooja Viswanathan, PhD'12**

«

Founder of Braze Mobility

«

**Next challenge:** Partnering with wheelchair manufacturers to make Braze Mobility's blind spot sensor technology a standard option on all wheelchairs

Viswanathan's devices have helped users execute moves they used to struggle with, such as backing out of an elevator or manoeuvering in tight spaces. They save time and help prevent injuries or damage. But perhaps their ultimate contribution is the removal of barriers to equality.

# MOTHER TONGUES

## Linguist Sonja Thoma is supporting the revitalization of Indigenous languages.

BY **RACHEL GLASSMAN, BA'18, MA'20**

When Sonja Thoma moved from her native Bavaria to Seattle, she noticed that her new immersion in English meant a slight shift in worldview. Sometimes English had no words for the precise emotion she was feeling, while German did, or vice versa. Her experience as an immigrant left her fascinated by the many ways language subtly shapes consciousness. As a linguist, it's something she considers daily in a very different context: her work supporting Indigenous language revitalization.

"Especially as a first-generation immigrant, I have a lot of humility as a settler who wasn't necessarily invited to come here," Thoma says. In the aftermath of Canada's systematic attempts to erase Indigenous languages, including punishing children in Indian Residential Schools for speaking their mother tongues, language revitalization is a fundamental way Indigenous communities are honouring and advocating for their cultures today.

During her linguistics training at UBC, Thoma learned from several Indigenous elders, who shared with her the centrality of language in "the way we see the world, the way we live our culture," she says. From the connections she made at UBC, communities began to invite Thoma to apply her training in support of their language revitalization efforts. "This work found me," she says. Since 2017, Thoma has supported the Stó:lō nation's Stó:lō Shxwelí language program through her company Linguistics in the Wild. She has also worked with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, coaching language teachers all over British Columbia.

Not a fluent speaker of First Nations languages herself, Thoma's expertise lies in the frameworks of language learning, teaching, and documentation. Depending on the unique goals of her clients, she supports a wide range of areas where she says outside help is welcome. For instance, she might offer teachers strategies to use in the classroom, or assist with organizing curricula so that learning tricky grammar doesn't feel too overwhelming. Often, Thoma translates academic jargon into accessible terms to create user-friendly resources. In communities where settler linguists or anthropologists once documented the local language in grammars or dictionaries – texts designed for other settler academics – Thoma's expertise supports efforts to reclaim these documents for the community's use.

Whatever form her work takes, Thoma emphasizes that the process is client-led, with her role being primarily to listen and to support communities "asserting their undeniable right to language and culture." Thoma feels grateful that her expertise and extensive training can serve those advocating to speak and celebrate their mother tongue. "It's great to be able to use my privilege to support that."

# Paper Pullers: The rise of microfiche

BY **RACHEL GLASSMAN, BA'18, MA'20**

IN THE DECADE between 1968 and 1978, the UBC Library added as many volumes to its collection as it had amassed in the first 52 years of its existence. An ever-greater deluge of paper – books, documents, records – had spilled onto the shelves with ferocious speed, and by 1978 the library's collection was overflowing its constraints. A massive physical catalogue of 6.2 million paper cards, each one representing an item in the library's possession, occupied a sizeable chunk of the Main Library's real estate. To locate their desired book, a library patron had to first search for its corresponding card in the catalogue.

"If we continue to expand card catalogues, we simply won't be able to keep up with published material," said UBC's chief librarian, Basil Stuart-Stubbs. "We run the risk of having the entire system come crashing down around us." The solution? A years-long project to computerize the entire catalogue and convert it into machine-readable microfiche. When the project completed, the 6.2 million cards would be transfigured into a modest pile of microfiche measuring four inches wide, six inches long, and 15 inches high.

Photo: Jim Banham (UBC Archives, UBC 41.1/654-3)

In preparation, the library officially closed the card catalogue in 1979 with a ceremony to mark the last entry, complete with a cake in the shape of a catalogue card and – if pictures are any indication – quite an impressive quantity of wine. Eleanor Mercer, who had worked for the Library for 40 years and was on the brink of retirement, had the honour of entering the last card, which happened to be for the *Guidebook for geologic field trips in the Lynn Canyon-Seymour area of North Vancouver, B.C.*

In 1972, a few years before the ceremony, *The Ubyssey* had written with foreboding that computerized library catalogues heralded "the demise of the classroom, the lecturer, and the library." Lucky for us, the classroom, the lecturer, and the library are still alive and well – and with 6.2 million fewer pieces of paper on the main floor.

# How connecting a city makes people's daily lives better

UBC President and Vice-Chancellor
Santa J. Ono

WHAT MAKES A city "ideal" for each of us is subjective, but what all great cities have in common is their ability to get people interacting, according to research out of the United Kingdom.

As the researchers say, "A great city is a connected city – with a large number of opportunity-spawning, face-to-face, physical interactions between its inhabitants."[1]

Their study suggests that the greatest cities are those with excellent connectedness. They go further to say that urban centres that make significant investments in infrastructure to reduce the time it takes for people to reach others foster enriching interactions that yield massive benefits.

Systems and networks that enable connectedness are more important than ever as the world's great cities transform into thriving regions – unique districts and boroughs merging to create more complex and interesting places to live, work, learn, play, and visit.

It is certainly true of our own region, with investments into infrastructure that have connected Metro Vancouver and expanded the housing ecosystem. These include the opening of the Expo Line, running between Vancouver and New Westminster; the Canada Line connecting Vancouver, Richmond, and YVR; and more recently, the Evergreen Line, linking the Tri-Cities with Burnaby, Vancouver, and Surrey. Each project faced many obstacles but dramatically and positively transformed the region. It's in large part because of these forward-thinking decisions that Metro Vancouver is the world-class region it is today, beloved by many – me included.

Conversely, it's not difficult to see the negative consequences of isolating key institutions from the rest of the region – especially those, including UBC, that develop the talent required to drive the economy and have the capacity to help us tackle the greatest challenges of our time. Tens of thousands of people from all over Metro Vancouver learn, work, and conduct research at UBC every day – at the Vancouver campus, at a satellite campus, or at UBC facilities in their own community. But access is not easy, because transit service to our campuses, especially the Vancouver campus, is over capacity.

Think of the "opportunity-spawning" interactions that could result from better connecting UBC to the region's rapid transit network. Health partnerships across Metro Vancouver could spark new UBC discoveries. Seamless links between UBC's expertise and industries could fuel innovation and job growth. More students could access on-the-job training around the region. And people throughout the region could benefit from easy access to our campus.

An extension of the SkyTrain to Arbutus Street is a good start, and it is now under construction. Significant progress has already been made in the planning for its further extension to UBC, and, if the momentum continues, the project could be completed by 2030. By that time, I hope we will be looking back at the decision to connect UBC to the rest of Metro Vancouver as one that made a great region even better.

1. Sim, Barahona, Stumpf (August 2015) Great cities look small. *Journal of the Royal Society Interface*.

# From Resignation to Revolution

To counter the "Great Resignation," managers need to buck the status quo and make staff wellbeing a priority.

BY **LAURA DOWLING, BA'09**

IF YOU'RE A manager who is spending increasing amounts of time and energy recruiting new employees, you're not alone. Many business leaders I've worked with in recent months are seeing an unprecedented number of staff leaving their organizations, hence the term "Great Resignation," which was coined by organizational psychologist Anthony Klotz in reference to the significant number of employees who have left or are expected to leave their current roles over the course of the pandemic. What's behind this phenomenon?

"It's not just about getting another job, or leaving the workforce, it's about taking control of your work and personal life, and making a big decision – resigning – to accomplish that," Klotz told CNBC's *Make It* in January. "This is a moment of empowerment for workers, one that will continue well into the new year."

To avoid a damaging loss of talent, leaders need to understand what motivates employees to either stay or go, and respond accordingly. It will require significant changes to traditional work cultures, but the rewards – both for workers and organizations – will be well worth the effort.

And it all hinges on respecting employees as human beings rather than just as units of production.

While some employees work solely for the paycheque, for others it's about personal development or a calling to contribute to a particular field. Regardless of their motivation for working, most people want to feel that their time is valued and their contributions matter; that their working environments are inclusive, respectful, and safe; and that they are encouraged to grow and develop.

As an executive leadership and career coach, I am no exception to that. On a professional level, I'm passionate about making sure talents, skills, and mindsets are enabled to set people up for success. But on a personal level, I feel good when my own talents and skills are used effectively. It causes me to be engaged. I am contributing positively. I am acknowledged and celebrated.

Ultimately, employees want their fundamental needs to be met on a truly individual level within an organizational context. And organizations should pay attention, because the cost of employee disengagement can be enormous to both organizational stability and the wellbeing of employees.

But research conducted by Gallup in 2020 revealed that 73 per cent of employees feel stressed or burnt out at work. And in a McKinsey survey, the top three factors employees cited as reasons for quitting were that they didn't feel valued by their organizations (54 per cent) or their managers (52 per cent), or because they didn't feel a sense of belonging at work (51 per cent).

An article published by McKinsey in September 2021 suggests that it doesn't have to be this way. "If companies make a concerted effort to better understand why employees are leaving and take meaningful action to retain them," it states, "the Great Attrition could become the Great Attraction." And in my experience, if a leader is investing in their people, those people will stay until they have genuinely outgrown the confines of their existing work context or have other life commitments to pursue.

The status quo is no longer sustainable, as evidenced by the decline of employee wellbeing. What if we started to see the world of work as an opportunity to develop employees not just as workers but as people? Instead of being seen as a threat, the disruption precipitated by the pandemic could be seen as an opportunity for employees at all levels, including management, to live authentic lives by knowing who they are, what they stand for, what they need, and the kind of environment that will allow them to flourish.

People managers are the key to a change in status quo, because at the heart of this much-needed shift are employee-manager relationships that are positive, trusting, and genuine. (Research conducted by Gallup in 2019 found that at least 70 per cent of an employee's level of engagement is due to their manager.)

**Laura Dowling (left) will present the following webinar on June 13. To register, visit *alumni.ubc.ca/make-your-career-move/***

**MAKE YOUR CAREER MOVE**

As the world of work regains its rhythm after pandemic restrictions, many managers, leaders, and executives now have new roles and responsibilities. Whether changing positions within or outside an organization, these transitions require a high degree of self-awareness and self-management, energy for change, and a focus on strategic relationships. To gain some practical strategies that will help you navigate your career, this insightful webinar will examine the role that personal and positional power plays in your own leadership development.

To this end, managers should make it a priority to develop their coaching and leadership skills. It's also important for managers to know themselves – what their own fundamental needs, strengths and weaknesses are – so that they can best lead others. They need to be courageous in setting the stage for meaningful and inspiring career and performance conversations that will enable their people to thrive.

To reach the sweet spot of high levels of staff engagement and wellbeing, managers need to ensure each of their employees is purposefully aligned with their personal North Star, as well as with the goals of the organization. I encourage inquiry-based coaching conversations about what employees value the most, what energizes them, and what their needs are. Managers should be asking their employees (as well as themselves) questions like these:

- Of all the things you do well in your job, which ones do you do best?
- If you could make one change for the better, what would it be?
- How will your work today fulfill your purpose?
- What parts of your role give you the most energy?

(Adapted from *Gallup's Wellbeing at Work* book, 2021)

It's time to be courageous about being our authentic selves, to create space for alignment with our best selves. This is the time for our inner world (our knowing) to catch up with our outer world, allowing us to experience the world of work in a way that is fulfilling, sustainable, and supportive of our individual needs. Ultimately, the healthiest work cultures are those that allow people to thrive and contribute positively, regardless of their motivation for working. And managers should be leading the way, starting with themselves.

# Don't have time to pick up your prescriptions?

# No problem, we'll deliver them to you.

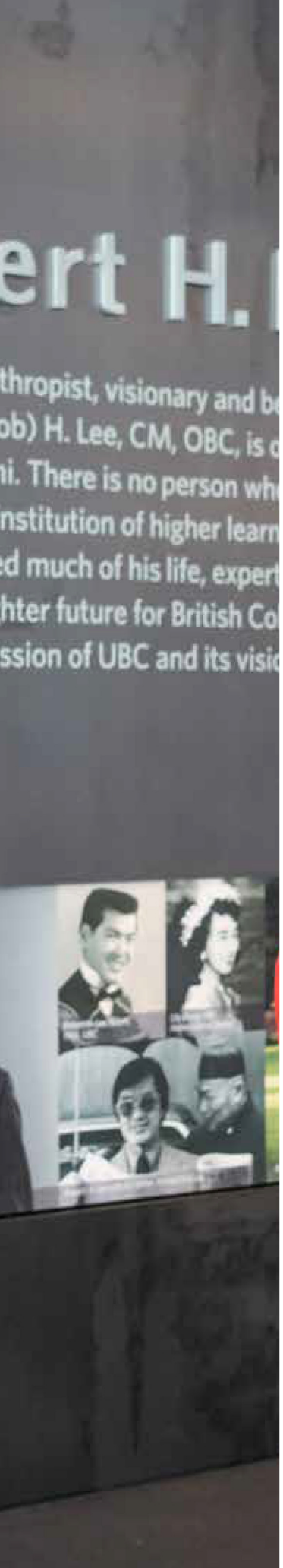
**Sign up for Pocketpills online pharmacy today!**
Visit **alumni.ubc.ca/savings** for exclusive offers in your area.

# Fill prescriptions online with free delivery, anywhere in Canada.

pocketpills

Canada's online pharmacy

# BOB LEE TRIBUTE




# Bob Lee: Mr. UBC

BY **CHRIS PETTY**

*Bob helped transform UBC from a geographically isolated commuter campus into a world-leading university – one with 24-hour life, complete with everything to support a vibrant community for residents to live, work, and study.*

**– Santa J. Ono, UBC President & Vice-Chancellor**

ONE AFTERNOON, SOMETIME in the '90s, I was walking across campus to the President's Office. I was editor of this magazine, in those days, and was trotting the latest issue, hot off the press, to then president Martha Piper. Just as I was turning off Main Mall to the Old Admin Building, a sleek, aubergine-coloured Bentley drew up beside me. The window rolled down and I heard a voice call out, "Hey, Chris!" It was Bob Lee.

I'd written some speeches for Bob, because he was the university's chancellor. We chatted for a moment about this or that – I remember complimenting him on his spectacular tie – then we waved goodbye, and he drove off.

That, for me, was Bob Lee. But that was Bob Lee for everyone – a guy equally at ease with premiers, CEOs, university presidents, and lowly editors. Jimmy Pattison, arguably Canada's most successful businessperson, described him as "one of the nicest guys in all of Canada," and "first class in every way."

When Bob died in February 2020, the loss was felt deeply at UBC, and not just from an institutional point of view. Bob's great skill was in forming lasting relationships. Students he'd mentored, administrators he'd advised, faculty he'd supported, staff he'd befriended, and a lowly speechwriter – all felt his loss on a personal level.

## THE FOUNDATIONS

Robert H. Lee, CM, OBC, was born in Vancouver in 1933 to Ronald Bick and Gin King Choon Lee. He was number six of seven children. Bick Lee ran a successful import/export company in Chinatown and became a trusted fixture in that community: honest in business and as a friend. These ideas of service to community and honesty in business dealings became core elements of Bob's working philosophy.

He graduated from UBC with a commerce degree in 1956 and joined the family business. But he continued to study and earned his real estate license in 1959. In 1964 he facilitated a deal for a Hong Kong businessman, David Lam, to purchase an apartment building north of Denman Street. Bob said he was the only real estate person in town who spoke Cantonese, so he got the lead. It was a big transaction, reported in the newspapers of the day. "I was shaking when I handed over the contract to sign," Bob once confided. "I made 10 times my annual salary in that one deal."

It started him on a spectacular business career. In 1966, he co-founded Wall Financial Corporation with Peter Wall and Peter Redekop. Quoted in a *Vancouver Sun* obituary, Wall said of Bob, "I don't know of a better business person than he was. He was generous, but at the same time he could be very strong and definite about things. I can't say enough good things about him."

Bob struck out on his own and founded Prospero International Realty in 1979. The company went on to become a major player in the Lower Mainland, Western Canada, and the U.S.

# BOB LEE TRIBUTE

**BUILDING UP**

By the 1980s, UBC had fallen behind both in facilities development and the ability to generate its own funding. In 1984 Bob joined the UBC Board of Governors. (As he remarked later on, "My four children graduated from UBC, their partners, my wife and me – so when nine of us graduated from here, I thought, 'I have to help out.'") David Strangway joined UBC as president the following year.

The two men would have a profound impact on the university, a key ingredient being Bob's invention of UBC Properties Trust. His intent was to leverage the University Endowment Lands, established in 1907 as a means of raising capital for the fledgling university. Strangway saw his presidency as an opportunity to reimagine UBC as, in his words, "a world class university," and provided a good deal of the impetus for the development of the lands.

Their plans met resistance. UBC had a reputation as a good regional university that served its constituency well. Many felt that the kind of growth Strangway proposed would rob the university of its identity and turn it into another big educational factory. But Strangway knew that in order to survive in a fast-changing world, where competition for the best and brightest – both students and academics – was becoming increasingly fierce, UBC needed to generate its own money.

Bob's idea was to use the university's 1,000-acre endowment of land as it was originally intended: to generate funding. He proposed that 99-year leases on parcels of this land be given to developers for market housing, with profits generated coming to the university. With the enthusiastic support of David Strangway and the UBC board, he created UBC Real Estate (later named UBC Properties Trust) as a vehicle to enact his plan.

He convinced Strangway to develop a few acres at Wesbrook Mall and 16th Avenue, which would come to be known as Hampton Place. As Strangway was to note, "This idea of the university going into business to build development projects to support the university was a very unusual thing." But ultimately, the concept would be adopted by universities across the continent.

Although Strangway also launched a more traditional (and spectacularly successful) fundraising campaign – "A World of Opportunity" – in 1989, which raised $260 million over five years, the money was tied to specific (albeit vital) purposes: a chair in physics, a piece of equipment for a biology lab, a specialized building. Little was raised for discretionary purposes, or money to use as the university saw fit.

**TOP LEVEL**

While hugely controversial, the development of Hampton Place in 1988 would generate more than $80 million for UBC's endowment fund. This led to the development of more university neighbourhoods. When he created the Trust, Bob predicted that the development plans would ultimately generate $1 billion in funding for the university. To date it has earned close to $2 billion and is forecast to generate $4 billion. As his daughter, Carol Lee (BCom'81) said, "He got a lot of pushback at the time. But Dad was always willing to go the last mile to get things done."

Al Poettcker, whom Bob brought on to the Trust's board in 1988 and who became president and CEO in 1996, praised Lee's vision. "Bob understood that developments that create all aspects of a community – rentals, market housing, commercial spaces, community parks and services – determine its vibrancy." Today, the now mature neighbourhoods south of Thunderbird, including Wesbrook Village, are bustling testaments to his vision.

Describing Bob's initial pitch to the Board and to developers, Randy Zien, chair of the Trust from 2012 to 2021, said, "Bob was determined that the university's land would never be sold. Initial developers were leery about this: 'How can we convince people to buy on leased land?' Bob took the long view. He convinced them that the project couldn't lose. He had that kind of reputation. People trusted his judgement."

In 2014, the soon to be completed alumni building was officially named the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre. Then president Stephen Toope said, "I call him 'Mr. UBC.' His profound dedication and uncanny ability to build relationships and solicit new supporters has helped UBC grow into the university it is today." A bronze statue of Bob now graces the centre's main foyer, both as a tribute to his tenacity and a reminder to all that an individual's dedication and vision can have dramatic impact. Carol Lee, who now serves as a board member of the Trust, sums up Bob's service to the university: "For him, philanthropy wasn't just about writing a cheque. It was about participation and involvement."

For me, Bob's life was a testament to the idea that humility, trust, and good humour can coexist with success, power, and influence. Or, as one commenter on his life succinctly remarked, "you don't have to be a jerk to get ahead." Over its history, UBC has been shaped by the vision of remarkable men and women from every era who have given their time, creativity, and resources to create an extraordinary institution. Bob Lee stands with the very best of them.

# Turf War

## New research highlights the role of green spaces in conflict.

U.S. Army Col. Hunter Mathews plants a seedling during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Panjshir greenbelt project. *Photo: 1st Lt. Holly Hess. The appearance of U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) visual information does not imply or constitute DoD endorsement.*

**THE RESEARCH:**
Professor of architecture and landscape architecture Fionn Byrne has been researching how landscapes can influence social behaviour. Specifically, he analyzed declassified U.S. military documents to explore how U.S. forces used landscapes to fight insurgency during the war in Afghanistan.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:**
Byrne concludes that green spaces can be used as a tool for social control. Since they have proven benefits for physical and mental health that in turn are linked to more peaceful societies, he argues that "trees, and green spaces in general, can be considered a non-coercive mode of warfare. They can further social cohesion and diminish the likelihood of insurgency."

Byrne focused on four projects funded by the Commander Emergency Response Program, a multibillion-dollar program designed to win over the hearts and minds of the Afghan people.

One of them was the Route Francine Green Space, a site adjacent to a road in Kandahar Province that the U.S. Military improved by planting trees and building playgrounds and other amenities. "Route Francine is part of a district that had a high rate of IED [Improvised Explosive Device] detonations," says Byrne, "so not only did the project beautify the landscape, but it also helped garner support for the local government and reduced instability in the region."

Another initiative, the Panjshir Valley Green Belt project, created jobs for residents through the planting of 35,000 trees. "Research already shows us that a new forest can influence the mental condition of an entire population, with many individuals gaining from being exposed to nature," says Byrne. "A landscape intervention of this

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Thank you!
Support from UBC alumni like you was instrumental in raising over $211 million during the Blue & Gold campaign. In the past year alone, you came together to change the lives of over 7,000 students.
The campaign might be over, but our commitment to student support is never-ending, and what we can accomplish together with your help is limitless!
"By supporting today's students, we have helped lay the foundation for tomorrow's leaders to shape a better world. Our efforts to support students continue. Thank you to all who gave."
—Santa J. Ono,
President and Vice-Chancellor,
University of British Columbia
BLUE & GOLD
CAMPAIGN FOR STUDENTS
You changed their world, now watch them change ours
give.ubc.ca/blueandgold

type is thus an instance of population-wide psychological modification."

He points out that most research examines the effects of war on the landscape rather than vice versa, or has focused on large-scale and destructive manipulation of the environment to achieve direct military objectives.

"War is rightly associated with death. So, when we see images of U.S. forces planting trees and fostering new life, it is worth looking at this closely," he says. "We need to study further how militaries have used landscape design in more subversive modes, distinct from an overt weaponization of the environment. This paper demonstrates that using tree planting to impact mental health is a nonviolent, subtle, and potentially unchallenged pathway to subdue resistance from a local population."

## OLD DNA PROVIDES NEW INSIGHTS

**THE RESEARCH:**
Researchers used 1970s DNA samples from kokanee salmon in Kluane National Park and Reserve (KNPR) to better understand the genetic health of the park's current population of salmon, which has undergone a severe period of decline.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:**
By including the historical DNA samples in their analysis, the researchers were able to determine that no significant diversity had been lost as a result of the decline. They also found that a hatchery population established during the 1990s using KNPR kokanee is no longer genetically similar to the wild population, and should therefore not be used to restore it.

The Kluane National Park and Reserve in southwest Yukon, where the kokanee salmon population suffered a severe decline. *Photo 61267464 / Kluane © Amichaelbrown | Dreamstime.com*

"The genetic health of the park's kokanee salmon became a concern after we started seeing really low numbers of returning spawners," says Linaya Workman, Parks Canada Site Manager and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations citizen.

Historically, the average number of spawning kokanee in a year was 3,660. But by the early 2000s, the numbers dropped dramatically – and in 2009 there was an all-time low of 20.

"While the population has somewhat rebounded since, park managers were concerned that this long decline had impacted the genetic health of the population, leaving it less able to adapt to future changes or stressors in the environment," says Workman.

The archival DNA samples, which were discovered by chance during an office move in 2013, were sent to UBC Okanagan researcher Dr. Michael Russello. He worked with master's student Chris Setzke to investigate the history of the salmon population by examining genetic variation between fin and scale samples taken pre- and post-crash.

They used a technique called Genotyping-in-Thousands by sequencing (GT-seq), which can target and sequence hundreds of predetermined areas across the genome and be used for thousands of individuals at the same time. It only needs short fragments of DNA to obtain genetic information, and the study was the first to show that the technique is effective for sequencing older, more damaged DNA.

An analysis using only current DNA suggested that, based on certain genetic signatures, diversity in the system may have been lost due to the severe period of decline. However, by including the historical DNA samples, the researchers found these genetic features were present even before the kokanee population crashed, and that no significant diversity was lost due to the decline.

The work further determined that the hatchery population at the Whitehorse Rapids Fish Hatchery – established using kokanee from KNPR throughout the 1990s – is no longer genetically similar to the wild population. This means hatchery kokanee should not be used to restore the KNPR population.

"If we had not had access to these archival samples, inappropriate conservation initiatives may have been enacted, misdirecting resources or even potentially leading to adverse outcomes for the kokanee population in KNPR," says Russello.

"Protecting the park's kokanee is important for maintaining ecological integrity," says Workman. "And using hatchery fish to supplement wild populations is a tool used by fisheries managers elsewhere. But thanks to the UBCO researchers, we now know that this currently is not an option for Kluane's kokanee."

# FINDINGS

## NEGATIVE ONLINE REVIEWS NOT NECESSARILY BAD FOR BRANDS

**THE RESEARCH:**
Professor of commerce Lisa Cavanaugh led a study to explore the extent of brand damage caused by negative online reviews and low-star ratings.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:**
Her team found that negative reviews don't always harm brands. In fact, they have little effect when brand relationships are strong and consumers personally identify with a brand's products, and in some instances can actually have a positive effect. How closely consumers identify with the reviewers is also a key factor in their response to negative reviews.

The researchers conducted 16 different experiments using identity-relevant brands – companies that consumers tend to feel strongly about and personally identify with. For example, researchers surveyed NFL fans about their reactions to negative or positive online reviews of an NFL-branded sweatshirt.

They found that if the reviewer's profile reflected a different social demographic or a distant location, a negative review could actually boost a fan's interest in buying the sweatshirt, even more so than a positive review. Similar effects were observed with other groups of participants and their interest in buying an Apple Watch, or President's Choice packaged coffee.

"When consumers personally identify with a brand, they see facets of themselves in that brand," Cavanaugh says. "When a reviewer leaves a disparaging comment about an identity-relevant brand, consumers feel compelled to protect the brand, and by extension themselves, by scrutinizing the source of the negative review."

Businesses shouldn't get too comfortable with poor reviews, however. The researchers observed that if consumers don't personally identify with the product or brand – if it's a toilet brush as opposed to an Apple computer or Timbits, for example – they won't be driven to defend it, so poor reviews will still pack a punch.

And when consumers read negative reviews coming from someone they perceive as socially closer, they tend to listen and accept what they have to say, explains Cavanaugh, causing a downgrade in their assessment of the product and willingness to purchase it.

Cavanaugh says the research reinforces the importance of forging strong brand relationships with customers, and cultivating that coveted connection to people's identities. She also points to the importance of displaying reviewers' profiles and review histories, so readers can more easily assess their social proximity and any pattern of negative reviews.

The study was co-authored with Boston College's Dr. Nailya Ordabayeva, and UBC Sauder School of Business professor Darren Dahl.


Hiring and HR Experts in Mining & Green Energy

- C-suite executive recruiting
- Technical and Professional recruiting
- Human Resources services

Pray & Company
Your people & project solutions

Learn more at praysolutions.com

# UBC Blue & Gold Campaign Surpasses Goal

LEARN ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE BLUE & GOLD CAMPAIGN FOR STUDENTS AT
**give.ubc.ca/projects/blue-and-gold-campaign**

## YESTERDAY'S STUDENTS HELPING TOMORROW'S ALUMNI

The largest fundraising campaign for students in UBC's history raised over $211 million thanks to the generous support of donors. UBC alumni were instrumental to the campaign's success, accounting for the majority of the gifts at campaign close on March 31. Donations ranged from $5 to $10 million, and more than 21,000 gifts were received from the community.

The Blue & Gold Campaign for Students supported a range of awards, including fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, and experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students at the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses. Areas of emphasis included awards that help students in need, targeted support for graduate students, and leadership-based academic awards. Further, the Centennial Indigenous Scholars Entrance Award and the Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Award focused on supporting students from under-represented communities.

## BLUE & GOLD LEAVES A LASTING IMPACT

UBC alumni came together with donors, faculty, and staff to help UBC students fulfil their potential by investing in their future. Supporting students now helps prepare them to become the leaders of tomorrow.

***"By supporting today's students, we have helped lay the foundation for tomorrow's leaders to shape a better world. The Blue & Gold Campaign for Students ended on March 31, 2022, but its impact is long-lasting and far-reaching, and our efforts to support students continue. Thank you to all who gave."***
– Santa J. Ono, *President and Vice-Chancellor, University of British Columbia*

In the past year alone, more than 7,000 students from both campuses received support thanks to the generous community of donors to the Blue & Gold Campaign for Students. The campaign launched with an inaugural gift from the Djavad Mowafaghian Foundation and was followed by significant contributions from the Jim Pattison Foundation and the Charles E. Fipke Foundation, among others.

***"This scholarship has given me such a deep sense of gratitude for just what post-secondary education can entail. It's shown me how there are always people out there willing to support and to reward hard work."***
– Sabrina Wang, *Blue & Gold Campaign Award Recipient*

By coming together to support the Blue & Gold Campaign, donors have helped students gain the skills and build the networks needed to launch successful careers and become the leaders of the future. The campaign might be over, but our commitment to student support is never-ending, and what we can accomplish together with your help is limitless!

# Things to Do

## DISCUSS

**Getting serious about climate change: How business must step up**
*June 16, 2022, noon-1:30 PM*
*Online*
What is the role of business and the private sector in fighting climate change? How can companies step up to meet the challenges of the climate crisis, and why is it important to act now? UBC Sauder School of Business and *alumni UBC* set out to tackle these pressing questions and more through a climate action panel event. The moderated discussion will feature experts including Naomi Klein, professor of climate justice and co-director of UBC Centre for Climate Justice; Carol Liao, law professor and principal co-investigator of the Canada Climate Law Initiative; Tamara Vrooman, president and CEO of Vancouver Airport Authority; and Kate White, business professor and academic director of the Peter P. Dhillon Centre for Business Ethics.

VISIT
**alumni.ubc.ca/events**

## READ

**New books from alumni of UBC's Creative Writing Program**

**The Strangers**
*Katherena Vermette (MFA'14)*
A companion to her bestselling debut *The Break*, Vermette's *The Strangers* brings readers into the dynamic world of the Stranger family, the strength of their bond, the shared pain in their past, and the light that beckons from the horizon. This is a searing exploration of race, class, inherited trauma, and matrilineal bonds that – despite everything – refuse to be broken.

**Rabbits**
*Terry Miles (MFA'08)*
A deadly underground game might just be altering reality itself in this all-new adventure set in the world of the hit *Rabbits* podcast. The identities of these winners are unknown. So is their reward, which is whispered to be NSA or CIA recruitment, vast wealth, immortality, or perhaps even the key to the secrets of the universe itself.

## LISTEN

**Don't Call Me Resilient**
UBC professor of Critical Indigenous Studies Daniel Heath Justice joins host Vinita Srivastava of *The Conversation* to discuss storytelling as a method of political resistance. The podcast features a variety of scholars and activists who view the world through an anti-racist lens and discusses radical approaches to systemic racism. The episode is an exploration of the power of fiction, or "otherworlds," to allow us to imagine alternate realities to the one in which we live. Hear two storytellers reflect on how Indigenous and Black people use fiction to fight against oppression and bleak realities. Listen to Season 2, Episode 7 of *Don't Call Me Resilient* wherever you get your podcasts.

# SUMMER SERIES

The *alumni UBC* Summer Series is back for a third year of summer fun. Whether you're a sports fan, wine-lover, roller skater, or outdoors enthusiast, this year's Summer Series has something for everyone.

After a long time apart, we're excited to be able to gather with our *alumni UBC* community this summer, and hope to see you soon!

**For more information and to register, visit:**

alumni.ubc.ca/summer-series

alumni UBC

## Monthly contests on the *alumni UBC* App!

**JUNE**
To celebrate the environmental and health benefits of cycling, we're giving away a shiny new bicycle courtesy of *alumni UBC* and our friends at Manulife.

**JULY**
Treat yourself to a fully catered picnic on behalf of *alumni UBC* and TD Insurance. The prize includes a $200 gift certificate to a local caterer of your choice, plus the perfect picnic blanket.

**AUGUST**
*alumni UBC* and BMO *alumni UBC* Mastercard are sending one lucky winner and a guest to Scandinave Spa in Whistler for a day of pampering. Enjoy this beautiful mountainside retreat with the Swedish Relaxation package, which includes a full-body massage and reserved access to amenities.

GET THE *ALUMNI UBC* APP
**alumni.ubc.ca/app**

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

# Classics, Critters, and Capers

**1. THIS JANUARY, THE UBC LIBRARY ACQUIRED A SHAKESPEARE FIRST FOLIO. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING PLAYS WOULD HAVE BEEN LOST, WERE IT NOT FOR THIS BOOK?**

a) A Midsummer Night's Dream
b) Macbeth
c) Much Ado About Nothing
d) Othello

**2. WHICH VEHICLE DO STUDENTS PASS EVERY DAY ON MAIN MALL?**

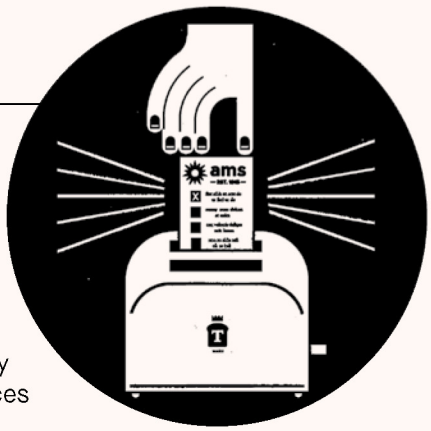
a) A 1960s Volkswagen van
b) A 1910 Ford Model T car
c) A 19th century horse-drawn carriage
d) A broken-down yellow school bus

**3. WHICH KITCHEN UTENSIL RAN FOR AMS PRESIDENT IN 2022?**

a) A spoon
b) A spaghetti strainer
c) A pan
d) A decanter

**4. IN MARCH 1956, ENGINEERING STUDENTS DUNKED AMS PRESIDENT RON BRAY INTO...**

a) ... the Pacific Ocean (at Wreck Beach)
b) ... the outdoor swimming pool
c) ... the lilypond outside Main Library
d) ... a bathtub in Fort Camp residences




**5. WHICH ANIMAL HAS BEEN SPOTTED AROUND THE VANCOUVER CAMPUS, IN RECENT MONTHS?**

a) Carlos the Raccoon
b) Daisy the Crow
c) Kip the Coyote
d) Cyril the Squirrel

**6. CECIL GREEN PARK HOUSE, A MANSION OVERLOOKING THE PACIFIC OCEAN THAT WAS THE FORMER HOME OF *ALUMNI UBC*, IS NAMED AFTER UBC ALUM CECIL GREEN. WHICH FAMOUS TECH COMPANY DID HE FOUND?**

a) Nokia
b) Texas Instruments
c) Blackberry
d) Oracle

***1: b) Macbeth:*** *Compiled by Shakespeare's actors and friends and published in 1623, the First Folio contains the first published edition of* Macbeth. *The other three plays were published earlier as individual quartos, when Shakespeare was still alive.*

***2: c) Horse-drawn carriage:*** *Rodney Graham's art installation,* Millennial Time Machine, *is a 19th century carriage that has been converted into a camera obscura.*

***3: c) A pan:*** *The pan (with a human "interpreter") ran as a joke candidate for student president and even made it to the final debate stage.*

***4: c) The lilypond:*** *According to the* Ubyssey, *engineers waited until dark to dunk Bray in the library pond. The following year, the paper reported that outgoing student councillors had their revenge by dunking new Engineering Undergraduate Society president Russ Fraser. But it's doubtful that was the end of it.*

***5: c) Kip the Coyote:*** *This beautiful creature has become a campus celebrity. Recognizable because of his limp, Kip was born in late 2020, hunts squirrels, and even has his own Instagram account.*

***6: b) Texas Instruments:*** *Green founded the famous electrical engineering company, won prestigious awards in geophysics, and started three Green Colleges: one in Oxford, one in Texas, and one at UBC.*

VANCOUVER OKANAGAN

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS RACISM

A year after its inception last April, UBC's Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence (ARIE) Task Force has released its report. It contains 54 recommendations to address systemic racism against Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour (IBPOC) and promote inclusive excellence across UBC's two campuses. The recommendations collectively underscore the reality that UBC has a deep-seated problem of institutionalized, systemic, and other forms of racism. "I would like to thank the co-chairs and members of the ARIE Task Force for their courage, energy, compassion, and hard work in producing this report. I believe that every member of the UBC community will benefit by studying its insights and recommendations," says UBC president and vice-chancellor Dr. Santa J. Ono.

## CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES

UBC has launched its new Centre for European Studies, a multidisciplinary home for the critical study of Europe. "The Russian invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated that area studies, in this case European Studies, are necessary and indeed more needed than ever," says inaugural director, Dr. Katherine Bowers. "Broad regional understanding that considers knowledge from multiple disciplines is invaluable." The centre has already been instrumental in organizing educational events about Ukraine, including an interactive discussion, a flash teach-in, and a movie screening, and will continue to host regular Europe-focused events to highlight UBC research and foster dialogue.

## PASSIVE HOUSE

UBC Okanagan's Skeena Residence recently become the first student residence in Canada to receive Passive House certification, a stringent set of efficient design and construction standards developed in Germany. The building features thick insulation, an airtight and high-efficiency building envelope, and a heat recovery ventilation system. It requires one-third the energy of a typical residence building, and the internal temperature remains remarkably stable – even during last summer's heat dome. "With these extreme weather events expected more frequently in the future, this kind of innovation and technology will become ever more important." says Shannon Dunn, director of Campus Operations.

**UBC's rankings in the 2022 *Times* Higher Education Impact Ranking for institutional efforts to advance the UN's sustainable development goals, which promote environmental, social, and economic wellbeing across the planet.**

13th
Overall ranking out of 1,400 institutions

=1st
Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

6th
Reduction of inequality

7th
Climate action

11th
Conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development

19th
Sustainable consumption and production patterns

—
Improved and more equitable trade

23rd
Inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities

## VACCINE RESEARCH RECOGNIZED

UBC's Dr. Pieter Cullis has been named a 2022 Canada Gairdner International Award laureate for his pioneering work developing the lipid nanoparticle delivery technology that enables mRNA therapeutics, such as the highly effective COVID-19 mRNA vaccines. The prized award, which recognizes major achievements in biomedical and global health research, is known to foreshadow further recognition, with many laureates having gone on to receive the Nobel Prize.

Dr. Cullis' foundational work has led to many clinical applications of lipid nanoparticles, such as delivering anticancer drugs to cancer tissues while limiting toxicity in normal tissues and advancing genetic therapies for rare diseases. In the case of mRNA, the lipid nanoparticles are designed to form a bubble around the mRNA that protects it from degradation and also enables uptake into cells and delivery of the mRNA into the cell cytoplasm. This technology is critical to the potency of mRNA vaccines.

## DEVOTED PROFESSOR HONOURED AT 93

Dr. Nelly Auersperg has been named by UBC students as recipient of the 2022 Great Trekker Award. The award is presented by the AMS to alumni who have made unique contributions to UBC and the wider community. A pioneering researcher in the field of gynecological cancer, Dr. Auersperg's distinguished career spans several decades, and her published work continues to be cited. Now a professor emerita, she mentored more than 60 graduate students and post-doctoral fellows.

Illustrations: Raymond Beisinger

Stay tuned for a one-of-a-kind celebration on September 24, 2022, at both our Vancouver and Okanagan campuses, as we embark on a new era moving UBC and the world forward.

SAVE THE DATE

24/09/2022

*Be the first to know and first in line by signing up for our special email announcement!*

**alumni.ubc.ca/sep24**

# We are invested in your future success.

## UBC Diploma in Accounting Program

If you are a degree graduate aspiring to become a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA), UBC DAP provides you with the pre-requisites required to qualify for the CPA Professional Education Program.

- Flexible delivery options, available part-time or full-time
- Recognized and respected by BC's top employers
- Delivered by award-winning instructors

**To learn more about our program visit**
**sauder.ubc.ca/dap**

UBC SAUDER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

# IN MEMORIAM

50s

### LESLIE BLAKE JANZ, MD'58

Dr. Les Janz, loved by so many, passed away peacefully at home at the age of 87, with Wendy, his wife of 62 years, by his side.

Les was born in Rosthern, SK, the eldest son of William and Hilda Janz. After spending his early childhood in Lanigan and Winter, SK, the family moved to Fort Langley in 1946. Les went on to UBC to pursue his MD and started his general practice in West Vancouver in 1960. During his 48-year career, Les was truly a GP, when general practice meant available full service to patients, including office practice, house calls, and hospital care. He was always suited up and looking the part. He provided compassionate care to all. Les was also a leader at Lions Gate Hospital, where, among other roles, he was chief of staff from 1992-1997. His legacy as a family doctor will continue for future generations of health care professionals because of an endowment that funds the annual Dr. Les Janz Leadership Awards (*lghfoundation.com*).

Several of Les's immediate family followed in his footsteps and became proud UBC alumni: sons Chris (MD'89) and David (PhD'95), and grandchildren Dustin (MD'17), Maia (BA'17, BEd'18), Alanna (BPharm'17, ACPR'18, MD'22), Aaron (BASc'21), and Aidan (BASc'22). Les embraced family and loved playing bridge and spending winters in Cabo. He was a Canucks season ticket holder for 40 years. He was a valued member of Capilano Golf Club since 1971, where he could be found chasing elusive birdies and engaging in friendly games for bragging rights. Les will always be remembered for his sense of humour, which was passed along by nature and nurture to his entire family. Les is survived by his wife Wendy; children David (Maia, Aidan, and Nicola), Debbie (Matthew, Ryan, and Emily), and Chris (wife Val; Dustin, Aaron, and Alanna); and siblings Vera, Elaine, and Doug.

### ANNE ELIZABETH WILLIAMS, BSCN'55

Anne was born and raised in Calgary, the only child of Dr. Thomas and Winifred Williams. She completed her early schooling in Calgary and Victoria, then enrolled in the five-year UBC/VGH nursing program. Anne's successful career in the field of public health nursing began in Eastern Canada when she worked for the City of Toronto.

On her return to Vancouver, she joined the nursing staff of the North Shore Union Board of Health. She moved up the ranks, being promoted to the position of director of Nursing, where she was responsible for the preventive health nursing program for the area from Deep Cove to Lions Bay, including Bowen Island and the Burrard and Squamish reserves.

Both Anne's father, Thomas Williams, and her uncle, Merton Y. Williams, graduated from Queen's with mining engineering degrees. Her father moved into the field exploring for oil, while her uncle Merton joined UBC and on retirement was a professor of geology and geography.

Anne had many interests, including travelling with UBC and Langara tours as well as independently with friends. She was a keen trail rider, a life member of the Trail Riders of the Canadian Rockies, and a life member of the VGH School of Nursing Alumnae Association, chairing the membership committee for many years. Anne died peacefully on November 11, 2020, at the age of 90.

### WILLIAM HIK, BASC'57

Bill passed away peacefully on September 4, 2020. The eldest of five brothers, he was born on a farm outside of Biggar, SK, on May 19, 1933. Bill graduated with a degree in electrical engineering, the first of three generations of UBC graduates. In 1959 he married Annette (née Porayko). Together, they shared many wonderful adventures over 60 years. Bill was a pioneer in electro-mechanical automation. He worked as a professional engineer for his entire career, at various times with Canadian National Telecommunications, GTE Lenkurt Electric, Bell Northern Research, British American Banknote, and Canada Post. He was committed to community service and was active in Scouts Canada for many years. He volunteered with Cub Scouts in Burnaby, as a troop scouter in Ottawa, and as regional commissioner for the Ottawa National Capital Region. He is fondly remembered by his sons David (PhD'94) (Tania) and Warren (Jaq); granddaughters Freya (MASc'22) and Felicity; and many friends and colleagues.

60s

### TIVADAR "TED" SZABO, BSC(FORESTRY)'61

Ted passed away peacefully after a lengthy battle with kidney failure at the age of 83. Ted is survived by his loving wife of 52 years, Barbara; daughters Erika Hunting (James) and Eva Szabo-Brandt (Glen); as well as his grandchildren Janelle and Julie Hunting and Kody Brandt, all of Edmonton.

Ted was born in Écs, Hungary, and attended the Benedictine High School of Pannonhalma. He escaped the country during the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 in order to go to university, and attended the Université Catholique de Louvain in Belgium, majoring in physics before coming to Canada. He arrived at Pier 21 in Halifax with $5 and a newspaper, and headed to B.C. He attended the Sopron Division of the Faculty of Forestry at UBC, graduating in 1961 with a BSc in forestry. He then received his master's in wood science

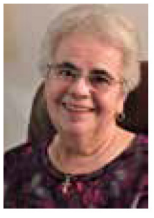
from Virginia Tech, with a minor in forest products engineering. There, he married Barbara and eventually returned to Canada.

He worked in many different forestry and science roles in government and industry, and loved his work. He recently retired from his position as director of Forest Products Innovations at Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions. He was an accomplished gardener and incredibly hard working. He was always amazingly good at math, physics, and chemistry, and was a secret weapon for his children if they needed help in these subjects, even at the senior university level! He loved his family very much and always had time and some gruff wisdom for them. He provided a stable and loving home, a contagious love of learning and higher education, and engendered an incredible respect for his strength and resilience. Ted lived his life well and leaves a legacy to be very proud of. He was much loved and respected and will be missed.

**ARNOLD SMITH, BPE'62, MED'82**

Arnie is survived by his loving wife Kathryn, and children Steven, Karen, and Grant. He is also survived by his son-in-law Brian and grandchildren Sean, Lee, and Robyn. After retiring as the principal of West Vancouver Secondary School, he and Kathy moved to Vernon, B.C., and later relocated to Oshawa, ON, to be near Karen and her growing family. He sadly passed away on May 24, 2021.

**SILVANA CARR, BA(HONS)'65, PHD'78**



Silvana Ester Carr (née Minuto) passed away peacefully on January 18, 2021, after a year-long struggle with Stage 4 cancer. She will be lovingly remembered by Derek, her husband of 50 years; their children Kate and Paul; daughter-in-law Jackie; wonderful grandson Joseph; relatives in Italy and England; and countless friends and former colleagues in Canada and elsewhere.

Born in Alba (Piemonte), Italy, to Paolo and Rina Minuto, Silvana spent part of her childhood in Córdoba, Argentina, before the family moved to Vancouver in the early 1950s. Graduating from Our Lady of Perpetual Help High School in Point Grey, she went on to UBC where she completed her BA with honours in romance studies in 1965 and her PhD in 1978. Silvana taught both Italian and Spanish as a graduate teaching assistant at UBC and was a sessional lecturer in Italian from 1978 to 1989. She then enjoyed a long and satisfying career as coordinator of the internationally recognized and award-winning Court, Medical and Community Interpreting Program at Vancouver Community College. She retired in 2009. Silvana was also involved with the UBC Faculty Women's Club, the Catholic Women's League, and other church-related activities.

A private requiem Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Perpetual Help church on January 27, 2021, followed by interment at the Gardens of Gethsemani in Surrey.

**CATHERINE JILL WADE, MA'67, BLS'67, MA'84**

On December 17, 2020, Catherine Jill Wade, loving wife of Don Sinclair, passed away peacefully at the age of 78. Jill was born and raised in Winnipeg (Norwood). She completed her BA at the University of Manitoba (U of M) and in 1964 she moved to Vancouver, completing her MA and BLS degrees at UBC in 1967. Jill served as a reference librarian from 1967 to 1969 in the fine arts section of the UBC library, and then she returned to Winnipeg for the position of reference librarian in the School of Architecture at the U of M from 1970 to 1973. In 1971 she met Don, who was about to leave for Vancouver. Jill returned to Vancouver in 1973 and reconnected with Don, whom she married in 1976.

Later in the 1970s, Jill catalogued the permanent collection at the Vancouver Art Gallery and local private collections of Inuit art. She was also a reference librarian with the Vancouver Public Library and worked on many collaborative historical projects. She obtained her MA degree in B.C. history at UBC (1984) and later her doctorate (1991) in B.C. history at Simon Fraser University. Jill's research led to the publication of countless articles in history journals and, most notably, of her epic book, *Houses for All: The Struggle for Social Housing in Vancouver, 1919-1950*, for which she received an award from the City of Vancouver. The book's title has become a rallying cry for a new generation of housing activists. Jill taught B.C. and Canadian history at a distance with Open Learning from 1990 until her retirement in 2013.

In addition to her beloved husband Don, Jill leaves to mourn her brother John Wade (Marilyn), her sister Judy Wade and all of the other members of her and Don's families, and her many friends.

**STEWART PAULSON, BSC(AGR)'68, MSC'70**

Stewart obtained his BSc (1968) and MSc (1970) from the UBC Department of Poultry Science under the supervision of the late Dr. Bob Roberts and continued his graduate education at UC Davis. Upon his return to Canada, he joined the poultry department of Agriculture Canada in Ottawa. Subsequently, he was an industrial market researcher for Cominco in Vancouver, and for five years had his own consulting company. He then worked as the poultry industry specialist for the BC Ministry of Agriculture. In this position, he became an effective liaison between the provincial government, UBC, and the B.C. poultry industry. He spearheaded the formation of the BC Sustainable Poultry Farming Group and later, to counter the avian influenza epidemic, designed a biosecurity and insurance policy for the industry to implement. Among his proud achievements, he

established the UBC Specialty Birds Research Fund with funding support from BCMAF. Stewart devoted his life to serving the poultry industry in British Columbia.

70s

### MICHAEL TITCHENER, BSC'78

Dr. Michael Titchener was born in London, England, and moved to Vancouver with his mother Rita, father Pete, and brother Peter in 1964. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science from UBC and Doctor of Chiropractic from Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College.

Michael was an avid hockey player and continued to play UBC alumni hockey weekly. He was a member of the Canadian Sports Medicine Team and volunteered his time treating rodeo athletes at the Cloverdale Rodeo for over 20 years. Michael was noted for his love of Bouvier des Flandres, birdwatching, swimming, and the outdoors. He is remembered by all for his laughter, dad jokes, and infectious smile. His sense of humour was phenomenal. Mike was a true healer who impacted many lives through his chiropractic work. He was a gentle, kind, humble, and pure-hearted man who selflessly helped others. He will be deeply missed by his family, his friends, his patients, and his community.

Mike is survived by his wife Kathleen, and children Jordan, Kendall, and Kasey, as well as his four grandchildren, Elodie, Charlie, Hugo, and Yale.

Michael's tireless love and devotion to his family and to healing people were evident to all who were lucky to know him.

10s

### MICHELE ARNESEN, MHA'12

Michele Arnesen passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, in her Vancouver home on April 16, 2021, following a year-long struggle with lung cancer. She is survived by her husband John, sons Ty and Marc Lacroix, parents Frank and Sally Perry, brother Greg, and relatives across B.C.

Born on April 6, 1968, Michele was raised in Osoyoos, B.C., and graduated from high school there in 1986. She then trained as a psychiatric and registered nurse and worked primarily in the emergency department at Surrey Memorial Hospital (SMH) until 2001. She had a passion for medical research, and between 1998 and 2006 worked as a manager of cardiology clinical trials at SMH.

Between 2006 and 2017, Michele worked for Vancouver Coastal Health, initially as the Regional Planning leader and later as the director of Planning and Strategic Development of the Regional Cardiac Program. She secured her Bachelor of Nursing degree from UVic and her Master of Health Administration from UBC in 2012. She was working toward a doctorate degree in health informatics at the time of her passing. From 2006 onward, she continued in cardiac research with a team of UBC professors and cardiologists, resulting in several published articles.

2017 saw Michele at the BC College of Nurses and Midwives as a regulatory practice consultant. From 2018, she was the manager of Clinical Operations of the intensive care and telemetry units, diagnostic cardiology, and cardiac rehabilitation at Burnaby Hospital. In May 2020, Michele became an adjunct professor at the School of Population and Public Health at UBC.

Michele's remarkable career and success in healthcare was born out of deep care and concern for the people around her. She delivered this compassion and interest tenfold in her personal life to her family, friends, and community. She sought out and focussed on the best in people, which brought out the best in her: good humour, smiling eyes, and a calm, graceful consideration. A strong and vibrant woman, Michele infused possibility and positive energy into every occasion. Michele will be deeply missed and forever honoured.

EVERY DONOR IS UNIQUE.
**EVERY GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.**
*heritage.circle@ubc.ca or 604.822.5373*

# Avi Lewis

## Loves Earth, despises open cupboards.

**WHO WAS YOUR CHILDHOOD HERO?**
Pelé, all the way.

**WHAT WAS THE LAST THING YOU READ?**
An advance copy of the great Brandi Morin's *Our Voice of Fire*. Incendiary and unputdownable!

**WHAT OR WHO MAKES YOU LAUGH OUT LOUD?**
The TV show *Peacemaker*. Its grubby genius for stunningly dumb dialogue that goes on and on at the most inappropriate moment really gets me.

**WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON YOU EVER LEARNED?**
When the going gets weird, the weird turn pro.

**WHAT WAS YOUR NICKNAME IN HIGH SCHOOL?**
Pugsley Slax. Well, you asked.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION?**
A Martin acoustic guitar that my wife, Naomi, gave me for my 50th.

**CLAIM TO FAME**

**Filmmaker/ journalist who has hosted TV shows including CBC's *CounterSpin* and *On the Map*.**

**UBC CONNECTION**

**Joined UBC last year (along with wife Naomi Klein) to teach climate justice and political documentary film.**

**NOT-SO-FUN FACT**

**CBC's genealogy series *Who Do You Think You Are?* revealed that the RCMP spied on his grandfather, former NDP leader David Lewis, for 55 years.**

**MORE Q&AS WITH AVI LEWIS AT trekmagazine.alumni.ubc.ca**

**WHAT WOULD BE THE TITLE OF YOUR BIOGRAPHY?**
*Bloodied Forehead, Stupid Grin.*

**IF A GENIE GRANTED YOU ONE WISH, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**
Magic the end of capitalism ASAP.

**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR EPITAPH TO SAY?**
After he interviewed David Bowie in 1994, they became friends and stayed in touch for years.

**WHAT ITEM HAVE YOU OWNED FOR THE LONGEST TIME?**
A tiny, mended, ceramic trinket pot depicting Angelica Kauffmann art – the only thing I have from my darling grandma, Lee Landsberg.

**WHOM DO YOU MOST ADMIRE (LIVING OR DEAD) AND WHY?**
All the land defenders around the world, putting their lives on the line to protect the earth for their communities and us all.

**IN WHICH ERA WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE LIVED, AND WHY?**
Late '70s, in New York City.

**WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?**
That we won't wake up in time to confront the climate emergency at scale, at speed, and in a way that doesn't leave anyone behind.

**WHAT IS YOUR LATEST PURCHASE?**
A very exciting vegetable peeler to replace the one that gave up after 40 years.

**NAME THE SKILL OR TALENT YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO HAVE.**
I would like to solo like Stevie Ray Vaughan or be able to build a house.

**WHICH FAMOUS PERSON (LIVING OR DEAD) DO YOU THINK (OR HAVE YOU BEEN TOLD) YOU MOST RESEMBLE?**
I got the Corey Hart thing real bad in the '90s.

**WHAT IS YOUR PET PEEVE?**
Kitchen cupboards left open. I just know those vicious corners are lining up a shot at my skull.

**WHAT IS THE SECRET TO A GOOD LIFE?**
Connection – to the earth and one another.

**DO YOU HAVE A PERSONAL MOTTO?**
Take it easy, but take it. (Thanks, Pete Seeger.)

# Is it time to reset the way you protect your loved ones?

Alumni Insurance Plans can help.

2020 will go down as the year of the great reset. The year we all got back to basics and were reminded of what really matters: family and protecting it. Maybe it's time to reset the way you protect your loved ones.

Alumni Insurance Plans can help protect you and your family against life-changing events that can happen at any stage of your life. Choose from Health & Dental, Term Life, Major Accident Protection, Income Protection and more.

**Reset your protection.**

Manulife

**Get a quote today.** Call **1-888-913-6333** or visit us at **Manulife.com/ubc.**

Underwritten by The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company (Manulife).
Manulife, Stylized M Design, and Manulife & Stylized M Design are trademarks of The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company and are used by it, and by its affiliates under license. Available to Canadian residents only. © 2021 The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company. All rights reserved. Manulife, P.O. Box 670, Stn Waterloo, Waterloo, ON N2J 4B8. Conditions, limitations and exclusions may apply. See policy for full details.
Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. Visit **Manulife.ca/accessibility** for more information.

# Disciplined Advice. Guided by Values.

**In our nearly 100 years as a firm,** Odlum Brown Limited has experienced and learned from a multitude of global events. Now we are putting those decades of hard-earned resilience to work for our clients.

Discover how you can benefit from our rich legacy: the lessons we've learned, our ability to adapt and our patience to stay the course to grow and preserve your wealth.

Let our experience and long-term results help you navigate these difficult times. Contact us at **604-669-1600**, toll-free at **1-888-886-3586** or visit us at **odlumbrown.com** for more information.

ODLUM BROWN
Investing for Generations®

Waterstone CANADA'S MOST ADMIRED CORPORATE CULTURES

CANADA BEST MANAGED COMPANIES
Platinum member

Member-Canadian Investor Protection Fund