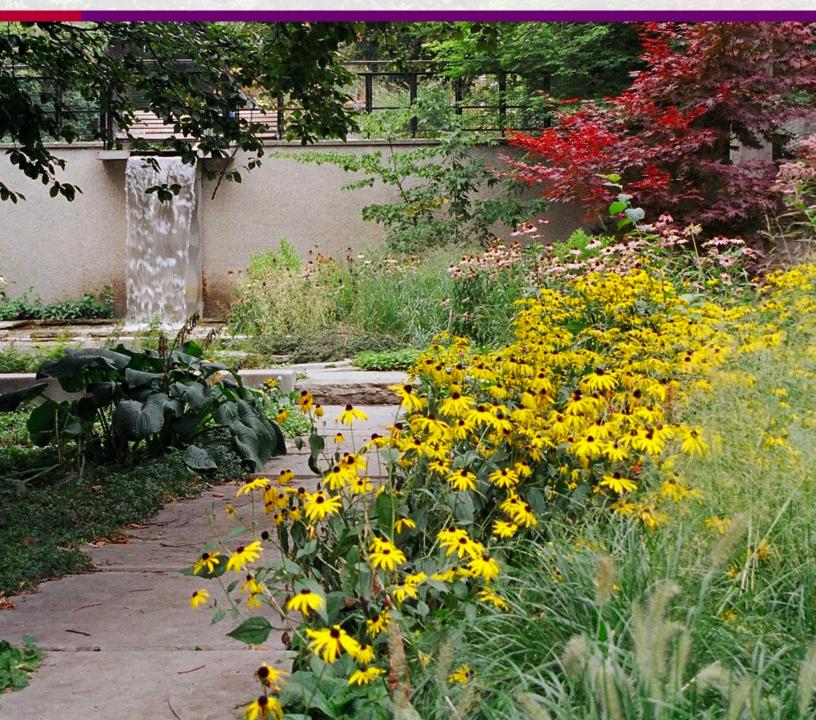


**Donor Newsletter April 2022** 





### Executive Director's Message

As we rapidly approach our fiscal year-end on April 30th, I'm happy to report that Vic has had a banner year in fundraising. The alumni affairs & advancement team has been hard at work—mostly from their home offices—throughout the 2021-22 year, and I want to acknowledge their dedication and commitment to furthering the University's long-term vision and strategic priorities through their work in fundraising and alumni engagement.

One of the key reasons we've exceeded our goals is due to the foresight of a handful of loyal and generous Vic donors who chose to leave a bequest to Vic in their Wills; these special gifts were realized in this year.

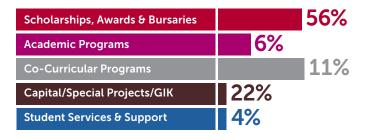
For many decades, Vic has promoted to its donors the opportunity to consider making a legacy gift to Victoria University. This is a special category of gift which is planned in advance by the donor and only realized when they pass away. A number of Vic alumni have taken steps to establish planned gifts at the University. These donors are securing the future of the University with their legacy gifts and, as such, they are recognized as members of Victoria's Heritage Society. (See listing on page 11.) On behalf of the University I thank our Heritage Society donors for taking this bold step—a step which signals their commitment and understanding of the importance of the University experience for our students, and its critical importance for our society as a whole.

Historically planned gifts have played a crucial role in Vic's ability to set a standard of excellence in the post-secondary milieu second to none. Realized planned gifts have helped provide tuition and other support for students in the form of scholarships and bursaries; they have been the catalyst for the development of new signature programs such as the Vic One and Scholars-in-Residence; and they have helped Vic both to expand and maintain its campus and glorious outdoor spaces.

As the *Defy Gravity* campaign, and Vic's important part in it, takes place over the next decade, I expect that planned gifts will play an essential and significant role in the attainment of Vic's goals around its stated strategic themes of building a strong and inclusive community, an inspiring sense of place, outstanding academic offerings, and signature learning experiences.

Louise Yearwood Vic 8T6

## DONOR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS. Thank you!





# Upcoming Events



### Alumni & Donor Events: 2021-2022

### **Upcoming Spring Events**

#### 2022 Alumni Reunion

Save the date! The 2022 Alumni Reunion will take place from Wednesday, May 25 to Sunday, May 29. Details about this exciting reunion will be available soon, but we are pleased to share that the Fun with Lego event is back by popular demand. There will also be lectures, events, speeches, presentations and more—come and join the fun!

For specific details on each event being offered by Vic, please visit https://vic.utoronto.ca/alumni/reunion/

We look forward to honouring the graduation years ending in 2 and 7 in May 2022!

### Winter Events Recap



### Graduates Holiday Lecture

Thank you to everyone who attended the Graduates Holiday Lecture (formerly the Graduates Christmas Luncheon) on December 11, 2021. Guests received holiday greetings and an update from

Victoria University President & Vice Chancellor, William Robins. Professor Anne Urbancic gave an engaging lecture about Sophia Loren and her life as a cook and cookbook writer, as well as offered a unique insight into the woman whom many of us know primarily for her film industry success as a leading movie star.



### Vic One Plenary -Lisa Hepner "The Human Trial"

On February 16th, Vic One students and the Vic alumni, faculty and staff were invited to hear Vic alumna, Lisa Hepner, Vic 9T3 speak about her recent documentary The Human Trial

which follows a ground-breaking clinical trial that paints an emotional portrait of the sweat, passion, and sacrifice it takes to make medical history. The Human Trial is Hepner's feature directorial debut and guests were treated to view parts of the documentary.

### Victoria College - "Grad School" Alumni Lecture Series

A Victoria College alum is a life-long learner! The young alumni community were invited to continue their education at our special "grad school" for alumni. The two-part lecture series included presentations from experts in their fields, Jason Murray, Vic 0T5, President and Managing Partner, BIPOC Executive Search and Cheryl Lau, Vic 1T7, Business Coach and PhD Student.



Jason Murray's remarks helped the young alumni to learn the approach to take to realize success in their career, and how they can plan their steps if they have an interest in leading organizations.



Cheryl Lau taught young alumni how to confidently share their unique skills, life and work experiences, and personal brand so to create more options and opportunities for their life and career.



### **Mental Health Focus**

### for Continuing Education at Emmanuel College

By Michelle Voss Roberts & Mary Heinmaa

Emmanuel College is a theological college of Victoria University in the University of Toronto. Emmanuel is the largest theological school associated with the United Church of Canada, one of seven federated theological colleges within the Toronto School of Theology and a fully accredited member of the Association of Theological Schools.

Rooted in the ecumenical heritage of the United Church of Canada, shaped by its context in Victoria University and in relationship with Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and other religious communities, Emmanuel College equips leaders and scholars for rigorous theological inquiry and for inclusive practices of justice and care, contextual analysis, creative activity, and interfaith engagement.

This past summer, Emmanuel College received a \$56,486 CAD grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative; a three-phase initiative to help theological schools in Canada and the U.S. strengthen and sustain their capacities to prepare and support pastoral leaders for Christian churches.



Lilly Endowment Inc. founded in 1937 by J.K. Lilly, Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. for the "promotion and support of religious, educational or charitable purposes", continues to this day to support these purposes. Its founders viewed character and human development in the context of community and encouraged unselfish concern for the welfare of others. The value the founders placed on philanthropy, which was in large part motivated by their religious faith, was expressed by Eli Lilly when he said: "Owing everything we are to the past and present generations, each of us must be willing to give unstinted help to others"."

Emmanuel College received a phase one planning grant through the Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative. The grant supported the college in developing "Pathways for Wellness: Hearts, Minds, and Spirits," an assessment and planning process designed to help prepare and support congregational leaders to effectively share Christ's patient, persistent, and compassionate love with those experiencing mental distress.

Under the leadership of Michelle Voss Roberts, project director and past principal, and Adam Hanley, program coordinator for Ministry Personnel Vitality for The United Church of Canada, the team conducted three targeted needs assessment surveys: potential contributors to programming, with students and prospective students, and with United Church ministers and alumni. Graduate student Oliver Lim conducted focus groups with Doctor of Ministry students about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health for clergy and congregations.

The data collected from these surveys will inform a long-term initiative on mental health through Emmanuel College's Centre for Religion and Its Contexts. Current and future continuing education programming will attend to three prongs of a wellness for ministry personnel and congregations: self-care, other-care, and community care.

 Self-care: Emmanuel College will ensure opportunities to develop spiritual practices that support resilience in congregational leaders and sustain the work of mental health advocacy.



- Other-care: Emmanuel College will prepare and support ministers to work with people and their families who have lived experience with mental distress.
- Community care: Emmanuel College will contribute to a wider public conversation that raises awareness to end the stigma of mental illness and advocates for a just distribution of mental health services.

"[Ministers] will take these habits into the pastorate, so that they can come at issues from a centred place and not a reactive one," says Voss Roberts. "The metaphysical connection to God provides an inner strength in knowing that you are God's beloved, even when your identity is under attack."""

Already a strength of the multi-religious Master of Pastoral Studies program, mental and spiritual wellbeing will become more central in how the College prepares Master of Divinity students and supports alumni working in congregations. This past fall term, pilot programs included workshops on spiritual practice, communication in congregations, and self-care to support service. The winter term will include a smallgroup series exploring personal satisfaction and stress in ministry with Beth Anne Fisher and a workshop on managing conflict with Credence & Co. As the project unfolds, interested ministry personnel can look for updates and opportunities through the Centre for Religion and Its Contexts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Source: https://lillyendowment.org/

<sup>&</sup>quot; Source: https://lillyendowment.org/

<sup>&</sup>quot;Source: https://broadview.org/united-church-minister-stress/

# **Defy Gravity**



By Louise (Huntingford) Yearwood Vic 8T6



In December 2021, the University of Toronto made Canadian history by announcing its new campaign, *Defy Gravity*. With a goal to raise **\$4 billion** for the university's highest priorities, the campaign also has an alumni engagement goal to inspire **225,000** alumni to become involved as volunteers, donors, mentors, participants, and leaders, and to encourage them to contribute their time and talent to the University **one million times** collectively. If you have not yet seen the official launch video, please visit *Defy Gravity* launch.

Defy Gravity is built on three fundamental commitments—excellence, access, and a caring and inclusive community—all of which align perfectly with Victoria University's own stated priorities, as outlined in its <a href="Strategic Framework 2021-2026">Strategic Framework 2021-2026</a>. Vic's four strategic themes include: An Inspiring Sense of Place; A Strong, Inclusive Community; Outstanding Academic Offerings; and Signature Learning Experiences. In a nutshell, Vic's campaign is about inclusive excellence, something to which we can all aspire, especially given the strife and division we see being experienced at present around the Globe.

Vic's last campaign, Imagination Unbound, was part of U of T's Boundless campaign, and raised \$70M for Victoria University's initiatives. Vic's contribution to *Defy Gravity* will follow a similar path and continue to set records for Vic, in terms of its fundraising and alumni engagement goals.

Some of the exciting strategic initiatives for which the fundraising team will be working to garner donor support include:

- student scholarships, as well as opportunity awards which make an undergraduate experience at Vic accessible to all;
- signature programs, including stellar programs like Scholars-in-Residence (providing research opportunities for undergraduates of the humanities and social sciences), and the Northrop Frye Centre, as well as introducing new programs in the area of creative expression and society;
- · Indigenous initiatives; and
- support for student mental health and wellbeing.

Each of these areas are strategic foci for the university over the period of the Framework and beyond, and will attract strong donor support.

Finally, Vic's major academic building, Northrop Frye Hall, after 56 years of service, is in much need of refurbishments, which will help meet accessibility and sustainability initiatives across the entire university. As a significant eastern gateway to the U of T St. George campus this flagship building for Vic will be a central focus for its fundraising campaign, and will form the cornerstone of Vic's contributions to *Defy Gravity*.

Gifts to Vic over the life of this campaign will significantly impact the University's ability to achieve its ambitious and exciting goals. President Robins put Vic's vision so beautifully in his recent Vic Report message. He says "the cultivation [at Vic] of an interlinked community of exploration creates an atmosphere in which academic coursework, co-curricular activities, and social connections are imbued with a common purpose: to share our curiosity and to sustain each other as we discover new forms and expressions of knowledge".

May the generous spirit of the Vic community sustain the University's vision over the coming years and may the gifts given, the time volunteered, and the alumni who engage with us truly defy gravity!

# Making a Difference

in Students' Lives – One Award at a Time.



#### By Mary Heinmaa

Since its inception, Victoria University has built a portfolio of student awards, which is impressive in both depth and breadth. Many of these established awards are through gifts from individuals who, with only a few exceptions, are—or were—alumni of Victoria College. Some gifts go back as far as Victoria's Cobourg period of 1836-1890, while still others were received as recently as this past year. One such gift is from Vic alumna, Julia Tremain Vic 8T8, made through her family's foundation, the Howitt Dunbar Foundation. The A. Julia P. Tremain Scholarship will be conferred upon Victoria College students who have achieved excellence in the Humanities during the course of their academic pursuits, with preference given to students with financial need.

Julia chose to give back to her alma mater for a number of reasons, primarily to provide access to a university education to those with financial need. "I have nieces and nephews who are about to enter university. It is such an exciting time to see them flourish and to develop new experiences through their academic pursuits. They, and I, had that opportunity without having to think about financial limitations. Everyone, regardless of their backgrounds, should have access to a university education," says Julia.

Beyond the financial support a scholarship offers, Julia notes that, "it sends a strong message to the student award recipient that 'we believe in you'; a little encouragement can go a long way". Furthermore, Julia views a scholarship as a partnership between the student and the university, as well as a way for the university to show that it values their learning efforts and encourages them to pursue courses of interest.

Specifically, Julia's scholarship will support students of the Humanities. She says, "One needs to think about the long-term impact which a university education offers. For instance, what studies will positively influence your career/life journey; no matter what you end up doing. With the Humanities, the skills you hone in critical thinking, constructing concise and persuasive

arguments, both written and oral, problem solving and soft skills, like empathy, are all valuable skills required in a variety of careers. Whether you are an entrepreneur, lawyer, doctor, financier, scientist, social worker, and the list goes on, you are going to use the skills you develop in the Humanities".

As a lawyer, Julia believes that her classes at Vic in philosophy, religion, and English taught her to write and present to a high standard and to draw from historical references to help solve current issues. In essence, she learned to be intuitive, to take a non-linear approach to problem solving, and to develop the capacity to see things differently.

On a final note, Julia expressed that she had a great university experience at Vic and that establishing this award has afforded her the opportunity to reacquaint herself with Vic. "It feels nice to have been asked to make a difference in a student's life through this award; otherwise, I just wouldn't have thought about it!"







### The Spirit of Leadership at Vic

### and the Future of Education

By Ruth-Ann MacIntyre



Julia Forgie Vic 0T5
embodies the spirit of
leadership at Vic. She was
featured in <u>Victoria College's</u>
<u>Annual Fund</u> fundraising
campaign this past fall
2021, which highlighted
her inspiring work as an
assistant professor and
program coordinator for Vic's
Education and Society minor

program. The campaign also highlighted Julia's research with students exploring teaching efficacy for online teaching due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I recently had the opportunity to connect with Julia. Some highlights from our conversation are offered in this article.

Last May 2021, Julia and five students in the Scholars-in-Residence program conducted a study examining what teaching efficacy looks like in the online teaching context of COVID-19, given the robust evidence that teaching efficacy is strongly related to both positive teacher practice and positive outcomes for students.<sup>1</sup> Teachers (K-12) from schools in Ontario were invited to participate in the study—all teachers who participated (more than 300) reported lower efficacy for teaching online when compared to teaching in person. Julia recently published her research, which proposes a model for professional development to improve online teaching efficacy, and will be presenting her research at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) 2022 Annual Meeting in April.

Julia recently received two Vic research grants: a \$3,000 grant to hire a student for data analysis and literature review research, and another \$3,000 grant to hire two students to help develop a proposal to extend her research and look at online teaching efficacy in the university/college context. "Many of these research opportunities would not happen without the generous support of Vic donors. My colleagues and I are able to develop meaningful projects that will help to change teaching practice for the better," says Julia.

Due to the provincial-wide COVID-19 mandate in January 2022, Julia returned to teaching the Education and Society program online where she continued to strive to improve the quality of teaching; she appreciated the technology support available from Vic.

"I'm glad students soon will be heading back to the classroom—that's where students want to be. We now also have the opportunity to integrate innovative and collaborative online tools into the classroom to replace some of the traditional paper and pencil tasks."<sup>2</sup>

The long-term impact that COVID-19 has had on learning achievements, particularly in elementary schools, presents many challenges. The inequities that existed before the pandemic have been exacerbated. The children who needed to be in school the most, had the most to lose during virtual learning and not every child had the same experience.

Julia believes that there are going to be significant gaps between where students are in their academic and social learning. Educators will need to remediate those gaps and help families and students to acclimatize.

With regard to university and college learning, students and faculty will need to re-establish a sense of community. "We have learned a great deal from the pandemic, so students will now receive a balance between innovative instruction and traditional teaching methods that will deliver best practice in teaching, especially for students who have diverse needs. Providing high quality instruction that is flexible and meets the needs of every student needs to be our future priority," says Julia.

In terms of Julia's future plans, she will continue to teach in the Vic Education and Society Program, supervise undergraduate research and apply for funding and research grants. Recently, Julia became a mentor for the University of Toronto's President's Scholars of Excellence where she provides academic guidance and leadership to two award recipients. Julia also received the Victoria University Spooner Travel Grant as part of the Education and Society program, which is a grant for faculty who are proposing travel to Asia to increase the scope for international opportunities.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>As published in *Principal Connections*, Winter 2021, Volume 25, Issue 2, Page 42.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>At the time of this interview in January 2022, University plans were to resume classes to in-person learning in February 2022.

### The Ties that Bind



### Alumni Affairs & Advancement launches Victoria University Mentorship Program

By Meghan Junke

Launching a formal mentorship program during a pandemic might seem like risky business; however, at Vic we've found it to be the perfect time to offer this kind of support to our students and young alumni. Vic students and grads are bound together by the University and it is this connection which makes a mentoring relationship so meaningful. Even while COVID-19 has limited the ways in which we gather and socialize, at the same time the pandemic has provided a way for mentors and mentees to connect through technology and enter into truly rewarding mentoring experiences.

The <u>Victoria University Mentorship Program</u> supports the University's strategic pillar, Belong – A Strong, Inclusive Community, and its commitment toward helping students and recent graduates flourish as they transition from their undergraduate studies into the next step of their life journey. Vic is highly regarded as a supportive and service-oriented community, so establishing a formal mentorship opportunity for current students and alumni was a natural extension of the University's values.

The Office of Alumni Affairs & Advancement ran a small, yet mighty, pilot mentoring program during the winter term of the 2020-2021 academic year. Riding the wave of success, in September 2021, after many fruitful consultations with participating mentors and mentees, the program officially launched and expanded its number of participants to 50 mentor - mentee pairs.

The program has two streams: student to alumni and alumni to alumni. The student mentees are members of the Vic Ready Year 2 (VR2) program who are nearing the end of their academic journey and beginning to consider next steps after graduation. Alumni mentees are recent graduates from the classes of 2019, 2020 and 2021 who are embarking on their early career journey or are pursuing graduate studies. Anushree Rai Vic 1T6, a second-year mentor, shared that she wishes a program like this had existed while she was a student at Vic, "A program like this would have been immensely helpful to me as an international student. I would have felt less overwhelmed when it came to navigating the University and to making decisions about my next steps afterwards."

The mentorship program is designed to be flexible so that all participants can maintain their balance at work,

at school and at home. Mentors and Mentees are encouraged to meet a total of five times over the course of the academic year (October – April) and meetings are conducted by video or phone call. The ability to conduct meetings virtually has been of tremendous benefit to mentors and mentees located both near and far. The program currently has participants located in cities, which include Toronto and the GTA, Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Boston, New York City, Helsinki, Oxford, Hong Kong and Beirut.

The program is also designed so that mentees get to direct their own learning, set goals and prioritize important conversations for each meeting with their mentor. Ms. Rai has had the opportunity to mentor in both streams of the program. Her conversations with her mentees have been wide-ranging and covered topics such as beginning graduate school and selecting the right program; stepping into the professional world after graduate studies; work-life balance and setting healthy boundaries; job interview preparation and job application documents. She remarked that helping her mentees with their resumes and cover letters required her to draw upon her experience as a Peer Career Start Advisor at U of T's Office of Career Exploration & Education.

Ms. Rai eloquently summarized why so many Vic alumni choose to mentor and give back in this special way: "While there are many helpful supports and services available to students and recent graduates, nothing beats talking to another person. When we share experiences and open up, our feelings are validated and we feel less alone. I really appreciated having mentors that would act as a sounding board for me and give me the space to ask questions and explore my curiosities. I am so glad that I can now help someone else, who was in my shoes, who is seeking this kind of support."

As part of its strategic vision, Alumni Affairs & Advancement intends to steadily grow this program's reach and to increase the number of participants. If you are interested in mentoring, or if you know of a Victoria student or recent graduate who would benefit from this program, please contact Meghan Junke, Mentorship Coordinator & Alumni Liaison at meghan.junke@utoronto.ca.

### Where There's A Will...Planning Your Legacy

Whether it is recognizing the impact of your education on your life and career, expressing gratitude for your experiences inside and outside the classroom, or paying forward the help you received in the form of a bursary or scholarship, there are many reasons for choosing to remember Victoria University in your estate plan.

Charitable bequests and other forms of planned gifts can help you plan your legacy, while providing financial and other benefits. Planned gifts provide support for scholarships and bursaries, academic programs, as well as the University's heritage buildings and grounds.

For information on charitable bequests, other forms of planned giving, and the five steps you can take to plan your legacy, to receive a free estate planning primer and workbook, or to enrol in the Victoria University Heritage Society for those who have made a provision for Victoria or Emmanuel in their estate plan, please contact Sharon Gregory, Associate Director, Gift Planning, at 416–813–4050, or sharon.gregory@utoronto.ca.

If you are considering a bequest in your Will to Victoria or Emmanuel, here is suggested wording:

I give and bequeath to the Board of Regents of Victoria University, Toronto, Ontario, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_% or \_\_\_\_\_shares of my estate.

### A Healthy Regard for Vic

By Sharon Gregory

Dr. Ben Chan Vic 8T7 (MD 1988) has taken on many public service roles throughout his career, as a travelling physician to remote areas of Canada, a former healthcare CEO in Ontario and Saskatchewan, and Assistant Professor of Global Health at U of T. His major focus over the last decade has been consulting to the World Bank, advising governments of low- and middle-income countries on how to strengthen their healthcare systems.



Recipient of the Moss Scholarship in 1987 and the Distinguished Alumni Award in 2005, Ben credits Vic for developing his abiding interest in public health policy and improving healthcare access for underserviced populations. Beginning his undergraduate studies as a student whose interests were limited to the "hard sciences", Ben immersed himself in university life, revelling in the wide-ranging debates on political and social issues, whether inside the classroom or at the Burwash Hall dining table. He ran for student government, ending up as External Commissioner on the executive of the U of T Students' Administrative Council (now UTSU). In this role, he represented students' interests to governments on issues including funding to universities, student financial aid, housing and transportation. He developed a much deeper appreciation of the broader world and an understanding of and interest in public policy issues and the political processes through which decisions are made.

"My experience at Vic was nothing short of transformational," says Ben. "It led me on a path to combine my original interest in the sciences with studies in health policy and management."

As an expression of his gratitude, Ben has returned to Vic several times to speak to students and has made an annual donation every year since he graduated. He has funded two student awards, the Dr. Ben Chan Scholarship for students in the life sciences, and the Ben Chan Leadership Award for students who have demonstrated leadership in student life, student government or student media. When it came time for him to make his Will, Ben included a bequest to Victoria University and joined the Heritage Society.

"When you're planning your estate, it's natural to want to remember those who have had an important impact on your life and, for me, that very much includes Vic," says Ben.



### Victoria University Heritage Society

The Victoria University Heritage Society was founded in 1992 to express the University's enduring gratitude to those who have made a provision for Victoria or Emmanuel College in their estate plan. Benefits include membership in the Chancellor's Council, which meets annually on Victoria's Charter Day each October for a luncheon and panel discussion. Heritage Society members are also included in the University of Toronto's King's College Circle Heritage Society and receive special invitations to campus events. The list below includes members confirmed by the publication deadline. If you have included Victoria University in your Will or arranged another type of planned gift but do not see your name listed, please contact Sharon Gregory at 416–813–4050, toll-free at 1–888–262–9775 or email sharon.gregory@utoronto.ca.

Phyllis D. Airhart Roy Allen 5T0 and Elizabeth Allen 5T6 Peter Allison 8T8 and Robin (Hollands)

Allison 8T9
E. Patricia Andrews 4T0
Susan M. Armitage 6T4

John Armstrong 8T2 and Barbara Armstrong

Doris A. (Jessinghouse) Arnold 6T6 Jeanine C. (MacDonald) Avigdor 5T4 Susan Bertoia Banting 8T0

Gillian (Smiley) Bartlett 7T0 and Kenneth R. Bartlett 7T1

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Rumerfield

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Elizabeth (Eastlake) Vosburgh 6T8

Germaine Warkentin

Nora R. Wilson 5T5 Mary P. Winsor Paula (Mitas) Zoubek 6T2

All those who wish to remain anonymous.

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Alumni Affairs & Advancement Office vi	c.alumni@utoronto.ca, 416-585-4500, 1-888-262-9775



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