cornerstone

CELEBRATING PHILANTHROPY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

AUTUMN 2014

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On the cover:
Bunny and John Ferguson relax at their cottage in Jasper National Park, August 2014.
Photo by John Ulan

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CELEBRATING PHILANTHROPY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Jeeshan Chowdhury, a U of A alumnus and former Rhodes Scholar, moved to the San Francisco Bay Area to work with colleagues on a new smartphone app designed to reduce the paperwork of clinical care and empower doctors to focus on healing (page 30).
Photo by Alison Yin

LEADERSHIP BY THE NUMBERS

Philanthropy enables the University of Alberta to be a leader through teaching, learning, research, innovation and discovery. Here are a few examples.

41

3M National Teaching Fellowships recognizing excellence in undergraduate teaching — the most among Canadian universities

618

miles per gallon: the equivalent fuel mileage of the hydrogen-powered EcoCar, the engineering student team's winning entry in the Shell Eco-Marathon Americas competition

3

Canada Excellence Research Chairs — more than any other university — whose research explores virology, molecular engineering and diamonds

41,808

entries in the Human Metabolome Database, a groundbreaking project that catalogues all chemicals produced in the human body, helping researchers find patterns that correspond to various illnesses and conditions

60

percentage of Alberta K-12 teachers who graduated from the University of Alberta

84

the U of A's rank in the QS World University Rankings — a jump of 12 spots from 2013

22

rank of the Department of English and Film Studies in the QS World University Rankings of English language and literature departments

2,208

All-Canadian Athletes, those exceptional varsity student-athletes who achieve an academic standing of 80 per cent or better — the most among Canadian universities

2006

year the Faculty of Native Studies was established — the first and only one of its kind in North America

To build something with the University of Alberta, visit giving.ualberta.ca or call 1-888-799-9899.

Vision and Daring

I had the privilege of being introduced to Her Honour Lois Hole not long before her death, 10 years ago this January. One of Alberta's most beloved public servants, she charged me, with passionate force, with being a champion for education. "This is a time of great opportunity for Alberta. We must not miss it," she told me. It was an extraordinary moment and one that has stayed with me.

There is a certain daring required of leaders. You must leap into challenges with total commitment, to take on risk, to dare greatly … or miss out. Together with our philanthropic community, the University of Alberta has committed to the daring goal of building a great global university for the public good.

We push students beyond the boundaries of the classroom with hands-on programs such as the Faculty of Science geology field school (page 10). Our faculty and researchers ask questions, reject assumptions and challenge the status quo ("Living With Hope," page 6, and "Voice of Reason," page 34).

We are building on our successful track record of shaping citizen leaders through the newly formed Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative, named in honour of an alumnus who embodied boldness and vision. John and Bunny Ferguson, whom you will come to know better on page 18, have echoed those leadership qualities in mobilizing the support of the philanthropic community to make the college a reality.

Deborah Yedlin is no stranger to striding fearlessly through life, and after you meet her mother on page 24, you will understand the inspiration behind her drive.

Bolstered by our passionate campus and philanthropic communities, the U of A has become a leading institution.

We dare greatly and, together, we are changing the world.

Indira V. Samarasekera, O.C., President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Alberta

The work of building a great and enduring world-class institution can only be done with the encouragement of our university community. To learn more about supporting excellence in teaching and research at the University of Alberta, *turn to page 38.*

Living With Hope

STORY BY CARISSA HALTON | PHOTOS BY JOHN ULAN

By exploring the power of hope, researcher Wendy Duggleby is helping terminally ill patients, caregivers and health-care providers find dignity, peace and joy

Recorder and notebook in hand, then-PhD student Wendy Duggleby entered the cancer patient's room to conduct an interview for her study on pain management. One look told her the patient was too ill to talk at length, so she assured him they could postpone their conversation until that Friday. "I won't be here on Friday," the patient responded, predicting with certainty the end of his life. He told Duggleby that his pain was minimal. "Do you know why?" he asked. She turned on her recorder, waiting for his answer. "It's because I have hope."

Inspired by this moment, Duggleby dedicated the next 15 years to researching the impact of hope. Her work accelerated significantly in 2010 when she was the first person to be offered the University of Alberta's Nursing Research Chair in Aging and Quality of Life. In total, she has completed 25 studies, with participants including dementia and cancer patients, family members, caregivers, palliative-care nurses and rural patients. Results from these studies all point to the fact that hope plays a powerful role in helping people live their final days with dignity and peace.

Duggleby's research on hope is mining the essence of humanity, helping participants determine what is important to them and what gives them purpose in life. What she's found is that it's not just patients who benefit from having hope but also caregivers and health-care providers. With hope, people who are dying often have less pain, caregivers experience more joy and health-care providers report being happier in their work. "We've seen people mend relationships as they learn to communicate what they hope for," says Duggleby, who earned her master's degree in nursing at the U of A. "We've helped people communicate with their doctors and nurses, helped them make decisions for themselves."

Anke Eastwood (pictured with her mother), a caregiver whose mother lives with Alzheimer's, participated in Duggleby's most recent study after hearing about it from a friend. Eastwood's 80-year-old mother had repeated herself for years

before the family realized something was amiss. Last fall, Eastwood moved her mom to a long-term care facility 30 minutes from Eastwood's Edmonton home.

Just as Eastwood joined the Living with Hope study, her dad was diagnosed with cancer and given only a few months to live. Through the duration of the study, Eastwood spent much of her day driving between each parent's care facility. She felt guilt that she could not be with each of them more, that she spent more time with her dying dad than with her mom, that her two teenage daughters and husband missed her. That kind of guilt, Duggleby says, is a huge factor in limiting people's hope and diminishing their quality of life.

Duggleby's study asked Eastwood to do two exercises. First, she watched a short film called *Connecting with Hope* in which people shared how they'd found, maintained and chosen hope despite their discouraging circumstances. "I felt like I was not alone in the boat," Eastwood says.

Next, she wrote in a journal every day for four weeks, focusing on where she found hope that day and what she hoped for the next day. "When you're writing it out, you realize that you're doing the best you can under the circumstances," says Eastwood. "Writing every day helped me appreciate the smaller things so I didn't have to hope for the bigger things."

And her hope begat small successes. "For my dad, I hoped he'd be comfortable. When I realized that he couldn't drink Ensure without getting sick, I began mixing it with milk. He was able to eat in comfort, and I felt good that I could do something."

Duggleby's translational work is informing nursing research, practice and policy. It has led to the inclusion of Living with Hope programs in health-care facilities and informed the education of health-care providers. Duggleby's research teams have produced four international-award-winning Living with Hope documentaries for patients and caregivers. An online toolkit developed through her work has made the program more accessible to the public (*changestoolkit.ca*). As a result, the terminally ill, seniors and their families have better access to support.

"My intent has always been that I do something that makes a difference," says Duggleby. Be it in the taste of a favourite food, the scent of a lily, the kiss of a child, "hope is the essence of life."

The Nursing Research Chair in Aging and Quality of Life was created through the generosity of more than 300 individual donors, including major contributions from Elly de Jongh, Allan Rowswell, the Edmonton Community Foundation and estate gifts from Olga Pollock and Esther Barnett. For more information on how to support Wendy Duggleby's work, turn to page 38.

Solid Foundations

STORY BY ROBYN BRAUN | PHOTOS BY JOHN ULAN

Geology field school offers students more than a chance to map virgin geological territory — it ignites a curiosity to explore more of Earth's natural landscape

One day this past summer, in the final days of Stéphane Poitras's last field school to complete his geology degree, he was walking alone along the shore of isolated Bell Lake in the Northwest Territories.

That's when he saw the rock. He'd never seen anything like it. It was a chance discovery that would shape the focus of his studies.

Field school had been more than a thrilling flight to the North and zipping around the lake in boats. It had allowed Poitras a real-world opportunity to apply geological theory outside the classroom in a remote part of the Canadian Shield, working with state-of-the-art equipment to map and measure bedrock distributions, record field descriptions and collect structural data. But even though he was gaining confidence and skills by being out in the field, he was struggling to find an honours thesis topic to complete his undergraduate degree.

Poitras called down the beach to his professor, Tom Chacko. The rock Poitras found turned out to be a rare volcanic ash layer from the Archean Eon that formed nearly three billion years ago when the Earth's crust was still young. Scientists have evidence of a volcanic eruption during the period, but as yet, no one has successfully dated it. Poitras's discovery of the rock could prove to be a key contribution to the field because, unlike other volcanic rocks, the ash layer can be used to determine the age of the eruption.

The earth sciences are practical sciences and, as Poitras's experience illustrates, ideas and understanding in the earth sciences most often start on the ground. Given the Canadian economy's heavy reliance on the sustainable development of natural resources, demand is high for geologists with excellent field skills. The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta recognizes this and requires its members to have participated in a minimum of one field school experience during their undergraduate degree. The University of Alberta has been running geology field schools for 50 years, part of a larger geoscience field school program that offers a variety of practical experiences. The opportunity Poitras had to map virgin geological territory alongside university and field geologists in the Northwest Territories is the only such student experience offered in Canada.

Most courses run for 10 days in early May, allowing students to participate before starting their summer jobs. Although Poitras and his classmates were flown to the Northwest Territories for their advanced-level field school, most field schools are in Jasper or Canmore, Alta., and the Interior of British Columbia. For these trips, everyone piles onto a bus in Edmonton and travels together to the field. Professors take the opportunity to get to know the students and talk to them about working safely on the mountain and in the field. Instruction includes how to defend against bears, cougars and mountain goats. Apart from these outdoor skills, field school camps nurture a sense of camaraderie among students and professors; everyone is housed together and meals are communal, complemented by starlit campfires and marshmallow roasts.

The fieldwork challenges students to apply the concepts learned during the school year. Teams of three and four will climb more than 100 metres to study a rock outcropping. From these outcroppings, students determine the geology of the rest of the area that is under cover, hidden by trees and grass. From the assessments, students draw maps of the underlying rocky structures of the hillside areas they've explored. In addition to nurturing a deeper understanding of the natural


AVALON

wonders of our planet, field schools also often inspire a love of fieldwork.

Philanthropic support helps to directly offset the cost to students, helping them afford this experience and get a jump on the skills they need for a career in the field.

Standing on the rocky outcropping of Bell Lake's silent shore that late-August day, both student and professor were inspired by the piece of ancient volcanic ash Poitras held in his hand. This was a chunk of Earth's history. Poitras had discovered more than a thesis topic and an opportunity to make a major contribution to the field; he had embarked on his professional path. "[Field school is] not only academic-life-changing," says Poitras, "it's character-building."

To date, more than 2,500 students have gained hands-on experience with the University of Alberta's geology field schools, thanks, in part, to the generous support of donors, including major gifts from Evelyn and Darol Wigham, ConocoPhillips Canada, Shell Canada and Mike Morrow. To learn more about supporting geology field schools, turn to page 38.

Partners in the Journey

STORY BY ERICA VIEGAS | PHOTOS BY JOHN ULAN

Bunny and John Ferguson have achieved much as individuals, but it is their shared desire to make a difference that makes their partnership truly powerful

When John Ferguson fell ill with altitude sickness while climbing near the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in 2011, his wife, Bunny, had to make a choice: finish the climb to raise half a million dollars for charity or be with her husband as medical staff rushed him down the mountain.

To understand why Bunny decided, tearfully, to push on to summit the mountain, it helps to understand the nature of the relationship. During 48 years of marriage, the Fergusons have faithfully supported each other in their individual endeavours.

They met while working at Imperial Oil in Edmonton — though at first Bunny wasn't really interested in this young-looking Price Waterhouse accountant's attempts to chat with her. One day, though, John noticed a copy of *The Gateway* on Bunny's desk. "When he mentioned his time in university, I suddenly realized he must be old enough to date," says Bunny with a laugh. They were married in 1966.

In 1975, John founded Edmonton-based Princeton Developments, a major player in Canadian commercial real estate. His foresight helped him see his company through the major real estate crashes of the '80s and '90s. His thoughtfulness and ability to see the big picture are keys to his success. These leadership qualities were also assets when he served as director for Royal Bank of Canada and Fountain Tire, and as chairman of Suncor. He lent his expertise to the University of Alberta, too, serving as chair of the board of governors (1994-97) and as chancellor (2000-04).

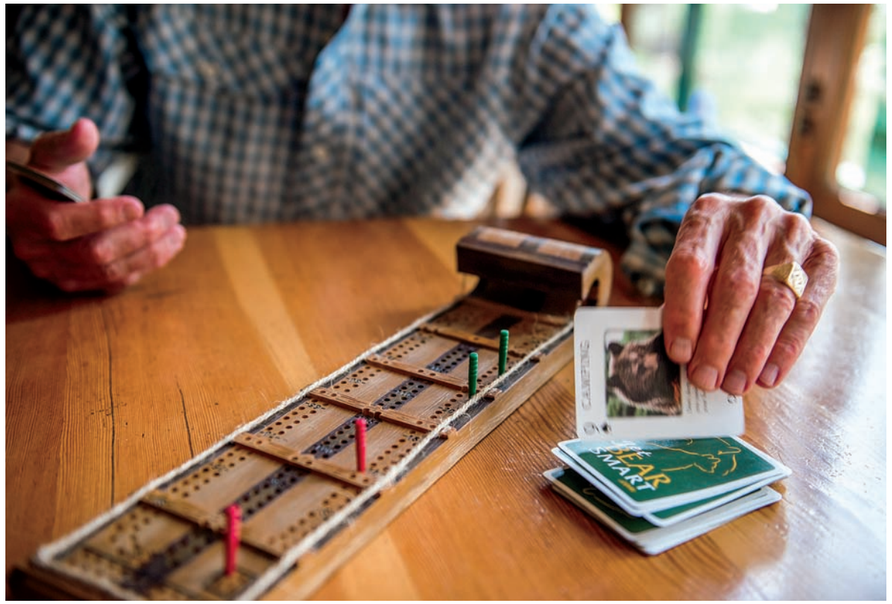
As John built his career, Bunny cared for the home, especially while their sons — Brent, Brad and Gordon — were young. "John was the businessperson and I was the family person and you have to compromise and blend those roles to make things work," says Bunny.

Bunny's growth came through public service. Teaching their children to be active community participants was paramount and so, with her boys in tow, she began volunteering. She gave her all to causes that moved her, and others were struck by her high energy, tenacious spirit and caring nature. As her sons grew, so did Bunny's career as a volunteer and community fundraiser. Soon, she was helping develop medical policy and raising millions for organizations she felt could make a difference in the community. In 2002, she became founding chair of the Alberta Business Family Institute at the Alberta School of Business (from which John graduated in 1964), where she referred to John's business experiences and lessons while mentoring emerging family enterprises.

Though they followed individual paths, the pair's shared philosophy helped ground them: projects they took on, they decided, must hold the potential to make a difference. They have been strong partners, lifting each other to achieve their goals and drawing inspiration from each other. "She puts her heart and soul into the things she does," says John. Bunny, in turn, says John is a great leader with a remarkable ability to look at the big picture, listen to all sides and then do what is right. The couple's son, Brad Ferguson, regards it this way: John is the eternal diplomat and thinks of the long term. Bunny is more of the salesperson, focusing on the immediacy of the current cause. "Together, that allows them to work both with conviction and compassion," says Brad, who is president and CEO of Edmonton Economic Development.

The Fergusons' dedication to the community has led to each of them receiving honorary degrees from the University of Alberta. They are also one of the few couples in Canada to both receive the Order of Canada.

With so many work, family and community obligations over the years, it would have been easy for John and Bunny to lose sight of one another, to forget to work on their relationship. John will tell you that the key to their relationship was "marrying right," but there's clearly more to it. The pair travel together and stay in shape together. They spend time with their eight grandchildren. And as often as they can, they withdraw to their



cottage in Jasper National Park. (Their Jasper cottage was the setting for all photos on these pages.) The isolated, rustic retreat insulates them from the demands of their lives back in the city.

Above all, there is respect. "You have to communicate, have respect and appreciate each other's roles," says Bunny. "Each needs to have an understanding of what's important to the other."

Over the years, the Fergusons have remained dedicated to the University of Alberta. "Being involved with the university, we don't ever think of it as 'giving back,' " says John. "We want to see what the younger generation is doing, and to give that opportunity to their children, too."

Their latest joint project is the Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative, a joint venture by the University of Alberta and The Banff Centre, designed to foster the next generation of Canadian leaders. The initiative includes a college on the U of A campus whose founding principal is Canada's first female prime minister, Kim Campbell. The Fergusons have played a key role in the initiative as lead donors, fundraisers, spokespeople, strategists and advocates. Not coincidentally, the Fergusons have long exemplified leadership qualities — even in their marriage, where each knows when to stand back and when to charge ahead for the greater good.

Just as on that day near the top of Mount Kilimanjaro.

The climb was conceived as a $500,000 fundraiser for orthopedic surgery at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. The idea to climb was Bunny's, but John, an avid athlete, was excited at the challenge of taking on Africa's highest mountain. As the couple planned the expedition, John promised to support Bunny in the climb, telling her he would never go ahead of her. They decided that if Bunny couldn't make it to the summit, John would descend alongside her.

But the choice that faced Bunny that day on the mountain was one they hadn't considered: it was John who was unable to make it to the top. Part way into the trek, he hit the wall with altitude sickness. As she watched medical staff prepare to rush him down the mountain, Bunny had to decide whether to continue. She thought of their goal as a couple: to make a difference. She thought of the promise she had made to the fundraising team and she realized that raising the life-changing funds depended on her successful ascent. With John in her thoughts, she summited Kilimanjaro.

By the time she was almost down, John was feeling better and they walked the final leg together back to base camp. When they returned to Canada several days later, the fundraising team had raised almost double its initial goal. A joint donation from the Fergusons boosted the campaign's final tally to $1 million — a testament to the giving nature of their partnership and to their individual, and collective, journeys.

Building on former Alberta premier Peter Lougheed's legacy of commitment to community and visionary leadership, the Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative will support current, emerging and next-generation leaders who will change the world. *To learn more, turn to page 38.*

Be Anything

STORY BY SCOTT ROLLANS | PHOTOS BY JOHN ULAN

As a business commentator, Deborah Yedlin takes on the world one issue at a time. You don't have to look far to find the source of her determination and chutzpah

At the age of 25, Deborah Yedlin found herself working in New York City as an analyst for financial giant Goldman Sachs Group, a job she won through persistence and sheer force of will.

It was 1987 and Yedlin arrived at Goldman Sachs just as it had named its first female partner — a groundbreaking move that had set Wall Street abuzz. Yedlin couldn't understand all the fuss: "For someone like me, it was just the way things should be."

Yedlin had spent a lifetime watching her own mother defy and defeat gender barriers. Tova Yedlin (pictured opposite page with Deborah), a professor at the University of Alberta, had to work consistently harder than her male colleagues in order to get ahead, says Deborah. Unable to gain tenure as a history professor, she switched departments. When she finally became a professor of Slavic and Eastern European studies, in 1975, Deborah says, Tova was only the eighth woman in the U of A's 67-year history to become a full professor.

So when Deborah chose to move to New York and blaze a trail into another male-dominated field, she felt sure Tova would be thrilled — but that wasn't the case. "After all that hard work and perseverance — which my mother had taught me — she didn't speak to me for two weeks," Yedlin laughs. "I think she was scared of the city."

Her mother's worries aside, Yedlin thrived. The Prairie girl with a BA from the University of Alberta proved more than a match for her mostly male, mostly Ivy League co-workers. But the pace was punishing. "It was a Faustian bargain," she observes. "You sold your soul for a paycheque." Then, one late night at the office ("they were *all* late nights") she had a pivotal quarrel with a colleague. He'd taken bitter exception to a small button pinned to Yedlin's cubicle wall, which read, "Health care is a right, not a privilege." After the incident, Yedlin found herself thinking, "This is a different place and I don't know if I want to stay here."

Yedlin has no regrets about her time in New York — "It was an amazing experience. I learned a ton about the markets" — but she left and never looked back. She returned to Canada, where she earned her MBA at Queen's University and continued her career in investment banking before finally turning to journalism.

Anyone familiar with Yedlin's work as one of Canada's foremost business commentators for the *Financial Post*, *Globe & Mail*, *Calgary Herald* and CBC Radio knows she is not one to back down from a good argument. At various times in her career, you could find her railing against the Alberta government's ill-fated 2007 plan to raise energy royalties, or holding industry and government to account for not taking adequate time to listen to First Nations' concerns over the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline.

Yedlin traces this determination, this chutzpah, directly back to her mother. Deborah grew up with Tova's wartime stories of escaping Poland barely a step ahead of the Nazis. Tova lived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through hunger and heartbreak in the former Soviet Union (she lost a brother to the Second World War) before arriving in Edmonton with little to her name except her *matura,* the Polish equivalent of a high school diploma.

Given her mother's example, Yedlin says she could never feel deterred by life's obstacles. "I didn't grow up in the war. I didn't see my life completely destroyed. I've had so many advantages that she never had."

Yedlin also learned a few things about what she wanted in her life that her mother hadn't achieved. "In her drive to succeed, as an immigrant and someone seeking to rebuild a life after war, my mom didn't quite achieve balance," she says. Tova rarely cooked, took time for herself or cultivated friendships outside work — all areas that Yedlin sees as essential in her own life. "It's great to have professional relationships," she says. "But one day, when you finally leave the office, they don't matter as much. It's the friendships that matter."

In building her own career and family, Yedlin has worked hard to find the balance her mother couldn't achieve a generation earlier. This meant setting aside her first career after marrying Martin Molyneaux, a fellow financier, in 1993. "I realized that two investment bankers in the house was not a good idea." Instead, Yedlin shifted gears to pursue her other passion, writing.

The move paid off in 1996, when the *Financial Post* began using Yedlin as a freelancer, and CBC Radio invited her to deliver a weekly business commentary — a gig that continues to this day. She says she pestered the editor of the *Calgary Herald* enough that in 1997 she was given a job there, becoming the paper's business columnist 10 years later. Along the way, she and Molyneaux raised three sons.

As a journalist, Yedlin is best known for her talent at demystifying complex business issues, placing them in a larger context for a general audience. She credits this to the wide-ranging liberal arts education she received at the U of A. "BA stands for 'be anything,'" she says. "It makes me insane how disparaged Arts graduates are."

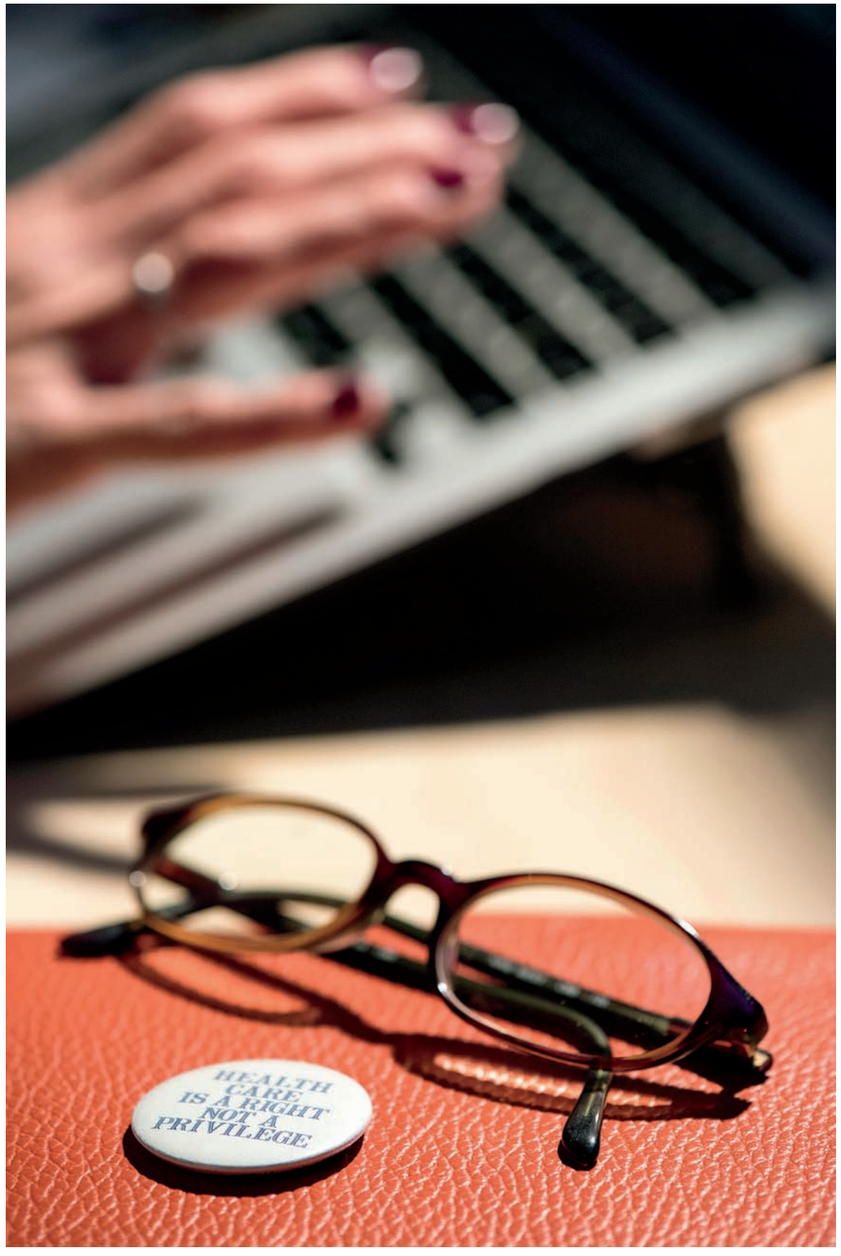
Away from work, Yedlin and Molyneaux strive to set an example for their boys by consistently giving back to their community — another lesson Yedlin learned from her own parents. "They gave to charity as much as they could on a professor's salary and a teacher's salary," Yedlin says.

In 2009, the U of A's Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies launched the annual Tova Yedlin Lecture Series, funded by an endowment by Yedlin and Molyneaux. Yedlin's unfailingly modest mother initially couldn't come to terms with the honour. "She was so mad at me," Yedlin says with a laugh. "We wanted a way to mark her contribution as an educator and to acknowledge the important role that the U of A played in giving my parents a second chance in Canada." Happily, Tova eventually acquiesced and helped shape the theme of the series: Central and East European Jewry prior to the Holocaust.

Tova says she will never forget the U of A for providing a new life after years of war and unspeakable hardship. "The University of Alberta was, for me, something I never dreamed of," Tova says simply. "The acceptance from Day 1 — the help, the support and the level of studies — was unbelievable."

These days, with Molyneaux recently retired and her boys mostly grown, mother and daughter relish the chance to spend more time together, a luxury denied for too much of their lives. "She turned 93 in November and she has a steel-trap mind," says Yedlin. After a beat, she adds: "She can't find her keys, but none of us can."

An endowment established by Deborah Yedlin and Martin Molyneaux created the Tova Yedlin Lecture Series. The annual event features a lecture by a prominent scholar on the history of Central and East European Jewry prior to the Holocaust. *To learn more, turn to page 38.*



Forging Links

STORY BY ALIX KEMP | PHOTOS BY ALISON YIN

Jeeshan Chowdhury knew he couldn't solve health care's most complex problems by himself. It turns out he didn't have to

As a boy, Jeeshan Chowdhury wanted to be an astronaut. The third of four sons born to Bangladeshi immigrants, he and his brothers were always fascinated by science and technology. But as Chowdhury grew older, he developed an equally strong desire to help people. He thought medicine would be a more practical path.

He found a way to combine his interest in science with clinical medicine as a medical sciences student at the University of Alberta. In his second year, he participated in NASA's Astrobiology Academy in California. There, alongside physicists and engineers, he studied human space flight, including the effects of gravity on mammalian biology and the feasibility of a human mission to Mars.

The academy's interdisciplinary research approach resonated with Chowdhury, who believes in tackling problems from every possible angle. In his time at the University of Alberta — earning a bachelor of medical science in 2005 and an MD in 2014 — he made a point of working with scholars and professionals from different backgrounds and disciplines. A Rhodes Scholar who studied health information systems at Oxford, Chowdhury believed this would help him create innovative solutions.

It seems to have worked.

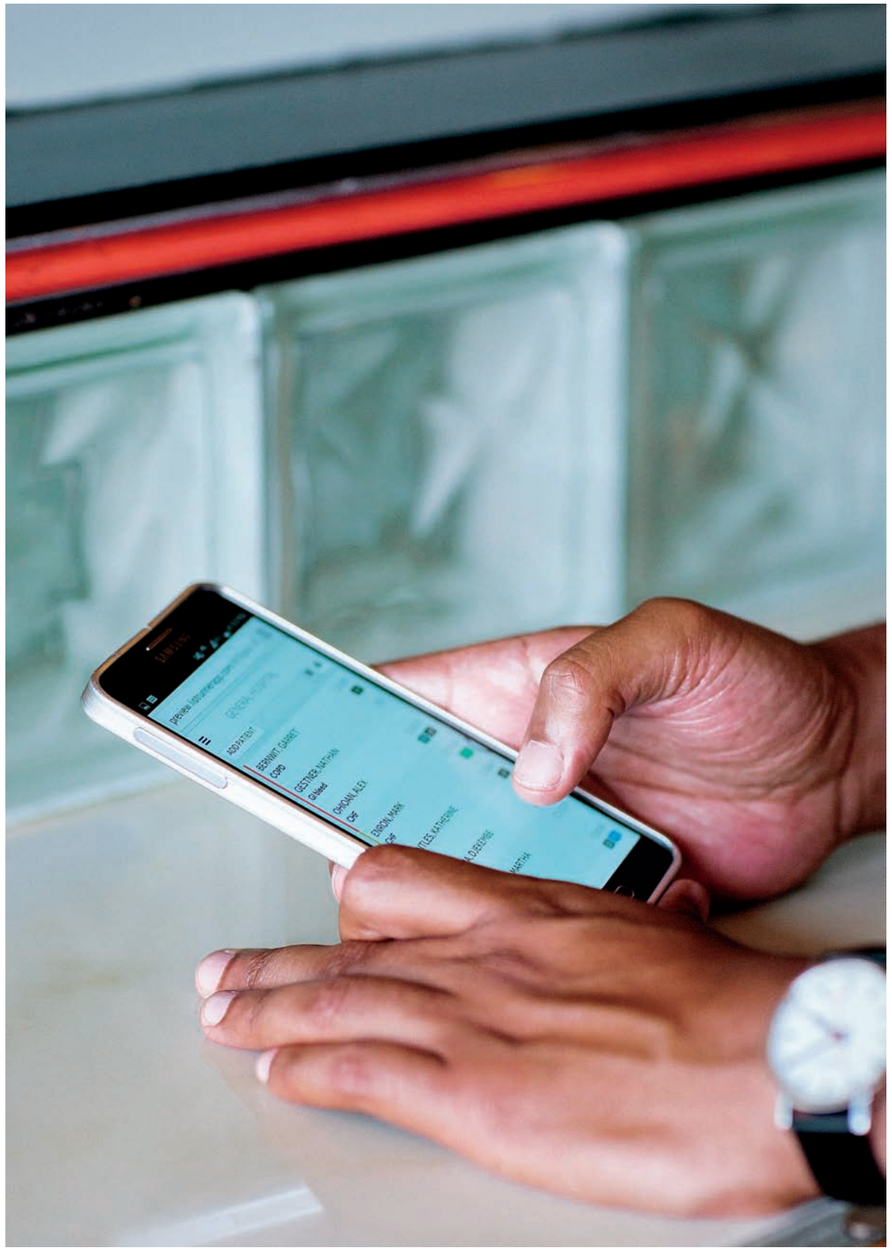
In 2012, Chowdhury met software engineer Dominic Savoie at a Montreal "hackathon," and together they founded Hacking Health, a non-profit organization that hosts technical meet-up events across Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia. These hackathons encourage collaboration between front-line clinicians and technology experts to develop web and mobile software solutions for some of health care's most complex problems. Successful projects have included a simulation that allows users to

experience the same hypersensitivity that affects those with autism, an educational app for patients with cancer, and software for doctors to remotely administer care plans for physiotherapy patients. "There's only so much you can do as an individual, but creating a platform by which others can do more is incredibly satisfying," says Chowdhury. "I'm really glad to see what Hacking Health has grown into and the impact it's having [on patients and clinicians]."

Chowdhury now lives in the San Francisco Bay Area — just a few kilometres from where he attended the NASA academy — to work with Savoie and fellow University of Alberta alumnus Trevor Chan on a new medical technology startup called Listrunner. Inspired by Chowdhury's medical residency at the U of A, Listrunner is a secure mobile app that allows hospital medical staff to keep track of and exchange patient data efficiently. "One of the doctors used index cards to manage his patients, and he told us that we should do the same." But the index cards presented problems: everyone organized them differently, and it was still difficult to share information during patient hand-offs. According to the U.S.-based Joint Commission Center for Transforming Healthcare, up to 80 per cent of medical errors happen as a result of miscommunication during hand-offs between doctors. Listrunner's goal is to eliminate those miscommunications while reducing the amount of time doctors spend on paperwork. Listrunner shows great promise. The app went through the prestigious Y Combinator startup accelerator in Silicon Valley and is being tested in hospitals around the globe.

Given the cost of a medical degree, Chowdhury feels fortunate to have received scholarships throughout his education. "The biggest thing about receiving scholarships is being able to pursue a longer-term vision.... You can focus on what you want to learn and on building yourself into the person you need to be to have the impact you want to have." Having the financial support to travel, build relationships with like-minded colleagues and acquire new perspectives has been key to achieving his dream of finding digital solutions to health-care challenges. "The people that I've worked with are now coming together to help me build this startup that we're creating from nothing," Chowdhury says. "That's hard to do without having that opportunity to invest in yourself and build up the skills and network."

The cost of Jeeshan Chowdhury's two University of Alberta degrees was covered by scholarships, including the donor-supported George Grover Leadership Scholarship, recognizing Chowdhury's scholastic and community achievements and leadership potential. To learn more about establishing student awards, turn to page 38.



IN CONVERSATION

Voice of Reason

STORY BY OMAR MOUALLEM | PHOTOS BY JOHN ULAN

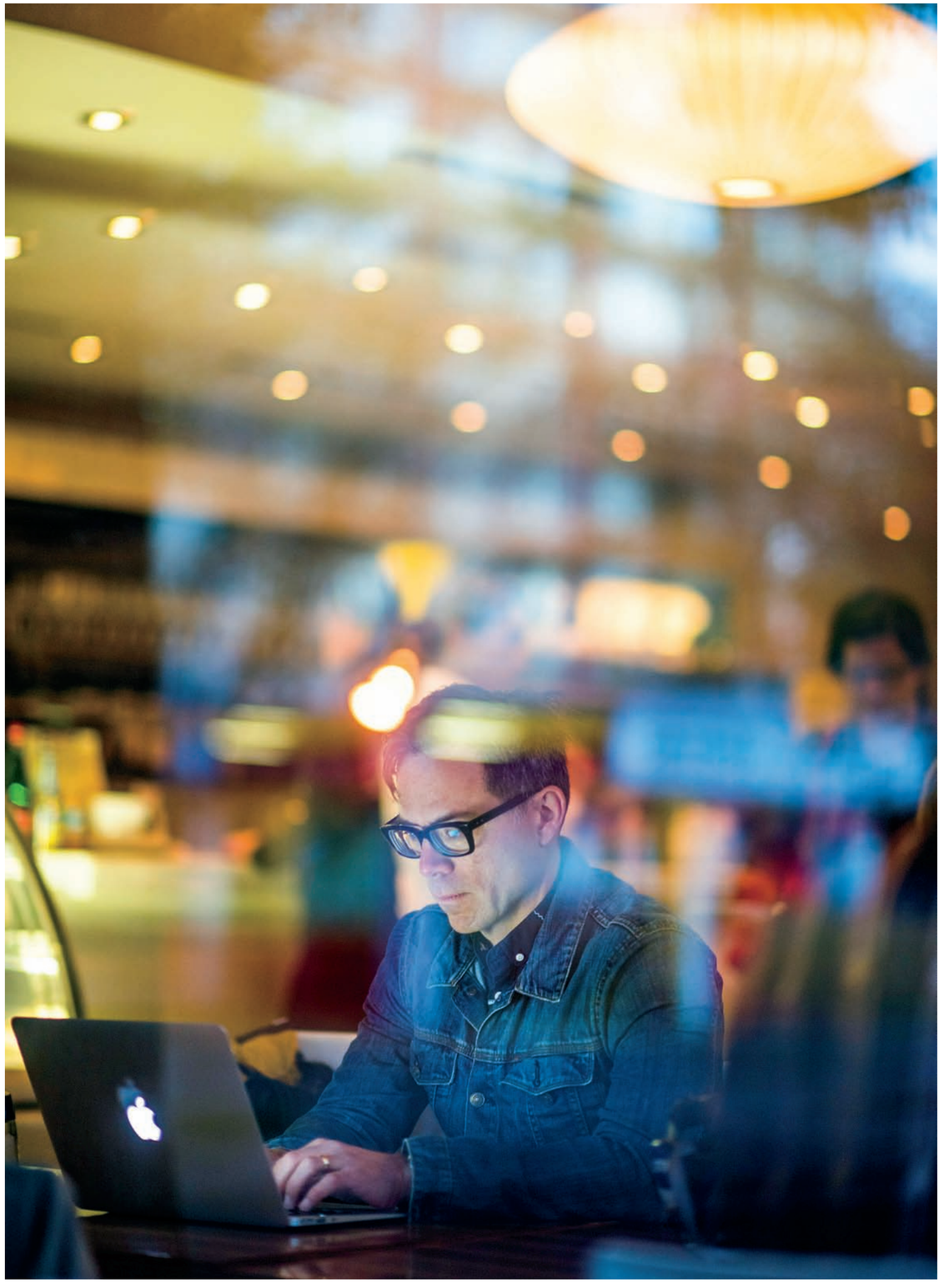
In the battle against health hype, Timothy Caulfield and his team bring law, science and other disciplines to bear on the causes and consequences of health fads

There are two sides to Timothy Caulfield. There's professor Caulfield — the lawyer, the holder of the Canada Research Chair in Health Law and Policy and longtime research director of the University of Alberta's Health Law Institute. And then there's the bestselling author of *The Cure for Everything* — the pundit, the science expert the media goes to when they need a voice of reason on health fads and false claims.

Caulfield, who earned degrees in science and law at the University of Alberta, is in high demand. With the proliferation of the web, pervasion of social media and persuasion of celebrities, many people now receive health advice from the wrong places, resulting in entire industries built on unscrupulous therapies. One such example is "stem cell tourism" — patients travelling to countries with questionable regulations in pursuit of controversial stem cell treatments for diseases such as multiple sclerosis. Under Caulfield's leadership, an interdisciplinary team is tracking the social causes and consequences of this abundance of often-questionable advice, and what recourse should be available to policy-makers and health professionals.

Why should the scientific community care about what's being said in popular culture?
People increasingly get information from social media and celebrity advice. It's becoming a big stew of information that bombards us all the time. Unless researchers and health professionals are part of that stew, their voices aren't going to be heard. They can't be ambivalent to celebrity culture, because it's not going away.

As part of your research, you've looked at the forces that twist science. What are they?
I call it a "hype pipeline" because forces happen all along the way. They happen in the laboratory, where scientists' enthusiasm might twist the information. Then a press release gives it a little more hype. Then the media, a little more hype. Commercial



forces come into play, more hype. They twist it along the way until it comes to celebrities and the general public, who have their own cognitive biases at play. It's amazing that people can get any accurate [health] information at all.

What's your next big research project at the Health Law Institute?
I want to do more research on nutrition, obesity and physical activity because, increasingly, I believe that's what's important to a healthy life. For example, we'd like to know what's a practical step that Albertans can take to deal with obesity and [an overall decline in] physical activity.

Why is it important to have an interdisciplinary team?
We do legal policy work, conceptual work and empirical work, and we need skill sets for all of those things. Through experience, I've gained knowledge of methodologies [of researchers in other fields], but I'm no expert, so I need people who are — such as linguists, interview experts and genetic and stem cell scientists.

Why is the Health Law Institute such a great place to do your work?
It has been around since 1977, started by Justice Ellen Picard [recipient of three University of Alberta degrees], who's one of my idols. From the start, she saw that the institute had to be flexible to respond to growing areas of health problems. We're encouraged to follow our noses and do empirical work. Historically, most legal scholarship has been a solo venture, based largely on theory. However, at the institute we get grants to work closely with scientists and clinicians — being on their research teams, having them be a part of our team.

What would be possible with philanthropic support?
What is really needed is funding that would give us — and others — the flexibility to respond to emerging health issues and to bring together the perfect team to provide evidence-based solutions. When you are tied to a granting cycle, it can be difficult to do this kind of work rapidly and comprehensively. For example, I'd love to have the opportunity to provide regular, high-impact, independent, evidence-informed policy recommendations on issues like obesity, vaccination and exercise. How can we make a positive change? ⇓

Timothy Caulfield and his fellow researchers in the Faculty of Law's Health Law Institute are tackling our society's toughest issues in health law, science policy and ethics. To learn more about how to support their interdisciplinary work, turn to page 38.

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