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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
ALUMNI MAGAZINE



When it comes to mental health,
one conversation can change everything.



How do students cope when homesickness turns to isolation and course overload leads to anxiety?

The answer can define a young person's success long after university.

BY AMIE FILKOW

MENTAL WELLNESS

PHOTOS BY JOHN ULAN | LETTERING BY KATY DOCKRILL

For **David Manuntag**, '14 BCom, the daily bus ride from North Campus to his parents' home in southwest Edmonton was normally quick and uneventful. But stepping onto the bus one cloudy May afternoon in 2010, Manuntag was carrying a massive burden. One week earlier, the first-year student had received an official notice of academic probation.

The first one in his family to attend university, Manuntag chose economics as a major without really knowing why. He soon found himself adrift. He was overwhelmed by class sizes and underwhelmed by the subject matter. He started skipping classes. Now his grades had slipped below a 2.0 average, and the kid who had graduated from high school with an above-80 per cent average didn't know how to tell his family he was in danger of being kicked out.

"I really had no clue what I was doing or what I wanted to do. The transition from high school was difficult and I wasn't really talking to many people. I just went to school, went to lectures and went back home. I didn't really have a support network."

On the bus that day, he ran into a friend from high school. They hadn't seen each other in a while, but Manuntag was feeling in over his head and just needed to talk to someone. He sat down and told his friend what he hadn't yet said out loud to anybody: he was thinking about quitting university. "I just wanted to get it out. I just wanted to share," he says, recalling that day.

His friend listened carefully and then encouraged him not to give up. "Just try," he said. "Try it for one more year. You don't want to look back and say you didn't try."

That one conversation made all the difference for Manuntag. It helped him get back on track and, eventually, it would lead him to create a way to help other University of Alberta students in need of someone to listen.



Canada spends more than \$6 billion every year on uninsured mental health services and time off from work for depression and anxiety.

One in Five

“We take illness far more seriously than health,” social psychologist Corey Keyes says as he shows slide after slide demonstrating how mental health is waning among university students.

With his silver moustache, hipster glasses, rolled-up shirtsleeves and jeans, Keyes looks more like an honorary member of the Grateful Dead than a leading mental health researcher. On this poetically gloomy day in Calgary, the professor from Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., is delivering the keynote speech at the 2015 Wellness Summit: a meeting of students, faculty and staff from 26 colleges and universities across Alberta, including 32 people from the University of Alberta. Their collective goal on this day is to develop a framework for post-secondary mental health and addiction.

Mental health is a major issue for young people. It's a problem that goes beyond universities and it's a problem that goes beyond Alberta. In North America, mental illness has an earlier onset than anywhere else in the world—about a year earlier, according to Keyes. In Canada, three-quarters of mental health problems emerge during childhood or adolescence, according to the Canadian Mental Health Association. Only one in five young people who need mental health services get the help they require. “More and more students arrive at university already in treatment,” Keyes says. “Isn't the point of life to start with a full tank?”

Keyes, who specializes in positive psychology, makes an important distinction between mental health and mental illness. People who are clinically depressed or diagnosed with bipolar disorder could actually be thriving—as long as they are living a healthy lifestyle and have support. Likewise, someone who has never been diagnosed could be languishing—living with anxiety or depression, feeling isolated and painfully lonely, feeling overwhelmed or generally unable to cope.

Mental health in young people has become an increasingly talked-about issue, and most Canadian universities are taking action.

The National College Health Assessment was completed at the U of A for the first time in 2011 and again in 2013. The U of A is on par with other North American institutions but the numbers are disconcerting. In the 2013 survey of 5,000 randomly

Steve Knish says it's important for young people to learn resiliency—how to bend but not break. Without this skill, they are at risk for a lot of problems. “It's only a failure if you stop and don't learn anything.”

selected U of A students, half of respondents “felt things were hopeless” in the previous 12 months. Nearly two-thirds felt very lonely. More than 54 per cent felt overwhelming anxiety. And 8.5 per cent—representing 3,400 students—had seriously considered suicide. Though more than a third of all students felt so depressed that it was difficult to function, only nine per cent reported being diagnosed or treated for depression. What happens to the rest? “If you're free of mental illness, you're on nobody's radar,” says Keyes.

Students living with poor mental health are not dealing simply with a disappointing test result or a bout of homesickness. These are behaviours, thoughts or emotions that bring real suffering and can interfere with school work, jobs, how they interact with people—even students' ability to live on their own, says the Mental Health Commission of Canada. And if these issues aren't tackled at this stage in students' lives, they can follow young people for decades. “If gone untreated, mental illness will follow youth into the labour market. Among 20- to 29-year-olds, including those just entering the workforce, mental illness is prevalent and problematic,” wrote the mental health commission in a 2013 report, “Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada.” Canada spends more than \$6 billion every year on uninsured mental health services and time off from

work for depression and anxiety. What's more, “languishing” adults—researcher Keyes' term for those who have poor mental health but are not clinically depressed—miss as many workdays and visit the doctor and therapist more often than depressed adults.

The Right Time, the Right Place

University is a unique period in a person's life. It's a kind of crucible: a test of strength, a time and place that challenges us, but also where our adult selves are forged. Our university experiences can push us, bend us and sometimes bring us to our knees, but by the time we cross the convocation stage, we are irreversibly transformed.

As a university community—students, faculty, staff and alumni—we could view the struggles of students as a rite of passage, a necessary requirement as young people transition to adulthood. But universities are realizing they are uniquely placed to serve as a safe space, to help provide a safety net as students cross the gulf between adolescence and adulthood. Universities can create supports that help young people gain personal insights, test their boundaries, learn how to seek guidance when they need it and begin to build the resiliency they'll need to thrive in the world beyond graduation.

As Keyes puts it: “Imagine what we could do if we didn't make the road so God damned hard for people.”

In the past decade, the U of A has begun to place new emphasis on mental health. But it was two years ago that things really started to change, thanks to a three-year provincial grant that allowed the university to add more counsellors and become the only university in



‘It’s real life, and the more you talk about it the more you face it and leave it in the past. It’s really hard but you keep going.’ –Vivian Kwan

North America with a group of registered community social workers. In 2012-13, before the new funding, the campus Mental Health Centre (now Counselling and Clinical Services) treated 5,142 students and had to turn people away. In 2014-15, the centre served 7,400 students. Nobody was turned away.

That provincial funding is set to run out in 2016. While acute care services are crucially important, the conversation on U of A campuses is increasingly centred on finding ways to intervene before students break down. The goal is to create an integrated support system that is proactive, integrated and holistic, focusing on prevention and early identification as well as building a community trained to listen and help. The idea is to make sure students are able to have the kinds of conversations that can transform a struggling young person into a flourishing adult. (See Other Supports on Campus, page 30.)

Chengtao Yan was no stranger to stress. He had encountered plenty in China’s highly competitive secondary school system. Yet, like many international students, he found the transition to Edmonton overwhelming. In his second year studying at the U of A, the environmental and conservation sciences student began to feel depressed. He found some of his classes uninteresting. His GPA was slipping. He didn’t get along with his roommates. And, as his Chinese friends graduated, he became less social. As the pressure continued to build, Yan felt increasingly isolated from his classmates. “In my major there is a big age range, so it was hard to identify with the other, older students who had already done a degree and who had a different destination. I couldn’t ask them, ‘Oh, what’s your strategy to deal with this stress?’ I started to lose my focus—I was procrastinating, not sleeping and wasting a lot of time online.”

Finally, a good friend noticed that Yan was disengaging. That friend pulled Yan aside for a conversation, urging him to see a counsellor. “After talking to my friend and the counsellor, I started to step out. I realized that it takes time to follow your path, to find what you like. “Online video games often have user reviews with tips, like, ‘if you go this way, you can maximize your points.’ In video games, you have a pathway and you push yourself through that pathway. But real life doesn’t work that way.”

The transition to university can be a rude awakening. It’s often the first time young people are living on their own, working and having to be

responsible for themselves. University students—many of whom were their high schools’ top achievers—struggle with the expectations of this new environment: the pace, the workload, feeling unnoticed by professors in a sea of students. In order to keep up, some lose sleep. They don’t eat well. They don’t exercise. Sometimes they turn to substance abuse or self-harm.

Steve Knish, ’94 PhD, a clinical psychologist at the U of A, calls these “welcome to the human race” problems. “They’re trying to deal in a competitive environment. Some of them are working 16 hours outside of school. There could also be family issues.”

Half of the students Knish and his colleagues see at Counselling and Clinical Services are in their first and second year—a critical time to identify issues. And counselling staff know that if first-year students get help to manage the transition to university life, they will be more likely to succeed in their programs. Research shows that if students have a positive first six weeks of university, and if problems are identified early, they are more likely to graduate within four years.

Of course, not all students are “traditional” in that they enter university right out of high school. Mature students face additional expectations and an array of complexities that can lead to mental health issues. International graduate students often arrive on campus with families in tow, unsure of where to find services and support. Students coming to the city from rural areas and Aboriginal students, too, face unique challenges. (See story, page 26.)

‘Is This World Even Real?’

In the waiting room, anticipating her fourth appointment with a campus-based counselling psychologist, Vivian Kwan wasn’t alone. In front of her, another student was anxiously pacing back and forth. “She reminded me of myself, nervous about something because you really don’t know what to expect,” Kwan recalls. “So I waited for her.” When the student came out of the session, her eyes were puffy and she seemed emotionally drained. “Let’s grab a coffee,” Kwan suggested.

A few months earlier, at the start of her second year at the University of Alberta, Kwan had been diagnosed with depression and anxiety. She can point to a number of factors that contributed: a heavy academic workload during her first year in neuroscience, overtaxing herself, a difficult breakup, the fact that



“You share it like a story, a memory. It doesn’t define you,” says Vivian Kwan, who talked openly about anxiety and depression as part of her Students’ Union campaign.

she’d move out of her parents’ home to live on campus. Kwan felt depressed and her anxiety mounted to the point where she was afraid to leave her dorm room. On the days she could make it to class, she would look down to find her hands shaking and cold.

Kwan’s roommate encouraged her to seek help. After a few counselling sessions, she seemed to be doing better, so when she met Lucy and Nicole (not their real names) in the waiting room, she wanted to pay that support forward. The three women bonded over their shared struggles with mental health.

“It was like being in a confession box—even though we didn’t know each other that well, it was weirdly comfortable to share our feelings,” Kwan says.

Inspired by the progress they each felt after the counselling sessions, the trio pledged that, once they were better, they would help others in the same circumstances.

It turned out that Kwan would have to fulfil that pact on her own. The worst two weeks of Kwan’s life began the winter of 2013. A month had passed since she had last seen her two friends. Kwan texted Lucy.

Lucy replied that she wasn’t feeling well. She hadn’t been to counselling in a while. Kwan offered to bring her something. Lucy said no.

A few days later, Kwan learned that Lucy had taken her own life.

“It was a complete shock. I didn’t see it coming. I just thought she was sick,” Kwan says.

Unbelievably, a week later, Nicole also took her own life.

“I thought, ‘Oh my God, is this world even real?’” Kwan remembers through tears.

After the deaths of her friends, Kwan spiralled. She stopped going to counselling. She didn’t go to class. She wasn’t speaking to friends. She had a hard time getting out of bed. “I dived into that dark, dark place again,” she says. “I didn’t think life could get any worse.”

Kwan began hurting herself. “I just

WHERE TO GET HELP

Anxiety and depression can be a problem at any age: one in five Canadians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime. If you or someone you know is dealing with the issues described in this story, there are places to turn. Here are some resources. For assistance finding a service within the Edmonton area, call 211.

On campus

Peer Support Centre
2-707 SUB
780-492-4357 (help line)
780-492-4268 (for information and appointments)
►su.ualberta.ca/services/psc

U of A Community Social Work Team
780-492-3342
►cswteam@ualberta.ca

U of A Counselling and Clinical Services
2-600 SUB, 780-492-5205
►mentalhealth.ualberta.ca

Off campus

HealthLink (24/7)
811

City of Edmonton Assessment and Short-Term Counselling
780-496-4777
►edmonton.ca

Walk-In-Counselling Society of Edmonton (WISCOE)
780-757-0900
►walkinedmonton.org

The Support Network- Crisis Support Centre (24/7)
780-482-4357
►crisissupportcentre.com

Adult Mental Health Crisis Response Services (24/7)
780-342-7777

Addiction Helpline (24/7)
1-866-332-2332
across Alberta

Kids Help Phone
1-800-668-6868

How You Can Help

This year’s U of A Giving Day, Oct. 13, will support student mental health.
►uab.ca/givingday

needed that little bit of reassurance that I was still feeling something, because I wasn't feeling anything for a long time."

It was Kwan's roommate who eventually saw what was happening and helped convince her to move back home. Her family had known she was having a rough time, but they hadn't known the extent of what had happened. It was the start of her road back to mental health, but the path was not an easy one.

When Kwan's younger brother expressed his ambition to follow in his sister's university footsteps, she couldn't understand why: "You don't want to experience things in my shoes."

Bend, Not Break

"University tends to be a culture of a lot of work and not a lot of self-care," says Steve Knish, the clinical psychologist. He has worked with students through the U of A's Counselling and Clinical Services for 13 years.

Whether it's the dim lamp lighting, the comfortable black leather Ikea chairs, the Persian rug or the offer of tea, Knish's office might be the most calming room on campus. His walls are covered with reminders of the stories that have been shared in this room. Photographs and a wire guitar hang above his desk. The guitar was made by a former client, a dentistry student, who felt severely depressed. "I thought we were going to lose her." But they didn't. The student has since graduated and owns her own dental practice. The guitar, a token of her appreciation, is a nod to the musical hobby she and Knish share. "It's made out of braces and dental floss," he says.

A former hockey goalie and coach for the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Knish uses his interest in sports psychology and the trial-and-error lessons of sports to inform his yoga and group therapy programs for students. "I teach students to be mindful. When students prioritize themselves and take care of themselves, it's so self-healing, and that tells me it's less about mental illness and more about connecting them to their resiliency."

Knish describes resiliency as the ability to self-regulate, to self-monitor—in other words, to bend but not break. "We're trying to teach students how to work with setbacks,

The shift from a small town to a city the size of Edmonton was difficult for Jenna Broomfield. The law student and throat singer is pictured onstage at this year's Interstellar Rodeo music festival in Edmonton, where she performed with 2014 Polaris Music Prize winner Tanya Tagaq.

'In the City, You Feel Alone'

Partway through her second year of studies at the U of A, Jenna Broomfield, hit a wall. "The city became too big and too scary and too expensive for me to stay there," she remembers. Broomfield was struggling with loneliness and isolation, and was also trying to juggle two jobs on top of a full academic course load. She wasn't sleeping. Eventually, her grades suffered, too.

These issues are, sadly, not uncommon for post-secondary students: the 2013 National College Health Assessment found that approximately 85 per cent of U of A students had felt overwhelmed or mentally exhausted within the previous 12 months. But in her case, those issues were compounded by the fact that she is an Aboriginal student.

Broomfield, '14 BA(NativeStu), '14 Cert(AborGov/Ptnshp), is an Inuk from North West River, a small town of about 500 people in central Labrador. Before coming to Alberta to attend university in 2007, she had never lived apart from her family and community and was forced to adapt to big-city life on her own.

"Where I came from, our next-door neighbour was my

auntie," Broomfield says. "Our other next-door neighbour was my cousin. Everybody you grew up with would take care of one another. Whereas in the city you feel very alone and you don't know who to reach out to."

At the university, Broomfield worked toward her degree in native studies, with an eye on treaty law. But she found herself

isolated from many of her classmates, both culturally and socially. (Broomfield lives her life on the "red road"—meaning she abstains from alcohol.) Without a car, she found it difficult to get around. And her financial situation meant it was difficult to see her family, even during winter break. "You can get to South America cheaper than you can get to my hometown," she says.

So when things got too overwhelming, Broomfield moved back home for a year to reassess. She worked as a substitute teacher and reconnected with Inuit culture through local drum and throat-singing groups. Her inspiration to return to her studies came during a chance trip to an indigenous youth gathering

"Where I came from, our next-door neighbour was my auntie. In the city, you don't know who to reach out to."—Jenna Broomfield

in Vancouver, which turned out to be a recruitment for the 2010 Winter Olympics. Broomfield was one of 300 indigenous dancers whose group performance became part of the opening ceremonies.

"[These youth] are doing the things they want to do," Broomfield remembers thinking. "Some are staying in the communities and some are leaving. Why can't I?" The thought motivated her.

Broomfield returned to Edmonton and took up her studies with vigour. Her grades improved. She started looking forward to her future again. Plus, this time around she took advantage of the supports offered by the Faculty of Native Studies, from a special housing program for indigenous students to free food and exercise programs on campus.

Today, she is going into her second year of law school at the U of A. She still thinks of the Faculty of Native Studies as her "saving grace" and commends its attentiveness to the unique challenges Aboriginal students can face. "They're the ones who reached out to their students—and who understood that they needed to reach out to those students." —MICHAEL HINGSTON

“At some point or another we’re all going to be affected by mental health. We’re all responsible for creating a healthy and well community.” –Paisly Symenuk

Unitea founders David Manuntag and Maggie Tong (pictured here and on pages 18 and 21), who now live in Vancouver, say the simple act of drinking tea allows people to actively listen. No phones. No distractions.

assignment, he invented a new kind of student group: Unitea, a one-to-one conversation over tea. Given his experience with isolation and anxiety—and the impact of that conversation on the bus—he wanted to make that simple connection available to all students. “I wanted it to be something that anyone could do. You didn’t have to be in business or know someone or be part of something already.”

After launching Unitea in September 2012 with his girlfriend, **Maggie Tong**, ’14 BScN(Hons), Manuntag was surprised at how much his little idea resonated with the student community. “When two people share an experience, like drinking tea, it’s a lot easier to get on the same page, slow down and just start talking,” he says. “Students are so often on their phones, they’re only half engaged or half there. With tea, the only thing you can have in your hand is the cup of tea, so it allows you to be engaged and listen.”

Tong reflects on the strength of such a simple concept as conversation. “It can make people brave, make them passionate. If talking to them for half an hour changes someone’s trajectory, then it’s worth it.” Manuntag now lives in Vancouver, where he works as a software developer. The Unitea program will be revived and expanded at the U of A in coming months and he hopes it will inspire other students to make a difference.

Connection and conversation can be powerful tools to support mental health. “Students turn to informal supports before they turn to formal supports: their family, their

friends, their community,” says Sheena Abar, who co-ordinates the Community Social Work Team at the U of A. Abar’s team has created a series of outreach initiatives aimed at bringing students together, building community and reducing loneliness.

Community Helpers workshops train students, faculty and staff to recognize warning signs and give them the tools to help. “Our mission is to make campus a place where people feel welcome, feel comfortable, feel safe, where they want to come and connect with others,” says Abar. Community Helpers and the university’s other outreach initiatives, including suicide prevention training, reached more than 10,000 students in 2014-15 alone.

The U of A’s large population can be overwhelming for students, but it’s also an opportunity to create a robust community network of awareness and support for mental health. Listening, asking questions and connecting can be seen as a simple thing but it is difficult to do it effectively—and has a more resounding echo in the world—than we realize.

“Everyone is responsible for everyone,” says Paisly Symenuk,



▲ Students turn to each other before they seek out formal supports, says Sheena Abar, (foreground) who co-ordinates the U of A’s Community Social Work Team and helps train Community Helpers, such as nursing student Paisly Symenuk (right).

because they just have no idea what to do with a negative experience, where to go with it. But these experiences need to be normalized: you keep going, you keep trying. It’s only a failure if you stop and don’t learn anything.”

Students cannot flourish without first being resilient. Anything less puts them at high risk for a lot of problems.

Sip, Chat, Connect

David Manuntag’s 20-minute conversation on the bus was a turning point. That brief connection with an old friend gave him the encouragement he needed to pursue his dream of going to business school. “My friend was one of the first people to tell me that I could do it, that it was possible.”

Manuntag found his niche in the bachelor of commerce program. For an entrepreneurship



ALUMNI CENTENARY AWARD

Celebrating alumni who have made an uncommon gift of time, self and energy to the University of Alberta



HELEN KWAN YEE CHEUNG
'13 MA

Cheung is a dedicated U of A volunteer who curated a historical exhibition at the Bruce Peel Special Collections Library and helps collect archival material.



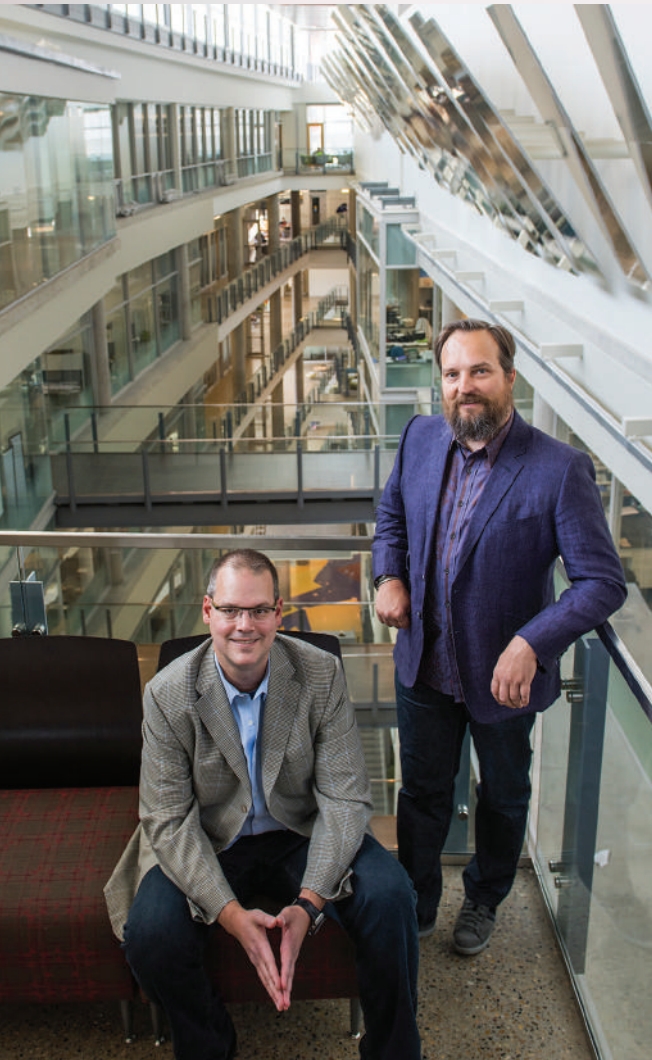
EDMOND LEVASSEUR
'67 BEd

Levasseur has spent his life as an educator. He served on the U of A Senate, helped introduce U School and works to promote Campus Saint-Jean.



TREVOR MAK
'82 BCom, '84 MBA

Mak is a senior banking executive developing private banking business for Greater China in Hong Kong. He leads the Alumni Association's Hong Kong chapter.



ALUMNI INNOVATION AWARD

Recognizing alumni who have significantly influenced their profession, community, the U of A or society at large by developing an innovative program, process or product

Ray Muzyka, '90 BMedSc, '92 MD, and **Greg Zeschuk**, '90 BMedSc, '92 MD, parlayed their passion for video games into a billion-dollar business. As freshly minted University of Alberta-trained doctors in 1995, they co-founded BioWare. Initially operated out of Zeschuk's basement, the company evolved into an award-winning juggernaut. At the invitation of LucasArts, founded by filmmaker George Lucas, the company created *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, which won Game of the Year at the Game Developers Choice Awards in 2004. Muzyka and Zeschuk were inducted into the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame in 2011 and received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Game Developers Choice Awards in 2013. They are both involved now in other ventures—Zeschuk with *The Beer Diaries* and Muzyka with ThresholdImpact.



BUILDING THE COMMUNITY

Learning a hard lesson early on and continuing to learn in life were key to success for this real estate developer

Tim Melton, '69 BCom, is a man who learns from his mistakes.

As a freshman at the U of A, he skipped classes and didn't study. "I fell dreadfully behind and dropped out in my first year," he says. "Luckily, I was reaccepted, and the second time around I made sure I didn't fall behind."

Now a real estate developer and executive chairman of Melcor Developments Ltd. with a career spanning more than four decades and counting, Melton continues to learn from the people and experiences in his life. He thinks of himself as a student of human behaviour, both in his work and his personal life, always looking to better understand people. One of his guiding principles, passed down through his family, is "the Golden Rule" — treat others as you would like to be treated.

"Basically, all people inspire me," he says. "Everyone has their own issues and they try to do their best given their qualities and circumstances. I try to put myself in their shoes."

stress, pressure and criticism while making personal sacrifices."

Melton has been involved in all aspects of the real estate business. He is proud of having built communities and provided shelter for people and businesses for 45 years. You could say real estate is in his blood. Melcor began in 1923 as Melton Real Estate Ltd., a family real estate brokerage business in which both his grandfather and father have played roles.

Melton believes it's important to be involved in his community. Helping others gives him personal satisfaction and a sense of purpose, he says. The company also values community service, encouraging its employees to contribute to their communities.

Melton has served on public and private boards, and worked with business and community organizations including Junior Achievement Northern Alberta and N.W.T., the Edmonton Police Foundation, the Edmonton YMCA, the Edmonton Eskimos Football Club and Newman Theological College, among others. His community work has earned him the Northern Lights Award of Distinction from the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, induction into the City of Edmonton's Community Service Hall of Fame and the YMCA Fellowship of Honour.

Despite his professional achievements and extensive community involvement, Melton says he is humbled to be recognized with a Distinguished Alumni Award. "Considering my [initially] rather mediocre academic record at the U of A, I was pleasantly surprised to receive recognition from this great institution."

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

The Alumni Association's most prestigious award, recognizing living graduates whose outstanding achievements have earned them national or international prominence

He particularly admires people like Helen Keller, who overcame the tremendous adversity of being blind and deaf to become a well-known humanitarian and journalist. "Also, I admire leaders, in all fields, who graciously handle

SPORTS WALL OF FAME

Recognizing the contributions of alumni as athletes and builders of university sport



DEBRA BARNETT (COVEY)
'83 BPE, '89 MA

Barnett is a field hockey player and coach who competed in the 1988 and 1992 Olympic Games. She is head coach of the Newtown City Hockey Club in Australia.



JENNY BENKIE (CARTMELL)
'03 BPE

Benkie is a national volleyball champion and former captain of the Pandas volleyball team. In 2011 she was inducted into the Alberta Volleyball Hall of Fame.



DOUG BRUCE
'01 BA

After multiple awards as a varsity volleyball player, including outstanding male athlete of the year, Bruce went on to play professionally around the world.



DALE SCHULHA

'72 BPE, '74 MSc, '74 Dip(Ed)

A national varsity football champ who became U of A director of athletics, he won the Austin-Matthews Award for contribution to interuniversity sport in 2014.



A LIFE OF LEADERSHIP

Early involvement in campus life laid the foundation for a future built on hard work and contributing to community

Francis M. Saville, '62 BA, '65 LLB, believes the keys to success in life are energy, hard work and a desire to succeed—not only in the material sense but also by contributing to the world in which you live.

"As Canadians, we occupy a unique position in the world. As individuals we all need to do our part, be it at the community, local, provincial, federal or international level."

His dedication to community service was evident even before he started a long career in law. During his time at the University of Alberta, he served as president of the Students' Union, the United Nations Club and the Phi Kappa Pi fraternity. As student union president, he was one of the determined group that championed the construction of the Students' Union Building on North Campus—a project called unique in an October 1967 *Time* magazine article because it was initiated, planned, built and operated by students.

One of Saville's early mentors and role models was Cliff Prowse, a lawyer and later a justice of the Alberta Court of Appeal, with

Whom he worked as a junior in the Calgary law firm of Fenerty Robertson Fraser & Hatch. He was inspired by Prowse's dedication and perseverance and says he never met another lawyer who worked so hard. "After the Second World War, where he was shot down, lost his leg and ended up a PoW, Cliff returned to the U of A to get his law degree—an impossible act to follow," says Saville.

Saville spent his early career as a litigator. He eventually turned to energy and environmental law, thriving on the challenge of helping develop new projects in oilsands, pipelines and other industrial development. In the 1990s, he branched out into the business world, serving as a director of Nexen Inc. from 1995 to 2013, and as a director for Mullen Group from 1993 to 2005.

He was also a founding member, director and chair of the Canadian Institute of Resources Law at the University of Calgary.

His volunteer work has included serving as Canada Olympic Park volunteer chairman for the 1988 XV Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, as trustee and chair with the Lester B. Pearson United World College of the Pacific (now Pearson College UWC), and in roles with the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service (STARS) board. He still serves as an adviser with the Global Leadership Foundation, an international non-profit group that allows former leaders to confidentially share experiences with today's national leaders.

Since retiring from law five years ago and from corporate director roles in 2013, Saville and his wife, Linda (whom he met in the Rutherford Library in 1961), have been enjoying their children and grandchildren, as well as their motorhome.

"We love the outdoors but at this stage of our lives we prefer 'roughing it smoothly,'" he jokes.

Looking back over his university years, Saville says, "It was a life-forming experience that became the foundation for the future."

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

The Alumni Association's most prestigious award, recognizing living graduates whose outstanding achievements have earned them national or international prominence

THE HONOURABLE DR. LOIS E. HOLE STUDENT SPIRIT AWARD

Recognizing undergraduate students who demonstrate a spirit of caring and community service



BRETTON HARI
'12 BSc

Hari is a U of A medical student who also spends time as a fundraiser, musician and volunteer for non-profit groups.



BLUE KNOX

Knox has travelled the world to work, study and volunteer as a play worker in Cambodia and with Leadership Africa USA in Washington, D.C.



by SCOTT ROLLANS, '82 BA

Pat Kiernan, '90 BCom

As morning news anchor for NY1 (and star of countless TV and movie cameos, including one in the upcoming *Ghostbusters* reboot), he is one of New York City's most recognizable faces. We recently caught up to Kiernan just before his daily afternoon nap.

Even as a quintessential New Yorker, you hang onto some Canadianisms. For example, I understand you eat Shreddies cereal for breakfast every morning. How do you maintain your supply? For years, it's been very simple. Whenever I go home [to Canada], I bring an extra suitcase, and whenever anyone comes to visit us, they're under orders to bring several boxes of Shreddies. The economics have changed since the airlines started charging \$25 for an extra bag. Now I tend to just order a crate online. It costs about the same as my extra bags—and I don't have to explain it at customs.

I'm a crispy Shreddies guy, but I understand you leave yours until they're soggy. What's the magic there? I think one time when I was six years old I accidentally soaked them and decided they tasted better that way.

Your face seems to pop up whenever a movie or TV show needs a newscaster character. That must be fun. Last year,

somebody put together that I am the only character that crosses over the Marvel Comics universes. I don't read the comics enough to have a full appreciation of how significant that is, but there are those who assure me that it's a big deal. [Every other character] appears in one universe or the other.

I did an episode of *Nurse Jackie* last year, and this time they actually stuck Pat Kiernan into the script. I had to show up at the hospital and check myself into the emergency room and complain that I was fatigued and needed their help. That was actually like acting—I even had lines to memorize. It was my most challenging role to date. [Laughs]

I'm sure you get recognized all the time in the United States. Does it ever happen in Canada? My father-in-law is a retired professor [Mel Lerohl, '60 BSc(Ag)], and we were having dinner at the Faculty Club a few years ago on one of our Edmonton visits. I was parking on campus, and the attendant actually recognized me from my old Global/ITV days.

Any U of A memories from your time as a student? I remember one of the best business courses I took. For a semester we broke a class of students into labour and management groups, and we had to hammer out a collective bargaining agreement for the projectionists at Cineplex Odeon Corp. To this day, when we cover labour-management issues [in newscasts], I think of the things I learned in that course.

And, about halfway through my degree, a couple of things happened. One, I did some volunteer work at CJSR, the campus radio station, which led to an opportunity to do Saturday and Sunday newscasts for what was at the time 96 K-Lite. Then I got involved with the campus newspaper, *The Gateway*, which is where I really got to know my wife [Dawn Kiernan, '91 BA]. And those two things led me quite firmly onto the journalism path.

In other words, you can draw a straight line from CJSR to your news desk at NY1. You really can—you're right! ■

PHOTO BY JOHN ULAN; ALAMY (SPIDER-MAN)