

UTAA President's Annual Report

University of Toronto Alumni Association Alumni Celebration and Annual General Meeting

Saturday, June 1, 2019 from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm at Convocation Hall

The University of Toronto Alumni Association's mission is to strengthen the bonds amongst alumni and between the University and its community of 600,000 alumni living all over the world.

Before I report on some of the activities of the past year, I would like to express my considerable thanks to my fellow members of the [UTAA Board of Directors](#). They are a committed group who have consistently dedicated their time and energy to fulfil their duties and obligations as directors and to furthering our mission. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with this outstanding group of volunteers, to engage with their ideas, and to benefit from their counsel and diverse perspectives.

I would particularly like to thank Dario Di Censo, Susan Gillmeister and Geeta Yadav for their longstanding dedication and service. They are retiring from the UTAA Board after serving with distinction on the Board the past six years. We look forward to their continued engagement in the University's affairs and alumni initiatives.

UTAA Strategic Priorities:

The UTAA continued to work this year on two previously identified priorities, mentorship and alumni recognition:

Alumni Mentorship Initiative: This initiative focuses on promoting alumni mentorship programs across the University to both alumni and students via the work of a [committee](#) comprising volunteers and staff. This year the UTAA, in partnership with Alumni Relations, hosted the sixth annual University-wide recognition event for alumni mentors. Mentors from all divisions were invited to this event, which was attended by 332 guests including mentors, divisional mentor program coordinators, senior U of T administration and alumni leadership.

Alumni Community Engagement Recognition: This initiative focuses on the [Carl Mitchell Community Engagement Award](#), named in memory of a past UTAA President, which recognizes an alum who has made outstanding contributions to their community at a grassroots level, and in doing so has enriched the lives of others through their community service. The award recipient is formally recognized at the annual [UTAA AGM](#) during [Alumni Reunion](#) weekend. We are delighted to honour Dr. Glen Sharpe as this year's recipient. A video highlighting Dr. Sharpe's volunteer work will be shown at the AGM and will be available for viewing on the award [website](#) in the days following the event.

Rose Wolfe Distinguished Alumni Award: This initiative recognizes exceptional alumni who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in their professional lives, dedication to civic, charitable and social causes, and extraordinary service to the University of Toronto, in a way that enables or inspires others to reach their full potential. The [Award](#) is named in memory of Dr. Rose Wolfe, the University's 29th Chancellor, and the selection committee was led by current Chancellor, Dr. Rose Patten. We are delighted to honour The Honourable Rosalie Silberman Abella as this year's recipient. Justice Abella will formally receive the award later this year.

We are proud to support these initiatives that are central to our efforts in building a community of actively engaged alumni who are passionate and supportive of the University, and to recognize those efforts of the University's alumni which enrich and inspire others. Additional information on these and other UTAA activities can be found on the [UTAA website](#).

Supporting Our University

Over the last year, the UTAA has sponsored and supported many programs and initiatives. We are proud to play a role in recognizing the accomplishments of so many outstanding members of the University community.

The UTAA is proud to have partnered with the University on the annual [Awards of Excellence](#) since its inception. This prestigious program promotes and celebrates the achievements of some of the University's most outstanding faculty, staff and students. The Awards of Excellence program consists of seven awards and two student scholarships. This year there were 19 recipients in total and their citations may be viewed [online](#).

In 2019, the annual [Gordon Cressy Student Leadership Awards](#) ceremony recognized 208 outstanding graduating students for their extra-curricular contributions to their faculty, college, or to the wider University community. In total, more than 4,000 students have been recognized since the award was established in 1994.

As part of its ongoing commitment to help the University of Toronto recruit outstanding high school students from across the country, the UTAA hosted its annual reception welcoming the 2019 National and Arbor Scholarship finalists to campus. In addition, the UTAA contributed towards financially supporting a current National Scholar.

The Landmark Project

The University's historic Landmark Project will revitalize the heart of the St. George campus and restore its natural beauty, significantly enhancing the experience for students, alumni, visitors and the entire community. At 2017's UTAA AGM, the UTAA announced that it was providing a lead gift, in partnership with the University, to the Landmark project. The UTAA committed \$1M, matched by \$1M from the University using unrestricted gifts to the Boundless Campaign, bringing the total gift to \$2M. The UTAA's gift continued a century-long tradition of alumni support for the St. George campus. I encourage you to consider ways in which you can also participate. Information on how you can get involved is available on the Landmark [website](#).

Soldiers' Tower Committee

I would like to express our gratitude to the [Soldiers' Tower](#) Committee for their ongoing commitment to preserving the memory of the University community's contributions to the war efforts. I would like to welcome Michelle Alfano as new Chair of the Committee. The Memorial Room inside the Soldiers' Tower received close to 3,000 visitors over the past year. The Committee is now preparing for the Service of Remembrance in November 2019, and an event in the spring of 2020 commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Senior Alumni Association

I would like to acknowledge the [Senior Alumni Association](#) for the active involvement of senior alumni as volunteers throughout the U of T campus, as well as the ongoing efforts of the SAA to provide lifelong learning opportunities for all alumni and friends through the popular [Canadian Perspectives Lecture Series](#). There were 29 lectures offered during their 2018-2019 lecture series; these offered wonderful opportunities for alumni to connect with each other and with their alma mater while hearing fascinating lectures by academics and industry professionals.

I would particularly like to thank the SAA's President, Ihor Prociuk, for his outstanding leadership and his support of UTAA activities and initiatives over the past year. I would also like to welcome incoming SAA President, Maureen Somerville, and the UTAA looks forward to working with her over the coming year.

The UTAA is grateful for the ongoing commitment and dedication of the Soldiers' Tower Committee and the SAA, and looks forward to their continued engagement in the activities of the University.

Our Extended Alumni Volunteer Community

I would also like to acknowledge and sincerely thank the other members of our alumni volunteer community, especially the Council of Presidents, the College of Electors, the Alumni Governors, the members of the Awards of Excellence selection committees, and the members of the UTAA's committees, for their commitment, expertise and active engagement over the past year. The guidance and leadership provided by these volunteers in their respective spheres is greatly valued by both the UTAA and by the University.

In closing, I would like to express my deep thanks to all of the staff of the Division of University Advancement for their support over the year, and, in particular, Barbara Dick, Assistant Vice President of Alumni Relations, and her colleagues Anne Cobban, Satpal McCaughey and Waqar Ahmad. Much of what the UTAA lends its name to would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of Alumni Relations staff and other colleagues within DUA.

I would also like to thank you for your attendance at the UTAA's AGM as well as your ongoing involvement with, and passion for, the University of Toronto.

Sincerely,



R. Scott MacKendrick, President, UTAA