

WINDOW

WOODSWORTH COLLEGE 2017-2018



**OPEN TO
THE WORLD**

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WINDOW

WOODSWORTH COLLEGE 2017-2018

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
WOODSWORTH COLLEGE

FORGING NEW PATHS



Today's students have opportunities and challenges that are different from past graduates: they live in an increasingly connected world and compete for jobs against people around the globe.

THE START of a new academic year is an opportune time to take stock of what we've accomplished and where we're headed. That's as true for colleges as it is for individuals.

As the 2017–18 academic year begins, Woodsworth College continues to celebrate 50 years of The Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program. Long before diversity and inclusion became common values, our bridging program welcomed non-traditional students – what used to be called “mature” students – into the University, offering them a chance to discover the joys and challenges of post-secondary education. Some of the exceptional Woodsworth alumni you'll find profiled in these pages first entered the University of Toronto through this important gateway.

In fact, alternative isn't a derogatory term at Woodsworth. A number of our alumni have chosen non-traditional career paths, striking out on their own in a variety of entrepreneurial ventures. Some alumni are graduates of the lauded Rotman Commerce bachelor's degree program, and have used their degree as a springboard to a successful career in business. Yet it's just as true that the skills our students learn as undergraduates may not be immediately tied to a particular profession, but can be utilized in any profession they choose – the only limit is their imagination. Woodsworth has helped them gain a broad understanding of the world, and develop discipline and critical thinking.

Today's students have opportunities and challenges that are different from past graduates: they live in an increasingly connected world and compete for jobs against people around the globe. Part of our mission at Woodsworth is to build global awareness and flexibility, and provide outlets for international experience to ensure our graduates feel comfortable with this growing mobility. For 45 years now, our Summer Abroad program, a flagship international

experience opportunity within the Faculty of Arts & Science, has been offering students the chance to earn a course credit and gain a global perspective. I'm proud that we offer classes on every continent except Antarctica – maybe that's next!

Boundless opportunities – these are part of the promise of U of T's Boundless campaign, and Woodsworth alumni, donors and friends have been extraordinarily supportive of our mission and the success of our students. We have set an aggressive fundraising goal of \$8 million, which we are close to achieving. What could be more satisfying than helping students to reach for the stars? The scholarships, bursaries and access pathways that are our fundraising priorities will allow us to expand our popular Woodsworth One program, offer students the excitement of a learning experience abroad and nurture the stellar research and teaching at the Centre for Criminology & Sociolegal Studies and the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources.

As we mark the release of U of T's Truth and Reconciliation report, *Wechehetowin*, it is also vital that boundless opportunities are available to our Indigenous students, and that our entire community benefits from the diverse experiences that shaped Canada. We are working towards the goal of increasing the diversity of our student body and our faculty.

We are also envisioning a transformation of our physical space in a way that would include and support all the programs and groups that are part of the Woodsworth community.

In the pages of this, our first magazine, you will find articles about our stellar programs, and many outstanding students and alumni. These stories should delight, but not surprise you; Woodsworth College has always been synonymous with a quality education and student experience. ■

WHEN J. BARBARA ROSE entered The Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program (ABP) in 1986, she recalls that the majority of students in her class were “women of a certain age who were married in the 1970s and whose kids were off at school, giving them a chance to do something they wanted to do.”

In 2017, as the Woodsworth College program celebrates its 50th anniversary, the mission has not changed, although the demographic makeup of the classes is a bit different. The ABP continues to be “an access program that provides the opportunity for mature students, who do not meet the established direct entry requirements, to qualify for admission to the Faculty of Arts & Science.” However, the majority of students today are “young men left behind who didn’t have a good high school experience and have no direction,” according to Professor Tom Socknat, the program director. “The bridging program is an attempt to turn their lives around and show them that they can do really well if they set their minds to it.”

Both Rose, who began the ABP at age 49, and Tim Harrison, who participated in the program in 2003, are living proof that bridging graduates can reshape their lives and have stellar careers.



Prof. J. Barbara Rose



Prof. Tim Harrison

Rose, who worked for many years as the executive assistant to Harry Rosen of Toronto clothing store fame, is now an associate professor, teaching stream at U of T. She teaches Introduction to Literature in the ABP and serves as the associate director of the Academic Writing Centre at Woodsworth College.

Harrison did poorly in high school and turned part-time modelling into a career after graduation before returning to university at age 24. Today, he is an assistant professor of English at the prestigious University of Chicago.

Rose first entertained thoughts of higher education when her boss's wife asked for help typing essays for her undergraduate program.

"It whetted my appetite," she says, "although, frankly, I was terrified. I had been away from school for at least 25 years, and my background was in business."

Nonetheless, she registered for the ABP, attended the evening class weekly and passed the course. Eager to continue learning, Rose forged on, earning her bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees. She also completed all of the coursework for a doctorate before joining the staff at U of T.

"Bridging provided such validation that I was smart, regardless of what

anyone said," she notes. "It was life changing and transformative."

Harrison agrees wholeheartedly.

"I came back to Canada with the aim of going to school, but I didn't meet the entrance requirements," he says. "My cousin knew about the bridging program, and I enrolled and really enjoyed it. I started my undergraduate degree the following year."

He found kindred spirits enrolled in the ABP. "They were people who hadn't done well in high school and hadn't been interested in university – similar kinds of stories to mine. I liked the feeling of working hard to bring myself out of where I was in order to head someplace else."

Harrison took a full course load during his first year of undergraduate studies and worked 40 hours a week to fund his education. He knew if he could earn an A+ average, he might be eligible for a scholarship. He achieved his goal, which then led him to pursue a doctorate.

"I saw it as an opportunity," he says. "The bridging program changed my life. No way could I have gone to U of T without it. It was extraordinarily transformative for me, both in terms of learning and expanding my mind and in re-orienting the trajectory of my life."

Rose, who plans to retire in 2018, says even if students in the ABP don't take other classes afterward, they have learned that they can persevere and meet challenges.

"I'll do anything I can to help my students complete the course," she says. "Whether or not they retain much about T.S. Eliot or Shakespeare, they do learn a lot about themselves." ■

WILLIAM NGUYEN: SECOND CHANCES

William Nguyen, 26, dropped out of high school to care for his mother when she was diagnosed with cancer, so he believed that university admission was beyond his grasp. Instead, he worked in a nightclub to support the two of them, becoming increasingly unhappy with the workplace environment.

Nguyen learned about Woodsworth College's ABP from a family friend and he loved the prospect of going back to school and gaining a post-secondary education.

Although he was admitted, there were still some difficult issues in his life and he failed on his first try. Luckily, Cheryl Shook, the College's registrar, and instructor in the program, recognized a bright student with potential. She suggested that Nguyen apply again and helped him find funding for a second chance.

"I didn't want to let her down, so I killed it the second time," Nguyen says. "I felt really good and motivated. My mom was in full remission, so it was a lot easier."

Success in the program led to university admission. Today, Nguyen is a Woodsworth College student entering his second year of full-time studies at U of T with a double major in political science and international relations, and a minor in book and media studies.

"I feel like I owe Cheryl [Shook] a lot," he says. "The bridging program gave me everything. It gives a chance to people with ability who just got sidetracked in life."

NO LIMITS

The skills our students learn may not be immediately tied to a particular career pathway, but can be utilized in any profession they choose – the only limit is their imagination. Here are the stories of creative and entrepreneurial alumni who blazed their own trails.

JULIANA WHITE & FATIMA YUSUF FROM ROCKING THE RUNWAY TO CONQUERING E-COMMERCE

BY ELAINE SMITH



FROM THE MOMENT they met at the Woodsworth College Residence in 2006, Fatima Yusuf and Juliana White felt as if they had each found a kindred spirit. During first year, Yusuf, a commerce student, and White, an arts student, would sit in the suite they shared, bubbling with ideas for start-up businesses and bouncing ideas for entrepreneurial ventures off of each other.

They began planning their first venture together later that year: a fashion show fundraiser.

“We attended a campus fashion show together and were inspired to create one of our own,” says Yusuf, an Oakville, Ontario native. And, thus, Rock the Runway, one of the largest student-run fundraising events on campus, was born. Together with classmates Heather McCann

and Randy Alexander, they planned the event for the following fall, and it turned out to be an overwhelming success.

“By the third year, we were holding the show at the Royal Ontario Museum, and by the fourth year, we had 1,000 guests and 250 volunteers and were a full-fledged non-profit organization.”

They ended their run on a high note after the fifth year, when graduation and jobs were playing havoc with both of their lives. In addition to raising thousands of dollars for War Child Canada, the pair had learned some valuable lessons along the way.

“We knew we worked well together and could build something,” says White, from Whitby, Ontario. “We had also seen first-hand what real market demand looked and felt like.”

“We learned how to build teams around us and organize people whose skill sets complement each other,” adds Yusuf.

“Our university years provided us with a lot of opportunity to test our skills and find our strengths in a risk-free way.”

Fast forward a year after graduation, and White is living in New York City. After working in public relations and digital media, she begins researching possible e-commerce opportunities; Yusuf is in the Toronto area working as a management consultant for PricewaterhouseCoopers. White sees a possibility for growth in the home furnishings sector and they decide to take the plunge into e-commerce.

“We wanted to recapture the feeling we had while building Rock the Runway,” Yusuf says.

A new venture was in play. Yusuf quit her job, moved to NYC and the pair proceeded to learn everything they could about the industry. Their efforts paid off: today, Yusuf and White are partners in Tressle.com, an online search engine for home décor – what Yusuf calls the “Kayak of home décor.” The company, backed by venture capital, offers a search engine that finds the customer the items he or she wants for the best value.

“We can streamline the online buying process for consumers,” White says. “A lot of retailers sell the same goods from the same suppliers, but we measure items using five variables to determine the best value for the client. It takes the guesswork and laborious research out of buying home décor.”

Eleven years after meeting at Woodsworth and becoming best friends, White and Yusuf are also business partners in this growing endeavour. They recently added the former chief marketing officer of Kayak to their staff, which continues to increase as they enter a new round of raising capital to expand their business.

“I often look back fondly to those Rock the Runway auditions we held at Kruger Hall when it was still under construction,” Yusuf says. “Woodsworth holds some of our best memories.”

“HONESTLY, I’M NOT SURE. I was doing it part time,” says Woodsworth College alumnus Chris Murumets. “I think the year I finally graduated was 2001.”

It’s fitting that Murumets couldn’t recall his ‘WDW’ year because in many ways, he’s never left Woodsworth. Since graduating, he has been giving back through his work with both the Alumni Association of Woodsworth College, and the Alumni Student Mentorship Program.

Murumets says Woodsworth was a special place for him when he was a student at the University of Toronto.

“I always appreciated that Woodsworth was a neighbourhood within the larger U of T,” says Murumets.

“St. George is a big campus, and can feel overwhelming. But Woodsworth allowed me to go deeper in forging more and varied relationships.”

Murumets says, back then, Woodsworth was still known as the “mature students’ college.”

“As a mature student I really respected the professors that were part of the business program and the experiences they brought to the students,” he says.

After working 12 years for large insurance companies, Murumets wanted to do more in the field as an entrepreneur. So, he co-founded LOGiQ3 and a couple of other companies that serve the global insurance industry.

“Ultimately insurance is a good thing for society and I wanted to support that. We want to make the world a better place,” says Murumets. “I love what I do and feel incredibly fortunate every day to have my favourite job.”

“Do the right thing” is listed as Murumets’ favourite maxim on the LOGiQ3 website. That same mantra applies to his relationship with Woodsworth after he graduated.

“When I reached out to the alumni group I was so impressed with the engagement and passion they had for their volunteer roles,” he says. “You see the impact that their time at Woodsworth had on people’s lives, and their desire to give back.”

Murumets says his involvement with the mentorship program allows him to give back in a different way.

“At first I was quite nervous because I wasn’t sure how I could help, or if my experiences were relevant to kids today. However, I soon realized how much fun it is to be a mentor. I get to meet with these incredibly smart, talented, nervous and scared kids who are about to start a brand new chapter in their lives,” he says.

Although the world has changed since he graduated, some fundamental things remain valuable for students to learn.

“Like the importance of a personal network,” he says. “I have always liked ‘connecting-the-dots’ a little differently. As a mentor, introducing these soon-to-be graduates to people I know and trust has been rewarding for me and, I think, a real help for the students.”

‘Real help for students’ sometimes included hiring some of those Woodsworth grads at his companies.

“Although the world is becoming more digital, personal relationships remain powerful,” says Murumets.

“The best lesson I have learned over the years is the importance of building a personal network: friends, classmates, colleagues, professors and everyone in between. Being genuine and authentic sounds obvious, but it isn’t always how people behave – if you’re not [genuine], it’s obvious and it will impact every part of your life. So, simple: be a good human being.”

CHRIS MURUMETS CONNECTING THE DOTS

BY MICHAEL COLLINS



SARAH SLEAN MUSIC. LIFE. METAPHYSICS.

BY MICHAEL COLLINS



EARLIER THIS YEAR, Juno and Gemini-award nominated musician Sarah Slean (WDW'09) released her 11th album, *Metaphysics*. Over her 20-year career as an international recording artist, the Woodsworth alumna has also expressed herself as a poet and a painter.

Slean signed with Atlantic Records while she was a student in her second year at the University of Toronto. Even as she toured the world as a musician, she continued to work to complete her degree on a part-time basis.

"When I was in class, it was so refreshing and liberating to step outside of my professional life," she says. "I find the student experience utterly ego-less, and, as such, invigorating. In my view it's a vital part of civil society, and of democracy. No matter who we are or what we've achieved in life, there is tremendous value in listening to someone speak on a subject they have studied exhaustively for most of their lives."

Slean says, through music, she's trying to understand the world, her emotions and "the befuddling phenomenon of being human."

"I'm trying to examine why my heart feels what it feels, why we suffer, why the mind works the way it does, why things happen, why the world is a dazzling chaos of misery and joy," she says. "Even in the songs that seem to be about very personal things, I'm always trying to feel at home, albeit temporarily, in some kind of metaphysics. I think art-making is always an attempt to bring ourselves back, continually, to hope."

This intellectual curiosity, of continually asking why, ties into Slean's interest in neuroscience, philosophy and psychology, all of which are subjects that she has studied at U of T and explored in her music.

"Education is important to me because reason is important to me," she says. "The goal of education, at least as I understand it, is to develop clear and critical thinking, to be able to think for yourself and support those opinions with reasonable explanations. I'm quite certain that in these times, the importance of that skill cannot be overstated."

Looking forward, her national tour for *Metaphysics* begins in October. And

later, in March 2018, she'll be singing Joni Mitchell's album *Travelogue* with the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra and Vincent Mendoza conducting.

"Music has taken me all over Europe, the United States and Scandinavia several times over, and I lived in Paris for a year when my album was being released on Warner France, so I feel extremely fortunate to have had those experiences," she says.

Slean says she will continue to create music as long as she possesses a combination of "bewildered curiosity and wonderment."

"I have always found the world, and our existence, utterly bewildering," she says. "This alone is sufficient for a lifetime's worth of artistic output. It is so magical and maddening to BE something and yet not fully understand that 'something.' The deeper we delve into the complex mystery of the world via education or any pursuit, the more we discover how we ourselves, the perceivers of that world, are as complex and mysterious."

SarahSlean.com | @sarahslean

RITA LEISTNER DIGGING DEEP

BY ELAINE SMITH



Fort Saint James, BC, a logging cut block.

WALKING ALONG the edge of the tree-lined highway in the British Columbia Interior with the sun shining is balm to Rita Leistner's war-ravaged soul.

Leistner, a Woodsworth College alumna and photojournalist, is renowned for her work in war zones. She has documented the pain and despair wrought by the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and has turned her lens on the troubles in the Middle East. The Canadian War Museum recently acquired 15 years' worth of her work in these challenging regions, bestowing upon her the honour of being the first female war photographer in their collection.

"It's something I was driven to do," Leistner says of her war photography. "I was driven to witness the conflict because of my ultimate desire to resolve conflict. With such work, I feel an

enormous responsibility toward my subjects. I want my work to be used for reflection, discussion and action."

Leistner dropped out of high school at age 16, more interested in adventure than scholarship, and finished high school via correspondence. Two years later, she wanted to pursue the idea of becoming a photojournalist, but hit a brick wall: Ontario's prominent university journalism programs required portfolios and applications submitted a year in advance.

When someone suggested Woodsworth College, a door opened that led to the rest of her life. Leistner was accepted as a part-time student, fell in love with literature and graduated six years later with a master's degree in comparative literature, plus numerous night classes in photography to her credit.

Before beginning doctoral studies, Leistner decided to take a year off to work on a documentary crew. She soon realized that if she pursued an academic career, she would be turning her back on her dreams of being a photographer. Accordingly, she made the decision to turn down a full scholarship, and instead began working as an apprentice lighting technician, with colour printing lessons on the side.

"Eventually, I found a seven-year itch awakening and I wondered what had happened to the dream of being a photojournalist that I'd had since I was 15," Leistner says. "I ran into a friend who said that to do so, I needed to go somewhere with a story."

Coincidentally, a connection wanted to sublet his house in Cambodia, so Leistner took the gamble and moved there. It became a training ground where she learned from many seasoned journalists who remained in the region after the Vietnam War and the reign of dictator Pol Pot. Her next step was to earn a degree from the International Centre for Photography in New York City before moving on to pursue a career as a photojournalist in war zones.

Woodsworth was the springboard to her entire career as a social documentarian, Leistner says.

"My work all ties back to my academic education, even though I ended up with degrees that didn't have an obvious connection to photography," she says. "It has permeated everything I do and has helped enormously in distinguishing my voice from others."

After a six-year stint teaching the history of photography at U of T's Victoria College, Leistner is now soothing her tired soul by working on a project documenting the tree planting and logging cultures in rural British Columbia. Her work will be on display at Toronto's Stephen Bulger Gallery beginning October 21, 2017.

"Two years ago, when it looked like all the world was going to hell, I couldn't teach because I couldn't see hope for the future," she says. "I had to do a story with some hope. Tree planting is about believing in the future, and it's a good story to put out into the world." ■

CITIZENS OF THE WORLD

BY LARRY KROTZ

Amongst the brightest faces making their way to the podium in 2017 convocation ceremonies were some young women who five years earlier never imagined getting their education in Canada. Their lives changed when an organization called The Mastercard Foundation, with an endowment from the international credit card company, intervened.

The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program was set up in 2006 to enable students from sub-Saharan Africa to attend top-rated universities around the world. The University of Toronto joined the program in April 2013, receiving an allocation of \$22.5 million (USD), and, to date, has supported 52 African students. Woodsworth College has hosted 21 of these exceptional young people. Here is a snapshot of three of them.



For **ANNIE BOSIRE**, a Life Sciences student with an interest in epidemiology, the 20-hour flight from Nairobi to Toronto was her first trip out of her country as well as her first plane ride. Her application to the Mastercard program included a lengthy personal statement that described the experience of her mother who, living in a rural area, was stigmatized because she had only daughters (Annie has four sisters). Now one of those young women is on a journey that will eventually take her back to her country as a highly trained scientist.



VANESSA BART-PLANGE, who has lived in Woodsworth's residence for four years, grew up in a coastal town in Ghana four hours from the capital, Accra. A star student in her high school, she was interested in writing, political science and world affairs. So International Studies became a natural academic choice.



SYLVIA MWANGI attended a high school in the beautiful central highlands of Kenya where her family of three brothers lives. In 2013, when she was 18, she was one of that year's nine candidates selected for the University of Toronto. Sylvia entered engineering thinking she might return to Kenya to take up a job in the

country's developing petroleum sector. But after volunteering at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, she shifted her interest to the healthcare field. Although Sylvia graduated from the Faculty of Engineering, she plans to pursue further education in healthcare.

Each young woman is taking a different path. Vanessa will stay in Canada for now to do graduate work at York University with hopes of one day becoming a professor. While living at Woodsworth she participated in a Caribbean Studies and African Studies writing group, sang in the choir of a nearby Presbyterian church and did volunteer tutoring. Annie served on the Blue Crew during orientation while Sylvia was active in a Rotary International youth program on campus. Sylvia admits to missing her family back home, but says that she has formed "a new family among students here."

All three emphasize the importance of maintaining connections back home and finding ways to "give back." Vanessa sees her journey as a circuitous one through which she can help her homeland by finding her place in a broader world. Her hometown has its own technical university, she notes, "But if I had stayed in Ghana I wouldn't have had the possibilities to become such a citizen of the world and learn how to make the world a better place."

Annie has already started to give back. She spent the summer of 2017 back in Nairobi (the program provides for two return visits home) volunteering at a clinic in one of the city's toughest shanty towns. ■



(DIS)ORDER

Thriving in the Chaos of the
First-Year University Experience

BY ELAINE SMITH

Woodsworth One students participate
in a co-curricular session.

Order & Disorder, the title of one of two first-year Woodsworth One streams, refers to the subject matter being taught, but it is also an apt description of the program's impact. By providing small classes and creating a sense of community, Woodsworth One helps incoming students find order as they navigate the large, sometimes disorderly seeming institution that is the University of Toronto.

WOODSWORTH ONE Coordinator Professor Beth Fischer notes, "The fall term of first year is probably the most challenging four months of their lives to date. Students may be dealing with living on their own, separate from family and friends, and there are high academic expectations.

"If you feel as if you are part of a community, you are much more likely to be involved during your university career. On the other hand, if you feel isolated and lonely, that's not a successful first year."

Order & Disorder itself is an interdisciplinary introduction to social science and humanities concepts that students will encounter throughout their academic careers. For example, the students study law, co-operation, oppression, war and immigration, and how these themes intersect and sometimes collide in today's world.

"Learning-wise, choosing Woodsworth One was probably the best decision I made coming into U of T, because it provided a great foundation," says Aadil Nathani, who graduated in the spring with a double major in criminology and ethics, law and society. "We covered so many topics that I still discuss today."

Admission to Woodsworth One is competitive, and Fischer receives twice as many applications as there are available places. Students must submit an essay about their interest in the program and it plays an important part in selection, as does a diversity of backgrounds among those chosen.

To help provide support, an upper-year student who has completed the program is assigned to each class as a student liaison. "They act as mentors and go to all the class meetings and workshops," says Fischer. "Students can turn

Prof. Beth Fischer delivers a lecture in the *Order & Disorder* stream.



to them more easily than to faculty and, every year, students say how valuable it is to have them.”

The program has a very high completion rate of 90 to 95 per cent each year, and many of its students also get involved in College and University activities. Nathani, for example, was a member of the executive of Woodsworth College Students' Association, and president of the Criminology & Sociolegal Studies Students' Association. He also worked with Fischer as the alumni and event coordinator for Woodsworth One.

Fischer views the students' engagement as a clear signal that the program is doing something right. “So much of the recent Woodsworth student government was made up of Woodsworth One students. If they are that involved as undergraduates, they go on to be engaged alumni and engaged citizens.” ■

PHOTOS: (OPPOSITE PAGE) WOODSWORTH ARCHIVES; DAVE STARRETT

WHAT IS WOODSWORTH ONE?

This full-year interdisciplinary program is designed to enable first-year students to make the transition from high school to university successfully. Its two streams, *Order & Disorder* and *Popular Culture Today*, both foster a high level of interaction among students and instructors, helping students feel at home in their new environment. Their interdisciplinary content makes them an ideal introduction to the challenges and rewards of study at U of T.

Besides attending regular lecture-style classes, students participate in co-curricular sessions that supplement and enhance their course experience, ranging from workshops on study skills to field trips to a variety of special guest lectures. *Order & Disorder* students have visited Queen's Park and the ROM and have heard talks by lawyers, police officers and an MP, while *Popular Culture Today* students have made field trips to local art galleries and have had guest lectures featuring musicians, filmmakers and authors.

Classes in both streams are capped at 25 students, allowing instructors to emphasize active learning in many ways, including small group discussions, debates, role-playing games and simulations. Together with the co-curriculars and the contribution of the student liaisons, the focus on active learning promotes every student's strong engagement in the program – the key to its success.

LEGAL SCHOLAR TAKES ON ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGE

BY ELAINE SMITH

PROFESSOR AUDREY MACKLIN,

a renowned expert in immigration law, is excited about serving as the director of the Centre for Criminology & Sociolegal Studies, a position she has held since January 2017.

“In the first year of law school, I was taught by Professor John Edwards, the founder of the Centre,” Macklin says. “He was a lovely man and daunting in his intellect. I am delighted to be the director of the centre he started.”

Serving as director for the Centre is Macklin’s first foray into administration, and she is proud to represent an interdisciplinary centre that has “a stellar reputation internationally and is unique in the field because it integrates criminology and sociolegal studies seamlessly.”

She has relied on the Centre’s relationship with Woodsworth College to ease her transition into her new role.

“We are closely connected to Woodsworth and its administration is really amazing at keeping us organized,” Macklin says. “As a new administrator, I’m on a steep learning curve. The College staff and faculty have been extremely helpful and my goal is to nurture that.”

“There is also a growing momentum toward moving our physical location to the Woodsworth precinct, because our current location is remote for undergraduates. A move would help integrate the undergraduates with the Centre as a whole.”

She believes that her new position is about “supporting and enhancing what is already a great place.” Although the Centre has a solid international reputation, Macklin wants to make sure the U of T community appreciates the Centre’s value by heightening awareness of its work within the University.

In addition, the Centre has an external review coming up. Macklin says, “This is not only an opportunity to be evaluated by our peers, but also enables us to showcase our work.

“I’m proud that we have abundant opportunities to engage with the wider public around issues related to criminal justice and governance. Our faculty and graduate students are frequently called upon to share their expertise. The Centre accomplishes an extraordinary amount for a small unit.” The cohort is just six full-time faculty and two teaching stream faculty.

Macklin is also eager to collaborate with other small units or others with a larger faculty cohort, such as the Faculty of Law or the criminology program at U of T Mississauga.

“I want to build and enhance our linkages,” she says.

Macklin began her own career teaching criminal law, but her research has focused on immigration and citizenship. She was involved in the high-profile case of Omar Khadr, the Canadian imprisoned at the United States’ notorious Guantanamo Bay prison for his role in a firefight against the Americans in Afghanistan when he was 15 years old. Macklin visited the prison twice to observe the military commission process, worked alongside his military defence counsel and represented Human Rights Watch in the Supreme Court Appeal of Khadr’s case.

“It was a long journey, but he is back in Canada as a free man,” Macklin says.

Macklin’s research interests include human rights law, immigration law and administrative law. Her most recent project focuses on evaluating the private sponsors of refugees to Canada, in order to better understand who they are, why they sponsor refugees and what impact it has on the sponsors’ personal lives. ■



“I’m proud that we have abundant opportunities to engage with the wider public around issues related to criminal justice and governance. Our faculty and graduate students are frequently called upon to share their expertise. The Centre accomplishes an extraordinary amount for a small unit.”

GOMEZ DIRECTS THE FUTURE COURSE AT RESPECTED LABOUR POLICY CENTRE

BY ELAINE SMITH

WHEN PROFESSOR RAFAEL GOMEZ

decided to return to Canada from London, where he was teaching at the London School of Economics, it was his good fortune to find a teaching position available at the very place where he'd earned his master's degree and doctorate: U of T's Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources (CIRHR).

At the time Gomez accepted the position, it was a joint appointment to the Centre and Woodsworth College. "My heart was back here," says Gomez. "I taught employment relations to both undergraduate and graduate students. It was a classroom forum that let you discuss big ideas, allowing you to dig deeper into issues."

Today, following in the footsteps of two of his mentors, Professor Emeritus Morley Gunderson and the late Professor Noah Melt, Gomez is director of the Centre and proud of its heritage.

"I'm eager to live up to the expectations of my mentors and keep the Centre vibrant," says Gomez, who was appointed as director in 2015. "It has a major role in shaping labour market policy across Canada at the federal and provincial levels. The influence of our graduates is spread far and wide."

Gomez aims to emulate Gunderson in keeping the Centre as unbiased and free of ideology as possible. He has sought to create a learning environment of integrity and honesty.

"With all the changes taking place in the world of work, it is important to produce students ready to study these challenges and come up with relevant policies," he says.

"We have very strong ties to Woodsworth, and the College has been very supportive of us," Gomez adds. "The College maintains our undergraduate program office and provides us with superb administrative staff. We

also co-host two annual conferences focused on labour markets and industrial relations."

Gomez is eager to keep the Centre vital and is in the process of hiring new faculty, in order to ensure that fresh ideas are constantly injected. CIRHR continues to introduce new undergraduate courses, including *Why We Work*, which focuses on the changing aspects of work through history. He has also encouraged contact with alumni and continues to plan events that draw them back to campus to maintain their connections.

Looking outward, the Centre is in the process of creating relationships with similar centres, including Queen's University, Ryerson University and Cornell University. "It's important to build bridges and share knowledge," Gomez says.

In addition to his teaching and administrative duties, Gomez continues to conduct his own research. One recent focus is industrial democratization.

"I look at how important it is to bring democratic values to the workplace; otherwise society becomes less and less democratic," he says. "We co-hosted a public conference on workplace democracy last year with Woodsworth and the Broadbent Institute. It was interesting to explore how union members tend to volunteer and vote more, being more engaged than employees without those institutional voice structures at work."

Gomez expresses great pride in the work being done by the Centre.

"We're very well known in the industrial relations and human resources communities," he says. "We've always had exceptional students. People are drawn to work in these fields because they are passionate about it. The study of work is the study of human nature, and what we learn can make our workplaces and the world a better place." ■

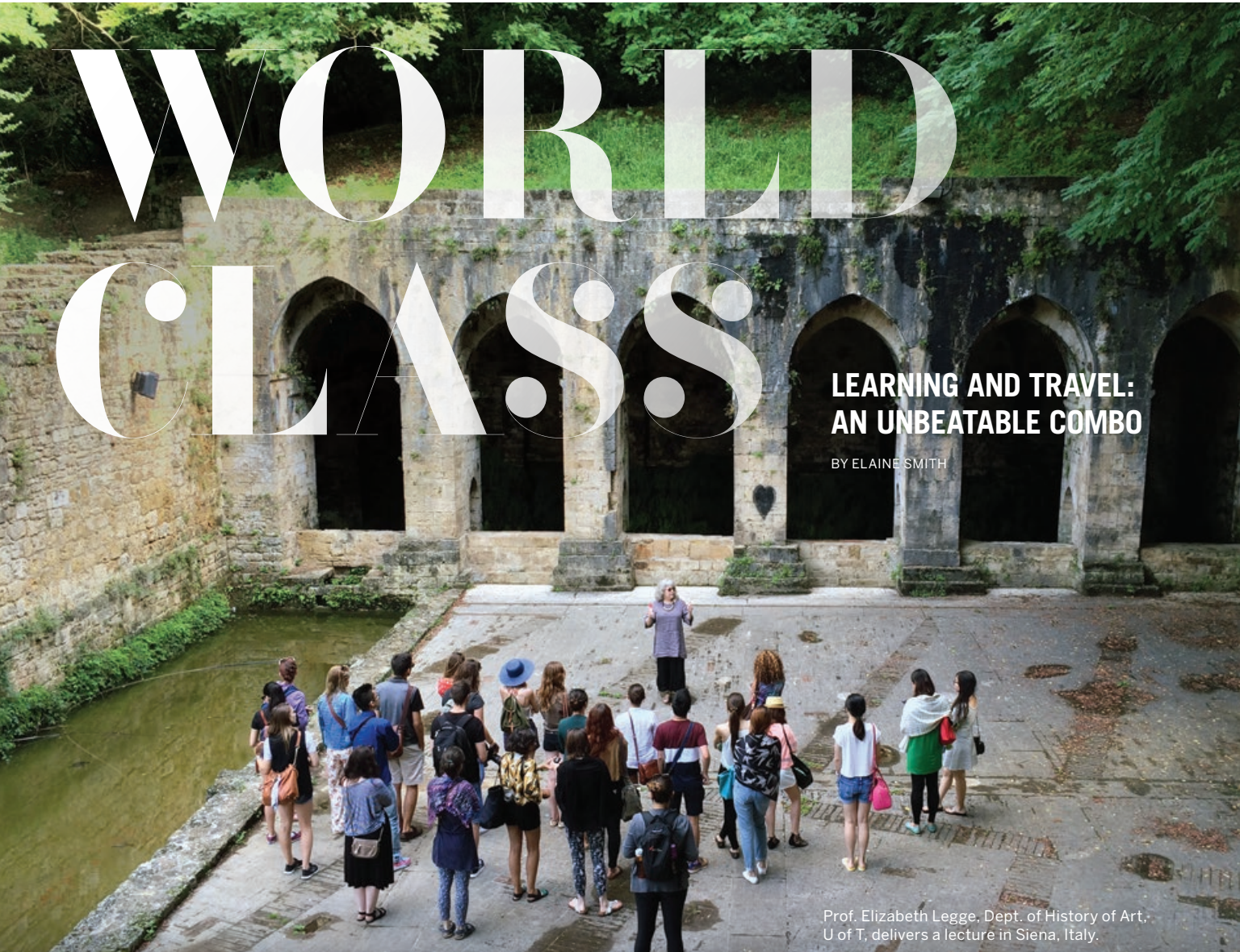


"With all the changes taking place in the world of work, it is important to produce students ready to study these challenges and come up with relevant policies."

WORLD CLASSES

**LEARNING AND TRAVEL:
AN UNBEATABLE COMBO**

BY ELAINE SMITH



Prof. Elizabeth Legge, Dept. of History of Art, U of T, delivers a lecture in Siena, Italy.



Students on an excursion in Tours, France.



Celebrating freedom at the Berlin Wall.

ATTENDING CLASSES in a restored Second World War army barracks wasn't something that Madeline Torrie had anticipated as part of her U of T coursework, but the University's Summer Abroad program, run by Woodsworth College, gave her that opportunity.

The summer following her third year, Torrie found herself at the American College of Thessaloniki in northern Greece, taking a course entitled *Comparative Politics: Greece, the Balkans and the European Union*.

"It was very interesting from a historical perspective," says Torrie, who graduated in 2017 with an international relations specialist and history major, "and it helped me going into the following year of courses, because I'd been to the countries I was learning about. I had perspective and insight into them."

The Summer Abroad program began in 1972. Today, there are 20 programs running in 18 countries; 35 to 45 courses take place each year, with an average class size of 22 students.

"It's a nice opportunity for students to have a small class experience," says Sarah Witol, director of the program. "It's also a nice way to travel because you still have the support of a group."

William Watson, professor of criminology, teaches a summer course about the history of the criminal justice system in Britain and Canada, based at Oxford University. He says the small classes are also enjoyable for the professors.

"We get to know the students very well in a short period of time and they get to know us, too," he says. "Performance improves because we can work together closely."

The courses last three to six weeks and earn the students a full course credit. A number of students receive bursaries

from Woodsworth, and the Faculty of Arts & Science also offers study abroad awards. Certain students are also eligible to receive Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) grants."

"We try to connect with students early in their university careers so they can plan for the expense of a course overseas," says Witol, who hopes to raise the funds for additional bursaries.

U of T faculty members propose and teach most of the courses. Each course draws on aspects of its unique location: for example, ecology and conservation in Ecuador, and Medieval art and architecture in France. Acceptance into a course is competitive; students must have a good academic record during the past years, select a class that is a good fit for their course of study and write a personal statement explaining why they want to participate.

"We're looking for people who give thoughtful responses, not just those who want to travel," says Witol.

There are field trips built into each course, but many students also travel on weekends or stay on to travel afterward. The travel augments the personal growth they gain from experiencing another culture.

"We are raising a generation of global citizens who are able to see their studies in a different context and are more aware of global issues," says Witol. "They are also comfortable in other cultures, because you have to adapt and be flexible and agile."

"They also become more independent, especially those who haven't lived away from home before. They learn to solve problems and deal with uncertainty." ■



Exploring Stonehenge, as part of the Oxford, England program.

TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

Grappling with the Past to Find a Brighter Future

BY ELAINE SMITH

When the federal Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) issued its final report and recommendations, the University of Toronto immediately took up the challenge of exploring its own strengths and failures in addressing Indigenous issues and concerns.

THIS PAST JANUARY, the University's own Truth and Reconciliation Steering Committee released its final report, *Wecheehetowin* (which means "Working Together" in Cree), with 34 calls to action.

The University of Toronto "acknowledges responsibility in contributing to the plight of Indigenous peoples" and is taking its first steps in the process of reconciliation," says President Meric Gertler.

"In acknowledging the truth, the University community embraces the opportunity, and indeed its responsibility, to join with Indigenous communities in the collective process of reconciliation."

For Indigenous students, these words have been a long time coming. As the University explores ways to address the steering committee's calls to action, two Indigenous students at Woodsworth College shared their own stories and perspectives on reconciliation.

AUDREY ROCHETTE

Audrey Rochette, who earned an honours bachelor of arts with distinction from Woodsworth College in 2016, is currently pursuing a master's degree in the Department for the Study of Religion, where she is exploring the decolonization

of public spaces, focusing specifically on Canadian museums.

"My passion for what I'm doing comes from a desire for people to be educated about Indigenous language and culture," says Rochette, who is Ojibwa from Whitesand First Nation, north of Thunder Bay, Ontario.

"Museums are sites of education and can be powerful tools to learning about other languages and cultures."

Rochette also serves as the Crane clan leader and governance leader for the University of Toronto Native Students'

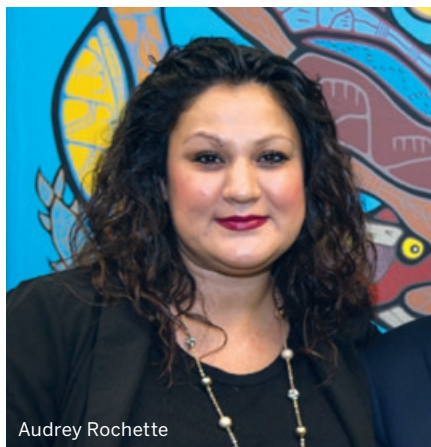
Association (NSA). The association uses a traditional governance model, and its goal is to spread cultural awareness across campus and beyond through social functions, advocacy and educational events.

Last year, the association launched a petition to the dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science requesting a mandatory Indigenous Studies course for all incoming students. The petition received strong support from Indigenous leaders, politicians, educators and the U of T community. Rochette continues to work on this initiative, as co-chair of the Indigenous Teaching and Learning Working Group. The final report, which can be found on the A&S website, calls for increased Indigenous content across all faculties so students graduate with some understanding of Indigenous culture and knowledge.

Rochette, the proud daughter of a residential school survivor, is dedicated to ensuring that undergraduate Arts & Science students are aware of this dark legacy in Canada.

"For me, if in five years, students can leave the University knowing what residential schools are, it will be a step towards reconciliation," she says. "It's my own personal journey and mission."

She also firmly believes that "Education is a tool to make changes for our future. It's important to share our language and culture." Rochette feels it's important for new Indigenous students



Audrey Rochette



Mársi, thá huná, "Cutting Away Culture" is one of four paintings in Lisa Boivin's Residential School Series.
Lisa Boivin, WDW'16, is a member of the Deninu Kue First Nation. She is an interdisciplinary artist and a MSc student at the Rehabilitation Sciences Institute at the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine.

to see themselves reflected within the institution so they are empowered to continue the work of reconciliation.

Woodsworth College has played a large part in Rochette's own journey. She entered U of T as a mature student through The Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program.

"I came through the bridging program and felt isolated in my first year," she says. "Then I found the Woodsworth community, worked in the dean's office and found support. It made all the difference in the world to my academic success."

She also appreciates the support Woodsworth has shown to the NSA, collaborating on large events at Kruger Hall.

"Woodsworth is already showing support for the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action," says Rochette, who received the President's Outstanding Native Student of the Year award before graduating. "I found a home within Woodsworth that empowered me to be confident and achieve my educational dreams."

Rochette says, "My Woodsworth experience has advanced my educational goals, which in turn, has positively impacted my children."

Her oldest son will be entering university in 2017, and she is confident that her younger son will follow.

JULIE BLAIR

Julie Blair began studying at U of T Scarborough in 1992, but dropped out to pursue a diploma in fashion design at George Brown College. Twenty years later, she was tired of the fashion industry, and of supplementing her income with bartending, but she discovered that any job that paid more than minimum wage seemed to require a university degree.

"Bartending wasn't sustainable for me," Blair says. "I needed a lifestyle change."

She entered Woodsworth College in 2013 to try out a university course, enrolling in Introduction to Aboriginal Studies and soon discovered that she wanted to know more.

Blair signed on as a part-time Woodsworth College student and is now



finishing her final credit for graduation this summer; her major is Indigenous Studies. This fall, she will pursue her master's degree in the Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency program at U of T's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.

Blair leaves Woodsworth as the recipient of the Brookfield Peter F. Bronfman Gold Scholarship, one of the most prestigious awards at the College, which recognizes academic excellence contributions to the University and the community.

"I was pretty shocked to find out that I would receive this," Blair says. "Students with a certain GPA were encouraged to apply and I decided to do so at the last minute. It is helping me immensely in being able to go to graduate school."

Her personal journey, both in school and out, has been an interesting one. Blair came late to a thirst for Indigenous knowledge. She is the daughter of an Anishinaabe father and a mother of Dutch descent. Her parents separated when she was young, and Blair was raised by her mother.

"I wanted to know more about the Indigenous culture, but we were estranged from my dad's family," she says. "To learn more, you need to build relationships. People don't welcome you until they know who you are and what you're about."

"It was hard not knowing the protocols, but I started to go to powwows and other events – I just kept showing up, and people began to accept me."

She joined Indigenous organizations at U of T, serving on the executive of the Indigenous Studies Student Union for the past two years, most recently as finance coordinator. She also found the perfect part-time job – a position as administrative assistant to Professor Suzanne Stewart, who served as special advisor for Aboriginal Education to the dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). Blair is the coordinator of the Indigenous Education Network, which helped her get to know people in the Indigenous community. In addition, she also joined Stewart's research team, which focused on Aboriginal mental health.

As a member of OISE's Truth and Reconciliation committee, Blair has given a lot of thought to how U of T could improve its commitment to Indigenous concerns.

"A lot of Indigenous teaching is experiential, so I'd like to see an outdoor space or a teaching lodge established," she says. "We have two medicine gardens on campus, but they aren't even large enough to support the Indigenous student body. I'd like people outside the Indigenous community to be able to experience the gardens and access those medicinal plants."

Blair believes strongly that everyone at U of T should undergo cultural competency training "sooner, rather than later."

"Between the revelation of truth and the process of reconciliation comes education. And a new way of looking at the world," she observes. "This became apparent to me in my own journey. I would like to see more knowledge of Indigenous people infused into every course. I want people to understand the Indigenous perspective."

"Justice Murray Sinclair, head of the TRC, says that reconciliation takes a long time. It's a process, and it's about establishing and maintaining relationships. It takes work."

It is work that Blair would like to see continue at Woodsworth College, within U of T, and in society as a whole. ■

FRESH PERSPECTIVES

BY LARRY KROTZ

There is more than one way for students to learn during their time at university. The time-honoured standard is to attend classes and lectures, do research and produce papers. But what about the opportunity to be taken under the wing of someone you can admire, someone whose career trajectory you might want to emulate, whose experiences you might want to learn from? A mentor. Here is one example of what a successful mentor/mentee relationship looks like, established through the Alumni Student Mentorship Program (ASMP).

THROUGHOUT THE WINTER of 2016, Neilashi Gunanayagam met six times with her mentor Sanjana Mitra, a 2011 Woodsworth graduate with a bachelor of science, and a master of public health. At the time, Sanjana was working as research coordinator for the Ontario HIV Treatment Network. Neilashi was a fourth-year science student, slated to graduate at the 2016 spring convocation with a bachelor of science. She entered the mentorship relationship hoping to better understand the career options that might be open to her, and how best to pursue them.

Many colleges are seeking to establish relationships between their successful alumni working in various sectors and students who aspire to enter those fields. The alumni act as role models who are willing to share insights and experience with their mentees, including the unexpected difficulties one might face. The students are hoping to get a feel for what both the rewards and the challenges might be as they move forward with their lives and careers after graduation. The college's task is to make the matches, after careful vetting and interviewing, set the parameters, and let the magic of connection happen.

Woodsworth initiated the ASMP in 2013 and has had 147 match-ups in the years since. One such match-up was Neilashi and Sanjana. Neilashi was

initially interviewed by the coordinators of the program, where she expressed her interest in not only a science-oriented career, but one that would involve her with people. "I love working with people," she says. In short order, she received an email with an introduction to Sanjana. They met and immediately hit it off. "Sanjana got me very excited," says Neilashi. "She looked over my CV and discussed everything, from places I might volunteer – places where she had contacts – to graduate programs I might want to look into."

Through their meetings, Neilashi felt confirmed in her desire to combine her interest in teaching with an eventual career in public health. Sanjana steered her towards graduate schools including



Neilashi Gunanayagam

some with emerging programs and orientations towards the developing world. One useful, and surprising, bit of advice, says Neilashi, was support for her notion that the year's break she wanted to take before graduate school could be a good thing. "There is no need to be in a rush, Sanjana confirmed for me. Be certain what you're passionate about before pursuing it."

For Sanjana, this was the third time she'd been a mentor. "Now that I have some experience, it's my pleasure to share whatever information and strategies I might have," she says. "I remember being in the same position as Neilashi, and found it most helpful to talk to a recent grad." ■



Celebrating success at the program closing reception.

GRADUATED AND LAUNCHED

A Sampling of Woodsworth's 2017 Grads

BY LARRY KROTZ



ZAK JONES is continuing his studies at U of T and entering a master's program in creative writing. A poet, he is excited about the workshop possibilities this two-year program offers and is already planning a "full-length novel in verse" for his thesis. His long-term plan is to become a professor, which is not surprising since Zak considers himself to have been the beneficiary of good teaching. He entered Woodsworth at age 25 through The Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program, and feels indebted to the faculty, saying, "I couldn't have figured it out on my own." Zak was one of the 2017 winners of the Bronfman Leadership award – he calls it the "vote of confidence" that gave him the boost he needed to finish his degree.



ABDULLAH KHAN is graduating with two options in his pocket. He will first spend a year at Oxford getting a master of science in Global Governance and Diplomacy, working on a thesis about the India-Pakistan dispute over the Kashmir region. Then he will return to U of T to study law. For Abdullah, an important support while at Woodsworth was the Academic Writing Centre; he had studied engineering in Pakistan and admits he "had no idea how to write papers." Another key support was the Alumni Students Mentorship Program, which matched him with an attorney. Their interactions helped him realize that he "could make the biggest impact on the world by becoming a lawyer."



VITHU RANJAN leaves Woodsworth with a degree in criminology and has applied for a job working with young offenders at the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. In the future he might pursue a master of social work and a career in law enforcement, but right now he feels he "will get the most enjoyment by helping youth." What helped to shape Vithu's career choice was his experience at Woodsworth where he served as a student liaison, and a don in the residence. Through those roles, "I realized how much I enjoyed working with young people." Also important to his experience was being matched with a former police officer through the College's mentorship program.

Our students, past and present, describe Woodsworth as a warm and inviting learning environment. Whether one is a commuter student or living in residence, there is immediate and ongoing access to a wide array of programs and services, all of which result in a rich and unforgettable university experience.



JACQUELYN LAURENDA came to Woodsworth in her mid-thirties – and already a grandmother – through The Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program (ABP). Jacquelyn defines the ABP not as a ‘second’ but a ‘first chance’. With her father in the navy, she had a peripatetic childhood and was home-schooled. Though she had “written hundreds of poems and stories,” she had never written an essay. Entry into degree studies in English changed all that, and Jacquelyn’s academic development is set to continue as she commences a graduate program in English at U of T this fall. According to Jacquelyn, the support she received along the way was “immeasurable, I feel everyone at Woodsworth is like family.” The icing on the cake was her selection in 2017 as one of the winners of the Brookfield Peter F. Bronfman Leadership Scholarship.



JINGRU (JENNY) ZHANG came to Canada from Shanghai at the age of four, settling in Windsor, Ontario, when her father was appointed as professor of neuroscience at the university there. After high school Jenny opted to move to Toronto, seeking “the opportunity to grow as a person.” The University of Toronto appealed because of its academic program, and Woodsworth College appealed because of its residence, which is reputed to be “the best on the campus.” Having earned an honours bachelor of arts, Jenny has now landed a job in the field of her choice as marketing coordinator for an international financial services company based in Toronto. Along with her studies at Woodsworth, Jenny was a porter in the residence and coordinated the mentorship program for the alumni office. Those two experiences, she says, “prepared me to enter the workforce.”



NOVERA KHAN has started law school at the University of Windsor hoping to specialize in public policy and constitutional law. What she wants, ultimately, is to find herself in a position to affect government policy around issues like immigration and refugees. Novera has first-hand experience with these issues, having come to Canada from Pakistan with her family in 2013. She immediately entered U of T and began demonstrating her leadership skills. During middle school back in Pakistan, she had been president of the student body. At Woodsworth College she was elected president of the Students’ Association in 2016. “Policy,” she says, “became my passion.” At Woodsworth she also served as an academic don, and in the Woodsworth Orientation for Life after Frosh (WOLF) program, helping to orient new students to academic life.

WOODSWORTH PROUD

A Silver Medallist in the 2017 Graduating Class

BY LARRY KROTZ

To fully appreciate Valeriya Mordvinova's achievement and the immense honour that goes with it, you have to try to imagine thousands of fellow fourth-year students writing their final papers and waiting for exam results. To receive the Governor General's Silver Medal signifies that you are in the top leadership ranks of that cohort.

One hundred and forty-four years ago, His Excellency, Lord Dufferin established the Governor General's Academic Medals in order to "encourage academic excellence across the nation." Today, an Academic Medal is one of the most prestigious awards a student in Canada can receive. The medals are awarded at four distinct levels: Bronze at the secondary school level; Collegiate Bronze at the post-secondary, diploma level; Silver at the undergraduate level; and Gold at the graduate level.

Valeriya is no stranger to this type of honour. Four years ago, she won a Bronze Medal, based on having the second highest high school average in the city of Ottawa. Still, the 22 year old claims she was surprised by her latest achievement. "I knew my marks were high but didn't think they were high enough to win a medal at U of T." (Because of its size the University is permitted three medals.)

Valeriya credits her success to a supportive home atmosphere where her parents, both recipients of academic awards back in Russia, encouraged academics as well as extra-curricular activities. She modestly asserts, "Winning an award gives one a temporary dose of dopamine. It will pass quickly. It is not where the rewards are in life." The graduate in economics is also a competitor in ballroom dancing. Following graduation from Woodsworth, she will commence a master's degree program in economics at the University of Toronto.



PHOTOS: GABBIGIARD, NEIL TA



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
WOODSWORTH COLLEGE

