

The York University Magazine

Summer 2021

WHAT'S THE **FUTURE** OF WORK?



The **Big** Shift



RIGHT THE FUTURE

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The
York University
Magazine

Contents

4 The President 5 Editor's Notes 6 View 32 Alumni 38 Flashback

14

THE MAGIC OF MUSHROOMS

Fungi are sprouting in food, wellness, fashion and waste management



22

THE BIG SHIFT

How 2020 changed the workplace – possibly forever

28

BALANCING ACT

Supporting mental health in the pandemic

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROBINSON

THE PRESIDENT



RHONDA L. LENTON
PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

AS WE CONTINUE to negotiate the delicate balance between tightening public health restrictions and hopeful reopenings, it can be easy to wonder if we will ever be able to return to life as we once knew it. But as our vaccination programs begin to gain momentum, there is also a sense of real optimism in the air.

And it is with this forward-looking optimism that we announced that York University is planning for a safe phased return to on-campus activities for the Fall 2021 term. Our plans are centred on bringing classes and co-curricular opportunities back onto our campuses as much as possible, while continuing to provide access to high-quality remote learning options. The dynamic nature of the pandemic will of course mean that we need to remain flexible in our approach in the months ahead, continuing to prioritize the health and safety of our community members in all of our planning.

While we continue to monitor the pandemic, we are also pausing to reflect on the lessons we have learned from the events of the past year, and how they will inevitably define our path through the recovery period and beyond – from our approach to teaching and learning, to the ways we work and provide services, to how we ensure that we are upholding the University's core values, including excellence, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

We have many exciting projects underway as we plan for the future, such as enhancing our ability to provide higher-quality and more efficient services through our new vision for Service Excellence; developing innovative programming for our new Markham Centre Campus to meet emerging labour market needs; building on our unique partnerships in the health-care sector in Vaughan to provide more experiential education and employment opportunities for our students; and leveraging our extensive expertise in disaster and emergency management, health and health governance, and sustainability to further our progress in addressing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and supporting the priorities set out in *Building a Better Future: York University Academic Plan 2020–2025*.

We are also continuing the important work of fighting racism in all its forms. In February, we shared a new framework and draft action plan to combat anti-Black racism, both on and off our campuses. We recognize that this work requires sustained efforts toward systemic change, and we are committed to putting the structures in place to support the changes we need today, as well as those we will need tomorrow.

While no one can quite be sure what the next few months will bring, as I look forward to the next academic year and beyond, I remain not only optimistic for what is to come, but confident in the knowledge that brighter days are indeed ahead.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

EDITOR'S NOTES



Time for a Breather

THINGS USUALLY SLOW DOWN IN SUMMER. But this year, we can expect things to rev up. After a bumpy start, COVID-19 vaccines are rolling in, making it likely that Canada will meet its goal of inoculating every Canadian who wants the jab by September. Expectations are high that life will return to normal. But what “normal” might actually look like is now very much open to speculation.

Those of us who have been able to work from home since the lockdowns began in March of last year are having trouble imagining what a return to the office might entail. So much has changed in the meantime that work itself is getting a rethink. Institutions – including York University – are discovering that much work can be done remotely, often with increased effectiveness and employee satisfaction.

We've all had to learn to walk a precariously thin line lately and, sadly, many people have not been able to maintain their balance. Forces beyond our control have upended life as we knew it, impacting not just the future of work, but also our mental health, eating habits and lifestyle choices, to mention just a few of the subjects touched on here in the Summer 2021 issue of *The York University Magazine*.

But you know what? During the pandemic, we've found ways

to realign our priorities, invented novel ways to stay connected and entertain ourselves and grown our own food (to reference still more of our Summer issue stories). Whew! But that's a mighty list. Time to take a breather. And summer is the best time to do it.

This is when the pull of the outdoors is strongest, and – as the philosopher Bertrand Russell once said – leisure is good. It is a product of civilization and education, and must be held as equal in importance to work in giving us a sense of dignity and a true shot at happiness in the days that will surely follow. ●

– DEIRDRE KELLY

The York University Magazine

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY



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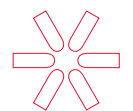
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ON THE COVER



The Big Shift
Photography
by Chris Robinson



YORK
UNIVERSITÉ
UNIVERSITY

View

OUTLOOK & IDEAS



Black Inclusion Matters

Changing the culture of an institution

YORK RECENTLY INTRODUCED two significant new documents, publicly committing to a series of strong, measurable actions meant to dismantle anti-Black racism as both an overt and covert practice at the University.

Addressing Anti-Black Racism: A Framework on Black Inclusion and *Action Plan on Black Inclusion* are among the first documents of their kind issued by a post-secondary institution in Canada. The multi-year implementation process – to achieve the outlined commitments – will begin later this year.

The *Framework* boldly asserts that “anti-Black racism is pervasive and entrenched in Canadian society,” that “white supremacy is the root of anti-Black racism” and that “anti-Black racism has led to the exclusion of Black people from the academy.”

The *Action Plan* includes commitments to hire an additional 12 Black faculty members by 2023, to create a new physical space where Black people can feel safe, to establish a new culturally safe tool for complaints about racial discrimina-

tion and harassment available in English and French, and to increase funding for scholarships, bursaries and other forms of financial aid in support of Black students.

“The overarching goal is to address the systemic nature of anti-Black racism that we know exists at York University,” says Sheila Cote-Meek, whose division of Equity, People and Culture is leading the project.

“I hope that, over time, as we implement the *Action Plan*, members of the Black community at York will start to feel a sense of belonging and a sense of safety on campus. I also hope Black community members feel that we as a university are making concerted efforts to try to change the culture of the institution.”

Over an eight-month period, Cote-Meek and President and Vice-Chancellor Rhonda Lenton met with more than 200 Black York community members, including the York Federation of Students, the Glendon Race Equity Caucus, the Black Alumni Network and the Race Equity Caucus of York University Faculty Association.

The committee also worked in close consultation with

University race expert Carl James, a professor in the Faculty of Education, and Andrea Davis (MA '91, PhD '02), an associate professor in the Department of Humanities and an affiliated faculty member with the Centre for the Study of Black Cultures in Canada.

Both faculty members served as special advisors on the project.

“Progress demands a fundamental shift in the way we think and in the way York operates as a university,” Davis says. “If the culture of the University can change so it recognizes that its fundamental role is to include and engage all its members, while also being at the forefront of advancing both change and inclusive transformational knowledge, then that is progress for me.”

For James, implementing these *Action Plan* commitments, along with policy and structural changes, is a vital first step toward creating an inclusive community.

“The *Framework* and the *Action Plan* must be accompanied by systemic changes, in terms of policies, programs, activities and practices that are relevant and responsive to the experiences and interests of Black students, faculty and staff,” says James, who is the Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community & Diaspora.

“This will benefit not only Black students, faculty and staff,” James continues, “but all students and other members of the York community. Recognition of individuals’ lived experiences is critical to the development of an inclusive university community.” ●
— Vanessa Thompson

NEW ART GALLERY FOR YORK



An engaging new showcase for the AGYU Collection

TORONTO'S HARIRI PONTARINI ARCHITECTS will design a new stand-alone art gallery at York University after emerging as the winner of an online design competition that incorporated feedback from York faculty, students and the extended community.

Led by Siamak Hariri and David Pontarini, the firm is known for its innovative building designs, including the new Tom Patterson Theatre at the Stratford Festival in Ontario.

“The AGYU has a long history as a leader in presenting and supporting artists. As a contemporary art gallery, it strives to serve an aesthetic and social function,” says AGYU director and curator Jenifer Pappararo. “Our goal with this ambitious new building is to establish both liveness and legacy by maintaining a critical contemporary art program and giving prominence to the University’s collection.”

The new three-storey art gallery – to be located between the Keele Campus’s Accolade East Building and the Centre for Film & Theatre – is made possible by a \$5 million donation given to York University by philanthropists and art collectors Joan and Martin Goldfarb. It will be named after the Goldfarbs in recognition of their ongoing support of arts and culture at the University. ●
— Deirdre Kelly

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROBINSON



That Other Pandemic

Heart failure is soaring globally, a new study finds

CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE is on the rise, and the increase is more rapid in low- and middle-income countries where public health interventions and access to basic medicines have been lacking for years.

This is the finding of a new study authored by Nicola Luigi Bragazzi, a biostatistician, epidemiologist and medical doctor in the Laboratory for Industrial and Applied Mathematics at York University.

The first systematic analysis of the burden and underlying causes of heart failure in 195 countries and territories worldwide, the study shows that the number of patients worldwide nearly doubled from 33.5 million in 1990 to 64.3 million in 2017.

The results are published in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*, a journal of the European Society of Cardiology.

For his study, Bragazzi used detailed information from the Global Burden of Disease study to examine the prevalence and underlying causes of heart failure globally over a period of 28 years.

Numbers and age-standardized rates of heart failure prevalence and years lived with disability were compared according to age, sex and socio-demographic index (SDI).

The data shows that nearly half of the global increase in the number of heart failure patients was in China (29.9 per cent) and India (16.6 per cent). Bragazzi identifies “an interplay of factors such as population growth and unhealthy behaviours including smoking and air pollution” as likely explanations.

He further observes that in these and other low- and middle-income countries, four basic medicines (aspirin, beta blockers, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and statins) are found to be generally unavailable or unaffordable for many populations, a situation which only compounds the problem.

“Heart failure represents a major global public health issue,” Bragazzi says.

“Scholars and workers in the field of public health, as well as decision- and policy-makers, can exploit the data provided in the study to develop ad hoc interventional programs to mitigate against the burden imposed by heart failure in their countries and territories. Moreover, it is of paramount importance to enhance people’s health literacy and awareness concerning the adoption of healthy lifestyles.” ●

— Deirdre Kelly

Energy Disruption

*A new study looks at the people power
fuelling low-carbon innovation in the marketplace*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROBINSON

ECO-SAVVY CONSUMERS who purchase electric vehicles and rooftop solar panels, for instance, or who participate in deep energy retrofit and other green-building programs, are already helping to mitigate greenhouse gases and challenge predictions of a future ecological calamity.

But for these small gestures to have lasting significance in making clean energy a reality for all, they require the creation of new products, services and policies that target the demand side to disrupt existing technologies and markets, ultimately leading to broad technological, social and political changes.

That's the key finding of a new study out of York University that looks at climate-change actions on the part of all energy users as a requirement for the radical energy system transformation needed to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2030, the target set by scientists to give the planet a fighting chance at long-term survival.

"We want to understand what role energy users – such as citizens, households, organizations and businesses within communities – can play in a low-carbon transition and how they can be supported to adopt multiple 'disruptive' innovations," says Christina Hoicka (MES '07), an associate professor of sustainable energy economics in the Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, and the project's principal investigator.

Between 2017 and 2019, Hoicka led a research team in identifying 131 low-carbon innovations that had been offered to energy users in Ontario between 1998 and 2018. Examples

of the innovations they found included a municipal energy planning program, electric vehicle charging policy incentives, a community energy-storage project, energy audits and regional sustainability initiatives.

But many "lacked the technology-specific regulatory, economic and knowledge-creation and diffusion policy supports necessary to achieve scale-up and diffusion in mainstream markets," Hoicka says, making them less effective than they could be in redefining a low-carbon landscape for the province.

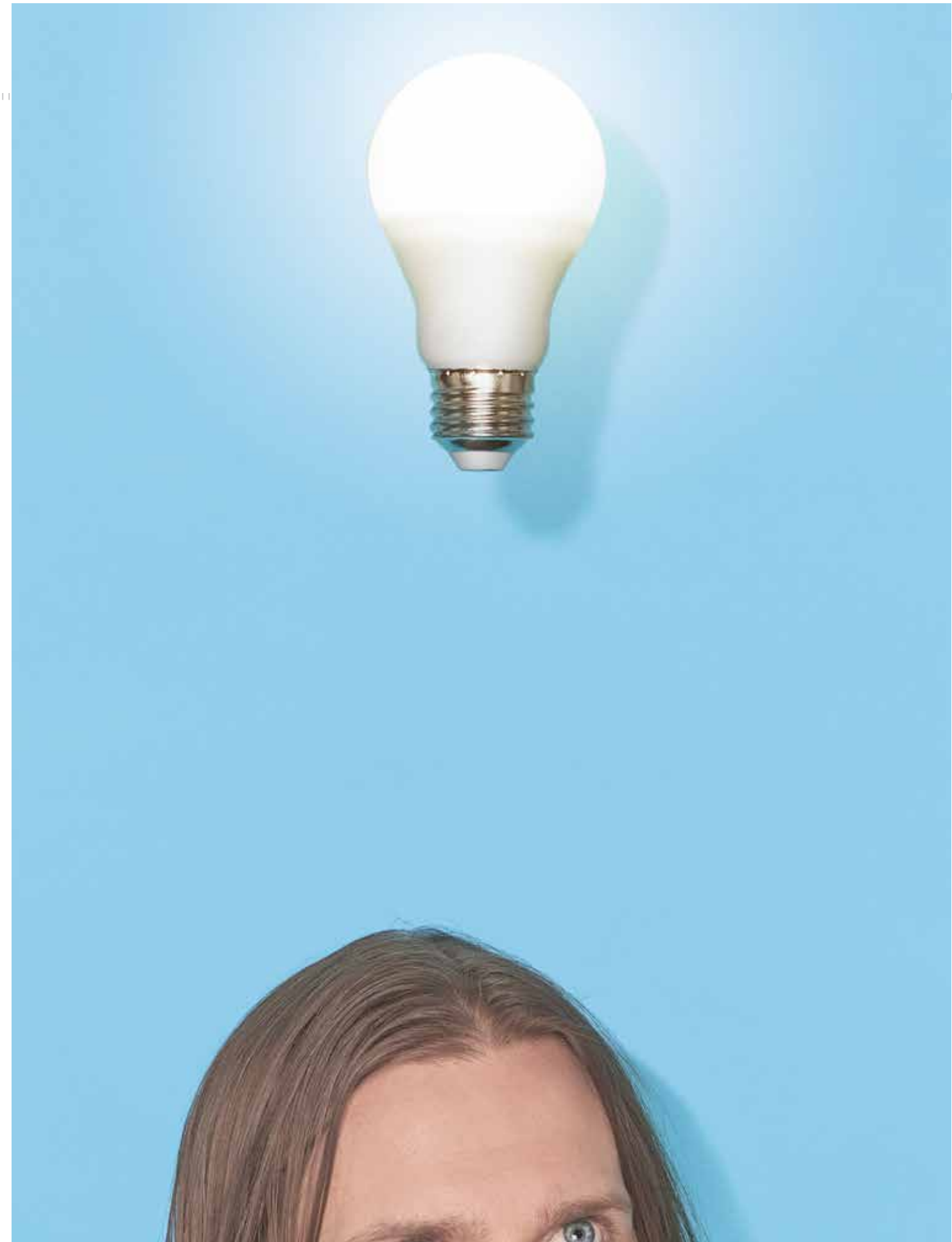
"Disruptive innovations create major societal change, for example by introducing new social values and political beliefs and through the emergence of new actors and regulatory interventions. We have identified these innovations and their dissemination rates, and measured their impact on a low-carbon energy transition."

The potential policy implications of the research are quite broad and impactful, earning Hoicka a 2021 Ontario Early Researcher Award based on this project.

"Our research can inform policy-makers, industry experts and professionals about how to identify disruptive innovations and the specific factors that influence the successful diffusion of existing low-carbon innovations," she says.

"By broadening our understanding and measurement of how to engage energy users quickly and accelerate our response, this research provides an important contribution to decarbonization policy that aligns with 2030 greenhouse gas mitigation targets." ●

— Deirdre Kelly



Meet the York graduates making a difference

AT A TIME of great uncertainty about the future, York University has launched its first-ever Top 30 Changemakers Under 30 list, a new alumni recognition program that spotlights young graduates who are transcending obstacles and making a real difference in their chosen fields.

Advancing innovation and demonstrating leadership (in

good times and bad), these young trailblazers are finding solutions to pressing local and global problems, from climate change to social inequity.

For more information on the 2021 Top 30 Changemakers Under 30, visit yorku.ca/alumniandfriends/top30. ●
(With support from Yfile)

Future Forward

YORK'S 30 CHANGEMAKERS UNDER 30

AJITH THIYAGALINGAM, BA '15, JD '18,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, Osgoode Hall
Law School

ALEXANDRA LUTCHMAN, BA '14,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

AURANGZEB KHANDWALA, BA '18,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

BAILEY FRANCIS, BA '19,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

BASIA POZIN, BBA '17, Schulich School of Business

BO CHENG, BSc '17, MMAI '20,
Science, Schulich School of Business

CHRISTINE EDITH NTOUBA DIKONGUÉ, BA '14,
Glendon

DANI ROCHE, BDes '13,
School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design

DAVID MARRELLO, BBA '15,
Schulich School of Business

DAVID (XIAOYU) WANG, MSCM '20,
Schulich School of Business

DEANNA LENTINI, BSc '16,
Health

EUNICE KAYS, BA '17,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

FARZIA KHAN, BA '17,
Lassonde School of Engineering

GIANCARLO SESSA, BBA '19,
Schulich School of Business

IMAN MOHAMED, BA '14,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

ISABELLA AKALIZA, BA '20,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

JILLIAN LYNCH, BA '19,
Health

KRYSTAL ABOTOSSAWAY, BHRM '13,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

LARISSA CRAWFORD, BA '18,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

LUKE REECE, BA '15,
School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design

MANEESHA GUPTA, JD '17,
Osgoode Hall Law School

MATTHEW RAVIDA, BCom '18,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

MIKHAELA GRAY BEERMAN, BA '14, MEd '18,
Education, Glendon

MIRANDA BAKSH, BES '17, MES '19,
Environmental & Urban Change

NICOLE DORAY, iBA '17, MES '19,
Environmental & Urban Change, Glendon

PRAKASH AMARASOORIYA, BSc '15,
Health

RANA NASRAZADANI, BA '20,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

ROWENA TAM, BA '17,
School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design

SHANT JOSHI, BFA '17,
School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design

SHAQUILLE OMARI, BA '15,
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

(With support from Yfile)

TOP LEFT: CHANGEMAKER PRAKASH AMARASOORIYA,
PHOTOGRAPH BY SOFIE KIRK
BOTTOM LEFT: CHANGEMAKER DANI ROCHE,
PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE FORD



The Magic of Mushrooms

BY DEIRDRE KELLY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

*It's a shroom boom –
boosting immunity, sustainability
and the hopes of the planet*

**Fungi are amazing organisms;
they have more in common
with animals than they do plants**

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED how, after a rainfall, mushrooms will appear fully formed as if out of nowhere? What was previously just a patch of earth or a rotting log – to name two familiar fungi incubators – is suddenly clustered with seemingly alien beings with slender stalks for bodies and bald caps for heads.

Easily toppled and decapitated (not to mention curious to look at), mushrooms appear to be fragile but are actually quite robust, capable of pushing through decomposing materials with astonishing speed and strength, their silken structures unscathed by the Herculean effort.

One of the distinct wonders of the natural world, mushrooms are not unlike the mythical phoenix rising from the ashes in a continual act of self-regeneration. Even in the course of the coronavirus pandemic, they keep on asserting themselves as a mysteriously unstoppable life force.

Mushrooms and their secret powers are cropping up everywhere right now, in immunity-boosting nutritional supplements, biodegradable building materials, sustainable fashion, vegan-friendly car interiors, replenishing skincare products, the emerging psychedelics market, even coffee. The reasons are as myriad as the threads in the mushroom’s infinitely regenerating root system.

“FUNGI ARE ABSOLUTELY AMAZING organisms; they have more in common with animals than they do plants,” says York University Professor Michael Brown, a Canada Research Chair in computer vision and amateur mycologist (or mushroom expert) who forages for mushrooms in the wild.

“What we think of as mushrooms are only the fruiting body of the larger fungi organism. Most of the fungi is in the ground or tree as the mycelium,” continues Brown, a member of the Mycological Society of Toronto, an organization whose stated goal is to stimulate public interest in and appreciation of fungi and their role in nature.

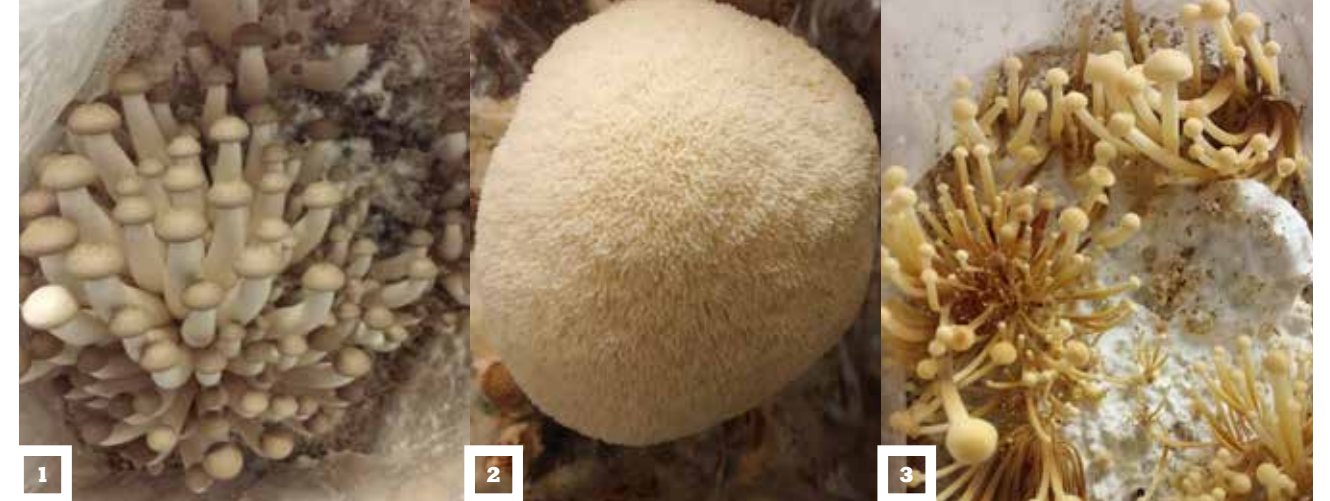
“The mycelium is the pale mass that looks like a network of connections, much like a brain. This is the part that often works in harmony with plant roots to exchange nutrients. I personally just find them fascinating.”

That fascination is spreading as mushrooms – in all their wondrous variety – emerge as an unexpected pandemic lifestyle trend. During lockdown, people have taken to foraging for edible mushrooms out of doors, as Brown and his fellow mycologists frequently do. They are also, in increasing numbers, growing them at home using kits supplied by the likes of Wylie Mycologicals Ltd. Until recently, Wylie Mycologicals would ship mushroom-growing kits to customers across the country from their location in the Bruce Peninsula, north of Owen Sound.

The family-run business was founded by Bill Wylie, a chartered accountant, and his wife, York grad Micky Wylie (BA ’71), a legal librarian by profession. The couple started selling specialty mushroom grow-blocks to commercial mushroom growers in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes in the 1990s, later expanding into local and inter-provincial nurseries, in addition to Loblaws and related supermarkets, due to demand for their organic products.

Their home growing kits – which consisted of sterilized and inoculated spawn-run red oak sawdust needing only a twice-daily misting of water to fruit – evolved out of store demos driven by consumer curiosity. The DIY kits have long been popular with the public – “People are genuinely amazed by what seems to be a mysterious growing process happening before their eyes,” Micky Wylie explains – but demand has surged during COVID-19. Sales are up 10 to 15 per cent over the year. (Unfortunately, these consumer sales were ultimately not enough to offset the loss of sales to restaurants forced to closed during the pandemic, and this past spring, the company ceased its operations.)

“Mushrooms put on a good show,” she says. “They grow very quickly, so what appears as an infant sprout in the morning may be ready to pick by mid-afternoon to be served at dinner.”



FABULOUS FUNGI

1. Beech mushroom,
2. Lion’s mane mushroom
3. Enoki mushroom
4. Pink oyster mushroom
5. Reishi mushroom

Photography courtesy Micky Wylie

BEYOND FRESHNESS, homegrown mushrooms promise immunity-building health benefits, something our disease-ravaged society has been craving during the course of the pandemic. Mushrooms are nature’s unassuming healers; many varieties supply the body with much-needed vitamins and minerals, including selenium, potassium, calcium and – when infused with sunlight – vitamin D. Protein and endurance-enhancing carbohydrates are also part of what Wylie

calls “the cornucopia of life offered by versatile specialty mushrooms.”

Nowadays, that cornucopia is overflowing with mushrooms in a variety of forms and formulations. Functional mushrooms, a description applied to certain types of fungi with medicinal (and not just nutritional) value, are another lifestyle trend gaining traction in the pandemic. Celebrities like Gwyneth Paltrow and Mischa Barton publicly endorse

**They also appear to increase creativity,
promote healthier lifestyles
and give people a sense of meaning
in their lives**

the healing powers of mushrooms, helping to raise their profile (and popularity) as a readily accessible natural health treatment.

Scientific evidence is still pending on whether or not putting powdered mushroom in your morning smoothie or coffee will delay the aging process and cure cancer, as some medicinal mushroom advocates proclaim. But other studies show that functional mushrooms reduce inflammation, lower blood pressure, manage weight, boost mental clarity and minimize the risks of certain chronic diseases. These findings and more are likely why the global mushroom market is currently on the upswing. According to a recent *Business Wire* report, the market for edible and non-edible mushrooms combined is forecasted to grow from its current value of US\$54 billion to US\$86 billion by 2026.

York alum Ben Nikolaevsky (BA '91), whose Pure Extracts Technologies company in British Columbia processes functional mushrooms for consumer use, says that the market is being driven by the health-promoting benefits of medicinal mushrooms: "The functional mushroom wellness market is experiencing robust sales as many consumers are trying to boost their immune systems in light of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Capitalizing on that growth, in the spring Nikolaevsky announced that Pure Extracts – a plant-based extraction company focused on cannabis, hemp, functional mushrooms and the rapidly emerging psychedelic sector – has a new wholly owned subsidiary devoted exclusively to the development of medicinal mushrooms. Pure Mushrooms' first offerings are three premium functional mushroom formulations sold as vegan capsules through the company's online e-commerce store: reishi, used for centuries in Eastern medicine to

increase the body's energy and immunity; maitake, reputed to benefit heart and brain function; and lion's mane, said to provide memory support and enhance mental clarity.

More products are expected to follow once the company builds out its mushroom extraction facility north of Whistler, in the Rocky Mountains. They will include manufactured psilocybin, a hallucinogenic derivative of functional mushrooms (colloquially known as magic mushrooms) to be made available as oral tablets, capsules and a nasal gel developed for investigation purposes. Nikolaevsky is currently working with scientific researchers to study the efficacy of psilocybin as a treatment for common forms of mental illness. His company has already submitted an application to Health Canada for future sales.

Rotem Petranker (MA '18), a clinical psychology PhD student at York University who is leading an international research team in examining the health benefits of psilocybin-containing mushrooms, says that medical science (psychiatry, psychology, pharmacology and the like) has a real interest in the therapeutic potential of hallucinogens.

"Psychedelics, and psilocybin in particular, show a lot of promise for treating anxiety, depression and OCD, and may even be effective for other disorders such as eating disorders and PTSD. On the flourishing side, they also appear to increase creativity, promote healthier lifestyles and give people a sense of meaning in their lives," says Petranker, whose main research interests are sustained attention, emotional regulation and creativity, all of which can potentially be affected by microdosing psychedelics. "But there is much that remains unknown about these substances," he cautions, "and so more research should be done before we embrace them wholesale."



ROTEM PETRANKER: The therapeutic potential of hallucinogens



MYRA ARSHAD: The next frontier in biodegradable materials

We really need to start thinking about using more food-based materials that can better support the survival of the planet

JUST AS THEY CAN TREAT PEOPLE, mushrooms can also tend to the woes of the planet, or so mycophiles – those with a positive relationship with mushrooms – believe. Decomposers that feed on dead organic material, fungi can clean up sawdust and other debris on building construction sites where mushrooms, not incidentally, are also being used to make biodegradable building materials like floor tiles, mouldable concrete and non-toxic replacement glues and insulation. Studies are ongoing as to how fungi can be applied to biohazard sites, where their ability to eat through and absorb environmental toxins is making mushrooms a significant future player in the growing bioremediation industry. Some varieties are also known to eat through plastics, insecticides and other pollutants, making them an ally in the war against human-made waste in oceans as well.

Elsewhere, strides are being made with mushrooms in fashion, one of the most polluting of all industries, where sustainability is becoming a much-coveted value. Earlier this year, French luxury leather goods brand Hermès announced that it would incorporate a mushroom-derived material into one of its high-end travel bags by year's end. Amber-coloured Sylvania, created in a lab by California-based startup MycoWorks, is made from the complex network of hardy threads found in the mycelium root structure. The resulting product is as durable and supple as calfskin but without the environmental impact of traditional leather manufacturing.

British designer Stella McCartney is also presently experimenting with fungal leathers, having recently produced a prototype of a mushroom-based black bustier with a matching pair of leggings made from a mycelium leather created by Bolt Threads. Adidas, LuluLemon and Gucci's parent company Kering (which owns Saint Laurent and Balenciaga, among other high-end European fashion brands) are also said to have signed up to use Mylo, as the vegan unleather is called, in their own future collections. Mushrooms' style cred extends to avant-grade designer Iris van Herpen,

whose 2021 Spring/Summer couture collection features chanterelle-shaped garments inspired by her reading of biologist Merlin Sheldrake's 2020 book *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds*, according to *Vogue* magazine.

To Myra Arshad (BBA '18), co-founder and CEO of Alt Tex, a Toronto-based startup that has found a way to convert unused industrial food waste into a biodegradable biofibre for textile use, mushrooms and other plant-based materials represent the next frontier in sustainable fashion.

"Humans have been using very linear materials for centuries now – that is, materials that are not designed to be recycled or biodegraded – and because of that, plus the speed with which we are manufacturing fashionable clothing, we've ended up amassing so much waste on this planet that we just don't have enough space for it," says Arshad, a 25-year-old Schulich School of Business graduate recently identified as one to watch by the Forum of Women Entrepreneurs, a national organization based in Vancouver.

"To solve the problem, we really need to start thinking about using more food-based materials that can better support the survival of the planet. Utilizing food waste, as we do at Alt Tex, or the root systems of mushrooms, as other companies do, will conserve the ecosystem. It's a novel process that, by creating biodegradable fabrics, will help keep fashion out of landfills."

Until that day arrives, mushrooms will do what they've always done – appear out of nowhere after a rainfall as a visible reminder of the secret powers of nature. "There are a large variety of edible and non-edible mushrooms that you can forage," says Prof. Brown, whose preferred mushroom-hunting grounds are north of Toronto, in the wilds of Muskoka. "Of course, you should never eat a mushroom without having expert knowledge," he adds, "because many non-edibles can be deadly."

Which only adds to their mystery. ●

BIG THE SHIFT

Building a better
post-pandemic workplace

BY TRACEY LINDEMAN

THE FUTURE OF WORK is universal daycare so women can get back to work.

Wait. The future of work is making sure people who lose jobs to automation can be effectively retrained and redeployed into the workforce.

No, that's not it. Maybe: The future of work is making sure all Canadians have access to a baseline income and workers' benefits, including health insurance and paid sick days?

In fact, the future of work – and the future of *workers* – is unclear as we (hopefully) begin to round the corner on COVID-19. Will white-collar employees go back to an office? Will contact centre staff be allowed to stay home, but with constant webcam surveillance? Will essential workers lose their hazard pay and have to scramble to make up the difference?

According to a survey from ADP Canada, 45 per cent of Canadians would prefer to work remotely at least three days a week, and more than 25 per cent said they would like to

have flex hours.

"One thing that I really hope continues is organizations continue to be much more open to remote work and flexible work arrangements," says Winny Shen, associate professor of organization studies at York University's Schulich School of Business.

"Organizations have always argued that there were limits on the kinds of jobs that could be done remotely, and concerns about people's ability to work remotely. But I think this pandemic has really highlighted just how many jobs can be done remotely, and many of them very effectively," says Shen, emphasizing that certain people, including those with disabilities or a greater need for flexibility, such as caregivers, could see greater workforce inclusion.

If this big shift materializes, it will have to be better than a return to business as usual, she adds. But whether we are up for that challenge is another question altogether.

Gig workers are often perceived as having autonomy and flexibility. But their choices are constrained

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROBINSON



WHEN THE PANDEMIC STRUCK, some people lost nothing. Switching into work-from-home mode, without a drop in income, has been the story for a lot of white-collar workers and other professionals whose jobs can be done from pretty much anywhere with an internet connection.

Some people, on the other hand, lost everything.

Industry group Restaurants Canada says more than 10,000 restaurants have closed since March 2020, and another 50 per cent are at risk of closure if conditions don't improve. Bars and other drinking establishments saw sales decline by 48 per cent last year. An Ontario industry group for beauty and personal care services says their line of work has been "decimated" by revolving-door lockdowns and COVID restrictions. In 2020, 58,000 small businesses became inactive, and another 181,000 are at serious risk of closure in 2021, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

Each business affected is a person's life savings and a staff's livelihood, in industries that are largely known for low wages and insecure work, usually without private health insurance benefits, and where women and people of colour have especially high levels of representation.

Armine Yalnizyan (BA Hons. - Glendon '83) is a member of the federal government's task force on women in the economy, and she says that recovering from the recession and massive disruption to work that COVID created is an opportunity and a challenge to make a more equitable future for workers:

"The people who lost their jobs, the industries that were declared non-essential, were often very marginal industries – marginal defined as marginal profitability, like five per cent or less profit margins. So we're looking at personal services, we're looking at restaurants and bars, we're looking at hotels and accommodations."

With losses for some in the 50 to 75 per cent range, plus the heightened costs associated with abiding by provincial health and safety protocols, the present – never mind the future – of work for the most economically vulnerable sectors is bleak and fraught with heartache. Continues Yalnizyan, "We've got a bunch of companies that have ended. As Dan Kelly of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has said, there's been a lot of deaths, but they just haven't held their funerals yet." Rollbacks on women in the workforce have been particularly stark.

In Alberta, the employment rate of women in 2020 was the same as in 1984. In Ontario, it was 1993. Canada-wide, it was 1996, according to Yalnizyan, who is also the Atkinson fellow on the future of workers, focusing on automation, women and workforce aging.

In other words, the economic effects of COVID-19 have not been the same for all workers, making it difficult to come up with an answer to the question of what the future of work will look like. But we can certainly try to imagine a better future for most people.

AT UNITO, a Montreal startup that makes workflow and collaboration management software, they know the future of work must be flexible. That's why they shifted their perspective on work schedules and remuneration when COVID-19 forced people out of the office.

Employees there can work a condensed workweek, can choose to swap out a weekday for a Saturday or Sunday and can even choose their working hours.

As Marie-Rose Rioux, the company's CFO and vice-president of business operations, says, employees are asked to be available during the 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. window to take a call or attend an all-hands meeting if necessary, but are otherwise free to work whenever they want. "But when you do your work, that's whenever you're productive," says Rioux. "We have people who love to work at night. So be it; work at night. As long as it's not work that needs to be done in synchronous collaboration with someone else, that's fine."

Rioux also notes that salaries at the company are determined by a compensation matrix and are transparent, meaning everyone knows what their colleagues are earning. The company also raised base pay for positions overwhelmingly held by women, to help account for systemic wage gaps and to improve diversity. "The whole company loved it," says Rioux. "I believe people are happier [that] we can retain our staff better. I believe that we can attract staff better."

Although it was initially developed for internal use, Unito has templated and made public (for free) its Better Workplace Toolkit, to help other companies create better conditions for workers. Rioux suggests companies start their programs small and build them over time. "The bigger it is, the more difficult,"

I think this pandemic has really highlighted just how many jobs can be done remotely, and many of them very effectively

PROFESSOR WINNY SHEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIE KIRK



More than 10,000 restaurants have closed since March 2020, and another 50 per cent are at risk of closure

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS ROBINSON



she advises. "Another recommendation is, it's not a program that you install; it's a mindset, and you need to invest in that."

The global health crisis created the opportunity for companies like Unito to push for flexibility. How many organizations are true-blue converts to a new way of working and thinking about work will depend on how the pandemic fallout is examined.

Professor Shen says it's critical to evaluate how women and people of colour have had their health, livelihoods and job security disproportionately affected if we want to learn from this moment and make a more equitable future for workers going forward.

"We need to make sure we don't sweep it under the rug. We really have to take this opportunity to examine some of our attitudes and our biases, and also, in order to prevent something like this moving forward, we really have to make some real systemic changes," she says. "Those are hard conversations to have, and we have to have them."

It's important, when considering equitable methods of recovery, to account for how different this recession is from the last one. Yalnizyan says the growing gig economy and taskification of work enabled by automation and mobile tech innovation is something we did not feel the full brunt of following the 2007–2008 market crash, but will feel more harshly now. According to Statistics Canada, this workforce grew from 5.5 per cent of the population in 2005 to 8.2 per cent in 2016, and it rose higher for women than it did for men. The figures from 2016 onward are still unclear, another Statistics Canada report notes, but what is certain is that gig work is here to stay.

As a recent analysis in *Policy Options* points out, "Gig workers are often perceived as having autonomy and flexibility. But their choices are constrained. For example, on some gig work platforms, price algorithms make some shifts more profitable than others. Gig workers might only turn a profit by working those particular shifts, undermining the notion that they can freely choose their schedule."

Yalnizyan warns that, without policy interventions, gig work will play a large role in further destabilizing the workforce.

Some tasks include rides delivered by Uber or Lyft drivers, food deliveries from Skip the Dishes or Foodora, hosting someone in your Airbnb or completing home maintenance chores via TaskRabbit. Other tasks are clicking a button to confirm a picture of an elephant is, indeed, a picture of an

elephant. "Whether that task takes a few minutes, or whether it takes a few months, it's still not a job. It's a contract to do a specific thing. You get paid by the checkmark, which can be just pennies a checkmark, and you just layer them up to make money," says Yalnizyan. "We do not deal with, in our labour codes, this gray version of 'worker' very well: you're either an employee or you're self-employed."

Reforming labour codes – and modifying the Canadian social safety net to account for the modernization of work – needs to happen, and soon, to ensure this growing workforce has protections, and even just has its basic needs as workers, and as humans, met in the post-COVID economy.

S O, WHAT does the future of work look like? "COVID has been a great pair of glasses to look through at inequities built over centuries," says Merle Jacobs (BA Hons. '79, MA '88, PhD '00), an associate professor and current Chair of York's Department of Equity Studies.

Greater flexibility for office workers could mean the conversion of empty offices into residential units – potentially good for the rental housing market, but perhaps not great for office cleaners or service industry providers in downtown cores. Working from home may be some people's dream and others' worst-case scenario. People who traded their jobs for caregiving of children or sick relatives may find it harder and harder to get back into the workforce as the cost and scarcity of outsourcing that care climbs.

To make a more equitable future for workers, then, policies on worker protections, compensation and accessibility of caregiving need to be implemented. But it's also more than that. Minds need to be changed about what work is, and how work is different for different people.

"That's where the political class – globally, not just in Canada – has got to see a new invention of how civil society lives, how we live in society," says Jacobs.

That mindset has changed over time, Jacobs continues. It used to be unfathomable that women could work at all. Now, we are talking about getting more women *back* into the workforce to save the economy.

"Society has transitioned, and there's nothing to say it can't again," Jacobs says. "But – there has to be a will." ●



Balancing Act

STELLA ISAAC

Supporting mental health at a time of crisis

BY SADIYA ANSARI ● PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

WHEN THE PANDEMIC HIT, Stella Isaac (BA '20) was just finishing her degree. And while a transition to online learning helped see her through to graduation, virtual connection wasn't going to cut it for her position as a varsity long jumper training with her team five hours a day, five days a week. She had always had sports in her life as an outlet, and when those workouts abruptly halted, Isaac struggled to get back on track. "My life is really balanced when I'm working out, and when I don't work out, that's an aspect of my life that is off-balance," she says. "It was very, very difficult for me to find that inner strength to be motivated."

Unfortunately, Isaac's experience has been a common one during a global pandemic that has seen many people socially and physically isolated, often anchored in front of screens at home. Odds are good that you or someone you know has struggled with a loss of motivation, feelings of isolation, or worse: Mental Health Research Canada (MHRC) has been polling Canadians on their rates of anxiety and depression since last year, and its latest poll shows the highest incidence of both, with 25 per cent reporting anxiety and 17 per cent reporting depression. MHRC, which is conducting the polls in partnership with Health Canada, reports that the rate of depression has increased by 70 per cent since the first wave. For post-secondary students, the pandemic has compounded pre-existing pressures like heavy course loads, uncertain career prospects and rising tuition by adding social isolation, health anxieties and the need to adapt to online learning into the mix.

Another source of stress during the pandemic is being unable to look forward to things, says Gordon Flett, a professor of psychology at York University and the Canada Research Chair in Personality and Health. Uncertainty, lack of control and financial pressure all compound stress, and that feeling is magnified for people already experiencing a mental health condition.

But Flett, like many others in the York community, is focusing on how his work can combat the intense level of stress, anxiety and depression taking hold during this trying period. In addition to University-wide programs including counseling services and the online initiative Wellness Wednesdays, individual academics are also doing their part – like Faculty

of Health assistant professor Simon Adam, a social scientist in nursing whose program of scholarship focuses on the mental health industry, and who recently launched a podcast covering mental health.

For Isaac, regaining that balance meant reconnecting with what is important to her well-being – physical fitness and community. In May of 2020, after heeding the advice of her mother and older sister, who urged her to draw on her experience as a University athlete, she came up with the idea to organize a group workout program to take place on a Saturday evening on a street corner in Parkdale, her neighbourhood in Toronto. Despite Isaac's call out on Facebook and Instagram welcoming people to participate, only three neighbours showed up to join her family members. But no matter. Word soon spread, and within a month, "NaCl Saturdays" (or "Salty Saturdays," to translate the chemical formula) was attracting dozens of participants ranging from five-year-olds to seniors.

Accessibility became a key component of Isaac's ethos. She built modifications into every routine to ensure that if a school-aged kid convinced his or her parents or grandparents to come along, everyone would be able to do the exercises.

Meaningful Connections

ISAAC'S INTEREST in facilitating social interaction – and even her desire to stay inclusive of a broader community – speaks to a psychological concept that Flett believes is key to combatting the isolation people are feeling right now: mattering. Quite simply, our need to matter is that desire to have meaningful connections, to feel significant – the feel-good sentiment in stories we often hear, like a teacher who pushes someone to pursue post-secondary education, or a favourite aunt who checks in regularly.

The isolation many are experiencing during the pandemic is contributing to feelings of loneliness, which Flett's research has shown is strongly associated with feelings of *not* mattering. "The flip side of mattering is marginalization," says Flett. But there are proactive steps we can all take to help people feel like they matter. These include checking in on people, telling someone how much they are needed, asking about their needs and acknowledging selfless acts. Flett

applauds the recent Canada Post campaign where every household across the country was sent a prepaid postcard to mail to a loved one, saying a simple act like that can show someone you are thinking about them, that they matter.

Feeling like you matter is correlated with other positive emotions and behaviours. In the context of the pandemic, Flett points to a recent study he was involved in that examined Israeli students' adaptability to online learning during the pandemic. The study, published in *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, showed that students who reported feeling that they mattered were more likely to adapt well to online learning. And it confirmed other positive correlations: "Both belonging and mattering were associated with elevated levels of adaptability, in accordance with previous research linking belongingness and mattering with adaptability, buoyancy and resilience."

Showing someone they matter can go beyond personal connections and academic environments. In the workplace, research shows, feeling like you matter can prevent burnout, absenteeism and other mental health issues, says Flett. And there are still ways to do this, even during a pandemic, like mentorship. Flett sees a "double bonus" in this: the person being mentored feels supported, and the mentor feels like someone depends on them. Ultimately, seeking out opportunities for connection – at home, work or school – is the key to cultivating this feeling.

Online Interventions

THE MOST COMMON FORM of one-on-one connection recommended to those trying to manage a mental health issue is counselling – but even pre-pandemic, Farah Ahmad, an associate professor in the Faculty of Health, realized that wasn't an option for many students.

Along with Christo El Morr, Paul Ritvo and others, Ahmad set out to study the potential of online interventions that marry cognitive behavioural therapy and mindfulness. Both practices have proven to reduce depression and anxiety, and while there was some work involved in adapting them for online applications, Ahmad says, there was a much bigger opportunity to be examined.

The study, funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and its industry partner ForaHealthyMe, was designed to see whether web-based interventions could help students – a population that often doesn't have easy

access to counselling, and is more likely feel stigma accessing it on campus but is quite comfortable online. The researchers held focus groups with York students to identify key stressors, like body image and procrastination, that would found the basis for online modules. Two iterations of an eight-week study included a 10-minute module followed by breathing exercises, along with online discussion, both peer-to-peer and professionally guided. In the first version of the study, modules were available for four weeks, with the following four weeks turned over to discussion. In the second run, modules were available the whole time.

Ahmad characterizes the main outcomes of the study as "amazing": participants showed "significant reduction in symptoms of depression, anxiety and perceived stress." In a subsequent study, a third group had access only to modules, with no online discussion, and the modules on their own were also effective at reducing depression, anxiety and perceived stress. Ahmad says this is a "significant insight" that indicates this could be a cost-effective tool made widely available. It's also a tool that could reach many more populations beyond students.

"During the pandemic, we are becoming more aware of the potential of these virtual tools," says Ahmad. "There is a huge opportunity for [evidence-based programs] to be scaled up."

Stella Isaac also introduced virtual tools to her workouts when a local fitness studio approached her to do online sessions. She agreed and asked the studio if they would make the sessions free to people of colour. "I wanted to continue to foster a sense of community," she says, "and make fitness accessible to all."

With the weather co-operating and "NaCl Saturdays" again taking place outdoors, Isaac reflects on how leading others in physical exercise helped her through those first few tough months of the pandemic. "It really gave me something to look forward to during the week," she says.

It's something participants in her mental, physical and community health-boosting fitness program look forward to as well. For some, the one-hour workout is their sole weekly window to be outside for a prolonged period of time. Isaac will be encouraging even more people to stay active this summer as a fitness leader for the nationwide Community Better Challenge, a Government of Canada initiative marking the 50th anniversary of the country's physical fitness ParticipACTION brand. Isaac can't wait to get started. "I am grateful to God that I can pour into others," she says, "and that makes me feel good." ●



PROFESSOR GORDON FLETT

Alumni

Pandemic Performance



LAURA MULLIN



CHRIS TOLLEY

Even in a shutdown,
their show goes on

BY LEAH RUMACK (BA '96)
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

LAURA MULLIN (BFA '94) and Chris Tolley (BFA '95) were making #PandemicTheatre before it was cool. On March 12, 2020, the York theatre graduates and co-founders of Expect Theatre were recording the latest episode of *PlayME*, their CBC podcast that turns Canadian plays into audio dramas. They didn't know that the world was about to implode, instantly shuttering live performance for the foreseeable future, but it turns out they were ready when it did.

"All of a sudden, CBC had to shut down a lot of their entertainment programming," Tolley recounts. "They looked around and said, 'Well,

All of a sudden, CBC had to shut down a lot of their entertainment programming. They looked around and said, "Well, what can we still do?"

what can we still do?' And they saw podcasting. So they asked us if we had any other ideas."

Mullin and Tolley – who formed Expect shortly after graduation and have been writing and producing everything from site-specific live performances to *PlayME* ever since – sold two additional theatre-focused podcasts to the CBC in a matter of days. Within a week, they'd designed a system for recording shows remotely and were madly shipping microphones to actors locked in their homes across the country.

The results – *The Show Must Go On*, which features audio versions of Canadian productions that were affected by COVID-19, and *The Quarantine Chronicles*, a series of original one-act plays by Canadian playwrights set in a world upended by the pandemic – have kept performers employed and the spark of theatre alive. In June, Toronto's well-known Tarragon Theatre also tapped Expect to help produce an all-audio season called Tarragon Acoustic.

It's been months since lockdowns began, with no sign that theatres will be opening anytime soon, so if Mullin and Tolley already seemed pretty clever when they launched *PlayME* in 2016, they now look downright prophetic.

"There was a bit of prescience for sure," says Richard Rose, the artistic director of Tarragon Theatre, a York guest lecturer and 1978 graduate of what was then called Drama Studies. "They're onto something, and I think this new art form will continue to grow."

"There's an increasing interest in immersive podcast storytelling," says Arif Noorani, the executive producer of CBC Podcasts, noting that within the past year alone (we spoke in the fall), the broadcaster has grown its library of what people used to call "radio plays" dramatically.

Mullin and Tolley didn't mean to become trendsetters when they first came up with the idea for *PlayME*. They were just tired of the painfully short life – and limited geographical reach – of most Canadian plays.

"We love the live theatre experience, but the downside is

that it's so ephemeral," says Tolley. "You have to be in that city at that moment to be able to experience it, and then it's gone."

Mullin says they also envisioned a world where the years of sweat that can go into creating a new play could give playwrights a better return on

their creative investment than the short onstage run that's typical for Canadian independent theatre. "These are really well-crafted pieces of writing," she says, "so we thought, 'Why not give them another life?'"

And so they did. *PlayME* is now arguably the biggest single platform for theatre in Canada, and one that happens to be pandemic-proof. This is not to say that recording a high-quality audio play remotely is exactly easy. For starters, most actors don't have a soundproof studio in their homes. The answer? Closets.

"Now we have all these poor actors spending hours sitting in their closets, yelling and acting their hearts out among their sweaters and jackets," Tolley laughs.

It was all a bit fly-by-the-seat-of-their-pants, but the duo says it will probably continue to produce some of *PlayME* remotely even after life returns to "normal," because it allows them to work with actors, playwrights and directors outside their home base of Toronto.

Expect's chances of success in the audio drama world were no doubt helped along by the fact that Tolley has always been *PlayME*'s resident sound mixer and foley artist, technical skills that most producers and directors don't have. He credits his time at York with instilling in him the benefits of being a creator who can wear many hats – often at the same time.

"We were given an opportunity to do everything at York, from producing plays to learning how to sell tickets to lighting and costume design," he says. "You learn a little bit of all these different skills that you can incorporate into different worlds, or can use when the world changes and you have to pivot yourself." ●



Rapid Acceleration A York grad drives the C-suite

VITO PALADINO (BBA '99, MBA '11) is the new president of Audi Canada, after seven years as the luxury automobile company's senior director of sales. His innate love of cars led him to York University to study business administration at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Paladino grew up surrounded by automobiles in Vaughan, Ont., and became fascinated by them at a young age. His father worked at Ford, but it was the foreign models he saw in the pages of automotive magazines that had him truly enthralled.

"I still remember the Lamborghini Countach photo in my room growing up, something I looked at often, as I loved its bold design," he says. "It served as a daily reminder to

remain focused on my future ambitions. I think of it often, considering Lamborghini belongs to the Audi family."

What's it like selling such a big-ticket item in a pandemic?

"Beyond recalibrating our business to a reduced market size because of COVID-19, we've had to accelerate our omni-channel approach, using digitization to improve customer convenience, and implementing public health protocols to keep our customers and employees safe."

It's a sharp right turn, and Paladino credits York for giving him the skill set to make it:

"The York business program is designed to test your ability to multi-task, and encourages strategic thinking while respecting multiple points of view through student working groups. All of this is necessary in today's business landscape." ● — *Deirdre Kelly*



Engagé
Ontario's newest professeur

POLITICAL SCIENTIST and York grad Leandro Vergara-Camus (PhD '08) is one of four new professors to join the faculty of the Université de l'Ontario français, Ontario's first French-language university, opening in Toronto in September.

An agrarian studies, social movements and sustainable development expert, Vergara-Camus has published extensively on land struggles, alternative development, agricultural policies

and Latin American politics. His current research is on the global energy transition in the context of climate change.

"My PhD years in politics at York were pivotal for the development of a transdisciplinary and critical outlook on social issues – which I will bring to bear on my new position," Vergara-Camus says. "It will be great to be back in Toronto and participate again in academic events on the York campus." ● — *Deirdre Kelly*

Classes



CHERYL NOMDARKHON
(BA Sociology '98)

1975

EGGERTSON, BILL
(BA Political Science)
After an early career in radio and newspaper journalism, Bill transitioned to management for a number of renewable energy groups in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. During his career, he has worked on many advisory committees centred on renewable energy and environmental sustainability at local, provincial, national and international levels, including the planning, environmental and energy advisory committees with the City of Ottawa. In 2019, he founded NetZeroPlus, a green energy supplier in Almonte, Ont.

1976

SPENCER, GOLDIE
(BA Glendon)
Goldie has been a storyteller for over 20 years, performing at schools, community centres and festivals in Canada and Australia with a repertoire that includes folk tales, myths and legends. She is a member of Storytellers of

Canada (SC-CC) and is a co-ordinator of 1001 Friday Nights of Storytelling. In 1993, she co-founded the York Storytelling Guild, a collection of storytellers with different specialties and interests who aim to share storytelling as an art that can entertain, teach, heal and bring diverse people together.

1986

ROSS, KARYN
(BFA '86, MFA Visual Arts '90)
Karyn is the founder of Women in Lean – Our Table, an organization that supports, mentors and guides members from around the world while providing opportunities for personal and professional development. In 2019, she launched the Love and Kindness Project Foundation, which fosters projects like free coaching and micro-grants to programs that “create love and kindness around the world.” Her book, *The Kind Leader: A Practical Guide to Eliminating Fear, Creating Trust, and Leading with Kindness*, is scheduled to come out this September.

1990

HOCHU, CAROL
(MBA Schulich)
Armed with decades of experience leading Canadian associations and non-profit organizations, Carol helmed the Canadian Plastics Industry Association as president and CEO for eight years. She also served as executive director of Ontario Electronic Stewardship, a program that ended in December 2020. In September, she was named president and CEO of the

Tire and Rubber Association of Canada, a national trade association that represents the interests of manufacturers and importers of tires and other rubber goods in Canada. A passionate industry advocate, Carol continues to further her company's profile while advancing important industry issues with key stakeholders, influencers and government

1991



ZAFAR, MOHAMED
(BA Political Science)
After passing the bar examination with the Bar Association of

Guyana in 2004, Mohamed served as the legal officer with the Ethnic Relations Commission. He became a family law panellist practising criminal law in 2004, and a family law panellist with Legal Aid Ontario in 2017. Prior to his career in law, Mohamed was an artillery surveyor in the Canadian Armed Forces, part of the Royal Canadian Artillery Regiment based in West Germany from 1985 to 1995.

1998

NOMDARKHON, CHERYL
(BA Sociology)
A certified personal stylist, Cheryl created Uncover Your Style, an image consultancy business based in Toronto that aims to help women and men dress with ease and confidence while discovering their style sensibility.

1999

KIRCHMAIR, CAREY
(MBA Schulich)
In January 2021, Carey launched the educational consulting company Pathways to Campus, an Aurora-based company with services that help high school students and parents navigate the path to post-secondary education. The organization helps students identify their post-secondary study interests and career paths, and guides students and their parents throughout the post-secondary application and admissions process.



MOUNSEY, JOSEPHINE
(MA Political Science)
Building on her studies at York and creative writing courses at the

Humber School for Writers, Josie published her first novel, *The Weak Against the Strong*, in September 2020. Set in the Soviet Union, it has as its backdrop the tumultuous events of the demise of the USSR in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

2001

METIVIER, ANTHONY
(BA '01, MA '02, PhD English '09)
Anthony is CEO of Advanced Education Methodologies, a publishing company with science-based memory-improvement training books and courses. With close to two decades of experience writing about and teaching memory and study skills, he delivers

presentations internationally. In February 2020, Anthony delivered a TEDx talk in Melbourne, Australia, on new applications of memory to meditation.

2003

BUECKERT, NATHAN
(BA Philosophy)
Nathan's education in philosophy inspired him to become a writer. In 2019, he published the fantasy novel *Blood and Gods: Books 1 & 2 of the Creator's Quatrain*, for which he was awarded the 2020 Next Generation Indie Book Award – an awards program based in the U.S. – in the paranormal fantasy category.

2004



SADDLER GRAY, MINERVA
(BA Sociology)
Co-founder of Kuinua Consulting Group, Minerva provides grant writing and

resource enrichment strategies to not-for-profits, public agencies and selected businesses throughout Ontario. She is a board member with Youth Without Shelter in Toronto, a charity founded in 1986 that offers shelter and support for youth facing homelessness in the GTA.

2006

JACKSON, KELLY
(MA Political Science)
Kelly has been associate vice-president of government relations, marketing and communications at Humber College since July 2017, and is currently on the boards of the Empire Club of Canada and the North York Harvest Food Bank. Kelly is a co-author of *Our Canada: A Year With Canuck Kids*, a book published in January 2021 with the goal of helping children learn about Canada as a country and its identity at home and around the world.

2007



SUTHERLAND, JAMIE
(MBA Schulich)
Among the youngest executives at accounting software company

Sage Canada, Jamie led its small business unit and worked as vice-president and general manager from 2008 to 2011. In 2010, he co-founded the Canadian taxi-hailing app TaxiNow, and in 2017, Sonix, a company providing automated speech-to-text software using artificial intelligence and natural language processing.

2011



SORICHETTI, ALEXANDRA FRANCESCA
(BA Psychology)
Since 2013, Alexandra has worked in human resources, with

experience in policy and procedure development, talent acquisition and other HR administration systems for GMR Marketing and the City of Toronto, among other organizations. In 2016, she obtained a certificate in labour law from York University's Osgoode Professional Development program. Alexandra currently works as a training specialist for the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO).

2015



HAFEEZ, OSMAN
(MBA Business Administration)
Having worked in an advisory capacity to energy, government and health-care clients

in Calgary since 2008, Osman founded SmartHealth Management Consultants, whose primary focus is to provide management advisory services for health-care clients to improve quality and efficiency of care.

IN MEMORIAM

LYONS, SALLIE
(BA Dance '75)
Born in Saskatoon, Sask., Sallie danced in the Judy Jarvis Dance and Theatre Co. and Toronto Independent Dance Enterprise (TIDE) companies before becoming a choreographer for the likes of Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer. As a movement instructor, she gave classes in dance and theatre at the University College Drama Program, University of Toronto and York University's Theatre program. Founder of the Lyonfish Yoga Studio, Sallie passed away in Toronto, age 71, on February 15, 2021.

BICKERSTETH, SEYI
(MA Economics '75)
Seyi Bickersteth started his career at the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), where he worked as a research economist before moving to Management Systems Nigeria as a consultant. He next worked at Arthur Andersen, rising to the position of partner and head of the firm's tax division. After 20 years, Seyi left to join KPMG professional services as the national senior partner. He died suddenly in Nigeria on March 3, 2021.



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PATRICIA MADIGAN'S CAMPUS SNAPS

(clockwise from top left)
 McLaughlin construction aflame;
 New signage;
 Muddy York;
 Up-and-coming Osgoode



Flashback

Have a great photo from your days at York?

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I HAVE VERY FOND MEMORIES of the three years that I spent at York University. Most of my friends went to older, well-established universities, but I opted to attend York for several reasons. Back in 1967, it was almost brand-new, fairly small and close to home, and felt like a breath of fresh air. It didn't hurt that I was a bit rebellious in those days too! Situated in a farmer's field, York had limited solutions to housing, so most of us stayed in residence, which I loved. First-year students had to live with a roommate. Mine was a girl from the nation's capital, and since I was from small-town Ontario, she often liked to tease me. Her name was Dinah Hoyle, and while we were very different people, we got along well. At that time, there were only three residences – Founders, Winters, and Vanier, where we lived. The fourth residence was under construction in the winter of 1968. Our room was on the 12th floor and faced north. One morning in March, Dinah looked out the window and said, "Come and look! McLaughlin Tower is on fire!" Sure enough. I am not exactly sure what the cause of the fire was, but it did set the construction back a few months. ●



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