



# YOUR REPORT ON PHILANTHROPY

2020 – 2021

*“Things we thought impossible can happen, sometimes quickly, when people work together.”*

~ Brett Fairbairn  
TRU President & Vice-Chancellor

# 02

## PHILANTHROPY MATTERS IN UNPRECEDENTED TIMES .02



We heard the words “unprecedented” and “new normal” over and over in 2020. There was an astonishing amount of change in a short period of time when COVID–19 was declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. Within days, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) suspended in-person learning and sent students, staff and faculty home to study and work remotely. We stayed home for more than a year to keep people safe. Students were most affected by new challenges in finances and wellbeing. They had to adapt to new ways of learning and were disproportionately affected by job loss when businesses closed their doors.

The pandemic up–ended society, and this place of learning had a lot to learn. What student needs are emerging with new modes of education delivery? Where can we support research continuity, virtually? Who in the region needs our help to reskill or upskill? How can we redirect additional TRU and donor funds to address student financial needs? How do we drive recovery?

TRU’s 50–year history as a hub for local, regional and international education includes 42 years of leadership in open and distance education. We had experience that helped us shift to remote learning and contribute to the province’s **Go Forward** guidelines for post-secondary institutions—and donors were ready to support where they could.

Our Limitless campaign was 85 percent complete at the onset of the pandemic, but we saw the most generosity from donors in the final months of our multi–year fundraising campaign. **While apart, our community came together.** As a supporter of TRU, you have leveraged the power of philanthropy to make the world a better place, especially in the darkest of times.

Every donation begins with a story. In these pages, you will find six stories to say philanthropy matters at TRU. For your generosity and partnership, TRU says thank you. **Kukwstsetsemc.**



Brett Fairbairn  
TRU President & Vice-Chancellor

## A MESSAGE FROM THE TRU President & Vice-Chancellor . 03

Stepping into 2020, the year ahead was positioned to be a big one for TRU. We were celebrating our 50th anniversary, concluding our Envision process to establish a new vision statement, and going strong on the Limitless campaign. Of course, what came next, we could not have predicted.

I am confident that we can draw very important lessons from our last year of pandemic experiences. For starters, we can have confidence in our ability to adapt, to innovate, and to find new ways of serving students—such as online counselling, which will become part of our ongoing ways of doing things. And here's another lesson: community matters.

Our university is a community, one that includes our students, alumni, and supporters. Our vision commits us to create a sense of belonging on our journey toward transformation. Community-mindedness is a value that guides us. In line with TRU values, our community supporters stepped up for emergency financial assistance to students, for outfitting our clinics in the Chappell Family Building for Nursing and Population Health, and much more, driving our Limitless campaign to success. We need this assistance to direct resources to student, pandemic and economic-recovery needs.

We are deeply grateful for the individuals, organizations and businesses that are helping students improve their futures. Thank you to the members of the TRU Foundation board who work to support education. Our university is fortunate to be invigorated by generosity from donors and volunteers. It's only with your help that we can be an engine for recovery and a gateway to possibilities.

Our university vision inspires us to achieve a recovery that is equitable, inclusive and sustainable. Guided by the Secwépemc concept of Kw'seltknéws (we are all related and interconnected with nature, each other, and all things), this means working with others to strengthen our communities and ensuring a post-secondary education remains accessible to all who seek it.

We are grateful for your support.

*Brett Fairbairn*

TRU President and Vice-Chancellor

# 03



Brad Bennett  
TRU Foundation President

## A MESSAGE FROM THE TRU Foundation President . 04

This was an important year for our community. Once again, the people of Kamloops and the region showed how they will step up when others are in need. In 2020-2021, the TRU Foundation helped distribute more money than ever before to students, giving out awards totalling \$1.8 million to support their education.

This was my fifth year on the TRU Foundation board, and it was my first year as TRU Foundation President. I witnessed the impact of donors when I attended my first awards ceremony years ago and was truly moved by the response from students, who showed immense gratitude for the support. That drove me to get involved with the TRU Foundation, which has championed charitable giving at TRU and raised funds for student awards for the last 38 years.

Today, the TRU Foundation's student assistance endowment sits at over \$30 million, and growing, to fund awards, scholarships and bursaries. That is thanks to generous donors who are making an investment in their community through students. People who live here have an attachment to this place, and they want to give back. They see an opportunity to do that through education and investing in young people to help continue building our community well into the future.

Education drives many of the key pieces that are essential to our growth and recovery post-pandemic. Thank you to all the donors who support education, to the members of the TRU Foundation board of directors for their leadership, and the hardworking TRU Advancement staff who advance philanthropy at TRU.

Sincerely,

*Brad Bennett*

TRU Foundation President

## TRU FOUNDATION BOARD

**Brad Bennett**, *President*

**Richard Heney**, *Vice-President*

**Mackenzie Kanigan**, *Treasurer*

**John Sparks**, *Secretary*

**Brian Daly**, *Vice-President, University Relations; Director*

**Tracy Christianson**, *Board of Governors Appointee*

**Vicci Ryan**, *Director*

**Maureen McCurdy**, *Director*

**Lori Ottem**, *Director*

**Marie Baptiste**, *Director*

**Jack Miller**, *Director*

## TRU ADVANCEMENT STAFF

**Kim Cassar Torreggiani**,  
*Associate Vice-President, Advancement*

**Alisa Coquet**, *Executive Director of Development  
SoBE and TRU World*

**Bradley Bostock**, *Director of Development  
Indigenous Education; Faculty of Arts;  
Faculty of Social Work and Education*

**Chris Visser**, *Director of Development  
Faculty of Science*

**Diana Major**, *Director of Development  
Annual Giving and Advancement Services*

**Geralyn Alain**, *Director of Development  
School of Trades & Technology; Faculty of Adventure,  
Culinary Arts and Tourism; Athletics*

**Marilyn Campbell Davis**, *Director of Development  
School of Nursing & Respiratory Therapy*

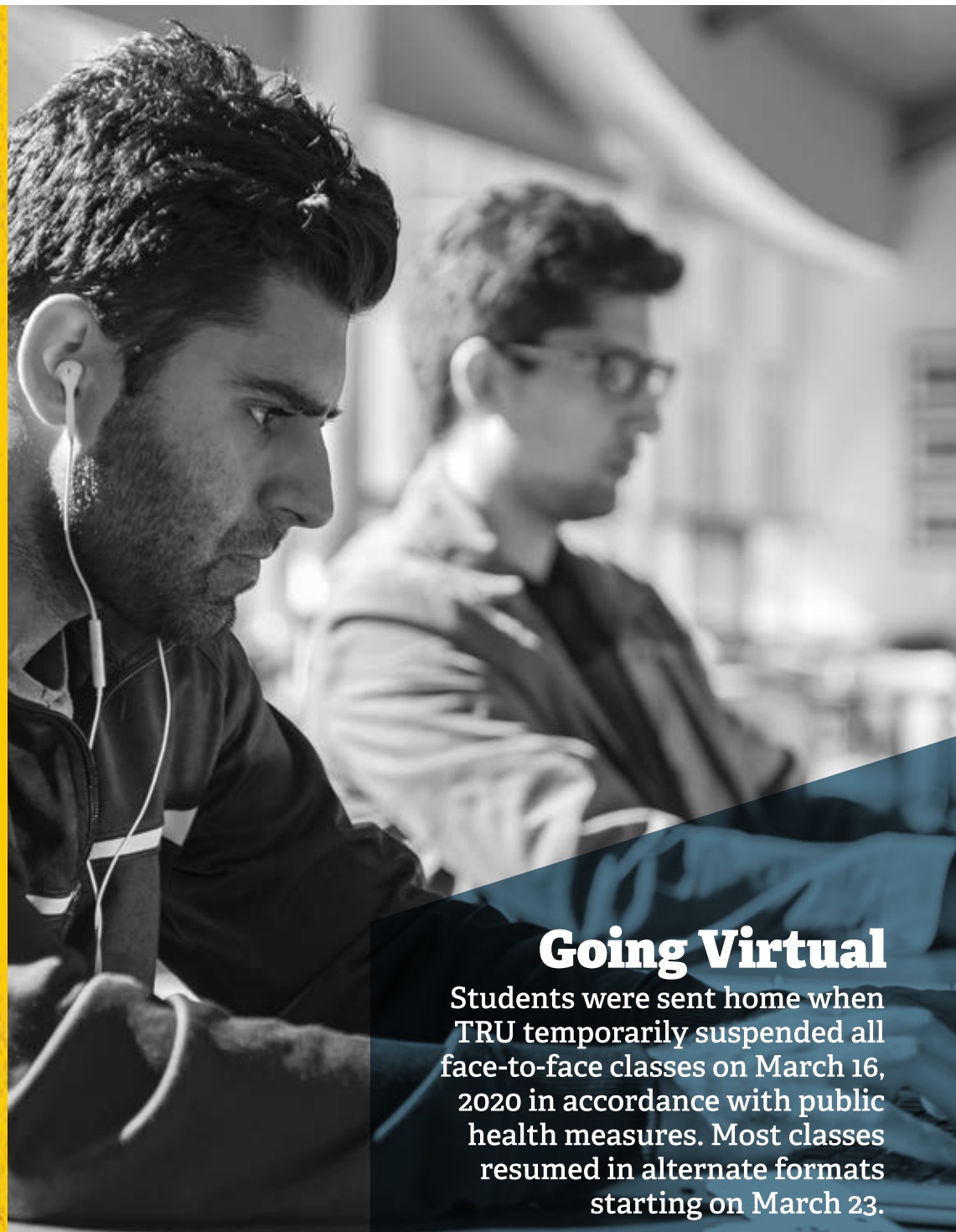
**Nena Jovic-Andrejevic**, *Director of Development  
Planned Giving and Stewardship*

**Sarah Sandholm** *Director of Development  
Faculty of Law*

# 04

# OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

# 05



## Going Virtual

Students were sent home when TRU temporarily suspended all face-to-face classes on March 16, 2020 in accordance with public health measures. Most classes resumed in alternate formats starting on March 23.



## RESILIENCY CAMPAIGN

\$53,800 was raised for the Resiliency Fund, introduced in July 2020, creating 107 bursaries for first-year students beginning academic studies during the pandemic.



## DAY OF GIVING

\$50,390 was raised in 36 hours during Day of Giving 2020 on Nov. 5 and 6. Donors—including alumni, long-time supporters and new contributors—chose from a variety of funds to make their donation.



## TRUly UNITED

500+ TRU staff and faculty gave during the annual internal campaign, donating \$181,000 to support the TRU Foundation and United Way to help people in our community pursue an education.



## DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

\$13,205 was given during the Dollars for Scholars 50/50 raffle in March 2021 in support of bursaries for first-year students. Half went to students, half went to one lucky winner.



## LIMITLESS CAMPAIGN

4,500 donors drove the Limitless campaign to the finish line on March 31, 2021, contributing \$53.7 million to TRU's first ever multi-year comprehensive fundraising campaign.



## TRU FOUNDATION GALA

300+ donors joined us online on Feb 6, 2021, for the TRU Foundation Gala: A Community Affair co-sponsored by BMO and BDO Canada. Earls Kitchen + Bar, The Noble Pig, Bright Eye Brewing, TRU Culinary Arts, ROMEOs Kitchen + Spirits, the TRU Conference Centre and Mitchie's Delivery brought the gala to everyone at home.

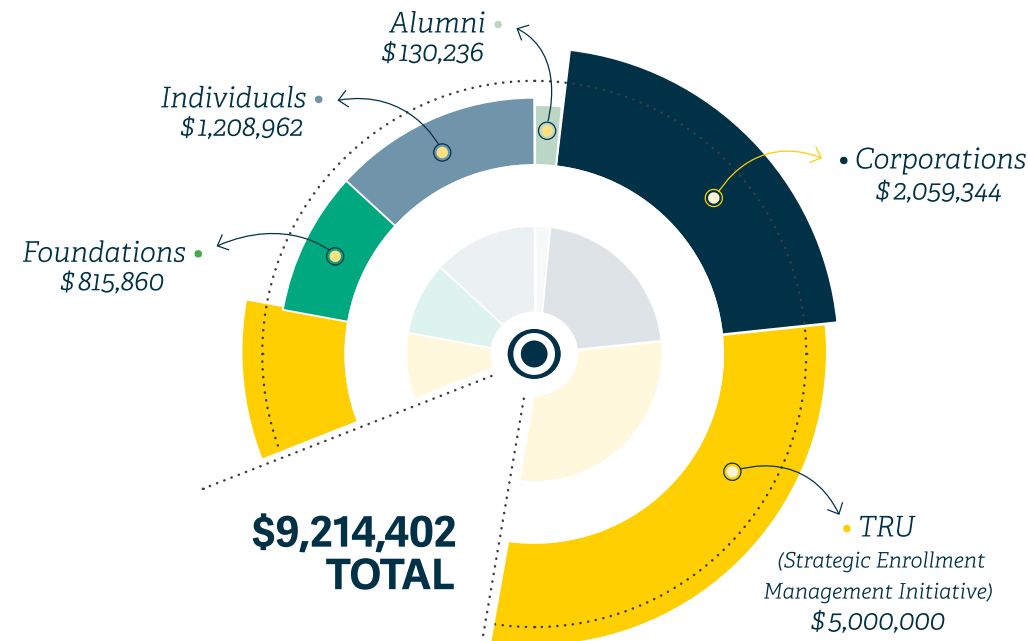
# 07

## 20.21 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

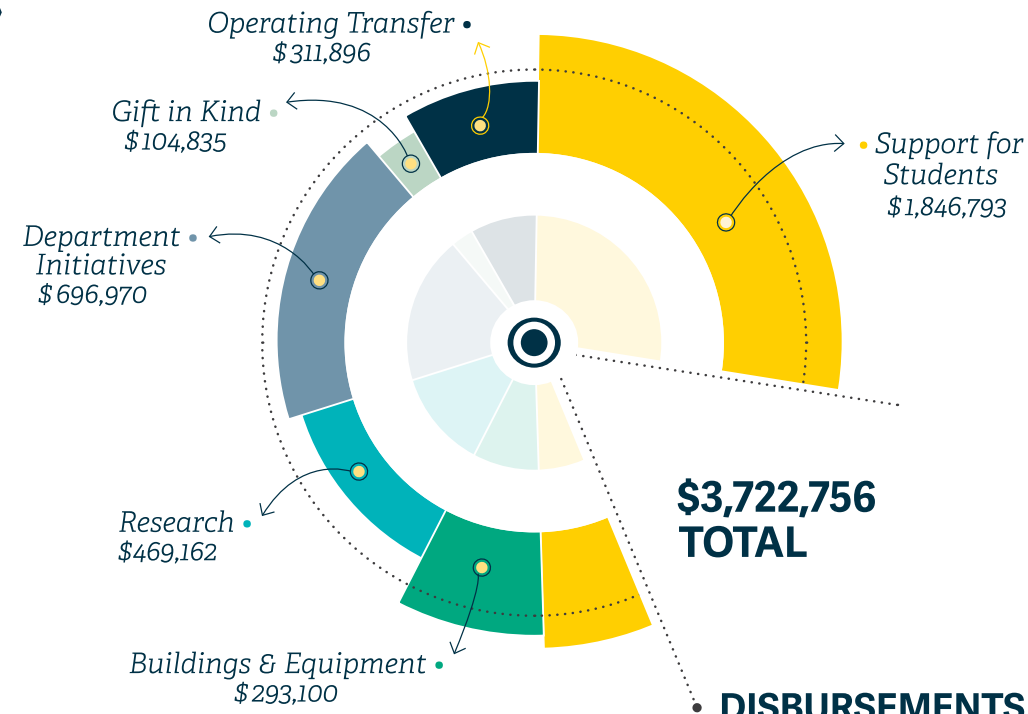
**\$9,214,402**  
TOTAL FUNDS RAISED

**\$122,294**  
OPERATING EXPENSES

**1,339** Students received donor-funded awards



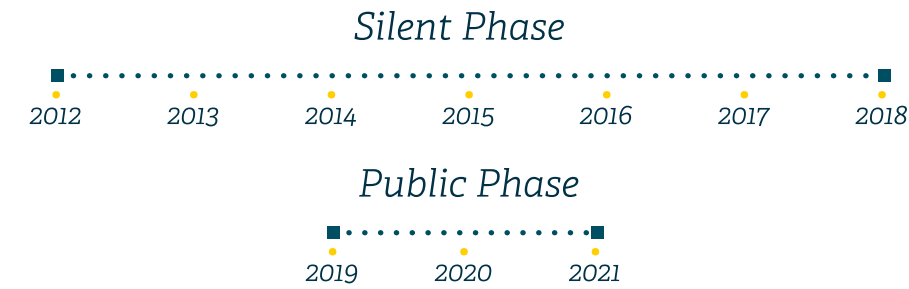
• GIVING BY CATEGORY



• DISBURSEMENTS

Figures based on March 31, 2021 unaudited financial statements.

## LIMITLESS CAMPAIGN



**4,500**  
Donors

**21%**  
Alumni Donors

**\$53.7 MILLION**

Most funds went to students

**\$33.7M**  
Student Support

**\$9M**  
Research & Innovation

**\$11M**  
Capital Projects & Equipment

### AWARDS

**289**  
NEW Annual Awards

**131**  
NEW Endowed Awards  
*For future students, in perpetuity*

Campaign Co-Chairs Jack Wong, Fiona Chan, Bruce Gysel



# 08

# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS . 09



09

## Donors and alumni step up to provide emergency support

Ian Laurrabaquio finished her first year of university without setting foot in a traditional classroom. The Bachelor of Science student, and NorKam Senior Secondary graduate, was one of 107 students who received a bursary in Fall 2020 through the First-Year Student Resiliency Fund, solely supported by donors and the TRU Foundation.

It was created to assist students like Laurrabaquio who were beginning their post-secondary education on shaky economic ground, in hopes they would not be forced to delay their education when they needed it most. Laurrabaquio came to Kamloops from Mexico to attend high school and has not seen her family in more than two years.

*“COVID-19 changed my way of seeing life because it made me open my eyes and see what is actually happening around the world,”*

said Laurrabaquio, one of the faces of the Limitless campaign.

*“I want to say thank you for all the help and support that I had received over this year of hard work.”*

The First-Year Student Resiliency Fund was one of two donor funds created during the pandemic to support students. The magnitude COVID-19 was unlike anything TRU had experienced before, and it caused immense academic disruption.

In the wake of campus closures, TRU worked to identify and address the emerging critical needs of students. With waves of layoffs and job losses, their financial position became increasingly precarious. Since TRU serves a disproportionate number of individuals who are the first in their family to pursue post-secondary education, addressing food insecurity, matters of mental health, and support amidst isolation were significant priorities. Post-secondary students surveyed by Statistics Canada reported delays or cancellations of work

placements, concerns they would not complete their credential as planned, and 58 percent said they were very or extremely concerned about their financial situation.

In Spring 2020, we introduced the Emergency Student Support Fund, which provided emergency bursaries to students facing urgent financial crises. In August 2020, we introduced the First-Year Student Resiliency Fund, creating bursaries for first-year TRU students. In total, donors contributed \$66,000 to finance these awards.

Former Dean of Education and Social Work, Airini, championed the First-Year Resiliency Fund with a donation of \$10,000. The Alumni Advisory Council contributed \$10,000 and the TRU Foundation provided matching funds of \$25,000.

“I was inspired by Dean Airini’s generous donation,” wrote ‘09 TRU alum Alex McLellan.

“Like so many members of the TRU community, she has consistently demonstrated a commitment to realizing the promise of education to empower people and strengthen

communities. I want to support this promise too. The First-Year Student Resiliency Fund is a further example of how working together, putting people first, and starting from empathy is our strength. This pandemic has made this strength clear, and I hope we never lose sight of that going forward.”

“We want current students to know they are part of a big TRU family,” said Jordan Hirschmiller, co-chair of the TRU Alumni Advisory Council. “Many of us benefited from awards when we were students, so we understand how impactful this can be. That feeling of support goes a long way and we want to provide that reassurance for today’s students.”



## WHAT RECIPIENTS SAID . 10

*“I had to move home with my parents. I am immunocompromised due to cancer treatments and so have been unable to work during the pandemic. Thank you, thank you so much. It means so much to have some of the financial stress lifted off of my shoulders.”*

*Emma Nichols, Education Assistant and Community Support Work Certificat*

*“I was laid off from my job in March of 2020. This made the decision to attend school a weary one, but I made the decision to attend despite the challenges. Contributions from donors has enabled not only myself, but many other students, to pursue an education in a very trying time. This year has been tumultuous for many different reasons, and your charitable act to continue giving in a time where its easier to be selfish does not go unappreciated.”*

*Hunter Aiken, Bachelor of Arts*

10

## PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR HONOURING TRUTH, RECONCILIATION AND RIGHTS . 11



# 11

### Funding that supports Indigenous students and Indigenous teachings

Briana Tetlich wanted to be a nurse. In her remote community of Old Crow, home to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in Yukon, nurses are the primary health-care providers and a crucial thread in the fabric of the community.

*“I’ve had some negative experiences where I felt judged or unheard. But I’ve also had amazing experiences where I felt like the nurses cared and made an effort to understand our community and our culture. Those nurses are the ones who inspired me to go into nursing and inspired the type of nurse I want to be.”*

In 2020, Tetlich completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at TRU and returned to Old Crow to live and work, serving a fly-in community she uniquely understands. Tetlich received the Cheryl Zawaduk Rural Award in the fourth year of her nursing degree, a financial gift that helped her relocate to Whitehorse for her practicum.

Self-identified Indigenous students represent 10 percent of TRU’s student population. BMO Financial Group announced in December 2020 a donation of \$750,000 to TRU that supports students like Tetlich by funding more scholarships, bursaries and awards for Indigenous health-care students and undergraduate researchers. Two new scholarships funded by the late Mike Wiegele for students from the Simpcw First Nation were also awarded for the first time in fall 2020.

*“Being an Indigenous student from a rural community, we’re learning a whole new lifestyle and culture when we go to university.”*

“I think [the funding] will greatly benefit the students and our future workers and leaders. We need more Indigenous representation in all fields, especially health care, to be able to share our perspective and share our reality and get our point of view across, because there is so much work to be done to break down those barriers,” Tetlich said.

TRU and Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc (TteS) renewed a partnership agreement in

Spring 2021 that outlines how TRU will work with TteS to address education programs and services, implement the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and ensure that all education practices—programs, services, faculty, students, governance, and research—will be respectful to the traditional territory of Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc. TRU also created a \$1 million endowment to support up to 16 awards per year for TteS students, with the first awards being available in summer 2022.

*“Education is a fundamental step towards a healthy and prosperous community,”*

said Tk’emlúps Kukpi7 Rosanne Casimir with the announcement of the endowment. “One which is inclusive and provides for the necessary tools needed for today’s growing communities and tomorrow’s changing landscapes.”

BMO’s contribution supported two initiatives: New awards in the School of Nursing for Indigenous students across nursing and health-care assistant programs in Kamloops and Williams Lake; and a new endowment for undergraduate Knowledge Makers.



### TOMORROW’S KNOWLEDGE MAKERS . 12

The Knowledge Makers is an Indigenous student research network that involves TRU faculty, staff, deans and Elders working together to mentor Indigenous students in learning to conduct and publish Indigenous research. It was introduced in 2015 and recognized with a national teaching excellence award in 2019 for its commitment to Indigenous-led research.

Tia Stanley studied her own identity as a knowledge maker in 2020, while completing her Bachelor of Social Work. She grew up away from her ancestral community—the Saulteaux of the Cote First Nation. Through the Knowledge Makers, she learned who she is as an Indigenous woman, producing research on her identity and struggle as someone who is part Indigenous, part settler and part Chinese.

“The money put toward Indigenous students and their ability to bring their lived experience of their Indigenous culture to the academic world increases the wealth of knowledge at TRU,” Stanley said. “It places value on Indigenous ways of learning. It’s about creating space and opportunity for Indigenous students to show what they already know.”

The Knowledge Makers brings together up to 15 Indigenous undergraduate students yearly, each of them publishing a research paper in the Knowledge Makers academic journal, now in its fifth edition.

# 12

## PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY . 13



### Opening the Chappell Family Building for Nursing and Population Health

TRU opened its newest academic building in September 2020 with community and government support. The Chappell Family Building for Nursing and Population Health was prioritized to train in-demand health-care workers in BC. It has state-of-the-art practice environments and technology to keep up with changing health education.

In addition to an \$8-million investment from the Province of British Columbia, donors who supported the Limitless campaign contributed significantly toward the \$37.2-million project. Among them are Dr. Sherman Jen, the Stollery Charitable Foundation, Spencer and Janet Bryson, Ken Lepin, and four Kamloops Rotary Clubs, including Daybreak Rotary, Rotary West, Aurora Rotary and Kamloops Rotary.

Donors provided support for capital and equipment costs, such as funding for high-fidelity mannequins that included pediatric models. This lifelike, state-of-the-art equipment helps students learn specialized skills to treat young patients.

*“TRU will have capacity to improve access for students, improve transition into the labour market, enrich research opportunities and simulate the full spectrum of health-care environments,”*

said TRU President and Vice-Chancellor Brett Fairbairn upon opening the building.

The innovatively designed Chappell Family Building prioritizes student needs. With it, lab space for the School of Nursing has now tripled from 16 to 48 beds. The three-storey building includes high-tech patient simulation labs, a home-visit lab, seminar rooms, student lounges, research space, breakout rooms and a 60-person classroom. It supports collaborative learning for interdisciplinary teams while fostering creativity and innovation.

*“This new building will transform how my classmates and I learn to be the future health-care workers in BC. We are excited to use this new facility,”*

said TRU nursing student Lisa Bonang.

Critical to student success is the Dr. Sherman Jen High-Fidelity Simulation Centre. Four simulation labs equipped with computerized mannequins and reflecting real health-care settings will

better prepare students for working conditions and support research designed to improve health outcomes.

Faculty member Wendy McKenzie said TRU’s new lab facilities are unique in nursing education. Faculty now have resources and technology to simulate a wide range of scenarios and observe student responses.

*“This new space for the TRU School of Nursing will help us continue to educate and develop world-class health-care workers. This space will enable students to be work ready once they are done their program,”*

said TRU School of Nursing Dean Rani Srivastava.

The Dr. Sherman Jen High-Fidelity Simulation Centre is also home to Super Tory, a lifelike infant mannequin newly purchased in summer 2020 with dollars raised at the TRU Foundation Gala in February 2020. For the first time at TRU, Super Tory will allow nursing students to experience simulated pediatric emergencies.

By providing a home for the School of Nursing, the new facility brings together under one roof, students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Health Care Assistant and Master of Nursing programs.



### OPENING THE WELLS GRAY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTRE . 14

An additional long-term capital project came to fruition in 2020 with the opening of the Wells Gray Education and Research Centre north of Clearwater, an area known for its globally unique biodiversity. The new four-season facility is wheelchair accessible with classroom and dining spaces, sleeping quarters for 20, and accommodates year-round visits to the area. The Friends of Wells Gray Park have been instrumental over the years in the development of the site, in addition to donors such as Ken Lepin, Trevor Goward, Helen Knight, the Wells Gray Community Forest Corporation, Roland and Anne Neave and TRU’s Faculty of Science. Many other generous donations have also been received over the years from valued community partners.

### ABOUT THE CHAPPELL FAMILY . 14

With the Chappell Family name, TRU is honouring a private donation of \$1.5 million and celebrating the legacy of Catherine and Edward Chappell. Catherine and Edward met in Kamloops and were married in 1938. Catherine completed her nurse training at Royal Inland Hospital and worked as a registered nurse in the BC communities of Kamloops, Michel, and Fernie and became a public-health nurse. Edward worked for the Crowsnest Coal Company and was a passionate community volunteer.

# 14



## PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR RESEARCH . 15



15

### Graduate scholar explores sustainability with financial support

Multi-time scholarship winner Hannah Allen had to rethink her graduate research when campus closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. A Master of Education student, Allen is studying how experiential learning impacts a student's views and actions around issues of sustainability with faculty supervisor Dr. Carol Rees. She set out to learn what educational experiences drive people to care about the planet.

When universities worldwide quickly transitioned to remote and online courses, Allen's research focus shifted to online experiential learning, and how it is used in post-secondary sustainability education. The topic is under-researched because most studies focus on traditional in-person experiences, and Allen found new purpose in an unforeseen circumstance.

*"It ended up being a great opportunity because I was able to look at what research exists in the traditional field and how that might compare to online. It opened up doors to how we use online technology and simulations to drive sustainability education,"*

*"I'm very interested in what motivates action. I love learning about what broadens understanding and what broadens awareness, but we know we're in a place today where we need action over everything."*

Allen is one of four graduate students awarded entrance scholarships by TRU through the BC Graduate Scholarship Fund in 2021—all of whom are engaged in research that explores the environment and sustainability. She's also the recipient of a Ken Lepin Graduate Award and nine other undergraduate awards funded by donors, including the TRU Foundation Undergraduate Achievement Scholarship, the Readers Digest Foundation of Canada Scholarship, the Douglas Morelli Memorial Bursary, and the SD73 Principals/Vice Principals Entrance Scholarship.

Allen completed her Bachelor of Arts at TRU before entering the Master of Education program and these awards have funded much of her post-secondary studies—and are the reason she was able to pursue a master's degree. Allen is already considering her PhD.

"I started receiving awards in my first year and have been lucky enough to have support throughout my entire time at TRU. I don't think I would be able to complete my education without that support.

At the end of the day, it would be very difficult," Allen said.

*"Not only that, when you have people believing in you, you can really maintain a strong focus in your studies. You feel motivated and supported to just continue. I've felt like there are people backing me up and that they cared about what I was doing."*

Allen spent several months studying students in a post-secondary course on climate change that utilizes virtual simulations built by MIT that allow participants to play out scenarios and test policies to address climate change. It's an experiential learning opportunity that was utilized more when in-person learning wasn't an option. Allen's thesis explores how the experiences were used in the course and how they may have influenced student views and actions. She based her research on the United Nations' (UN) 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the UN's definition of sustainability:

*"Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*

Ending poverty is number one on the UN's list, and climate action is 13th. The goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, and the target date is 2030.

16



### DONOR-SUPPORTED RESEARCHERS . 16

- TRU researchers Dr. Ruby Dhand and Dr. Dipesh Prema received a grant from the Law Foundation of BC to pursue a community-based, multidisciplinary research project investigating access to justice for those with mental health and substance use issues in BC's mental health facilities, prisons and detention centres during the pandemic. It's one of two distinct projects Dhand and Dipesh are working on that explore access to justice for vulnerable populations who are living in congregate care settings during the pandemic.

- Three-time donor award recipient and undergraduate Josh Parker studied the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local restaurants, working with faculty supervisor Terry Lake. Through surveys, interviews and roundtable discussions with customers, employees and restaurant owners, Parker, a Bachelor of Business Administration student, discovered that the restaurants that have fared the best during the pandemic were those that diversified operations. He shared his research with the Kamloops Chamber of Commerce to provide insight that could assist in economic recovery.

## PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR WILLIAMS LAKE . 17



### Back to school, 25 years later

Every time Patricia Johnston makes a contribution to the Paul Davis Memorial Bursary, she thinks of Paul. She remembers his compassion, his fairness, his openness. She remembers how he inspired her to return to school when she was already a grandmother, and to this day credits him for the turning point her life.

That's why she gives. It was 1984 when Johnston enrolled at TRU, when it was known as Cariboo College.

*"He encouraged me to pursue education at a time in my life that I thought it was too late,"*  
Johnston said.

*"I had been out of school for 25 years. I didn't think I could do it, but I took Paul's advice."*

Johnson went to college with her daughter and granddaughter, two of them in classes and the youngest going to Cariboo Child Care on campus. Before that, Johnston was working two jobs to support the three of them. She thought college was out of reach, but Davis—who was a minister at her church in Williams Lake—told her to seek out student loans.

*"Every summer I would apply again, and I would just pray,"*  
Johnston said.

*"The difference education makes is exactly what Paul said. It not only expands our knowledge but provides a wider lens in which to view the world."*

Davis told her it's never too late. Johnston pursued her transfer studies and became a nurse (TRU's Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing program was established in 1992). She's still friends with many of her classmates who were closer in age to her daughter, Tina.

"They kept me young," Johnston said.

Friend Roger Hicks established the bursary in memory of Paul Davis after he passed in 2014. Johnston donated generously. It's her way of saying thank you him, all these years later.

"Paul was a person that got along with almost anyone," Hicks said. "He was extremely human. He could appreciate people's frailties, and his own, too. I liked him for that."

More than 40 donors have helped sustain the award, a \$1,000 bursary given to a Williams Lake student every year in

memory of Davis. A tribute to his work as a mental health and addictions counsellor, the bursary is given to a student in the Educational Assistant and Community Support Program or the Human Service Diploma Program at TRU's Williams Lake campus.

Six students have received the bursary since its inception in 2015. To help the fund continue amid the pandemic, TRU Williams Lake raised money for the Paul Davis Memorial Bursary during the university's internal fundraising campaign in fall 2020—hosting a drive-through bake sale and virtual raffle for university faculty and staff.

Hicks hopes to keep supporting the fund through grassroots fundraisers with the church and friends of Davis. It's a good way to remember him because he strongly believed in the importance of education. He encouraged Johnston to go to college, and it led her to a much-loved career as a nurse.

*"I'd like him to know where I arrived,"*  
Johnston said. *"You lit the fire, Paul, and it just keeps burning."*

Anyone interested in contributing to the Paul Davis Memorial Bursary can contact the TRU Foundation at [foundation@tru.ca](mailto:foundation@tru.ca).

# 18

## What will be your TRU Legacy?

Learn about the many ways to leave a legacy at TRU through planned giving. Charitable donations of securities, life insurance, and bequests have a tax benefit and can allow donors to make an impact they never thought possible.

To learn more, contact Director of Planned Giving and Stewardship Nena Jovic-Andrejevic at 250-319-0224 or [njovic@tru.ca](mailto:njovic@tru.ca).

# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR ALUMNI . 19



Ken and Maureen Lepin, recipients Angela Achoba-Omajali, Robbie Davey, Pam Asbury

## Graduates pursue further studies after receiving donor support

Alumni who were supported during their time at TRU have sustained their success after graduation. WolfPack women’s basketball alum Taiysa Worsfold was the recipient of several awards during her time at TRU, including the Alvin and Lydia Grunert Undergraduate Scholarship and the Ken Lepin Award for Academic Achievement in Science while working toward her Bachelor of Science degree in 2016.

Worsfold was a star basketball player, playing five years at Sa-Hali Secondary and five years at TRU before retiring from university sport to pursue medical school. She told Kamloops This Week in 2021:

*“School can be quite expensive for tuition and really knowing that I’d have some financial support behind me really allowed me to not only have support for school, but also from some phenomenal people in the community, as well, who cheered me on,”*

Today, Worsfold is training to become a family doctor and hopes to one day open her own practice. She’s training in her hometown of Kamloops at Royal Inland Hospital. And she’s not the only award-winning alum who is pursuing an MD after finishing undergraduate studies at TRU.

After completing his Bachelor of Science degree, Tyson Bodor furthered his studies and earned a Bachelor of Education degree at TRU. He’s now in his third year of medical school and working at Kelowna General Hospital. Bodor also received support from donors, including the Ken Lepin Prize of Excellence in Education while finishing his BEd. He told Kamloops This Week in 2021:

*“People like Ken Lepin are really part of the reason I feel drawn back to Kamloops. The community being so heterogenous, there’s so many progressive things, as well as education and multiple industries, I think it adds to how beautiful Kamloops is and makes it an appealing place to come back to,”*

In 2021, Ken Lepin topped up his awards for students, donating \$275,000 to increase each of his awards by 10 percent post-pandemic. Lepin started giving small amounts to TRU in the 1990s and his contributions now total \$3.98 million. His endowments fund 17 awards for students—including a new award for software engineering. The Lepin Awards span all areas of study, including science, nursing, trades, business, law, education, animal health technology, culinary arts, tourism management, respiratory therapy and graduate studies.

Ken was interviewed by Kamloops This Week about his philanthropy, telling the newspaper he values the opportunity to meet and stay in touch with the students who benefit from his awards.

*“It restores your faith in the coming generation like you wouldn’t believe,” he told the newspaper. “Holy smokes. I don’t remember kids in my class who were that smart and that hard-working.”*

In total, Lepin’s awards have supported 274 students, and his endowments will continue to support students like Worsfold and Bodor in perpetuity, for generations to come.

# 20

## ALUMNI STAY IN TOUCH

Alumni can stay involved through class reunions and chapter events, signing up to receive the TRU alumni e-newsletter, and updating your record to gain access to discounts and benefits through local businesses and affinity partnerships.

Learn more at [tru.ca/alumni](http://tru.ca/alumni) or contacting [alumni@tru.ca](mailto:alumni@tru.ca)

A great way to stay connected

21

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22

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