

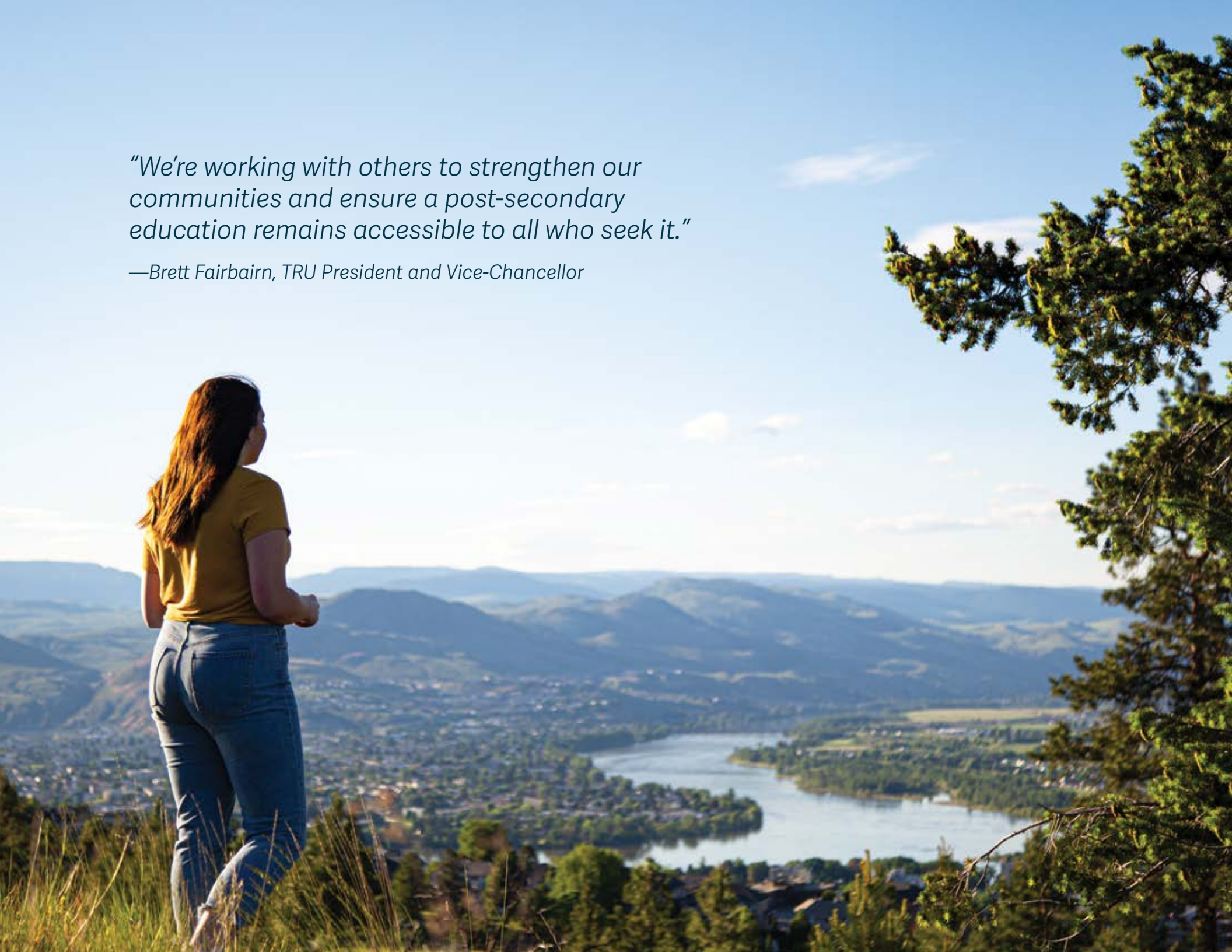


# YOUR REPORT ON PHILANTHROPY

2021-22

*"We're working with others to strengthen our communities and ensure a post-secondary education remains accessible to all who seek it."*

*—Brett Fairbairn, TRU President and Vice-Chancellor*



# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

The last three years brought events unlike many of us have ever experienced.

In the midst of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, confirmation from our neighbours at Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc of the unmarked graves of 215 children reverberated around the world. With TRU students, staff and faculty directly affected, our campuses took the news hard.

Summer brought a deadly heat dome. Wildfires burned across our region, including within the city of Kamloops. The destruction of the town of Lytton affected the TRU community, too, as did the atmospheric rivers that led to horrific flooding and sudden loss of major transportation routes.

Months of isolation dragged on with the emergence of Delta and Omicron variants. Continuing public health measures restricted

learning, social gatherings and events, including another year of convocation.

This past February, Russia invaded Ukraine. Thankfully, bright spots shone through the darkness.

Our university — at both the institutional and personal levels — has taken on a renewed commitment to work towards truth, reconciliation and indigenization.

We continue to work to eliminate achievement gaps and support students of all backgrounds to access and succeed in higher education.

TRU was thrilled to welcome students, faculty and staff back to both campuses in fall 2021, and with it a sense of community and solidarity.

In February, the first faculty or school at TRU to be named after someone was announced: the Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics.

We hope the stories among these pages will offer a fresh sense of hope.

Today, our world is experiencing an unexpected chance at renewal. Institutions like TRU are instrumental in ensuring that what follows serves the broad needs of all in our communities. Our donors are helping students find their passions — redefining what it means to make a difference and furthering the education of the next problem-solvers and trailblazers.

Every donation begins with a story. Thank you for sharing yours with us. As a TRU supporter, you make the difference in the lives of the students in these pages, and so many more.

***For your generosity and partnership, TRU says thank you. Kukwstsetsemc.***



# A MESSAGE FROM THE TRU PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

The last two years have been challenging. Many of us have suffered financially, emotionally and physically through 2020 and 2021. But there is hope. Today, the world is entering a new phase. Many are asking what is needed to help our communities gain back measures of what was lost.

Recovery is needed and, while portions of our society will bounce back quickly, others might need help to get on the right track. We need recovery to be inclusive to ensure our “new normal” — whatever that will look like — brings everyone along. Institutions like Thompson Rivers University will be instrumental in ensuring that what follows serves the broad needs of all in our communities.

Education is about people transforming hope into real-world potential. Students envision themselves and their futures and choose education as a transformative process. People will drive the recovery. And, as an open, accessible and inclusive university, TRU will help them prepare for that.

Universities are a vital societal resource with the ability and capacity to provide leadership and support across many areas. Thompson Rivers University looks forward to being a

crucial part of our collective effort towards recovery. Guided by the Secwépemc concept of Kw’seltnéw’s (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 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 supported by the generosity of donors and volunteers. It’s only with your help that we can achieve a recovery that is equitable, inclusive and sustainable.

We are grateful for your support.



*TRU President and Vice-Chancellor*



*Brett Fairbairn, TRU President and Vice-Chancellor*

# A MESSAGE FROM THE TRU FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

The TRU Foundation exists for one purpose, and one purpose only: to raise funds for TRU students. Those funds reach students through scholarships and bursaries, university programs, research initiatives and capital projects on campus. All the funds we raise improve the learning experience and make quality post-secondary education accessible to as many people as possible.

Despite external circumstances, our TRU donors once again outdid themselves. In 2021-22, the TRU Foundation distributed awards totalling over \$1.9 million to students, more money than ever before. Today, the TRU Foundation's student assistance endowment sits at nearly \$32 million and growing, funding awards, scholarships and bursaries. And it's all because of generous donors like you.

Though your own reasons for giving are undoubtedly unique and reflect your own life experiences, the collective outcome is the same. You are creating a brighter future for TRU students, the leaders of tomorrow.

An investment in education is an investment in your community. Thank you to all the donors who support education, to the members of the TRU Foundation board of directors for their leadership, and to the hardworking TRU Advancement staff who continue to advance philanthropy at TRU.



*Brad Bennett, TRU  
Foundation President*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Bennett', written over a white background.

*TRU Foundation President*

## TRU Foundation Board

*Brad Bennett, President*

*Richard Heney,  
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*Mackenzie Kanigan,  
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*John Sparks, Secretary*

*Brian Daly, VP,  
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Board of Governors  
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*Maureen McCurdy,  
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*Jack Miller, Director*

*Lori Ottem, Director*

*Vicci Ryan, Director*

*Manju Singh, Director*

## TRU Philanthropy Contacts

*Kim Cassar Torreggiani,  
Associate Vice  
President, Advancement*

*Alisa Coquet, Executive  
Director of Development  
Bob Gaglardi School of  
Business and Economics  
and TRU World*

*Barbara Tolevski,  
Director of Development  
Faculty of Science*

*Bradley Bostock,  
Director of Development  
Indigenous Education;  
Faculty of Arts; Faculty  
of Education and  
Social Work; Library;  
School of Nursing and  
Respiratory Therapy*

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

*Geralyn Cormack,  
Director of Development  
School of Trades and  
Technology; Williams  
Lake Campus; Faculty  
of Adventure Studies,  
Culinary Arts and  
Tourism; Athletics*

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

*Sarah Sandholm,  
Director of Development  
Faculty of Law*



# OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

## Return to Campus

After more than a year of virtual classes in accordance with public health measures, students returned to TRU campuses on Sept. 7, 2021.



### Disaster Relief Fund

The Disaster Relief Fund was established to help current and future students impacted by climate-related disasters. Last summer, residents of Lytton, Monte Lake, Merritt and more lost their homes to wildfires, extreme heat and flooding. **Our goal is to assist displaced students with tuition, housing and other costs.**



### Dollars for Scholars

**\$11,680 was given** during the Dollars for Scholars 50/50 raffle **in support of Williams Lake bursaries and the ICCHA Wish Nursing Bursary.** Half went to students and half went to two lucky winners.



### TRUly United

**430+ TRU staff and faculty gave** to this annual internal campaign, **donating over \$92,000 to support the TRU Foundation and United Way toward helping people in our community pursue an education.** Because of COVID-19 and the inability to hold on-campus events, many departments came up with new and creative ways to raise money.



### Day of Giving

**Day of Giving raised \$39,652** from March 17–18. Over \$10,000 was raised for the World Relief Fund, **supporting emergency funding for international students impacted by the war in Ukraine,** with the remainder going toward **cat kennels for the Vet Tech program** and to ongoing scholarships, bursaries and awards.



### Fund-A-Need

Although the Foundation's annual fundraising Gala was cancelled due to public health orders, Fund-A-Need moved ahead with a goal to raise \$100,000 to purchase horse and cow simulators for Veterinary Technology students. **Twenty-three donors helped us nearly double our goal, raising over \$180,000.**

# 2021–22 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Figures based on March 31, 2022 unaudited financial statements.

**\$3,768,729**

Total Funds Raised

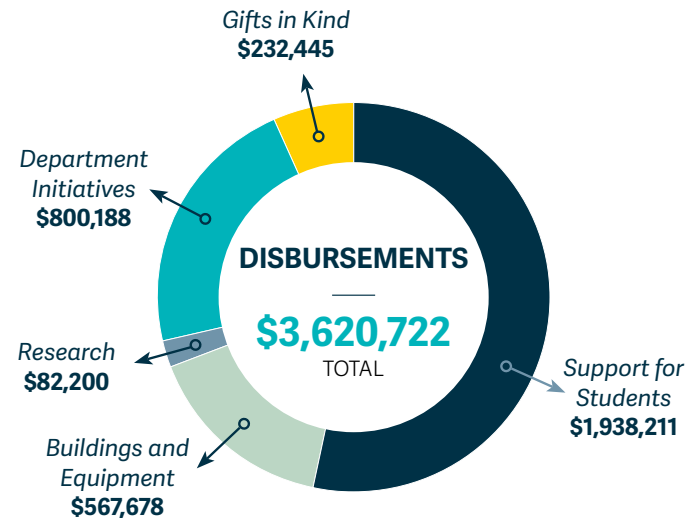
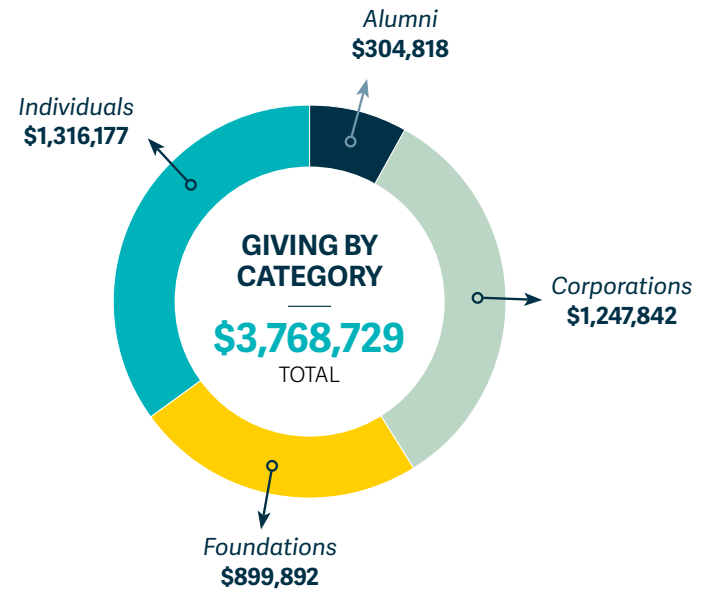
**\$127,184**

Operating Expenses

**1,122**

students received  
donor-funded awards

**\$12.29 million**  
in additional pledges





# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

## Financial assistance in the face of war

When 21-year-old Kateryna Tretiakova left her home in Kyiv, Ukraine to attend TRU four years ago, she thought she'd never look back. She said goodbye to family and friends and embraced her new culture.

"My mom went to Canada years ago and when she came home she told me, 'That country is made for you,'" says Kateryna. "She was right. Everything here makes sense to me — the society, how people behave and talk, the work structure, everything."

A math lover since the age of nine, she threw herself into pursuing a Bachelor of Science in honours mathematics while volunteering with the TRU Math Club and working two part-time jobs. She organized math contests while pursuing research opportunities and attending conferences. Life was hectic, but Kateryna was managing. Then, in an instant, everything changed.

"I was so busy and then the war happened. No one expected it. No one was prepared for it," she says.

Kateryna's concern immediately pivoted from student life to the safety of her mother Olena and brother Oleh, 16, living in Kyiv.

"To get them from the capital was hard — stressful," she says.

The duo safely arrived in Poland, but processing Oleh's passport took more time than expected.

It wasn't until June that mother and son arrived in Kamloops. For Kateryna, getting them settled comes with many stressors and adjustments, but at least they are safe.

"Now I can focus back on my math," she says, adding that after she receives her degree, she plans to pursue graduate studies with a goal of becoming a university or high school teacher.

**At the same time Kateryna was worrying about her family's safety in Ukraine, she also faced financial woes. As an international student with no financial support from family, she's always relied on hard work and a solid plan. Receiving the Dr. Sherman Jen Scholarship for Science came at exactly the right time.**

"The scholarship helped a lot," she says. "At that moment I was trying to make a plan and figure out how to pay my fees and attend conferences. It was close and I don't like (my budget) to be that close."

Thanks to the generosity of donors, Kateryna was able to pay her tuition, attend multiple conferences in her field of study and greatly reduce her mental strain.



# From Kenya to Kamloops: pre-med and beyond

If it wasn't for a couple of neighbours, TRU student and WolfPack Men's Basketball team member Richard Mageto might never have found his sport — or his path at TRU.

Growing up in Nairobi, Kenya, Mageto did track and field and played soccer. At the age of nine, he and his family moved to Surrey, BC.

"My neighbour was always playing basketball outside and I'd go out there and play against him," Mageto says. "He'd destroy me every single time. And I'd get so frustrated, I was like, 'I gotta keep practising, I gotta keep trying.'"

He practised with a soccer ball because it was all he had. One day, another neighbour pulled up in his car while the young Mageto was practising and offered him a basketball as a gift.

"From there, my love for the game grew."

Athletics is only one aspect of Mageto's university career. He's also a fifth-year chemical biology student who plans to become an orthopedic physician. He received a research grant last year to study the effects of heavy metals on salmon and human health. And in his spare time, he volunteers with and fundraises for the Special Olympics.

In his four years at TRU, Mageto has also won a host of awards. He's a two-time recipient of the Alvin and Lydia Grunert Undergraduate Scholarship and has received support from the TRU WolfPack Athletic Fund, TRU Men's Basketball Fund, the Kim Dalin Memorial

Athletic Award and the Joyce Family Foundation First Generation Bursary. Last year he received the Pat O'Brien Award; he's also received the Cliff Neufeld Leadership Award, given to a student who embodies athletic performance, academic achievement and leadership/community service.

How does he balance it all? "The way to find joy in a heavy workload is to do what you enjoy," he says. "I like the academic side of it, I like basketball, I like helping out in the community, so it makes it not so burdensome."

Financial support has been a big help, Mageto says.

**"I wouldn't have been able to do everything I'm doing if it wasn't for (the awards) — I'd probably have to be working as well. In my eyes, it's helped me spend more of my time (on my education), and it's helped me give back to my Kamloops community. It just makes me feel eternally grateful."**

While the secret to Mageto's success could be his multiple talents, it's clear his attitude is a factor, too. "I know I'm not in debt to these donors, but in essence I feel like I am," he says. "I have an obligation to do my very best if someone is investing in me in this way."



# Flood evacuee receives tuition help

*A letter from Danika Potter, recipient of the RBC Women in Trades Training Learning Success Bursary:*

I am from Merritt, BC, and am enrolled in the Horticulture Certificate program at TRU. I do the daily commute to school from Merritt. It takes about 45 minutes and most mornings, I get to catch a killer sunrise.

On Nov. 15, 2021, my boyfriend and I were evacuated from our home on Coldwater Ave. due to flooding. Our entire town was displaced — everyone was sitting on the edge of their seats as we eagerly awaited the green light to go back and check on our homes.

Phase by phase, our city let residents return home as it was safe; much of the town thankfully was untouched by the flood waters and was able to go back to their houses once the city's water and sewage stations were fixed.

We were not so fortunate. The flood left our home unlivable and most of our belongings destroyed. November and December were very hard months. The grief we feel isn't even about the things, but it's a strange feeling to suddenly have no clue what is coming next. I do realize that this is the reality for so many people every day; this event has opened my eyes to my privilege. I hope that these struggles I have experienced over the past couple months will allow me to be more compassionate, generous and kind to those who live less fortunately than me.

On Dec. 8, I was in my home for the week, room 110 at the Holiday Inn, studying for finals when I received an email that I was the recipient of a financial award. By now, three and a half weeks after evacuation, I was surviving off emergency supports, caffeine and adrenalin rushes. This award could not have come at a better time, not only when I needed the money but also when I needed something to feel happy and proud about. I also wasn't able to work after being displaced, and the award covered the remainder of my tuition payment.

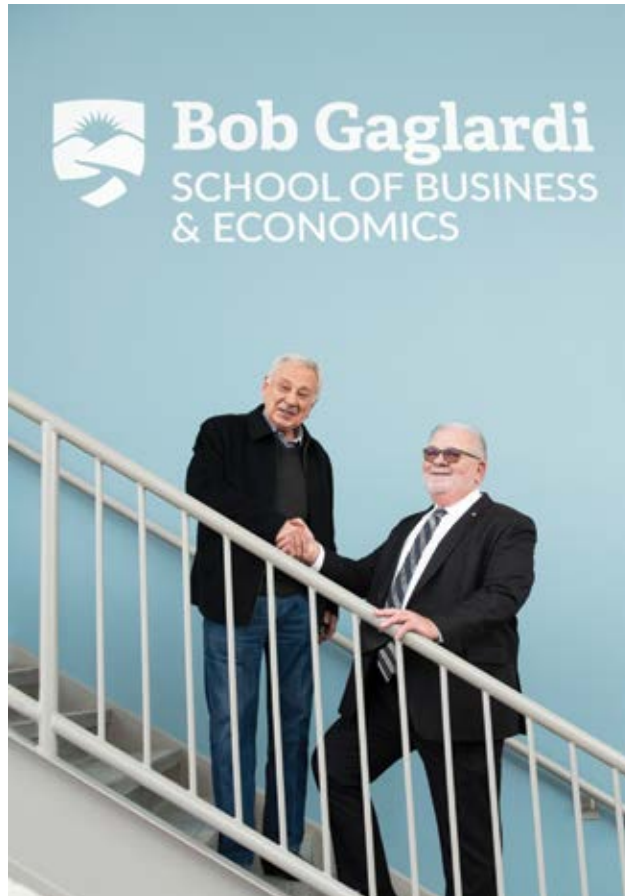
My pipe dream is to buy land and establish an extensive fruit and vegetable production farm. I love to be outside and would love to spend my working days connecting with the land. I imagine being settled and in a position to offer opportunities to other people that will allow them to get closer to their goals, and to make choices they're proud of.

I hope that you know how much of a difference you make with your contributions to students.

Thank you.



# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY



*Bob Gaglardi (left) with Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics Dean Michael Henry at the Feb. 17 unveiling.*

## Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics unveiled

The newly named Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics honours a Canadian entrepreneur and philanthropist with deep Kamloops roots and a family legacy grounded in community service. Unveiled on Feb. 17, this is the first faculty or school to be named at TRU and represents the qualities Gaglardi himself values: personal integrity, hard work, strong ethics, innovative thinking and the ability to face and overcome challenges.

With support from Bob Gaglardi's company, Northland Properties, the Gaglardi family has donated \$10 million to TRU to support future construction of an academic building for business studies. Together, TRU and Bob Gaglardi champion a game-changing business education in the heart of the BC Interior.

The Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics aspires to be the school of business that connects the BC Interior to the world through experiential education and high-quality research.

Students from Canada and more than 100 countries study business at TRU, and the Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics prepares regional, national and international learners to excel in both their workplaces and communities.

"This is the first time in TRU's history that a faculty or school is being named. The impact associated with this donation extends beyond the monetary value and represents leadership for TRU," says President and Vice-Chancellor Brett Fairbairn. "TRU strives to be a leader in diversity, a leader in community-mindedness, a leader in curiosity and a leader in sustainability. The Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics champions that mission as one of our flagship faculties."

# Finance students bring idea to life

## About Bob Gaglardi

Bob Gaglardi is the eldest son of Phil and Jennie Gaglardi, who were both influential in Kamloops. From them, Bob Gaglardi learned the importance of investing in community.

Gaglardi lives and works in Vancouver, but still refers to Kamloops as home. When his four children talked about how they could give back to honour their father and all he has accomplished, they came back to the place that holds significant meaning for the family.

"Kamloops is a special place to my family but, most of all, to my father," said Bob's daughter Andrea Gaglardi, vice-president of corporate development at Northland. "It was important to us as a family to give these funds to TRU in support of the growth and future enrolment at their business school, while also continuing a legacy of contributing to the community that our family has long valued."

A portion of the Gaglardi family's \$10 million gift is designated for expanded programming, research initiatives and student financial support in business and economics.

TRU finance students Adam Burke and Jacob Lawrence had an idea for a trading lab for student learning. Their vision became reality last November with the official opening of TRU's Raymond James Trading Lab, a purpose-built lab outfitted with sophisticated research and analysis software used for managing investments.

"We're really excited to have concrete support from an industry player," Burke said. "The new trading floor will provide TRU students the advantageous opportunity to practice with professional resources."

Burke and Lawrence initially created the TRU Student Investment Fund (TRUSIF) in 2019 with support from Raymond James, TRU and the Chartered Financial Analyst Society. Through TRUSIF, students manage a portfolio of Canadian and US equities, gaining valuable knowledge and skills in equity research, financial modeling, portfolio tracking, teamwork and public relations. With the opening of the trading lab, students now have a place to work.

Paul Siluch of Raymond James (Canada) Ltd. has worked as a portfolio manager with TRU since 1993, when the institution was still Cariboo College. He has witnessed the enthusiasm expressed by students assigned the task of investing a small part of the university's investment portfolio.

"When these remarkable students came to us and said we have this idea for a portfolio management course, we thought, what a



*Adam Burke (left) and Jacob Lawrence (right).*

great way for all of us to win," Siluch said.

Raymond James (Canada) Ltd. in partnership with FactSet — a financial data and software company — equipped the lab with a total contribution valued at more than \$550,000. The gift provided five state-of-the-art, dual-screen trading stations, a five-year commitment to equip the stations with industry software and training for students.

"We're here because of the generosity and vision of Raymond James," said Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics Dean Michael Henry. "We're also here because we have some rock-star students who had a vision."

# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR HONOURING TRUTH, RECONCILIATION AND RIGHTS



*TRU Law graduate Darnel Tailfeathers (centre) with family members at convocation.*

## Indigenizing the justice system

Walking across the stage at convocation is always special, but for TRU Law grad Darnel Tailfeathers, a Kainai Nation (Blood Tribe) member, the experience was unforgettable.

Led by his grandfather Roger Hunt Sr., family members stepped up to perform an Indigenous honour song as Tailfeathers accepted his degree. Hunt called out Tailfeathers' traditional name as their voices filled the room.

"There were some tears rolling down my face — it was so powerful," says Tailfeathers. "As he was calling my name I could feel my ancestors were there with me."

It was a compelling finale to a challenging, yet rewarding, period in the life of Tailfeathers, his partner Brittany Thomas, also a TRU student, and their two young children. The family moved to Kamloops from Alberta in 2019 to attend TRU, moved back when the pandemic forced the closure of campus and then returned as in-person learning resumed. All that moving took a toll on the family finances, so when Tailfeathers received the Acumen Law Award and a Keith and Robbin Bracken Law Emergency Award, he was incredibly appreciative.

“The extra support was a huge assistance to my family in helping us move back to Kamloops,” Tailfeathers says.

Tailfeathers plans to put all the support he has received to good use. From his first days as a university student taking an Indigenous studies class to opening his acceptance letter to law school at TRU and receiving the awards that would help propel him to the finish line, he has always been committed to giving back.

**“The Tailfeathers are very educated people, but there has never been a lawyer in the family — no one has been down this road before,” he says. “I want to be able to open doors, not only in my family but for other Indigenous youth. I want to let them know that anything is possible.”**

As part of his commitment to opening doors, Tailfeathers has a vision to help reduce the disproportionately high levels of Indigenous peoples in the Canadian justice system. The

idea took on a whole new life when Tailfeathers and classmate Nicholas Todd began discussing projects for a course. They talked about creating an app that would address the need for an expedited resource for criminal defense lawyers representing Indigenous clients to use in sentencing hearings. Soon, the Gladue Submissions Assistant, now named Four Justice Services app, was born.

The Gladue report came to being in 1999 following the case of R v Gladue when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that systemic and background circumstances unique to Indigenous clients must be considered during sentencing in a criminal trial. Since the decision, judges have directed that in order to assist in the sentencing of Indigenous offenders, pre-sentencing reports must be prepared to assess the offender’s circumstances, also known as Gladue factors.

Tailfeathers, Todd and fellow students Zachary Halper, Hasleen Sanghera and Sean Macdonald developed their app for lawyers to use in sentencing and bail submissions in cases when it isn’t feasible to wait for a Gladue report

to be drafted. It produces a draft sentencing submission tailored to the client’s Gladue factors. The group is still taking steps to bring the app to life.

The app went on to win two awards, one locally and one internationally. In April 2022, six teams competed in the final round of the Iron Tech Lawyer Invitational, an international competition for student-made tech solutions that bridge the justice gap, hosted by Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Presenting their idea by Zoom, the group of TRU Law students took first place.

Tailfeathers is currently articling at an Indigenous law firm in Calgary and says he is confident he is on the right path.

“I’m here to provide the best service I can, and I really am confident in what I am going to do,” he says. “It is my goal to help Indigenous people.”

# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS **FOR RESEARCH**



*Dr. Michael Flannigan, BC Research Chair in Predictive Services, Emergency Management and Fire Science.*



*Dr. Jill Harvey, Canada Research Chair in Fire Ecology.*

## Renowned wildfire experts based at TRU

In June 2021, TRU and the Province of British Columbia announced Dr. Michael Flannigan as the new British Columbia Research Chair in Predictive Services, Emergency Management and Fire Science at TRU.

At the same time, an incoming TRU faculty member was granted a Canada Research Chair (CRC) in Fire Ecology. Dr. Jill Harvey is investigating how wildfires and drought impact forests in the BC Interior.

These appointments are particularly significant for Kamloops and the Interior region, as nationally and internationally renowned research is now taking place right here. Extreme weather events will increase in number and intensity in the coming years, which makes this research even more critical.

The work of the Interior Universities Research Council, which includes the University of Northern British Columbia and University of British Columbia Okanagan, helped make Flannigan's appointment possible.

Flannigan is an award-winning researcher and leading expert on wildfire behaviour and landscape fire modelling. Flannigan's research goals include developing methods to help predict when and where extreme fire weather may arise and exploring the development of early-warning wildfire notification systems.

He is working directly with BC Wildfire Service staff and emergency management agencies to

address challenges related to predicting wildfire activity and behaviour, which will enhance their ability to prepare for and respond to wildfires in the province.

Flannigan said an average of 7,000 fires per year have occurred in Canada in the past decade. That results in an average of 2.5 million hectares burning annually — about half the size of Nova Scotia.

"The wildfire landscape is becoming more challenging and demanding due to climate change, so I'm excited to help shape the future of wildfire prediction and analysis as part of a collective research effort," said Flannigan.

Harvey said a warmer and drier climate has made wildfires in British Columbia more common. Her research studies the dynamics of past wildfire events in the central part of the province to understand how drought impacts the recovery of forests following wildfires.

"Understanding the connections between wildfire, drought and forest responses is crucial to protect natural resources and determine how British Columbia landscapes may change in the future," said Harvey.

In addition to the Canada Research Chair, Harvey has received nearly \$75,000 in funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation that will support the development of the Fire and Forest Ecology Centre (FFEC). This centre is designed to advance research on the



ecological effects of fire and climate change on montane forests. The FFEC will enable the collection and processing of new field-based datasets to support innovative research activities. Laboratory infrastructure at TRU will be crucial in training students and disseminating research results.

The goal of Harvey's research is to have better informed forest- and fire-management practices to improve the resilience of Canada's forests. By using tree rings as well as forest and climate datasets, her research seeks to determine how often and severe wildfires were in the past, and to identify patterns of forest recovery after wildfires.

"I will examine historical wildfires, cultural legacies of Indigenous burning and how forests are recovering after recent wildfires. This research will provide important information to understand how forests and grasslands are changing over long periods of time," she said.

The total cost of the BC Research Chair in Predictive Services, Emergency Management and Fire Science is \$5 million, with \$3.2 million contributed by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development and \$1.8 million from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training.

## Fighting fires with an eye on prevention

"I am a first-year natural resource sciences student who grew up in Kamloops. I spend half of my year in Salmon Arm, where I am a wildland firefighter. I am extremely passionate about wildfire research, which is what brought me to TRU, after hearing about the incredible research funding that was invested by the province to the university.

My goal is to understand how human engagement has affected the occurrence, severity and impact of wildfires on the environment and surrounding ecosystems. My passion for trees and other living material in our beautiful forests has been magnified by my studies in this program.

Your assistance will allow me to devote more time pursuing a greater knowledge of my field of study in lieu of spending time at work. Thank you so much for your generous support of my education."



*Cooper Butchart, recipient of the Alex Drdul Memorial Bursary.*

# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS **FOR WILLIAMS LAKE**

## Grad digs in to revitalize farming

Determined. Resilient. Passionate. Three words that describe Julia Morgan, a recent graduate of TRU's Applied Sustainable Ranching program.

The program is based in Williams Lake, and is the first of its kind in Canada, providing graduates with a solid foundation in business and enterprise management as well as regenerative agriculture skills. Morgan was one of 11 presenters vying for the 2022 Cariboo GM Bull Pen Award, sponsored by long-time TRU donor Brian Garland. After presenting to a panel of six local experts at the event on May 26, Morgan was chosen as this year's recipient of a \$1,000 award.

"Julia's presentation was excellent. She was knowledgeable about her proposed business in terms of the cost to set it up, the market for her products and services and the sustainability of the (proposed) farm," says Dallas Jasper, VP of Cariboo Auto Group and award panellist. "Julia has a real passion for this proposal and I genuinely hope she can make it a reality."

Morgan has plans to operate JEM Farms, a regenerative farming operation that will include pasture-raised sheep and chickens as well as educational opportunities.



L-R: TRU Vice-President of University Relations Brian Daly; Applied Sustainable Ranching program coordinator Gillian Watt; and donor Brian Garland with Julia Morgan and her son Ethan.

In addition to running the farm, Morgan plans to host educational programs, providing hands-on experiences that highlight topics such as soil microbiology and the connection between food and health. Her interest in the connection between food and health stems from her search for answers to her son Ethan's health challenges.

In 2011, Morgan was a young executive living in Toronto when her son Ethan was born with severe health issues. As a single mother, she quickly realized her career was going to have to take a back seat to his health.

Ethan has a chromosome disorder that effects his endocrine system and has life-threatening implications. When Morgan heard that living in a coastal climate could have a positive impact on Ethan's health, the duo headed west. Since the move, Ethan has significantly reduced his need for asthma medication.

Morgan has dedicated her life to finding a balance between advocating for her son while pursuing her own passions. As she has discovered along the way, both priorities often intersect. When she registered for the program at TRU, she found both the educational opportunity and support system she'd been searching for.

"I signed up in 2019 while I was living at Ronald McDonald House," said Morgan, adding that Ethan was in the midst of a health crisis at the time. "I needed some hope for the future and this program and TRU offered me that. The people in the program were a lifeline supporting me and helping me work toward a better future."

Through the program, she says she developed a further passion for soil health and received all the tools necessary to run a regenerative farm.

"The program gives you a full understanding of running an operation, from animal health to creating a business plan," she says, adding she is incredibly grateful to many people involved. "They were a light in a really dark time. I would like to thank Gillian Watt, Ty and Ingrid from Onward Ranch, Judy Reid from Williams Lake campus, the expert panel of the Bull Pen and all the staff at Williams Lake."

Morgan also received the Bill Freding Memorial Award in 2020 and the Williams Lake TRU Grit Entrance Award in 2019 and 2020.

With a supportive team behind her and a commitment to lifelong learning, Morgan is determined to find a beautiful space to raise her son, build a future and offer guidance

to others carving a path through difficult circumstances.

"I hope that I can be an inspiration to other women, give them hope and show them that it's possible to follow their dreams," says Morgan.

***Did you know?*** More than 120 donors have contributed to the TRU Williams Lake campus cumulatively, representing \$695,305.55 to date. Over 700 students have received support from these donors, in the form of 18 annual awards, 22 annual bursaries and five annual scholarships. In addition, volunteers with TRU Grit have given out another 90 student awards of their own.

# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS FOR HONOURING LOVED ONES



*Troylana (left) and Bart Manson (right) with son Levi on Aaron's memorial bench.*

## Aaron Manson Endowment Established

Third-year BBA student Aaron Manson tragically passed away in April 2021 of an accidental overdose due to self-medicating. His parents, Troylana and Bart, wanted to give back to TRU, where both of their sons attended school. The family established the Aaron Manson “Be Brave” Endowment Fund in the fall of 2021 with the goal of supporting mental health and substance use awareness activities and programming for the TRU community, both on and off campus.

Other memorial awards created in 2021/22:

- Junko N. Ikebuchi Memorial Award
- EDSW 215+ Award
- In Memory of Jim Moore
- Sunita Mehta Memorial Women in Trades Award
- Lloyd Bennett Memorial Bursary
- Estella Legacy Endowment Award
- Maxine (Engstrom) Quigg Memorial Award

To create a memorial endowment or to donate in honour of someone, contact Diana Major, *Director of Development, Annual Giving and Advancement Services* at [dmajor@tru.ca](mailto:dmajor@tru.ca).

# PHILANTHROPY MATTERS **FOR ALUMNI**



Alumni: stay in touch!  
For info on AlumNights, discounts and benefits, visit [tru.ca/alumni](https://tru.ca/alumni), contact [alumni@tru.ca](mailto:alumni@tru.ca) or download the TRU Alumni app.

## Charter alum pays it forward four decades later

Mark Leriger De La Plante (Leriger) used his Cariboo College education to launch a successful four-decade career in the oil and gas industry. Now retired, he's paying it forward for future students with a legacy gift.

After working with his father in the seismic field in Alberta and Saskatchewan, Leriger enrolled in marine biology at the University of Calgary. Three months in, he left school to work in Africa and the Arctic after his father passed away. Two years later, he decided to go back to school.

This time, he wanted an institution with a more intimate setting. He found it at Cariboo College (now TRU). "I enjoyed the smaller classes... with terrific professors, which led to some great discussions. Of course, the climate was incredible, too. Kamloops has so much to offer," said Leriger.

Leriger eventually transferred to the University of Victoria, graduating with a double major in economics and marine biology.

Midway through his studies, Leriger considered going back to work, but a scholarship from PanCanadian Petroleum Ltd. convinced him to take one more year, with a job as a geophysicist waiting for him on the other side.

"The oil and gas industry was just beginning to boom back then and Jacques Cousteau wasn't offering me any jobs at that point, so I finished up my degree and moved back to Calgary to resume my career in the oil and gas field," said Leriger.

For the next 41 years, Leriger worked for several large oil and gas companies before starting his own consulting business for clients in Canada and around the world.

Leriger now resides in Victoria, BC, with a second home in Scottsdale, Ariz. He remains close with some of his former classmates and still owns property in Kamloops. Much of his life can be traced back to his decision to head west for college.

"Cariboo College was the best thing that ever happened to me," said Leriger.

Now, he's providing future students the same opportunity. In January, Leriger made a \$50,000 legacy gift to establish a bursary endowment to support students at TRU beyond his lifetime.

For information on planned giving, email [foundation@tru.ca](mailto:foundation@tru.ca), call 250-828-5264, or visit [tru.ca/foundation](https://tru.ca/foundation).

# 2021-2022 SUPPORTERS

## THANK YOU

to these donors who have made contributions this year.

(April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022)

All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If an error or omission has occurred, please call the TRU Foundation office at 250-828-5264.

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