

UNIVERSITY

NEWS BEAT

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Our alumni are lifelong members of the York community

In just 25 years since the University was first conceived as the place for the education of the "whole man," in the words of founding president Murray Ross, York has distinguished itself in teaching and research in virtually every field.

York's alumni, now 50,000 strong, carry this reputation into the world outside the University—and eventually, with the selection of physics grad Steve MacLean as one of Canada's first astronauts, into outer space.

"Life doesn't end"

"Life doesn't end after graduation," says Janis Roy, York's new assistant director of alumni affairs. "You're a life member of this community."

"It took a while for me to realize how important my university experience was," says Mike Shook, financial executor, who is the president of York's alumni association. He graduated in '77 with a BA in Economics. "You couldn't help but make friends and get involved in new activities. Sometimes I think I must be even busier now than I was then, because I haven't had much time to follow up on a lot of those old friendships, not to mention new interests. The Alumni Association is bringing me back out, and I can see that there are more benefits to getting involved than just the real camaraderie to be rekindled."

The York community strongly welcomes the participation of past students. Graduates of all 10 faculties are automatically members of the Alumni Association. Each college has its own alumni chapter, while Administrative Studies and most recently, Social Work grads belong to their respective alumni groups. Osgoode Hall Law School alumni participate in the activities of an autonomous, yet affiliated organization; those who graduated before 1970 are not York graduates, while those who have completed degrees since the school joined York are. All groups are represented on the Alumni Council.

Branches across Canada and as far away as Hong Kong maintain contact with York alumni. Over 43,000 receive the quarterly news magazine produced by York communications staff. Chapters keep their own mailing lists and publish regular newsletters and bulletins.

A nominal membership fee allows alumni to use any branch of the University library system. Non-degree courses and conferences are a major way York graduates continue their academic association with the Uni-

versity. York's Centre for Continuing Education works closely with government, professional, business and community groups, designing and staging a wide range of seminars and symposia.

The Faculty of Administrative Studies has conducted a highly successful executive development program for nearly 20 years and encourages the growing number of managers in York's alumni to participate.

The Tait McKenzie Centre and Glendon's Proctor Field House also welcome past students: a single membership is \$100 for one calendar year. The Track and Field Centre is open to members free of charge during university hours and at other times for a specified fee. Membership in the Glendon squash club is another popular option. Alumni are also welcome in any of York's recreational instruction programs on both campuses.

Local alumni are encouraged to organize or play on alumni inter-college sports teams during the September to March season. Former interuniversity athletes become members of the XY Club upon graduation and are kept up-to-date about York athletics. They are included in such events as the annual XY Club Golf Tournament and the Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Dinner.

Homecoming

Everybody loves Homecoming, an annual fall event usually taking place over a weekend of socializing in conjunction with a Yeomen football game. Your college or faculty will have its own version, so keep a spot in your calendar free.

The University really does want to continue to serve the people who have made it a success. Alumni can rent facilities for special functions, book the Religious Centre for marriages and christenings, or stay at Canadian universities listed in the Alumni Summer Travelling Brochure at a discount. The Association has negotiated group rates on term insurance for its members and has recently secured a discount offer from Zenith Computing Systems on personal computer packages.

While you're at it, consider too that the University relies on gifts and donations for a good chunk of its livelihood. Don't hesitate to offer books to the libraries, or even, as some Stong graduates did, establish an annual bursary for needy college undergrads. Alumni donations to York's fundraising campaign have reached close to a quarter of a million dollars.



Kids in the Jane-Finch corridor are one focus of our community relations activities.

Community relations

There's a world outside the university

It may come as a surprise to many York people, but the world doesn't end at Steeles, Keele, and the Murray Ross Parkway.

Just outside of those boundaries is a community that the University is part of, and community relations is something virtually everyone at York can be involved in. Faculty, staff, and students already serve in diverse ways, and there's always the need for more help.

Working behind the scenes to match York's resources with community needs is the University's Community Relations office. Elspeth Heyworth, who is leaving York next month to become the Executive Director of Dixon Hall Community Centre in downtown Toronto, has been York's coordinator of community relations since the position was established a little over three years ago.

She has worked to develop faculty and staff resources in the University in response to various needs expressed by the community. These include volunteers, including student placements, to work with various community organizations; bridging courses; collaborative research undertaken jointly with community groups on problems that have been identified as priorities for the community; and a variety of linkages with that outside world.

"The bridging courses are probably the most successful thing we've done," says Ms. Heyworth. They are offered by the Women's Studies program of Atkinson College in conjunction with the Community Relations office.

The secret of their success, she maintains, is the high level of consultation with the external communities, which play a strong role in determining both what courses are offered, and their locations.

Three courses are being taught this year: one in the Jane-Finch area, which is now in its third successful year; one, in conjunction with Seneca College, in the Peanut area of Willowdale; and another in Aurora. Faculty for the courses include Atkinson professors Shelagh Wilkinson (English and Women's Studies), Judy Posner (Sociology and Women's Studies), and

Leslie Sanders (English and writing workshop), as well as Ms. Heyworth, who formerly taught in Atkinson's Social Work department.

The courses are offered on a non-credit basis, and students who earn at least a B are automatically granted admission to York.

"Higher education is a secret wish for many women who have never had the opportunity for it," she explains, "but many of them lack confidence in their abilities. Confidence-building is a crucial aspect of these courses."

Bethune "twinned"

In another community relations endeavour, Norman Bethune College and Jane Junior High School are "twinned". Ms. Heyworth explains activities range from tutoring, to "fun thing" such as bringing the kids to campus for sports events or taking them to plays at Stratford. A number of Bethune students are involved, and are coordinated by Cindy Crystdale, president of the Bethune College Council.

The Community Relations Office also provided assistance to the Asian Community Centre, initiated last year by Aruna Lord, who works in York's Department of Physical Education.



Elspeth Heyworth

The Centre is designed to provide people with education and contact with each other to help them orient themselves in the community. Mrs. Lord and the other volunteers spend most of their free time helping new Canadians to shop, find jobs, visit the doctor, and get to their English

and math classes or Sunday afternoon leisure activities at the centre.

Community Relations is busy every summer, too, with its annual day camp for youngsters aged 10 to 15 from the Jane-Finch area. Drawing on University resources, it introduces campers to sports, computers, and fine arts. The camp, an annual event for the past 10 years, is organized by the York Youth Connection, a subcommittee of the York Community Connection, a volunteer board representing both York University and the neighbouring Jane-Finch community.

Speakers bureau

Another important linkage with the community is the Speakers Bureau, which matches faculty and staff members with community groups requesting speakers for their organizations. In the month of January, Ms. Heyworth received 27 requests for speakers and was able to fill 14 of them.

Two areas in which volunteers are most in demand, according to Ms. Heyworth, are collaborative research and service on boards of organizations.

Collaborative research is particularly difficult, she explains, because the community groups seldom have funding but must rely on volunteers. Also, it is essential for each group to participate in defining its needs and developing research to address them.

In one current example, three York students are assisting in research on developing a community health centre, with some faculty consultation.

Service on boards requires a real commitment of time, Ms. Heyworth emphasizes, with organizational development skills and an ability to gain access to resources.

But it's also a way for students, staff and faculty to get to forge closer ties with our neighbours.

These linkages and many others in Fine Arts, the Art Gallery, Osgoode Hall Law School, the Faculty of Education, and other areas ensure a two-way flow between the University and its neighbouring communities, to the benefit of both.