

2013|14

# YEAR IN REVIEW

FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS  
& PROFESSIONAL STUDIES





# TABLE OF CONTENTS



Student Beverly Gamuso on a class excursion to the mountains, Les Bauges, in France, part of the LA&PS Yorku Abroad course, French Language & Society

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<b>4</b> LA&PS and the World	<b>20</b> Exceptional Educators
<b>10</b> R&D: Research Dominance	<b>24</b> Building Community
<b>15</b> Growing Opportunities	<b>28</b> Class Acts
<b>16</b> Wired for Learning	<b>30</b> A Philanthropic Philosophy

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

**I am delighted to present the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies Year in Review, a summary of our key achievements over the 2013-14 academic year.**

The end of Fall/Winter 2013 marks the end of LA&PS's fifth year. It is difficult to believe that it has been five full years since the merger of two Faculties created the country's largest single offering of programs in social science, humanities and professional disciplines.

LA&PS has added to its already impressive array of Majors, Minors and Certificates, providing its students with even greater choice. The Faculty has continued to lead the University in the growth and evolution of digital learning, and it has inaugurated new programs to improve its students' experience, and help with their transition to university life.

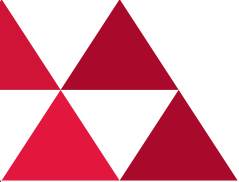
The high quality of LA&PS's academic programs has not gone unnoticed, with English, History, Geography and Philosophy now ranked among the top 100 programs in the world. The exceptional work of LA&PS researchers and teachers continues to increase the Faculty's reputation outside York and to gain recognition within. At the June Convocation one Faculty colleague, Isabella Bakker, was awarded the title of Distinguished Research Professor to honour her pathbreaking research, and two colleagues, Susan Dimock and Martin Lockshin, were honoured with the title of University Professor for their extraordinary contributions to the life of the University.

The Faculty's most striking achievement over the past five years has, however, been the success of its internationalization strategy. The influence of LA&PS faculty, students and alumni now reaches into every habitable corner of the globe. The Faculty hires from among the best scholars in the world and their research has a global impact, making a difference in some of the most challenging countries on the planet.

Every year LA&PS welcomes a greater number of students from even more countries, and all students benefit from immersion in so rich an array of cultures and perspectives. And the international opportunities the Faculty affords its students – from our acclaimed iBA programs, to internships and exchanges, to LA&PS courses taught abroad – continue to grow and provide an education without borders.

Everyone in LA&PS has played a role in its current success. At the beginning of another year of growth and opportunity, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the hard work, talent and dedication of students, faculty and staff that have helped to make the Faculty the research, teaching and learning powerhouse that it is.

**Martin Singer**  
*Dean*



# LA&PS AND THE WORLD



Dean Singer greeting prospective students at the Shenzhen Concord College of Sino-Canada in Shenzhen, China

## LA&PS INTERNATIONALIZATION OFFERS THE BEST OF ALL WORLDS

The Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies is a post-secondary leader with a global reach. Our award-winning researchers are active in more than 80 countries around the world; our students participate in academic partnerships that span more than 40 countries; and we welcome students from 108 different nations to our campus each year, learning as much from our cultural diversity as our 100 program areas. The Faculty’s internationalization strategy orients its innovations and attests to its commitment to making meaningful contributions to the world.

Both the scale and scope of international activities available to LA&PS faculty and students have increased. Years of outreach efforts overseas have yielded a new suite of grant and scholarship programs supporting international study by LA&PS students and research by LA&PS faculty. Produced also have been a range of new supports for international students studying in LA&PS.

“We live in an increasingly global world, and every year LA&PS faculty and students are fuelling progress across its many regions,” says Dean Martin Singer. “Our researchers are changing the way we think about everything and everywhere. Through increased international study LA&PS students are experiencing this change in some of the planet’s most culturally-rich destinations.”

Today LA&PS researchers can be found from Iceland to South Africa, the United States to Japan, and virtually all points in between. Among them is Professor Jelena Zikic of the School of Human Resource Management, who is studying careers in Serbia as part of a 38 country, cross-cultural study. Humanities Professor Kabita Chakraborty is working with colleagues in Japan on a project about studying a globalizing India through the lens of the South Asian matrimonial site shaadi.com. Professor Alison Crosby of the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies is using a transnational feminist lens to examine war memorialization practices in Sri Lanka and Guatemala. These are amongst the hundreds of LA&PS researchers who are working with colleagues and partners from across the globe to expand the Faculty’s reach in every scholarly field.

The number of study abroad courses offered by LA&PS has increased dramatically over the past few years, trebling in one year alone. Destinations include Greece, Italy, France, China and South Africa. These experiential courses combine with the Faculty’s 12 International Bachelor of Arts programs and with its many foreign exchange or internship opportunities to provide students in LA&PS with truly worldly opportunities.



Children's Studies students in South Africa, against wall of newly painted school



## A TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA PROVES LIFE-CHANGING FOR 15 LA&PS STUDENTS

Since 2009, Singer has focused on expanding the international scope for students. He has travelled to such places as China, Hong Kong and India fostering opportunities for exchange and collaboration, increasing international enrolment, and strengthening the global LA&PS alumni network. In his words, "International students bring the world to LA&PS, enriching the university experience for all of our students and providing a global perspective in every classroom and every program."

Furthering LA&PS's ties to the international community is a \$1-million gift to York University from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, which celebrates 70 years of Canada-Greece relations and will support Greek exchange students attending York. LA&PS is a well-known hub of Hellenic studies and this July a group of 10 Greek students and one professor travelled to York to attend a two-week summer school where they were treated to a wide range of academic and cultural experiences, including lectures, tours and interactive workshops.

In the past five years, the number of international undergraduate LA&PS students contributing their spectrum of experiences to York's student body has increased by more than 80 per cent, and now comprise 12 per cent of the Faculty's undergraduate population.

To help these students adjust to life in Canada, LA&PS offers an abundance of support programs. Notable among these is The Wor(l)d Cultures Buddy Project developed by the Department of Languages, Literatures & Linguistics (DLLL), which offers international students DLLL "buddies" with whom they can learn about the new cultures among which they have landed, have new experiences and develop new friendships.

LA&PS's internationalization strategy is fomenting innovation and promoting growth while remaining grounded in the Faculty's commitment to enhancing the experiences of our faculty, students and alumni.

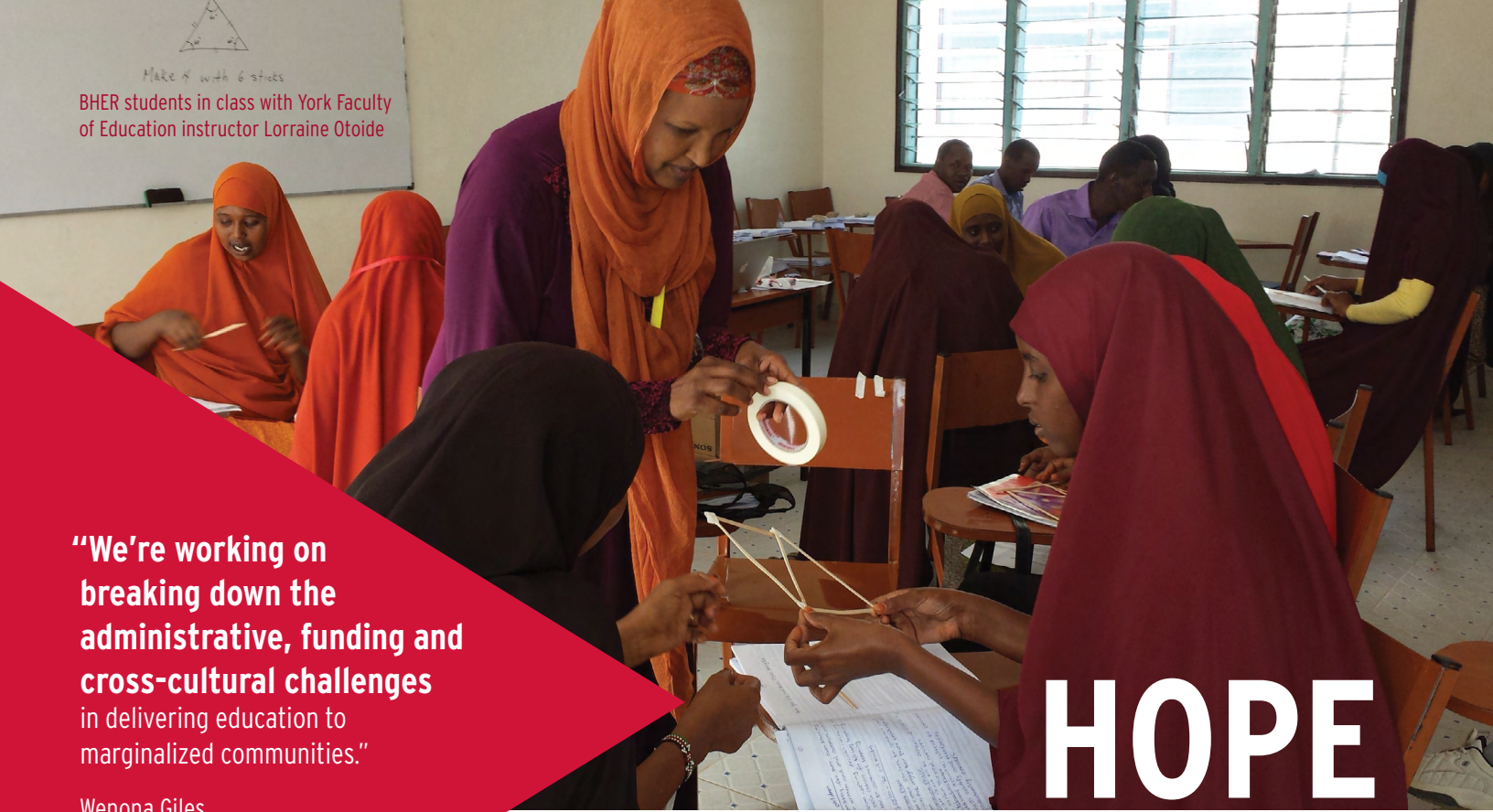
This spring, students in LA&PS's Children's Culture in Context course had the experience of a lifetime when they travelled to a rural community in Limpopo province, South Africa. Under the direction of Professor Andrea Emberly, the students were placed at seven local primary schools to teach classes, observe teaching methods, engage with children and learn about local Venda children's culture as part of YorkU Abroad.

Student Josh Sintzel found the opportunity to engage with children and learn about their culture to be life-changing. "Travelling to South Africa has been the type of experience that has defined me as a person. The local people welcomed us with open arms and taught us about their culture, language and beliefs. I encourage all students to go abroad and explore the beauty of another culture."

The Children's Culture in Context course focuses on applied learning to support children and young people in communities around the world. As a whole, the Children's Studies Program is moving toward a focus on internationalization and global engagement that examines a child-centred and child's rights approach to the study of child and youth cultures. Professor Emberly has been doing research on Venda children's music in South Africa since 2004 and it was a logical progression to take a group of Children's Studies students with her.

"The students learned about Venda children's culture, about education in rural South Africa and about the importance of understanding and respecting cultural context in our global world, especially in regards to children's cultures and the emphasis on universal children's rights," says Emberly. "It was a fully hands-on, immersive experience."

Student Jehd Lunar found travelling to South Africa to be a wholly enriching experience. "I continuously learned new things, not only about the culture but about myself as well. Being there challenged me in more ways than one; it was definitely the experience of a lifetime."



BHER students in class with York Faculty of Education instructor Lorraine Otoide

**“We’re working on breaking down the administrative, funding and cross-cultural challenges in delivering education to marginalized communities.”**

Wenona Giles  
Professor, Department of Anthropology

# HOPE BEYOND BORDERS

The small border town of Dadaab in the North Eastern Province of Kenya has, for the past 20 years, provided refuge for survivors of military and other conflicts in countries such as Somalia, Chad, Sudan and Ethiopia. Today, it is one of the world’s largest refugee camps and home to almost 500,000 people spread out across five sites. With young adults and children comprising a significant portion of the camp population and often spending their childhoods there, it’s no surprise that residents sought post-secondary education opportunities from various aid organizations.

Wenona Giles, a York anthropology professor and researcher in the Centre for Refugee Studies, says “the camp residents see education as a way out; they want their children to have productive lives and help rebuild their countries.”

Giles and fellow York professor Don Diplo are co-leads of the Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER) project, a teacher education initiative launched in February 2013 to deliver university courses, diplomas and international degree opportunities to Dadaab camp residents and townspeople.

Students choose between two program streams – a primary teaching program offered by York in conjunction with Kenyatta University, or a high school teaching program offered by the University of British Columbia (UBC) in partnership with Moi University (MU). Upon completion, they have the opportunity to pursue degree programs online with one of three international post-secondary partners.

A year after its launch, there are more than 200 students taking classes taught by York, UBC and MU professors online and onsite in the camp. Three BHER staff work in Dadaab full-time, working in a newly built learning centre on the edge of town, co-ordinating the BHER program and ensuring delivery of key program elements. A number of camp residents also participate in the women’s mentorship program, connecting with Canadian mentors through Facebook.





York and UBC instructors pose by the gate of the UNHCR compound in Dadaab ahead of their first day of classes, August 2014.

Giles believes the BHER program will do more than deliver education in the camp. “We call this a pilot project. What we’re doing right now is developing a model to address ongoing challenges around delivery of higher education to people in precarious and extremely difficult settings,” she says. “We’re working on breaking down the administrative, funding and cross-cultural challenges in delivering education to marginalized communities.”

BHER received a \$4.5 million grant from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development of the Government of Canada, additional funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and support from both York and UBC. With a widely praised launch behind it, the BHER program has entered the second year of its five-year mandate.

“One of my goals is to be immersed in an enriching cultural experience and to gain an understanding of other people’s cultures. I know I will develop that at York.”

Michelle Linh Truong  
Administrative Studies student

## A YOUNG STUDENT'S ACADEMIC SUCCESS LEADS TO A PROMISING FUTURE

When Michelle Linh Truong, 18, applied to university she imagined herself attending an American Ivy League school for business. Indeed, Truong was accepted to all of the top-tier schools she applied to from her hometown of Hanoi, Vietnam. In the end, she decided that the Faculty of LA&PS at York University was the best fit for her. “I want to graduate with a global mindset,” Truong explains. “York has a rich international student group and one of my goals is to be immersed in an enriching cultural experience and to gain an understanding of other people’s cultures. I know I will develop that at York.”

As the recipient of the \$100,000 International Entrance Scholarship, Truong is receiving funding over four years to assist in pursuing her studies at York. The prestigious scholarship is awarded to the entering international student who best combines high academic achievement and demonstrable leadership skills.

With her first year of undergraduate work in the Finance stream of the Administrative Studies program under her belt, Truong thinks back to her arrival in Canada a year ago and what she has learned in and out of the classroom. “When I arrived I was nervous, but I believed in myself,” she says. “I was also scared: Would I fit in? Would I be successful? Would I make friends?” Fast forward 12 months and Truong has had a very successful year, earning herself a place in the Dean’s Circle of Student Scholars, a group of close friends she made while living in Vanier College and membership in several York financial and business student clubs, including the vice presidency of the International Outgoing Exchange.

Truong’s interest in business was ignited several years ago when she saw a family member’s investment misstep in the stock market. “I thought, ‘Why don’t I try to master this?’ ” Since then, she has dabbled with her own investment portfolio, learning firsthand through trial and error the high stakes and rewards that investment banking can offer. Now both an interest and a real passion, a career in investment management and finance is where she sees herself in the future.

For now, Truong is excited to be a part of the LA&PS community, specifically the School of Administrative Studies. “The professors are so helpful and friendly,” she explains. “People might think that at such a big school students get lost in the shuffle, but the support I have received from my department has been invaluable. You can go to them for answers and they want you to succeed. They are like my second family.”



# EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES HELP SHAPE AN OUTSTANDING UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

"I was so thankful that Canadian culture is more welcoming and social than what I expected," recounts student Daniel Lu, who moved to Canada in 2009 to attend the York University English Language Institute (YUELI). "I found it easier to meet people and socialize than what I was accustomed to in China." Growing up in the province of Zhejiang, Lu was eager to move to Canada for university, and after eight months in YUELI he enrolled as an undergraduate in LA&PS. Four years later, Lu will soon graduate from the School of Administrative Studies with dreams of working in the fashion industry as a marketer and, hopefully, a designer of his own clothing label.

**"The best thing about getting involved at York has been making great friends that push me to succeed."**

Daniel Lu  
Administrative Studies student

Looking back, Lu cherishes the varied extracurricular activities in which he was involved at York, activities that allowed him to not only meet many new people but also to gain valuable experience honing his interests and skills. As a volunteer student ambassador for York's recruitment department and LA&PS's Centre for Student Success, Lu assisted at campus-wide events such as student workshops, fall and spring campus days, and convocation. He was also a member of the Chinese Students Association, rising through the ranks to become event director and then vice-president.

One opportunity that appealed to both his passion for helping others and his interest in fashion was York's Multicultural Week, where he staged traditional Chinese fashion shows. For two years, Lu produced and styled a fashion show that featured LA&PS students modelling Ancient Chinese traditional dress called Hanfu, which represents the Chinese Han culture. "I want to raise an awareness of and appreciation for traditional Chinese dress by incorporating it into modern styles and with a modern aesthetic," Lu explains.

His passion for fashion also took Lu off-campus and into the community when organizers of a Jane-Finch multicultural week invited him to their event to showcase traditional Chinese fashion last summer, and again when he was asked to participate in a fashion show in downtown Toronto that celebrated multicultural garb. His volunteer role as a mentor to new LA&PS international students also reflects his desire to embrace and share world cultures.

"The best thing about getting involved at York has been making great friends that push me to succeed," Lu says. "My interactions with others have helped me realize how responsible I am for my own happiness and success."





**“It is amazing  
to see how different,  
yet connected we all are.”**

Aytak Akbari-Dibavar  
Political Science graduate

# ONE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TURNS HER PAINFUL PAST INTO A BRIGHT FUTURE

More than 265,000 international students flock to Canada yearly to attend university, excited for what lies ahead. For Aytak Akbari-Dibavar however, leaving her home in Iran was more about necessity than opportunity. As a political activist, she bore witness to the imprisonment and execution of friends and colleagues during the protests leading to the 2009 Iranian election and knew that for her safety and that of her family's, she needed to leave.

Saying goodbye to her parents, friends and a budding career, Akbari-Dibavar arrived in Toronto in 2010. “The first six months were terrible,” she remembers. “Unlike most international students who go to another country willingly, I was forced to leave my home and my entire life behind me.” At age 22, she didn't know what she would do or where she should go.

Akbari-Dibavar's desire to create positive political change led her to LA&PS's Department of Political Science, from where she proudly graduated summa cum laude in June. Although she looked into attending other Toronto universities, Akbari-Dibavar

chose York specifically for its well-regarded Political Science program. “I was interested in the critical approach that York's Political Science department takes, while still providing the freedom for discussion and thinking,” she explains. “I learned about the professors beforehand and knew this is where I wanted to study.” When she started attending classes, Akbari-Dibavar was heartened that her professors encouraged her to use her life in Iran as material for her studies and to keep the memories of her friends alive through her scholarly work.

This fall, Akbari-Dibavar began a Masters program in International Relations at McMaster University with plans to return to York for her PhD. “I loved studying here and I enjoyed my whole time at York. At graduation, I think I was the only one crying because I *didn't* want to leave.” When asked what the best thing about attending York is, she answers simply: “The diversity. It is amazing to see how different, yet connected we all are. I wouldn't have experienced that if I had not come to York.”



# R&D: RESEARCH DOMINANCE

## CELEBRATING A BANNER YEAR OF RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

Researchers in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies have a long tradition of groundbreaking work that consistently earns international acclaim. But even by our very high standards 2013-2014 was a remarkable year, one that built on our strong foundation of cutting-edge research and progressive scholarship anchored in social responsibility.

“At home and around the world this year, **our researchers pushed boundaries**, made discoveries and challenged commonly held beliefs.”

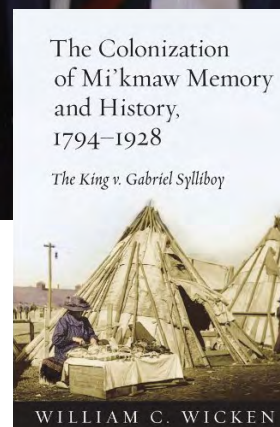
Naomi Adelson  
Associate Dean, Research

The best and brightest researchers in the world call LA&PS home. If you haven't already, you will soon hear of Ali Asgary's pioneering work developing sophisticated disaster simulations for emergency planning (p. 18). Researchers Stephanie Ross and Mark Thomas are exploring international labour trends and their impact on individuals as co-directors of the new Global Labour Research Centre (p. 14). Anthropologist Wenona Giles is co-director of the Borderless Higher Education for Refugees project that is bringing post-secondary education to the 500,000 residents of one of the world's largest refugee camps in Dadaab, Kenya (p. 6). These projects, like so many others in LA&PS, are making a lasting impact across disciplines and continents.

It's no surprise that over the past year LA&PS researchers continued to garner recognition from their peers in organizations across the country, including History Professor Adrian Shubert and Professor Bettina Bradbury, of the Department of History and School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, who were inducted as new Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada and English Professor James Carley, who was honoured with the Society's distinguished Pierre Chauveau Medal. Other award recipients include William Jenkins, professor of history and geography, who picked up the Clio Prize, the Joseph Brant Award and the James S. Donnelly, Sr. Prize for his book, *Between Raid and Rebellion: The Irish in Buffalo and Toronto: 1867-1916*, and Humanities Professor Sylwia Chrostowska, whose debut novel *Permission* was chosen as a book of the year by Quill and Quire and who received a Humboldt Research Fellowship to further pursue her research on nostalgia.

Closer to home, Political Science Professor and Trudeau Fellow Isabella Bakker was named a York University Distinguished Research Professor. In February, Carley, Bradbury and Shubert along with Political Science Professor Leah Vosko and Geography Professor Qiuming Cheng were celebrated at the second annual York U Research Leaders celebration.





History Professor William Wicken receiving Governor General's Award for Scholarly Achievement from His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston. Wicken was honoured for his book, *The Colonization of Mi'kmaw Memory and History, 1794-1928: The King v. Gabriel Sylliboy*.

Our faculty also enjoyed continued success in funding competitions, winning grants from Canadian and international funding organizations. Collectively they were awarded more than \$6.5 million in funding as principal investigators, the majority of which came from the Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council. This total includes a \$2.5 million Partnership Grant to Professor Carla Lipsig-Mummé to investigate how Canadian work and workplaces can best respond to climate change. This seven-year project, which includes 38 individual members and 19 partners in four countries, will examine the changes needed in law, policy, work design and business models to mitigate greenhouse gases. A Partnership Development Grant totalling \$199,000 was awarded to Social Science Professor J.J. McMurtry to examine best practices and knowledge mobilization in community energy development. A total of 32 projects were funded through SSHRC grants in the past year.

LA&PS researchers also continued to collaborate with leading scholars around the world. They were successful co-applicants with colleagues in other Faculties and institutions for a further \$7.6 million in funding, including a \$3.5 million grant from the Templeton Religion Trust to Humanities Professor Bernard Lightman and colleagues at Coventry University in England to study contemporary public debates surrounding evolution and religion through the lens of the humanities and social sciences.

Grants awarded in previous years, both from external funding agencies and from within the University and Faculty, allowed LA&PS researchers to host a wide range of national and international events at York, including the Canadian Anthropology Society annual conference and the inaugural conference of the Lusophone Studies Association. These funds also supported an impressive array of peer-reviewed publications and presentations. From 2011-13, researchers in LA&PS wrote or edited more than 230 books with some of the world's leading publishers, wrote more than 640 book chapters and 870 articles, and delivered 1,680 peer-reviewed conference presentations.

"At home and around the world this year, our researchers pushed boundaries, made discoveries and challenged commonly held beliefs," says Associate Dean, Research Naomi Adelson. "They are visionaries with an extraordinary sense of social action and we are enormously proud of their achievements."



Professors Linda Peake, left,  
and Lesley Wood



# HONOURING WINNERS OF NEW DISTINCTION IN RESEARCH AWARDS

The LA&PS Awards for Distinction in Research, Creativity or Scholarship were launched this year to recognize the exemplary work of our faculty members, enhance the Faculty's profile as a national leader in research and promote research practices that advance knowledge engagement with the wider community. We proudly celebrate the achievements of our winners, **Linda Peake** in the Established Researcher category and **Lesley Wood** in the Emerging Researcher category. Their outstanding accomplishments in research, the impact of their work on academic and social communities, and their commitment to engaging students make them truly remarkable members of our community.



**LINDA PEAKE, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**WINNER: ESTABLISHED RESEARCHER**

Linda Peake describes herself as a critical human geographer, exploring the feminist geographies of gender, race and sexuality, particularly as they relate to the global south. Over the past 30 years she's spent much of her time conducting research in Guyana and working with the grassroots women's organization Red Thread to improve the lives of local women.

"My research is grounded in the issues and problems facing poor people and how women work together across race and class to survive in grassroots communities" says Peake. "I don't measure success purely in terms of publication or the standard markers, but in terms of the ability to bring about change in people's lives."

That change has included training Red Thread members to conduct research on issues that impact upon the quality of life for local women. Among the issues Peake and her graduate students have researched in collaboration with Red Thread are: human trafficking – how it works and reintegrating survivors into society; and domestic violence – reducing occurrences of domestic violence and changing how courts and the police deal with its victims.

Peake is also the director of York University's City Institute, an organized research unit focused on urban studies. Under her leadership the City Institute has embarked on a mission to build a community of researchers and a wealth of knowledge to influence policy and academic knowledge in regard to urban issues. Linda Peake's goal is clear: "We increasingly live in an urban world, but as of yet no Canadian political party has an urban agenda. It's important that we have the academic expertise that can help develop policy platforms; not just on an academic level but on a governmental one. Research is ultimately about improving the quality of life for urban dwellers both in Canada and beyond."

In her career, she has edited and authored or co-authored a long list of articles and books, sat on the editorial board of many international journals and continued to be a voice for women around the world.

"I don't measure success purely in terms of publication or the standard markers, but in terms of the ability to bring about change in people's lives."

Linda Peake  
Professor, Department of  
Social Science

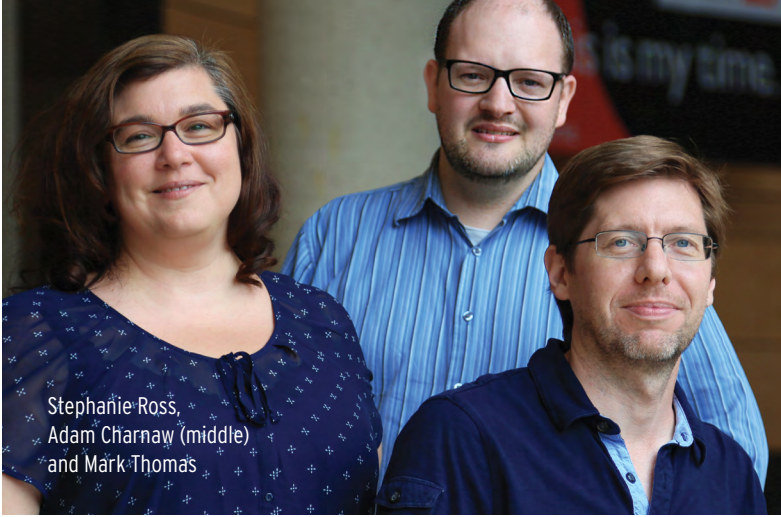
**LESLEY WOOD, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**  
**WINNER: EMERGING RESEARCHER**

"I believe that ordinary people can and do change the world through collective action," says Lesley Wood. The sociology professor's research examines social movements in a variety of contexts, exploring how ideas travel, how power operates and institutions change, how people resist and how conflict starts, transforms and ends.

What makes her work uniquely compelling is its marriage of theory and activism. She says, "I was an activist before I became a scholar. It's one thing to read about social movements, it's another to experience them." Wood's research has included surveying G20 protesters in the thick of a demonstration, interviewing activists about their organizational and strategic choices, studying the impact of policing on protest and examining the characteristics of the U.S. anti-war movement.

"One of my goals is to be able to share my thinking outside of the classroom and so I write not just as an academic but so the public will be able to read it. It's important to me that my work is accessible," says Wood.

Wood's publication record over the last five years has been extensive and reflects her leadership in the field. In that time, she authored two books and co-authored a third, contributed two book chapters and two refereed journal articles, and co-edited two special issues of journals. Her book *Direct Action, Deliberation, and Diffusion: Collective Action after the WTO Protests in Seattle* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) explores the impact of reflexive, egalitarian and strategic deliberations on the spread of protest tactics to new sites. It won the Porter Award by the Canadian Sociological Association in 2013. Wood is also regional editor of *Interface*, a journal for social movement activists and scholars.



Stephanie Ross,  
Adam Charnaw (middle)  
and Mark Thomas

**“Our mission is to be a pan-university hub for faculty and graduate students at York doing work on labour issues from a progressive social change perspective and to connect those people to practitioner communities.”**

Stephanie Ross  
Co-director of new Global Labour  
Research Centre (GLRC)

# NEW CENTRE PUTS YORK AT HEART OF GLOBAL LABOUR STUDIES

“We’ve had a really productive year,” says Mark Thomas, associate professor in the Department of Sociology and co-director of York’s new Global Labour Research Centre (GLRC). One year into its first five-year mandate, the GLRC is a thriving research hub with an ever-expanding network of researchers, and labour and community partners. Its focus on emerging global labour issues and the many collaborative projects already underway at the Centre make it one of York’s most exciting new initiatives.

Stephanie Ross, the GLRC’s other co-director and an associate professor in the Department of Social Science, is clear about its purpose: “Our mission is to be a pan-university hub for faculty and graduate students at York doing work on labour issues from a progressive social change perspective and to connect those people to practitioner communities.” The Centre’s efforts are focused on four distinct research areas: the impact of the changing nature of work and employment on labour rights; the inter-relationships between migration, citizenship and work; gender relations in work and labour movements; and the revitalization of workers’ movements.

With shifting perspectives on work and workers’ rights, and the implications of policy changes reverberating globally, labour research has never been more important for communities both at home and around the world.

Within the Global Labour Research Centre, an LA&PS Faculty-based research unit, faculty members and graduate students are engaged in a wide range of projects including migrant labour and precarious worker organization, employment standards enforcement, worker and policy responses to

deindustrialization and the link between good jobs and economic development in Latin America, to name a few. Ross says, “We want our research to have practical impact. We want the material we produce here to have real resonance for people who are struggling with these issues on the ground.”

Over the past year, the GLRC has, with the help of Centre Coordinator, Adam Charnaw, launched a number of initiatives aimed at sharing its scholarship. The 2013-14 Global Labour Speaker Series attracted hundreds of participants from a wide variety of Faculties across the University, along with those from other institutions and the community. The Centre also launched a Scholar-in-Residence program, bringing three renowned researchers to York. In April, the GLRC piloted its High School Education program, an initiative that educates GTA high school students about their rights in the workplace. A graduate student network is also emerging from within the Centre, with up to 30 students participating in a reading group and sharing their knowledge of labour and workplace issues. In addition, the GLRC has developed a labour studies library, which is currently home to more than 250 titles.

Building on a year of notable achievements, the Global Labour Research Centre is now looking forward. It remains oriented towards social justice research while working to expand its activities by integrating teaching into its mandate, increasing its international profile and developing a large-scale, multi-year research project with key community partners. Its focus for the next several years will be on contributing to the global discourse on work, employment and labour, and developing projects that will improve working conditions and strengthen workers’ organizations in Canada and abroad.



# GROWING OPPORTUNITIES



## NEW LA&PS PROGRAMS EXPAND INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING AT YORK

A degree from the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies continues to be a promise of deep knowledge and a well-rounded education. This year, Canada's leading interdisciplinary Faculty added to its existing roster of degree and diploma programs five new programs that will allow students to tailor their degrees to their interests and career goals. Students are now able to select from graduate diplomas in World Literature and Comparative Literature, and undergraduate minors in Japanese Studies, Marketing and Medical Anthropology.

LA&PS minors are a distinctive addition to any degree. The Japanese Studies program provides a solid foundation in Japanese language and culture, while the Medical Anthropology minor will help students gain an anthropological perspective on health and illness processes, and the socio-cultural factors that shape them.

According to Professor Lee Li, the Marketing minor "provides a deep and specialized education in the field of marketing that will allow students to further develop their knowledge from their major into a new and specialized career path."

"In today's competitive and quickly changing job market, more and more students are looking for skills that are marketable and transferable across industries," explains Professor Andrew Strebing. "Marketing skills are certainly among those."

In addition to the Marketing, Medical Anthropology and Japanese Studies minors, LA&PS also introduced two new graduate diplomas in World Literature and Comparative Literature this year. Offered by the graduate programs in English and Humanities respectively, these diplomas are unique in Canada and speak to an increased focus on transnational, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary studies in

academia. Professor Markus Reisenleitner, director of the Graduate Program in Humanities, describes how the Comparative Literature diploma highlights the multi-faceted nature of a student's graduate training. "In the case of MA students, it provides promising opportunities for further study in related disciplines; in the case of PhD students, it can lead to prospective careers in a range of areas requiring a high level of cross-cultural competency and literacy from government to the global creative industries. While there are other opportunities to study Comparative Literature at the graduate level in Ontario, our diploma is distinctive in that it supplements a more general interdisciplinary degree with a specialized graduate diploma in the discipline."

The new graduate diploma in World Literature is equally compelling. "World Literature is an exciting, emerging field of literary studies in this era of globalization, and York is the first in Canada to offer a Graduate Diploma in World Literature, further confirming York's leadership in innovative, interdisciplinary research and teaching. Located in a city where half the population was born outside of Canada, York has students from around the world and is committed to internationalization. A graduate diploma in World Literature is a perfect fit," shares English Graduate Program Director, Marie-Christine Leps.

"York was invited to present its new Graduate Diploma in World Literature at the 2014 Institute in Hong Kong (sponsored by Harvard University) to an audience of world leaders in the field from over two dozen countries: an excellent way to launch this promising new diploma!"

All five new programs signal the Faculty's continued commitment to truly multi-dimensional and interdisciplinary education.

# WIRED FOR LEARNING

## LEARNING OPTIONS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

LA&PS is making world-class education more accessible than ever before. This year the Faculty offered 50 per cent more online classes and a wide variety of blended courses, providing convenient and technology-enhanced learning opportunities to suit students' different learning styles, backgrounds and personal needs.

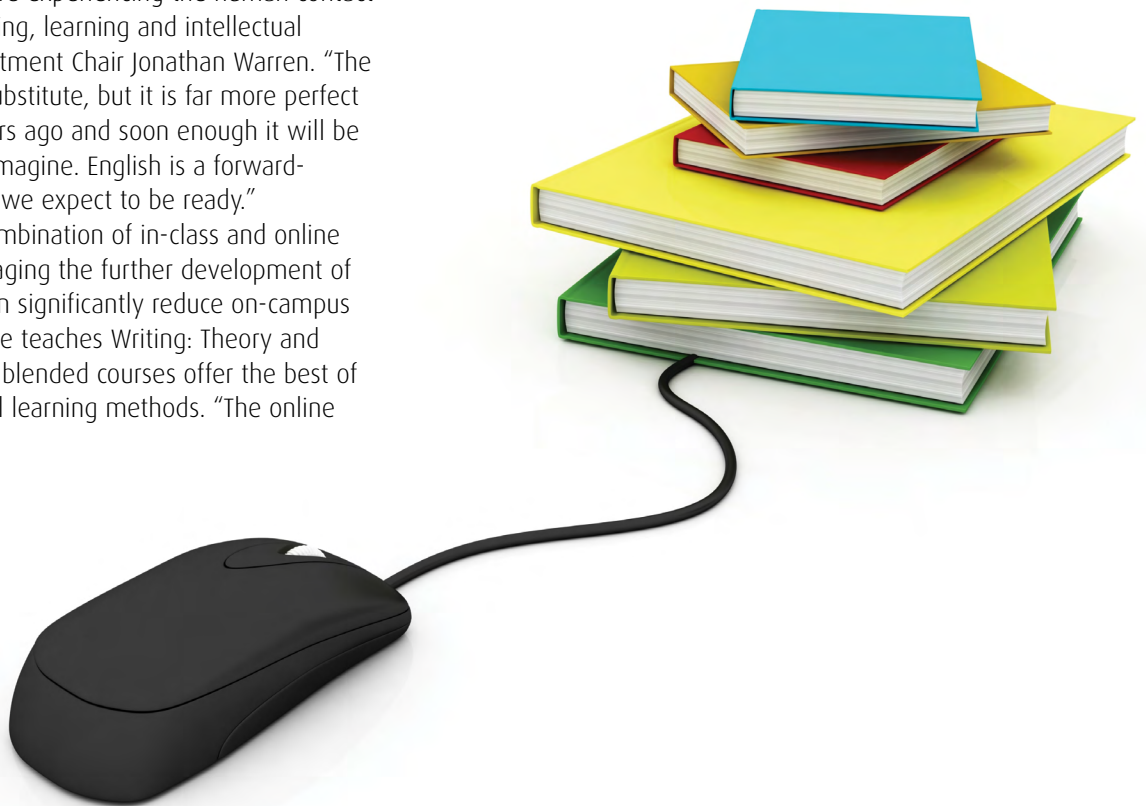
The English Department led the Faculty for online course enrollment in Summer 2014 with its rich collection of courses ranging from Comics and Cartoons to Introduction to British Literature.

"It used to be the case that face-to-face was exclusively suited to making us feel like we're experiencing the human contact that is invaluable to teaching, learning and intellectual discovery," explains Department Chair Jonathan Warren. "The Internet is not a perfect substitute, but it is far more perfect than it was just a few years ago and soon enough it will be better than we can now imagine. English is a forward-thinking department, and we expect to be ready."

For those who prefer a combination of in-class and online learning, LA&PS is encouraging the further development of blended courses which can significantly reduce on-campus visits. Professor Kerry Doyle teaches Writing: Theory and Practice and believes that blended courses offer the best of both online and traditional learning methods. "The online

lectures allow students the flexibility necessary to pursue their academic goals and also offer a dynamic means of conveying course content, while the face-to-face tutorial gives students a space where they can actively discuss and practice different writing methods and learn how to work collaboratively — skills that will help them succeed in their studies and their careers."

York has always been committed to providing learning opportunities to all students and these days the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies is delivering — online, in class and across disciplines.







Law and Society students at Making Connections day

## For many new students, enrolling in courses and connecting with the LA&PS community before ever landing on campus isn't just a good idea – it's plain smart.

This year, LA&PS students entering eligible programs directly from high school were among the first to experience the University's innovative new YU Start program, an online initiative designed to help first-year students transition successfully to postsecondary life. The program provided them with important resources for researching their programs, enrolling in courses and using online student-service tools — all from the comfort of their own homes and without the stress of September start-up activities.

One of the most exciting aspects of YU Start is its thriving online community. Over the summer, students joined peer-to-peer discussion groups, participated in campus life activities, asked questions, made new friends and learned about their programs. The robust support network and ample opportunities to share information helped participants to take ownership of their education and get the most out of their university experience.

YU Start activities culminated with the on-campus Making Connections event on September 2nd. This event allowed new students to connect with senior students and professors

in their programs along with representatives from their home college, and provided them with an opportunity to explore the University campus.

The YU Start program is just one aspect of York's deep commitment to student development and success. At LA&PS, that commitment also includes appointing College Academic Life Coordinators in the four colleges affiliated with most LA&PS programs: Founders, McLaughlin, Vanier and New College. A new initiative as of Fall 2014, the coordinators are full-time faculty members who will work collaboratively with the College Masters and LA&PS student-success team to develop programming that supports student transition and development.

"This is an important moment for LA&PS. We now have in place key individuals working collaboratively toward a vision of engagement, successful transition and leadership development of our students," says Diane Woody, Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning at LA&PS. "We have structures in the Colleges to bring together students, instructors and staff in ways that reflect the very best of what university education offers."





**“I started using a virtual world to simulate different disaster scenarios such as tornados, school shootings and terrorist attacks, where students could play different roles in a simulated disaster environment.”**

Ali Asgary  
Associate Professor,  
School of Administrative Studies

# LA&PS RESEARCHER REVOLUTIONIZES EMERGENCY PLANNING

Being at the epicenter of one of history’s most dire humanitarian crises can change you. For Ali Asgary, associate professor in the School of Administrative Studies, volunteering on the front lines of the catastrophic 1990 earthquake in Manjil & Roudbar, Iran, that killed 40,000 people and left 500,000 more homeless, was a pivotal moment. Asgary says, “I was deployed as a Red Crescent volunteer to the heart of the impacted area. Observing closely the extensive loss of life, injuries and damages, I decided to study disasters and disaster risk mitigation.”

Twenty-four years later, Asgary teaches in Canada’s leading disaster and emergency management (DEM) program and is an international leader in DEM modelling and simulation research. These days he and his students are developing sophisticated computer simulations to explore how

different factors impact disasters and what it all means for organizations engaged in emergency planning.

“To provide students with a better understanding of how large emergencies unfold and are managed,” says Asgary, “I started using a virtual world to simulate different disaster scenarios such as tornados, school shootings and terrorist attacks, where students could play different roles in a simulated disaster environment.”

Within a year of its first exercise on Second Life, an online virtual world, the class had created its own Virtual Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) and run a virtual pandemic exercise with the International Association of Emergency Managers. Participants logged in from the United States, Canada, Europe and South America, sharing in both the experience of the simulation and the discussion around best practices for emergency planning and response.



Asgary's research now focuses on agent-based simulations, programs that zero in on the behaviours of individuals rather than simulating generalized group actions, for more effective disaster and emergency planning. Working with partners at the University of Geneva, he and his colleagues recently completed an evacuation simulation for Vulcano Island, which can be used by Civil Protection Italy for emergency planning and response purposes. Asgary is also working on a simulation tool to predict and manage responses to train derailments like the one that occurred in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, in 2013. And as part of York's Disaster and Emergency Management program, Asgary and his students are developing a variety of agent-based evacuation simulations for public facilities such as university campuses, airports and shopping malls. Their goal is to make more affordable, customizable and user-friendly disaster simulation tools for emergency planners.

This commitment to making life-saving technology accessible to end users is a hallmark of Asgary's work. He says, "Although good research projects have been done in this area, the existing simulation tools are not widely available [to] emergency managers in disaster-prone areas." As a result, Asgary regularly contributes articles to industry publications around the world and has spent the past few months sharing his work with emergency planning professionals at conferences in Davos (Switzerland), San Francisco and Toronto. Looking ahead at the next generation of emergency planners, Asgary is working to integrate virtual world simulations in his courses over the next year.

## VIDEO SERIES MARKS WWI ANNIVERSARY

There are few historic events that have had the profound impact of the First World War. To mark its centennial, the Department of History summoned its collective expertise to create a comprehensive six-part video series titled "The War to End All Wars". This documentary combines interviews with leading York scholars, historical news footage and period photos to provide a multi-faceted exploration of the Great War.

From the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austria-Hungary Empire that sparked one of the deadliest combats in human history, to our nation's shared grief and its unifying effect on Canadians, the documentary examines important aspects of the war, the role Canada played in it and its lasting impact on this country.

This project brings together some of Canada's top historians and shares their knowledge of the war with audiences around the world. Since April 2014 audiences have accessed the documentary series in its entirety on the LA&PS website ([yorku.ca/laps/ww1/](http://yorku.ca/laps/ww1/)).





# EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATORS

The Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies is a community of scholars and home to some of the most extraordinary teachers in the world. This year we celebrate our very best teachers with the Dean's Awards for Excellence in Teaching. Our four winners are professors and a teaching assistant who exemplify exceptional teaching and have records of outstanding leadership on teaching and learning within the Faculty.

**"I assume students want to learn. I try to get everyone to feel engaged, to connect with them on an individual level."**

Michael A. Gilbert  
Professor,  
Department of Philosophy





## PHILOSOPHY PROFESSOR HONOURED WITH DEAN'S AWARD

Michael A. Gilbert recalls being handed a piece of chalk at his first class as a graduate student at the University of Waterloo almost 50 years ago. "There were about 30 students, which these days is tiny, but [the class] began to form my teaching experience and my teaching approach." The winner of the Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching — Full-Time Faculty says, "It was interesting because half of them were arts students with no training in logic and half were computer students with no philosophy, so I developed a curriculum that would accommodate all of them." This is classic Michael Gilbert—engaged, innovative and committed to deep and sustained student learning. It's exactly why the philosophy professor is both beloved and admired by students and colleagues alike.

In the classroom he moves up and down the aisles, speaking directly to students and zeroing in on those whose expressions suggest anything but absolute clarity. Gilbert says, "I assume students want to learn. I try to get everyone to feel engaged, to connect with them on an individual level. A very basic element in my pedagogical approach is that the material itself should speak to our lives. Even when I was teaching Introduction to Formal Logic I tried to bring it home for the students, to relate the material to what's going on in the kitchen, boardroom and lunch room."

Over the years, Gilbert's developed a number of creative teaching strategies to connect with students and help them share their knowledge with each other. Among them is his "Preppie System" wherein students take turns acquiring expert knowledge of each week's reading materials and then sharing that knowledge with the rest of the class. This peer-to-peer learning helps foster a community atmosphere within the classroom and gives individual students the opportunity to explore small sections of the curriculum in depth. His "Pre-Quiz" technique has students completing short quizzes online prior to classes, helping them stay on top of their program material. And the seasoned professor is also fond of just plain asking students whether they understand and what they need.

"The way I grow as a teacher is through my research and my writing," says Gilbert. "I believe there's a very important connection between research and teaching; every time I go to a major conference I come back with new info and new ideas that often impact my teaching."

Gilbert's passion is argumentation theory, exploring how people argue in real situations and dialectically what constitutes an argument and how we define legitimate argument. He's lectured extensively in the U.S. and Mexico, teaching master classes to graduate students and faculty members, and contributing to a thriving argumentation theory program at the University of Guadalajara. His most-recent book, *Arguing with People* (Broadview Press), was published in May 2014.

Michael Gilbert is also renowned for his research in sex and gender theory, specializing in transgender theory. He was a columnist for *Transgender Tapestry*, a trans-focused publication by the International Foundation for Gender Education and lectures across Canada and the U.S. on gender issues.



**REHANNA SIEW-SARJU,**  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
**WINNER: PRESIDENT'S**  
**UNIVERSITY-WIDE TEACHING AWARD**

Rehanna Siew-Sarju and fellow LA&PS teaching assistant, Yael Machtinger, were recently honoured with the President's University-Wide Teaching Award for excellence in teaching. They were selected by the Senate Awards Committee and received recognition at York University's 2014 Spring Convocation ceremonies.

"I believe a great educator must be committed, passionate and willing to adapt to new and different classroom dynamics," says Siew-Sarju. "I believe higher education must prepare students for the realities of our society. It must equip students for the world of work but more importantly provide them with the skills and knowledge to be engaged citizens who are committed to their communities."

Siew-Sarju is a doctoral candidate who, for the past two years, has helped second- and third-year Sociology students acquire critical and analytical skills to better understand social issues. She's also served as a Teaching Commons tutor, contributing to the development and delivery of programs in support of other TAs.



Teaching award winners Elizabeth Brulé, Yael Machtinger, Michael A. Gilbert and Lisa Violo

# PARTICIPATORY EDUCATION KEY TO PROFESSOR'S SUCCESS

Equity Studies Professor Elizabeth Brulé's students say she changes lives. The co-winner of this year's Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching — Contract Faculty, covers critical issues from democracy and freedom of expression to community justice and women in Canada in her social justice courses. Brulé says, "I encourage students to explore and challenge some of their taken-for-granted assumptions about the world, and try to do so in a way that's both playful and reflexive."

In her Democracy, the State and Freedom of Expression class, Brulé introduces in-class debates as a way to bring pivotal but often complex court cases to life. Students are asked to form groups, develop opposing arguments and present their cases to a panel of supreme court justices comprised of their peers. The court delivers decisions as reports to the class and all students are encouraged to share their learning with each other. Students in her Justice, Community and Social Action class benefit from guest speakers who are leading social action in Canada and around the world.

As Brulé says, "I like to bring people in. I also like to get students involved with the community through their assignments, researching particular organizations and interviewing people to find out first-hand how those organizations work toward their goals." She's currently

developing a program that will allow students to work with local organizations to determine and help meet their research needs. This model would allow the course assignments to serve greater community needs in addition to their initial academic purpose.

Brulé credits the late dian marino — artist, activist and professor of Environmental Studies at York — with influencing her participatory education technique. When asked about her inspiration in the classroom, she says, "The students inspire me. When you challenge them to think outside the box they really love it; when you respect them and their learning processes, they rise to the occasion. I try to pay attention to my students' needs and evolve my teaching practice to help them relate complex ideas to their everyday lives."

Elizabeth Brulé also plays a leadership role within her department and in the broader field of social justice and education, sharing her expertise with colleagues through workshops, meetings, speaking engagements and conferences. Her generosity of spirit and commitment to deep engagement in the classroom and outside of it make her a truly outstanding teacher and a vital member of the academic community.



## DEAN'S AWARD WINNER INSPIRES LIFE-SAVING LEARNING

For Lisa Violo, co-winner of the Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching – Contract Faculty, lectures should be two-way discussions that facilitate shared learning. She says of her classes in both the School of Administrative Studies and the School of Human Resource Management, "You have to come prepared to participate." That's exactly what students in her Digital Marketing, Executive Coaching, Training and Development, and Leadership courses have done for seven years. They go to class knowing it's going to be an experience that stays with them long after graduation.

From lively classroom discussions to group presentations with hands-on digital components and community-based assignments, Violo's focus is on experiential learning with practical benefits. She says, "My work [as a Learning Consultant] is a crucial factor in my success as a teacher. I bring in my own examples, case studies, training videos and guest speakers all the time to make sure students are getting a broad range of knowledge."

Course assignments are often designed to leave local partners with actionable marketing plans and graduating students with job opportunities. In her Coaching course, Violo ensures students experience the on-the-ground challenges of the field by pairing them with each other for peer coaching. Students are expected to present in all of her courses, thus learning "hands-on" how to engage with an audience.

Violo is inspired by the vast spectrum of experiences students bring to her classrooms and their enthusiasm for learning. One particularly enthusiastic former student is Michael Andrade, who used what he learned about social networking in Violo's Digital Marketing class to launch a successful organ donor search for his critically ill mother. Andrade later wrote, "Throughout [the] ordeal, I kept thinking about that e-marketing class. Thank you for teaching that course and everything you taught me in it. What you learn in E-marketing doesn't only have to be applied to marketing a business or marketing yourself, but you can also market a cause. Which is what I ended up doing and very, very fortunately, it paid off."

With no shortage of praise for her work in the classroom and a long list of impressive achievements in her consulting practice, Violo remains committed to lifelong learning and personal growth. She continues to study, pursuing other degrees and professional credentials. Students will sometimes spot her taking in lectures or sharing ideas with colleagues across the University. But more than anything, Violo learns from her students, saying "I learn as much from them as they do from me."

## SOCIAL SCIENCE TA ADDS DEAN'S AWARD TO HER ACCOLADES

"It's very overwhelming to win. It's a humbling experience," says Law and Society teaching assistant, Yael Machtinger on receiving both a President's University-Wide Teaching Award and a Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching—in the Teaching Assistant category.

As a fifth-year doctoral candidate in Socio-Legal Studies, Machtinger has been teaching first- and second-year classes in Law and Society and Introduction to Socio-Legal Studies since 2008. Her colleagues praise her work in the classroom as an exemplary guide to effective teaching and her students say their experiences with her make them more confident students.

Machtinger says, "I don't look at students as numbers. I make it a point to get to know them as much as I possibly can. People have different learning challenges, different privileges. We have to account for that as teachers. Not everyone has a printer, internet or can afford a textbook. But we can all contribute to a safe, respectful learning environment."

Understanding students' individual circumstances and creating a safe and inclusive space for them to participate in sometimes-contentious discussions is one of Machtinger's priorities in the classroom. Another is helping them stay on top of their courses. Among the tools she's developed to do this is *Read, Round and Review*, a one-page summary of each week's readings that students complete and discuss together in class. These summaries help students absorb the week's material, give them an opportunity to connect detailed readings with broader course themes and help Machtinger identify any issues students may have with the course content. During mid-terms these documents also serve as invaluable study tools.

Machtinger's commitment to knowledge sharing extends beyond the classroom. Her collaboration with and leadership among colleagues in the Department of Social Science is, like her teaching, outstanding. Over the years she's developed and then shared countless worksheets, marking rubrics and other resources with fellow TAs and all who ask for them. More importantly, she's an enthusiastic partner in educating first- and second-year students whose needs can be both complex and varied.

Machtinger says, "My goal is to help students actualize their potential and become who they want to be. Seeing them grow toward this makes me want to be a better teacher."

# BUILDING COMMUNITY

## DOCTORAL CANDIDATE WINS URBAN HERO AWARD

Sociology doctoral candidate Sam Teclé was “blessed, honoured and humbled” to receive the *North York Mirror’s* Urban Hero Award for his notable contribution to education and his work with youth in the Jane and Finch community.

The Sudanese-born immigrant of Eritrean descent has been a youth facilitator, focusing on educational attainment, sex education, as well as personal and career development with many community organizations across the Greater Toronto Area. Last summer he taught grade nine students attending the Success Beyond Limits program, a joint initiative of York University and the Jays Care Foundation, in partnership with the Toronto District School Board.

Teclé is a teacher who understands the transformative power of education. He’s a role model who knows the importance of having someone to look up to and an activist committed to building capacity within his community.

“I am thrilled that Sam is a recipient of this respected award, which honours grassroots-level heroes for their efforts, sacrifices and contributions, having positive impact on our communities,” says Professor Carl James, director of the York Centre for Education and Community, and Teclé’s PhD supervisor and nominator for the award. “Sam is an example of the many students doing exemplary work through involvement in neighbourhood community initiatives at York University.”



Talisha Ramsaroor receiving award from The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

## MAKING NOISE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

If you take what you know about mentorship programs and turn it upside down you’ll have York’s New Opportunities for Innovative Student Engagement (NOISE) for Social Change project. Led by Professor Uzo Anucha in the School of Social Work, this innovative project features a dynamic experiential education initiative that’s redefining mentorship for more than 100 participants.

NOISE brings together youth from two local high schools, York undergraduate social work students and graduate assistants to design and implement social action projects. Each participant contributes important skills and experiences and benefits from the relationships within his or her group. This model upends the traditional approach to mentorship wherein youth are positioned as recipients and not active agents in their own learning.

NOISE prioritizes engagement, multi-directional learning and accountability among all participants. More than anything, it’s about shared learning and a collective dedication to social action.

“When you offer engaged learning opportunities for youth that provide them with learning opportunities beyond classroom walls they do better in school,” says Anucha.

Throughout the course of the project, students gain exposure to the postsecondary environment and take an active role in their community. Sociology student Talisha Ramsaroor, who graduated in June, received the 2014 Lincoln M. Alexander award for her community-building work through NOISE.



# TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH DANCE

Mike Prosserman was transformed by breakdancing at a young age. Expressing himself through music and dance gave him a positive outlet for his anger and frustration during a difficult time in his childhood. He left it all on the dance floor!

Realizing the powerful effect dancing had on him, Prosserman was inspired to help other young people find a positive and supportive space in which to creatively express themselves and launched UNITY in 2005 as a small student club while studying Administrative Studies at York. Today, UNITY is a Canada-wide arts-based alternative education organization with programs in Halifax, Calgary, Fort McMurray, Nunavut and the GTA, with plans to expand to Montreal and Vancouver.

Since 2007, UNITY has empowered more than 100,000 youth aged 10 to 18 to use artistic self-expression to help make positive life choices and uses breakdancing, spoken word poetry, beatboxing and performance art to bring kids together. Programs include after school and artist training programs, university chapters and the annual UNITY Festival, a showcase of the most talented and dedicated youth performers from across Canada.

"UNITY provides an outlet for young people to express their anger and focus on their future. By using hip hop we engage youth who are disengaged in various aspects of their life and help them develop the skills to become passionate and contributing citizens."

This past May, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, the Governor General of Canada, visited the UNITY Halifax hub where he took in performances from local youth and spoke with them about how hip hop and breakdancing has positively influenced their lives.

Though Prosserman graduated from York in 2008, his presence can still be felt on campus. UNITY @ York is still an active student group and runs several events and sessions throughout the school year.





## NEW COLLECTION EXAMINES HISTORY OF TORONTO GREEK COMMUNITY



Greek Portuguese soccer match in Toronto. 1967. Toronto Telegram fonds ASC12880

Professor Sakis Gekas, Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History, and Christopher Grafos, PhD candidate in History, are stewards of a vital new resource for Greek Canadians and historians everywhere. The Greek Canadian History Project brings together hundreds of photos, videos, diaries, books and other materials donated from the collections of private individuals and organizations across the country to reflect the experiences of Canada's Greek immigrants and their descendants.

The collection launched with "Memory and Migration: A History of Greeks in Toronto", a public exhibition at Toronto City Hall in May 2014 and aims to become an essential resource

for research on Greek Canadians. It will be housed in the Clara Thomas Archives & Special Collections at the York University Libraries.

"This project provides a research platform for anyone interested in the Greek immigrant narrative in Canada," says Grafos. "The Greek Canadian History Project is a foundation upon which books, articles or other popular forms of knowledge construction can be based."

Project organizers plan to provide online access to a portion of the collection for use by researchers, scholars, teachers, students and those in the community who are interested in learning more about the Greek experience in Canada.

## LA&PS STUDENTS LIVE THEIR EDUCATION WITH FRANCOPHONE SHELTER

The best education is a lived one. These days LA&PS students are benefiting from experiential education as part of their programs, deepening their knowledge through civic engagement, advocacy and policy development while also contributing to local organizations. There's no more compelling example of this than the collaboration between students in the Department of French Studies' Techniques of Communication course and la Maison, central and southern Ontario's only francophone shelter for women and children survivors of domestic abuse.

The shelter's mandate is broad and its resources limited: In addition to emergency accommodation and a wide range of support services, including a telephone crisis line, counselling, legal assistance, outreach services and referrals, la Maison also offers workshops to help women guide their families out of crisis. This is where four LA&PS students found their opportunity to make a lasting impact during the 2013-14 academic year. Their immersion in French would prove both instructive and unforgettable.

Working with the staff and clients of la Maison, the students developed and presented a number of workshops aimed at empowering abused and homeless women and children. Tailored to the participants' needs and refined with their feedback, two of these initiatives were ultimately implemented in the shelter.

Director of the Techniques of Communication course, Christiane Dumont, says, "Experiential education has transformed my students. Once they understood the idea and bought into it, they blossomed. It is so satisfying — and touching at times — to witness such empowerment."

This experience has created a bond that helped educate and transform both the students and the shelter's clients. While the students improved their French proficiency and gained a deeper understanding of theories explored in their course, the women at la Maison gained valuable insights that will help them transition into new lives.





## BRYDEN AWARDS HONOUR EXTRAORDINARY ALUMNI

The 2013 Bryden Awards honoured five truly extraordinary graduates, including two LA&PS alumni whose professional achievements and personal contributions to their communities serve as inspirations to others. Excellence, social responsibility, inclusiveness, respect and openness — these outstanding graduates not only embody York's values, they lead change with them.

In 2001 Carolyn Acker (BAS '87) founded Pathways to Education Canada, an organization dedicated to helping youth in low-income communities complete high school and transition into postsecondary education. It now serves more than 5,000 students and alumni across Canada, successfully decreasing drop-out rates in the 13 communities in which it operates. "Leadership is both an art and a science," said Acker. "York's unique sense of responsibility inspires students to make positive change." For her innovative, unconventional and daring leadership, and for the tangible change she is creating for young people, Acker was presented with the Redefine the Possible Award.

Winner of the Outstanding Contribution award, Guy Burry (BA '82) is York's ultimate ambassador, giving more than 30 years

to the University as a tireless volunteer, passionate fundraiser and philanthropist. He's a member of the Board of Governors and the driving force behind the Chair's Cup golf tournament, which has raised more than \$5 million for graduate scholarships. Burry and his family have also made generous contributions to York.

Other 2013 Bryden Award winners include Janice Fukakusa, CAO/CEO of Royal Bank of Canada (MBA '79); Dave Smith, (Ret.) Director of Management Information, York University (BSc '70, MBA '72); and Karen Foss, Canadian Foreign Service Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade (BA '01).

The 2013 celebration, which included a dinner and awards presentation ceremony, was held on Thursday, Nov. 21 at the Toronto Reference Library's Bram & Bluma Appel Salon and saw more than 250 guests. The evening was sponsored by TD Insurance Meloche Monnex, MBNA and Manulife Financial, and was hosted by York grad and co-host of CBC Radio's "Metro Morning" Jill Dempsey (BA '04).

# CLASS ACTS



Dean's Circle members meet with Dean Singer during coffee hour

## DEAN'S CIRCLE OFFERS UNIQUE EXPERIENCES TO TOP STUDENTS

Every Fall, Dean Martin Singer welcomes a select group of students to his Dean's Circle of Student Scholars — an elite program for the highest-achieving LA&PS students — offering them an array of opportunities to help them become more engaged in the York community.

"New students can feel lost here, however they can also have experiences that are not available at smaller schools," says Singer. "We personalize the university experience, especially for our best-performing students by giving them opportunities such as the Dean's Circle of Student Scholars."

With approximately 500 members, the Dean's Circle was launched in 2010 to recognize and celebrate students who demonstrate exceptional commitment and dedication to their studies. High school students accepted into the Faculty with an average of 90 per cent or higher are members, while current students who have an overall GPA of 8.0 and are enrolled in 12 credits continue as members.

Events include a welcome lunch, a speaker series and networking opportunities. Dean Singer also holds monthly

coffee hours with Dean's Circle members for discussion and networking.

"Only half of higher education occurs in the classroom. The other half occurs in events like those offered through the Dean's Circle, student activities and through community service," says Singer.

Past events include LA&PS graduate and Yale University alumnus Jamil Jivani who spoke about the importance of living outside of your comfort zone and the skills and strategies necessary to be successful after graduation. A separate event welcomed York alumna and Creative Writing Professor Priscila Uppal to discuss her artistic process, the challenges of a writer and her book *Projection*, which was short-listed for the 2013 Governor General's Award and the Hilary Weston Prize.



# LA&PS ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Each year, the LA&PS Celebration of Student Academic Excellence brings together students, faculty and staff to honour some of our brightest students with academic awards.

The foremost award at this celebration is the Dean's Award for Academic Excellence, which is presented to the student in each year of study with the highest sessional grade-point average based on a course load of at least 30 credits.

The Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies Essay Prize is also a considerable achievement as it is awarded to the student in each year of study who wrote what is considered to be the best essay in an LA&PS course.


Congratulations to all of the 2013 winners!

## DEAN'S AWARD FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- **First Year:** Shuman Zhang, *Specialized Honours, Administrative Studies, Finance*
- **Second Year:** Nick Zabara, *Professional Writing & Psychology*
- **Third Year:** Joseph Palmieri, *Law and Society*
- **Fourth Year:** Sean Grouhi, *Specialized Honours, Financial Business Economics, and Fransiscus Winson, Specialized Honours, Administrative Studies, Accounting*

## THE FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES ESSAY PRIZE

- **1000 Level:** Jessica Catalli, *Writing/Humanities 1700*
- **2000 Level:** Shimshon Dukesz, *History 2600*
- **3000 Level:** David Artemiw, *History 3395*
- **4000 Level:** Elanna Segal, *History 4100*
- **4000 Honours Thesis:** Emily Chicorli, *History 4000*



Aidan Moir receiving medal from York University Chancellor Greg Sorbara

## GRADUATE STUDENT WINS GOVERNOR GENERAL'S GOLD ACADEMIC MEDAL

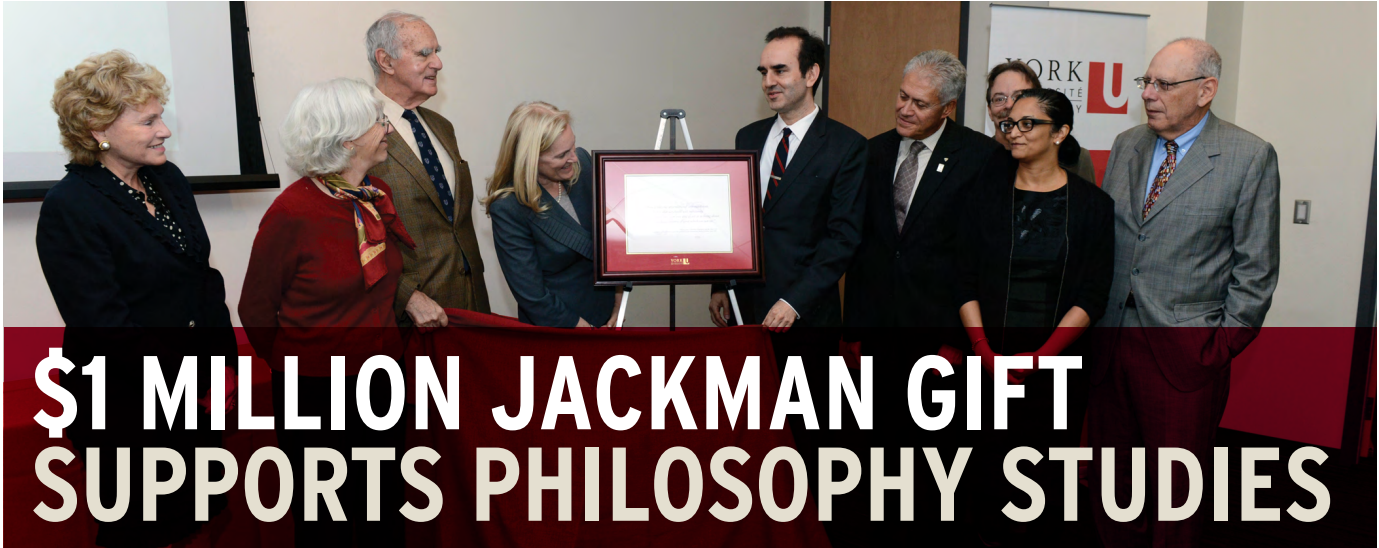
Recent MA graduate in Communication and Culture, Aidan Moir, was awarded the prestigious Governor General's Gold Academic Medal as the graduate student with the highest academic standing. She received the medal at her convocation ceremony on June 17.

"I really was overwhelmed with so many emotions, and it will always be a very special moment," she says. "Having completed my previous degrees at York, this honour means even more to me since the faculty, opportunities and resources provided by York helped inspire — and continues to do so — my growth and development as a student."

Lord Dufferin, Canada's third Governor General after Confederation, created the Academic Medals in 1873 to encourage academic excellence, and over time they have become the most prestigious award that students in Canadian schools can receive.

Moir is currently pursuing a PhD in Communication and Culture at York University.

# A PHILANTHROPIC PHILOSOPHY



Members of the York community present a commemorative gift of thanks to the Jackman family

“Our family has enjoyed a long and sustained relationship with York University for decades,” said Professor Henry Jackman of the Department of Philosophy, at a reception honouring his family’s latest gift to York. “Hal Jackman, my father, served a lengthy tenure on York’s Board of Governors, while several of my relatives have also graduated from the University. We felt it was important to give something back to a school that had given us so much.”

On Sept. 30, 2013 President and Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri and Vice-President Advancement Jeff O’Hagan announced the new \$1 million gift from the Jackman family in support of the University’s Department of Philosophy.

Two-thirds of the gift will be used to establish the Philosophy Graduate Awards Endowment, and will be matched two-to-one by the Graduate Studies Awards Program, to create a \$2-million endowment. The remaining one-third will establish the Philosophy Department Conference Fund, which will be used to host academic conferences, workshops, speakers or other events that contribute to the academic life of the philosophy department.

“With this latest gift, the Jackman family has positioned themselves as champions of education at York,” said Shoukri at the event. “Not only will this generous gift allow us to improve academic and research opportunities for graduate students in our Department of Philosophy, but our increased conference resources will enhance the department’s profile and thought leadership.”

“York’s Department of Philosophy is already among the top rated in the world and, with the help of the Jackman family’s tremendous gift, it will be able to take a significant leap forward,” said Martin Singer, dean of the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies.

The Jackman family has been a valued supporter of York University for many years, contributing significantly to the University’s vision for the future. For more than two decades, Hal Jackman, who served as the 25th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario from 1991 to 1997, his wife Maruja and the Jackman Foundation have generously invested in York University’s students and programs.

Their gifts include the Newton-Rowell Entrance Scholarship at Osgoode Hall Law School, as well as the Newton W. Rowell Graduate Scholarship, also at Osgoode Hall. This is in addition to their many contributions to the Art Gallery of York University and their support of numerous other scholarships and causes that help York students to grow, prosper and succeed.



## **FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES LEADERSHIP**

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