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Q&A
with Dr. Bruce Aylward, program director, WHO

AND

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A Memorial education can take you anywhere.

On our cover we position the wonderful digital artwork of alumna Tara Feener to note our university’s place alongside the iconic Signal Hill signpost – at the centre of the universe. Of course, this is merely a starting point.

We know that the true beauty of a university, its work and the people who give it meaning, allow for the free flow of ideas and the dynamic exchange of knowledge and learning – none of which is fixed in time or space. It’s an experience that’s borderless.

Trying to capture the essence of internationalization and Memorial is like trying to catch lightning in a bottle. But we try. In the pages that follow you’ll hear from Dr. Bruce Alyward about the fight against Ebola in West Africa and also see how the Marine Institute reaches far beyond our shores. In the cover story, profiles of eight fantastic alumni bring you a story from each continent – and the seas that separate them.

The flashes we illuminate here are but a few stories among thousands. Our university and alumni are doing incredible work that is affecting and reflecting across the globe.

And we’re pretty proud of that.

You’ll understand why when you take a trip around the world in this issue of Luminus.

Dear Editor:

It was with great pleasure that I saw Justin Dearing’s photo essay about Students on Ice (SOI) in the last issue of Luminus (Vol. 37 No. 1). It gave a real sense of the majesty of the northern landscapes that the participating students visit.

It is with equal pleasure that I can inform you that youth in our own province are experiencing the outstanding educational and social opportunities that SOI offers. This year, when the Ocean Endeavour left port on an exciting expedition exploring western Greenland and Canada’s eastern Arctic, Jonathan Lidd, a Grade 12 student from Nain, was onboard. He followed Nain’s Chaim Andersen who took part last year.

Jonathan and Chaim’s involvement is the result of a partnering arrangement that Parks Canada and SOI have formed. Each year from 2014-16, some 13 students from across the country – seven from the North and six from the South – are being selected to take part in this life-altering experience. They not only fully participate in the on-board adventure with educators, scientists and other students from around the world, they also work with Parks Canada for one summer. Like Chaim before him, Jonathan joined the staff of the Torngat Mountains National Park in Labrador to promote his Arctic experience though urban and youth outreach projects and to visitors on site.

Parks Canada believes that Students on Ice is a tremendous way to support youth and to contribute to the development of our future northern Aboriginal leaders. The program is helping to increase the connection that our youth have with Parks Canada’s special national heritage places and to build bridges between northern and southern Canada.

GEOFFREY HANCOCK, BA’91, PARKS CANADA SUPERINTENDENT, WESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
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Honouring our 2014 Tribute Award recipients

From left are the 2014 Alumni Tribute Award recipients: Robert Crosbie, Maurice Lewis (accepting on behalf of Thomas Maddox), Jane Rowe and Mark O’Brien.

INCREIBLE ALUMNI

BY JEFF GREEN, BA’00
AND DAVID PENNEY, BA’95, B.Ed.’97

The remarkable individuals who fit those descriptions were presented with the 2014 Alumni Tribute Awards at a gala ceremony attended by over 200 alumni and friends on May 14, 2015.

Acclaimed business executive and influencer Jane Rowe, B.Comm.(Hons.)(Co-op.)’81, was named 2014 Alumna of the Year, the highest honour bestowed on a Memorial graduate by the alumni body. Ms. Rowe had a stellar career with Scotiabank before joining the Ontario Teachers’ Pension Plan, where she oversees an $18-billion portfolio as head of the private equity and long-term equities groups. She is one of Canada’s top financial leaders and was recognized as one of the country’s most powerful women in 2012.

“I am absolutely overwhelmed to be receiving this honour. I am a proud Newfoundlander and a very proud Memorial graduate and as we all know this is a very special place. My memories here, of my years at Memorial, are many and they are very fond. This honour and seeing old friends here tonight makes this very special.”
– JANE ROWE

Corporate executive, mentor and Memorial champion Robert Crosbie, B.Comm.(Co-op.)’79, received the 2014 J.D. Eaton Alumni Award, which recognizes outstanding volunteer contributions to Memorial. Mr. Crosbie is the chairman of the board of St. John’s, N.L.-based Crosbie Group Ltd. and serves on the boards of a number of other companies. A steadfast supporter of Memorial’s Faculty of Business Administration, he is a strong believer in student success programs at Memorial and has created a fund for students and career-planning initiatives. He also served as co-chair of the St. John’s regional volunteer committee for Memorial’s recent and successful Dare To fundraising campaign.

“Memorial is perhaps the most important institution in the province. It has a pivotal role in shaping the future of the province and that of the students. There are so many Memorial graduates having a huge impact around the world. It is just amazing what many of these folks are achieving.”
– ROBERT CROSBIE

Educator, municipal leader and tireless advocate Thomas Maddox, BA, B.Ed.’70, received the Outstanding Community Service Award. A former teacher and principal, Mr. Maddox became involved in municipal politics in 1970 as a member of the King’s Cove Town Council. He was elected mayor in 1975 and held the position for 39 years. He is a consummate volunteer and community builder and has served on numerous boards, committees and organizations during an exemplary career dedicated to the Bonavista Peninsula and Newfoundland and Labrador.

“As a community member who supports and admires Tom’s contributions to his community and the area in general, I am honoured to accept this award.”
– ALUMNUS MAURICE LEWIS, IN ACCEPTING THE AWARD ON BEHALF OF THOMAS MADDOX

Actor and filmmaker Mark O’Brien, BA’10, received the 2014 Alumni Horizon Award, which is presented to graduates 35 years of age or younger who’ve demonstrated exceptional achievement in a chosen field of endeavour. Mr. O’Brien has worked on several high-profile television shows, miniseries and movies, most notably on the hit CBC show Republic of Doyle and now in the highly acclaimed AMC drama Halt and Catch Fire. Always available to support his alma mater, Mr. O’Brien has come back to Memorial on numerous occasions to lend his time and talent: he hosted the official launch of the Dare To fundraising campaign in 2011 and The Wicked Memorial Variety Show in 2012, as well as co-hosting Super TSC Night during havin’ a time: Reunion 2013.

“You are the backbone of every decision I make personally, professionally, socially... I love you with all my heart. I feel lucky to spend every day with you.”
– MARK O’BRIEN, IN THANKING HIS WIFE, ACTRESS GEORGINA REILLY
THE POWER OF ONE

Dr. Michael Newton of Grenfell Campus is strengthening international bonds one student at a time

For more than a decade, Dr. Michael Newton, a professor of religious studies (with an interest in the human connection to the natural world) at Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook, has been one of the driving forces behind a highly successful recruitment program. It’s an initiative that has benefited many students from this province and has improved the lives – directly or indirectly – of many students in the impoverished Central American country of Belize.

Dr. Newton joined the university’s international recruitment team after meeting with some of the Belizean students who were already studying at Grenfell Campus.

“At that time, all students in my course on ‘Spirituality and the Earth’ had to make a presentation in honour of a special place where they felt at one with the Earth and their surroundings,” he explained. “The Belizean students were showing us not only the nice stuff about their country – the palm trees, islands and tropical forest – but also the poverty.”

It was through this encounter Dr. Newton decided to take a vacation with his wife to see Belize for himself. As a former English colony, he discovered that Belize and this province share many common bonds.

“Newfoundland and Labrador is small and friendly – if you’re looking for somebody, it doesn’t take much to find them. You just ask somebody who says ‘hi’ to you on the street.”

“I found that to be similar in Belize. And they have Carnation milk in their tea and coffee – like you would,” he laughed.

Dr. Newton accompanied the next recruitment team leaving from Newfoundland and Labrador to Belize and the relationship continued to evolve. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Grenfell and Galen University in Belize was signed in 2010 and further MOUs with other Belizean colleges followed. As a result, exchanges between students and faculty ensued, setting the program on a new and exciting path.

Dr. Newton spearheaded a successful funding proposal for $50,000 to support a formal exchange program for both Belizean and Grenfell students. He also established the Belize Travel Bursary at Grenfell Campus.

“Belize is such a small place, and because it’s such a small country you’re up close to life wherever you go,” explained Dr. Newton. “A student who is doing a course there is going out to the islands and doing some diving, you’re going to meet the people who live there and you’re going to meet the people who take you out in the boat, or serve you food.”

Belize is an English-speaking country and that means there are no language barriers.

“For the Belizean students who come here, especially Corner Brook, it seems a lot like Belize and it’s safe,” he said. “It’s a relatively small area, a small campus, they’re not going to get lost. They have close contact with professors and they’re never far away from our international student officer, who happens to be from Belize.”

Grenfell Campus currently has on staff two of its former students, originally from Belize, who initially came to the province to study.

For Grenfell Campus students applying to receive Dr. Newton’s Belize Travel Bursary, which is valued at $1,000, they’ll get to take part in an educational experience like no other, studying in Central America and at the same time fulfilling Memorial’s degree requirements. All it takes is a five-hour flight to Cancun, Mexico and a bus ride to Belize. All that, plus palm trees, beaches, blue Caribbean waters, beautiful Mayan temples and, as Dr. Newton is quick to add, “You’ve got beautiful people.

“This is a great opportunity to get our students to experience that and for us to enjoy the presence of Belizean students here.”

BY SHANNON DUFF
Memorial continues to cement its world-class reputation as a leader in cold ocean and Arctic science research and public engagement with international projects that are bringing together collaborators from industry, community and governments.

One shining example is the Marine Institute’s Holyrood Marine Base – often dubbed the portal to the ocean – which is undergoing major developments to construct a breakwater and marginal wharf, as well as reconstruct the existing wharf and install evacuation training systems at the facility. Tenders were issued during the summer of 2015.

The base supports at-sea research and training priorities for the Marine Institute, as well as the broader community. Currently, these priorities are primarily related to education and research in the fields of ocean technology, fisheries science and marine ecosystems. Upon completion of the development, the institute will relocate all of its at-sea safety and survival training to the Holyrood Marine Base to take advantage of Holyrood’s environmentally clean waters, sheltered harbour and low traffic volume.

The new developments will transform the base, allowing for more collaboration with local, national and international partners to continue doing essential, innovative, hands-on in-water training and testing.

“This next development of the Holyrood Marine Base will be transformative as we move forward to expand our capacity to undertake critical at-sea, in-water and sub-sea education and training activities and increased collaboration with industry to cement our province’s position in the global oceans technology sector,” said Glenn Blackwood, B.Sc.(Hons.)’83, MA’96, vice-president, Memorial University (Marine Institute).

Memorial’s location – perched in the mid-North Atlantic and close to four distinct cold ocean zones including the high Arctic – allows its researchers, faculty, staff, students and alumni to conduct important work in a challenging harsh environment – the largest cold ocean research lab on earth. Currently, more than 40 per cent of the university’s research is ocean-related, which means Memorial is likely to be involved in any sort of research now taking place in the North Atlantic.

Dr. Lesley James, assistant professor in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, and current Chevron Chair in Petroleum Engineering, was drawn back to Newfoundland and Labrador because of the exciting research and development opportunities in the province. She returned home in 2010 to take up her academic post at Memorial.

Combining cutting-edge research with the art of collaboration, Dr. James is leading a global project focused on enhanced oil recovery. Three years ago, the Hibernia Management Development Corp. announced a contribution of $11.8 million for the new Hibernia Enhanced Oil Recovery Laboratory at Memorial. The work Dr. James is doing in the lab is aimed at maximizing offshore returns – and it’s the only facility of its kind in Canada.

Dr. James says the new lab has put Memorial on the map and has helped attract international collaborators as well as graduate students from afar.

“The Hibernia EOR Lab is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” she said. “I dreamed and I dreamed big, and now we have a world-class lab to conduct research that is meaningful for the university, province and industry.”

Researchers from other faculties and campuses are also involved in cold oceans-related research and public engagement projects, further strengthening Memorial’s reputation as a global leader. From the Marine Lab in Logy Bay to the Labrador Institute to Grenfell and Harlow campuses – there’s plenty of research Memorial is leading focused on cold ocean and Arctic science, technology and society.

All of this means graduate students, as well as researchers from other international post-secondary institutions, industry and governments, continue to turn to Memorial for advice and expertise related to cold ocean and Arctic research – sparking further collaborations and revealing possibilities that run as deep as the North Atlantic itself.
A gift from the estate of Gary W. Rowe resonates at Memorial University

Betty Simms pauses to consider the question.

“Thoughtful,” she responded. “And dedicated.”

She is talking about her late husband, Gary W. Rowe, and her words capture perfectly his approach to life – and the enduring legacy he leaves behind.

A generous gift from his estate is having an impact across Newfoundland and Labrador. Twenty different organizations are receiving support for their programs and activities, with a concentration in areas that can be broadly described as health care and education.

His legacy lives on at Memorial.

Mr. Rowe had a vision for a comprehensive scholarship program extending across Memorial’s three main campuses. Ms. Simms has worked diligently to ensure that vision would become a reality. “Before Gary passed in 2010, we talked about his plans for giving and his estate,” she said. “He worked as a lawyer for many years and worked incredibly hard along with Jim Chalker and John Green to establish their own firm here in St. John’s. He was always very committed to everything he did and to the people and organizations in this province that were important to him. Every part of his gift has a reason or history to it, which I think makes it that much more special.”

At the St. John’s campus, his gift funds two general entrance scholarships, as well as designations for the Faculty of Business Administration and Centre for Nursing Studies. A commerce graduate himself in 1966, creating a business scholarship was particularly important to Mr. Rowe. Designed to support students studying finance, it’s also a tribute to Mr. Rowe’s father, who enjoyed a career as a chartered accountant. The nursing award is named in honour of Mr. Rowe’s mother, Dora, formerly a nurse at the Waterford Hospital in St. John’s.

Travis Kemp, B.Comm.(Hons.) (Co-op.)’13, received the Rowe scholarship in 2012 as a business student. Mr. Kemp is currently working as a senior staff accountant in Assurance Services with Ernst & Young in St. John’s.

“It was a tremendous honour to receive the Rowe scholarship,” he said. “When I was a student, the financial support really helped me focus more on my studies by reducing some of the financial stress. I’m from Manitoba and I was living on my own, so being fiscally responsible was really important and the scholarship helped ease that burden.”
This scholarship, and any scholarship, really reinforces the importance of giving back to your alma mater and being involved in the community in which you live and work.

Travis Kemp

Mr. Kemp also reflected on the influence of the scholarship beyond the immediate support it provided during his academic career. “This scholarship, and any scholarship, really reinforces the importance of giving back to your alma mater and being involved in the community in which you live and work. And I think the impact of building leadership in this field is extremely positive.”

Mr. Rowe’s estate gift is also having a significant impact at the Marine Institute (MI) and Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook.

Scholarships have been established at MI for students enrolled in technical certificates and diplomas. This includes the first MI endowed scholarship, prioritized for students pursuing the Bridge Watch Certificate and Marine Diesel Mechanics Certificate. An avid art collector, Mr. Rowe also had a passion for art – and Newfoundland artists especially – so establishing two scholarships for the Fine Arts program at Grenfell Campus was a perfect fit.

“This is a tremendous gift made even more tremendous by virtue of the fact that it has the potential to directly affect a student throughout their academic career,” said Todd Hennessey, head, Division of Fine Arts, Grenfell Campus.

“The legacy of this gift is not only in its generosity, but also in the desire to continue to train and educate Newfoundland artists.

“Arts education is a vital tool for self-expression and self-identity,” he added. “We’re fortunate to live in an amazing technological world, but technology alone won’t drive us forward – technology fuelled by creativity will.”

The many touch points of Mr. Rowe’s gift are a testament to his pride in Newfoundland and Labrador and his intent to reach the entire province. Ms. Simms noted that Memorial was more than a means to an end. For both her and her husband – the university is special to them as the place where they fostered friendships that have lasted a lifetime.

Ms. Simms is confident that the next generation of Memorial graduates will build a wonderful legacy, creating new opportunities and prosperity in the province that meant so much to her husband. She has seen that potential in those who have been affected by Mr. Rowe’s generosity.

“I’ve received letters and notes of thanks from many people,” she said. “I get emotional just thinking about that. To hear from them and meet them is very special, and I’m reminded how this gift reaches a lot of people from all walks of life. I am sorry Gary isn’t around to see all the smiles on the faces. He would be absolutely delighted.”

PHOTO: Betty Simms

Gary W. Rowe
This can be said about our alumni: they don’t lack ambition and they definitely don’t lack a sense of adventure. Whether through careful career planning or a combination of curiosity and happenstance, Memorial graduates can be found all over the world.

From the glaciers of Antarctica to an elite training facility in Argentina, from the marine investigations unit of the United States government to mining explorations in the jungles of Africa, our alumni have used their time at Memorial as a jumping off point for diverse and exciting endeavours.

Earlier this year, Luminus set out to connect with alumni, and through the power of social media, the response was overwhelming! From Facebook shares and posts to tweets and emails, we heard from alumni scattered literally across the globe. Of course, these eight stories are just the tip of the iceberg. There are thousands of others to tell.

BY STEPHANIE PORTER
Fifteen years ago, Torbay native Anita Tapper traded the icebergs in her backyard for kangaroos in her garden, winter snow banks for a much gentler climate and working as an accountant in the private sector for working with Australia’s national government.

Ms. Tapper’s husband, also a Memorial commerce graduate, was offered a one- to two-year contract in Australia at the time when its government was implementing a new goods and services tax. The opportunity coincided with the Sydney, Australia Olympics in 2000 – and so, after gathering professional experience in St. John’s, Conception Bay South, Moncton, and Vancouver, Ms. Tapper and her spouse packed up for an adventure on the other side of the world.

“The transition was easy,” Ms. Tapper said of the move to Canberra, Australia’s capital. “The lifestyle is similar – but no shovelling snow! So we decided to stay.” She characterizes Canberra as a cultural, garden city.

Since moving Down Under, Ms. Tapper has worked with the Australian Commonwealth Government in different departments – the Australian Communications and Media Authority, the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Department of Agriculture – which have each offered different complexities, strategies and opportunities for development.

Ms. Tapper, who focused on accounting during her time at Memorial and went on to earn a Certified Management Accounting designation, attributes her early success in her field to Memorial’s co-operative education program. “When I started my first job in an accounting firm, I had that experience from a work term, so I think I was more easily able to convert book knowledge into real-world application.”

Dr. David Holland has an annual schedule of teaching, research and travel few could imagine: New York University-Abu Dhabi in the spring; NYU-New York in the fall; June and August in Greenland; July at home in St. John’s; December and January in Antarctica, during the austral summer.

Dr. Holland, a physical climate scientist who also holds a PhD from McGill University, is primarily interested in sea level change and the interaction of the big ice sheets of Greenland and Antarctica with ocean waters. “Antarctica is especially important,” he said, “because it has a marine ice sheet, and should it disintegrate, it could raise global sea levels significantly.”

Dr. Holland’s work – he has published more than 60 peer-reviewed papers on environmental science – seeks to answer a broad range of questions, including: “Will the ice sheets of Greenland and Antarctica collapse, and if so, when?” How do we develop ways to get to these harsh, remote environments to get the data we need to run the models?”

Indeed, obtaining that raw data requires an immense amount of preparation and time in the field. Dr. Holland admits he was “awestruck” the first time he travelled to Antarctica and landed at the U.S. base of McMurdo Station – impressed by the landscape and the “sheer amount of co-ordination and effort that goes into allowing the science to happen.

“The only time I felt scared was when we went into the deep field on the Pine Island Glacier,” he said. “As the Twin Otter that dropped us off disappeared into the distance, the realization that you are 2,000 kilometres away from anything and anyone sinks in. But once you digest that fact, you get on with the science … the satisfaction comes from getting the data back that we work so hard to gather.”
In researching the perfect location to complete a PhD in linguistics, Jordan-born Dr. Osama Omari came across a university and a place he’d never heard of – Memorial University and Newfoundland and Labrador. Attracted by the department’s cutting-edge line of research and the specializations of faculty members, he decided to put aside his wariness of winter weather and enrol.

Little did he know how he would enjoy sledding and skating – and more importantly, how his time by the North Atlantic would shape his career.

Dr. Omari says he was inspired by the contributions of the linguistics department of Memorial to the communities of Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly in terms of studying the local languages and dialects. “I have already started a couple of research projects that focus on the dialects of the local communities in the north of Jordan,” he said. “I have encouraged my students to follow suit by researching certain aspects of their local communities’ dialects.”

Now a professor of linguistics at Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan, Dr. Omari still keeps in touch with Memorial colleagues and has participated in a number of joint research papers.

Overall, “life in Jordan is not very complicated,” he noted. “The people here are known for their good hospitality … people tend to have strong social ties.” That attitude is passed on to those in need: Irbid is in northern Jordan, the area to which many Syrian refugees have fled because of the civil war in their home country. Dr. Omari has been involved in a number of activities to help out, including distributing donations of basic household items (such as blankets and carpets) to the refugee families who have been welcomed to the country.

Influenced and impressed by Newfoundland ferries such as the Joseph and Clara Smallwood, Corner Brook native Adam Tucker enrolled at the Marine Institute knowing that his goal was to work in the passenger vessel industry. He achieved that dream – he was hired by Royal Caribbean right out of school – but never would have guessed where his career would take him.

Mr. Tucker spent almost nine years at sea with the cruise line, in various capacities, including navigation officer. In 2004, he moved to a land-based position and was named superintendent of maritime safety and compliance for the company.

In 2014, he made another big change when the National Transportation Safety Board of the United States government came calling. These days, Mr. Tucker is a marine investigator for the agency, and based out of Washington, D.C. He conducts investigations in the wake of accidents or mishaps related to cruise ships and other vessels and analyzes his findings.

“We are not in business to assign blame,” he explained. “We’re in business to find out what happened, to determine probable cause and to make recommendations. It’s rewarding: the recommendations you make can save lives.”

Although he is “honoured and privileged” to have his current role, Mr. Tucker remains a mariner at heart. “I do miss my true days at sea, when I was sailing as a navigation officer and I had my own watch, when I got to see the sun rise and set every day,” he admitted. “It was the experience of a lifetime.”
Since graduating in 2006, Jessica Burry hasn’t lived in one city for more than 15 months – she’s worked in Ottawa and Toronto, Qatar, Swaziland, Denmark and New York City.

“Probably the turning point for me was spending three months in Lesotho [a small country surrounded by South Africa],” she said. I’d done some smaller projects in African countries, but this was specifically an HIV and TB project … I just really got a taste for the work and the impact you could have in capacity building and training and even things like supply management in pharmacy.”

International work was her calling.

Currently, Ms. Burry works with the Access Campaign of Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) in Geneva, Switzerland. The mandate of the Access Campaign, launched in 1999, is to make life-saving diagnostic tests, vaccines and medicines accessible to patients around the world. Ms. Burry’s specific focus is on drugs for HIV and Hepatitis C treatment. “We’re really putting a focus on getting people access to affordable quality medicines,” she said. “Whether you live in Canada or Malawi, there shouldn’t be a divide between access to the medicines you need to stay alive and healthy.”

Ms. Burry loves her line of work for the opportunities to travel, meet new people and live in different countries. More importantly, though, it’s “also fulfilling in a professional sense. We can help a lot of people in accessing medicine. On a global scale … but also individually.” Recently, for example, Ms. Burry was involved in securing HIV drugs for two children in Kenya.

Clinical work, political work, advocacy, liaising with major pharmaceutical companies – all keep her engaged and still moving around.

“When you work in a headquarters job for MSF, they encourage you to go out into the field a couple of times of year,” she said. “It’s a good balance.”

Nadine Veillette has spent the last 10 years doing field work for mining exploration companies, primarily in Africa, and “living in tents and mining exploration camps, taking a shower in the river or no shower for a few days because there was no water in Mauritania, eating local food.”

Ms. Veillette is also a partner in East African Voyage, which offers safari and trekking adventures, including to Mount Kilimanjaro. East African Voyage is owned and operated by her sister and brother-in-law, and for a couple of years, Ms. Veillette worked full-time with the company as well. “I have always liked adventure, to discover new places, and working abroad gave me this opportunity,” she said of both lines of work.

Ms. Veillette also loves working with local people. During a two-year project in Gabon, which is located on the west coast of Central Africa, she was collecting samples from the forest and hired villagers to help.

“They were really good at orientating themselves in the forest and I felt very secure – I knew that if my Global Positioning System (GPS) would go wrong, I could count on them to find my way out,” she said. “At the time they didn’t know what a map, compass or GPS was. Slowly we trained them on the use of those tools for orientation and on the different rock types.”

Although she recently decided to take a break from living out of a suitcase and has returned home to Montreal to work as a consultant, Ms. Veillette is enthusiastic about her days in Africa.

“I have been able to visit places that nobody will ever visit,” she said. “I have been able to live the life of different cultures, not just to pass as a tourist.”
Chelsi Walsh has a bit of a double career—on one hand, she’s an ambitious recent graduate of the University of British Columbia’s master’s program in Opera Performance and is now in Toronto pursuing a career in music.

Her alter ego, known as ChelsiMadonna, is a beloved YouTube personality—her series of delightfully bubbly lifestyle and fashion videos has over 65,000 subscribers. She’s employed by Google to make the videos, which proved a perfect part-time job for the born performer while she was at school and honing her singing skills.

As someone who grew up singing Newfoundland music and taking part in community musical theatre, Ms. Walsh’s affinity for opera took her a bit by surprise. “I loved doing musical theatre because you get to act and sing at the same time and really express to the audience,” the coloratura soprano reflected. “I didn’t realize opera was the same—after I did my first opera, I realized it was a heightened version of everything I’d done to that time.

“It’s been cool to work on my vocal technique and make it very strong, to sing without a microphone,” she added. “And the acting is just as important ... everything is on a grander scale, with full orchestra and very difficult music.”

Ms. Walsh is on to the next adventure. An experienced voice and beginner piano teacher and a certified Kindermusik instructor, she plans to teach in Toronto while auditioning for everything. “In a perfect world, I’d be able to just sing for a living,” she added. “We’ll see what happens next.”

Dario Cappa instructs at the Institute of Physical Education in Mendoza, Argentina and teaches graduate-level courses at a university in Chile. He also owns and operates a training facility for a more general clientele and trains elite-level athletes in many disciplines, including boxing and rugby.

His lifelong love of sports has fuelled his career and driven him to his current position of an in-demand expert in physiology and exercise prescription.

While working on a research paper several years ago, Mr. Cappa reached out to Dr. David Behm of Memorial’s School of Human Kinetics and Recreation. Not only did that lead to a professional collaboration, but Dr. Behm also convinced Mr. Cappa to travel to Newfoundland and Labrador to complete a master’s degree in exercise physiology. It was a tough decision—as Mr. Cappa points out, he was 41 at the time with two small children—but not one he regrets. In fact, he was so inspired that he is now working on his second masters, this time through the University of Barcelona.

“I work in both areas, theory and practical training,” he said. “It’s the only way to very completely understand this field.” If the paperwork side of owning a business is his least favourite part of his current work; the academic work might be his preferred activity.

“We’d love to hear from you to learn about your journey since graduation. Please get in touch with us at munalum@mun.ca.”
In an age where smartphones are everything from our notebooks to our dictionaries, the way we consume information has drastically changed.

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And that’s just a start. Reading the Marine Institute (MI) International project list would make anyone, especially the travel bugs among us, itch to know more. In the past 30 years, they have participated in more than 200 education-based projects in 50 countries and taken great strides to “internationalize,” in the words of Bill Chislett, BPE’90, BA’91, B.Ed.’91, director, MI International. It also means it’s one of the most internationally active institutes in Canada.
MI International is involved with a project focused on building climate change-resilient food systems in Cambodia for future generations.

PHOTO: Andrew Vikerson
The work of MI International falls into three key categories: projects and consultancies like those listed earlier, finding opportunities for MI students, faculty, staff and graduates to work and study abroad; and international recruitment. It’s a broad mandate, but it all boils down to bringing the experts and expertise of MI and Memorial University to the world, and bringing international knowledge and experience back home to Newfoundland and Labrador.

“Our approach is one of partnership,” said Mr. Chislett. “By engaging in communities around the world, it improves the quality of what we are offering here. There are just as many challenges in [Newfoundland and Labrador] communities as there are elsewhere. We partner with communities to improve our own offering and our own knowledge and what we can offer students.”

Although Mr. Chislett hesitates to pick one venture to highlight, there’s no doubt the Vietnam-Canada Community College Project is close to his heart – and it stands as a good example of how one project can develop into a lasting, stimulating relationship.

The school, open since 2006 in the southern Vietnamese province of Tra Vinh, introduced a new model of education to the area. While Vietnamese partners handled the physical infrastructure, MI, in co-operation with several other Canadian colleges, developed the human resources, computer, curriculum development and student information systems. Training programs were developed to meet specific local employment and self-employment opportunities in sectors like agriculture, aquaculture and small-scale processing.

About 30 MI employees spent time in Vietnam working on the project, which has since been renamed Tra Vinh University and boasts a number of satellite campuses.

“It grew from a fallow field – an unused rice paddy is now a university of 20,000 students,” said Mr. Chislett. “It’s pretty amazing to see thousands and thousands of Vietnamese students – who otherwise wouldn’t have had the chance to go to university – have that opportunity.”

Fifteen years since this partnership began, the collaboration continues. MI faculty and graduates go to Vietnam each year for work placements, and MI International and Tra Vinh University frequently bid on projects together.

In another initiative, several faculty members from MI’s School of Fisheries travelled to Mozambique to work with a local small-scale fisheries development institution. Together, they created a post-harvest food spoilage instructional course that could be brought to the fishing communities, increasing the value of the catch and reducing pressure on the resource.

In Cambodia, a rice-fish integration project was developed;
by integrating fish into rice paddies, not only was disease reduced and rice fertilization increased, but aquaculture – a new income stream – was put in place.

These days, MI International is involved in a significant amount of work in the Caribbean, including developing a strategic operational plan for the community college in Anguilla, and “a yachting project” in Grenada. The Grenada yachting industry is growing, explains Mr. Chislett, and it needs a workforce with technical skills available in boating and service. There aren’t enough skilled hands available locally to fill the positions, so labour is currently being imported; the MI project, funded by the Caribbean Development Bank, intends to change that. All of these projects require people, and providing faculty and staff the opportunity to work abroad adds depth to MI’s offerings at home and away.

Sending students and graduates abroad is also a key part of MI International’s mandate and one of its most exciting initiatives. Since 1997, over 300 students have participated in international work, internship or study placements.

“Our goal is to provide high-quality programming that is globally relevant,” said Mr. Chislett. “No matter if our graduates work here in the oil and gas field, at the university, for a local private or public company, or in Alberta or Hong Kong or Vietnam or sub-Saharan Africa, they will be working in an environment that requires them to have cross-cultural skills and knowledge. We are meeting those needs.”

On the other side, bringing international students to study at MI is just as valuable. The goal of international recruitment is not to displace local students, but to add to both the course offerings and the diversity of student perspectives in the classroom.

“If we have a program that is undersubscribed, if we can add four or five international students we can help offset the costs of delivery, and perhaps continue to offer the program,” said Mr. Chislett. “But more importantly, it makes the program more globally relevant, because those students bring a range of international experiences.”

In the end, these projects are all about making MI a stronger, more innovative player in a tightly connected world.

“Our goal is to become a world oceans institute,” said Mr. Chislett. “So it’s part of our strategic plan to be more globally engaged. Our sectors – maritime studies, fisheries, ocean technologies – are very global, so it’s very much part and parcel of what we do. We’re an island, but we’re not an island.”
In helping to push polio to the brink of eradication, the World Health Organization’s Dr. Bruce Aylward has had an impact on a global scale. This past year, he faced a new challenge: leading the response to the world’s worst-ever outbreak of Ebola.

BY LESLIE VRYENHOEK
Dr. Bruce Aylward, B.Med.Sci.'85, MD'85, Honorary LLD’04, joined the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1992 as a medical officer. After five years working in the field with national immunization programs, he joined WHO’s Global Polio Eradication Initiative. He became the program director in 2006 and was instrumental in dramatically reducing the incidence of that disease. Today, the eradication of polio is a very real, very near possibility.

But Dr. Aylward’s role at WHO also involves other humanitarian crises. And in June 2014, with Ebola raging in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, it was clear a major crisis was underway. Dr. Aylward explained to Luminus how his role developed and how the battle against Ebola, which has claimed over 11,000 lives, is being fought.

In June of last year, we were at the upturn where this disease was starting to move fast. Furthermore, there were questions about WHO’s capacity on the ground, so that was the point at which I first started getting involved, to provide advice on the scale-up that was needed.

Things escalated in July and August, and Dr. Aylward was asked to help put together what became known as the Ebola response roadmap – a strategy for catching up to the disease. In September, he was in West Africa helping to restructure country programs when the United Nations (UN) launched its mission for emergency response to Ebola. Within 24 hours, Dr. Aylward found himself in New York at the UN, helping to define the response, its goals and milestones.

The disease was escalating exponentially in these countries. You were seeing pictures on the television of riots in parts of these countries … you were seeing horrific stories of disease and … these countries were getting increasingly isolated.

I came up with “70-70-60” which was based on the math and the science. If we could get 70 per cent of the cases properly isolated and 70 per cent of the bodies safely buried within 60 days, we could potentially “bend the curve” and take the heat out of the outbreak.

So with “70-70-60” as a rallying cry, the major operation was launched. There were three Bs – behaviour change, burials and isolation beds. The big push was burial teams, because we had bodies on the streets and remember, these bodies are highly infectious, so how they’re handled and how they’re buried is very important. This was very difficult, especially given the burial rites and rituals in these parts of the world.

... It’s really hard to put yourself back into those dark days of August, September, October, when we had a hugely escalating disease and were trying to catch up. We don’t talk about it now, but ... there were a lot of people very deeply worried about how to take the risk out of the international spread.

In December, the response was getting out in front of the virus. Liberia, where the disease hit explosively in the capital city of Monrovia, was the first to see the tide turn. The high visibility of the disease sparked behavioural changes, and Dr. Aylward says there was incredible leadership from the level of the president on down. Ebola cases peaked later in Guinea and Sierra Leone, but started to fall in those countries by January.

By then, Dr. Aylward was the Director General’s special representative on Ebola and was heading the response. He worked closely with all of the major contributing agencies. The role of international players has been huge, but success is, he notes, also very dependent on local communities.

Ebola is a ferociously local disease rooted in local behaviours, so you’re not going to win this unless you are there on the ground, understanding those behaviours....

We had to start getting people to understand that it has to go beyond behaviour change to true community engagement, where they really own the strategies and they are fully behind this – because the next two pieces were the hardest: the case finding and the contact tracing.

Case finding was tough because people knew that if they reported their cases, they would be taken to a treatment centre. They knew if they died in a treatment centre, the body would not be returned, which is very difficult for a culture that is so rooted in its ancestors and how it cares for and continues to interact with the relative after they’re dead.... If there was a risk you would become a case, you did not want to be on a contact...
So it took a huge amount of work with the communities and community leaders both to own the program and … to ensure that cases were found and reported and that safe burials were implemented everywhere. And that is still the challenge today.

We’re now in a completely different place. Liberia has stopped the disease, which is great. Last November, we had 800 cases of Ebola a week, which is twice as many cases in one week as in the largest outbreak – the entire outbreak – ever before. In mid-May we had nine cases, so that’s a huge reduction in disease, obviously. But still, half of those nine cases … were deaths in communities that tested positive for Ebola. It’s too late by then – you’re dealing with the consequences. By then the disease is already spreading.

You have to find these cases as soon as they get sick so you can isolate them. And their contacts have to be isolated immediately, too. If you get those two pieces right, then you’ll stop the disease very quickly.

While he is optimistic Ebola will be vanquished in West Africa in the coming months, he notes that mid-May flare-ups in Guinea and Sierra Leone underline the need for community engagement and a rapid response in order to close off transmission channels. And it’s a tougher environment now.

Once Ebola is beaten in West Africa, Dr. Aylward can’t say what’s next for him. He expects to have a role in reforming WHO so the organization is in a position to move faster, on a much bigger scale.

And you know we’ve got Syria, Yemen, Iraq – we’ve got huge crises that we’re trying to manage the health impact of everywhere. So what I end up doing is going to depend very much on what the world looks like late this fall … how ugly the world looks.

Dr. Aylward, who grew up in St. John’s, says he has found the career he hoped for.

My dream as I was going into medical school was to have a very portable skill set that would allow me to work in Africa and places like that – places where, quite frankly, I thought I could have an impact. My goal was to be a surgeon, but during my medical training at Memorial, I went to Africa and realized they had a lot of really skilled surgeons who were better than I was ever going to be.

Besides, I realized that if you wanted to make a big dent, it was really all about public health…. It doesn’t have the immediate gratification that clinical care does, or the very personal relationships with people – but it has the ability to affect big health outcomes in the longer term.

Ultimately, Dr. Aylward says that despite how tough the work is, and as nasty as the world can be, there’s an awful lot of good. And there are a lot of good days, too.

The really great days are when it’s not so crazy and I can go home and have dinner with my family…. It means that while there are still great challenges out there, this is one of the days when things look a little brighter.

So that’s one indicator of a good day – but it’s a pretty rare one.
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THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN

BY BERT RIGGS, BA(Hons.)’77, B.Ed.’77, MA’12

After a period of training at Fort George, Edinburgh Castle and Stobs Camp in Scotland and at Aldershot, on the Hampshire Plains of England, during the spring and summer of 1915, just over 1,000 members of the Newfoundland Regiment sailed for the eastern Mediterranean. They arrived in Alexandria, Egypt on August 31, and from there the Regiment was taken by train to Cairo, spending several weeks becoming used to the hot climate before being transported to Mudros on the Greek island of Lemnos, off the entrance to the Dardenelles.

It was from Mudros that the Newfoundland Regiment entered into the actual fighting in the First World War. On Sept. 19-20, almost one year after the First Five Hundred had left St. John’s, they were taken aboard the coastal cruiser Prince Abbas and sailed to Suvla Bay on the northern side of the Gallipoli Peninsula. It was here they would remain for four long months; it was here they would encounter the enemy for the first time, fire their first shots, sustain their first casualties, bury their dead and see many of their number invalided with trench foot and frostbite. And it was here they gained their first battle honour in the capture of Caribou Hill (as it became known), a knoll that sheltered Turkish snipers, about halfway between the two rows of trenches.

The Regiment withdrew from Suvla Bay in early January 1916. They left behind 46 of their comrades, 12 of whom had been killed in action, 19 who died of wounds received, and 15 who succumbed to disease. Eighty were evacuated with battle wounds. Hundreds of others were taken to hospitals in Egypt or Malta suffering from pulmonary or other afflictions including trench foot and frostbite. Of the 1,000 men who had begun the campaign, and the 100 reinforcements who had joined them, only 400 came out of the Gallipoli campaign unscathed.

In 2015, 100 years after the conflict, the once-combatants have united to honour and remember. As part of Memorial’s WW100 Commemoration Program, Memorial University and the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa have already joined together for a number of special events. Most recently, this included a special wreath laying in November at the Ceremony of Remembrance on the St. John’s campus, as well as a symposium featuring Prof. Kahraman Şakul from Istanbul Şehir University, Turkey.

For more information, please visit www.mun.ca/WW100/
Clockwise from top left: photographs from Gallipoli: Soldiers removing lice from their clothing, one of many discomforts in the trenches; Newfoundlanders building reserve dugouts, one of their first assignments; Newfoundland Regiment en route to Mudros, after their evacuation from Gallipoli; Newfoundlanders in their trenches, a typical trench scene (note the soldier on duty at the periscope in the centre of the picture).

PHOTOS: James R. Steele collection, Archives and Special Collections, QEII Library, Memorial University
1960s

1 | PHILIP PRATT, B.Sc.’67, the architect behind The Rooms in St. John’s, N.L., has been named a 2015 fellow by The College of Fellows of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. Mr. Pratt is also the co-founder of PHB Group Inc., an architectural and interior design firm (now a subsidiary of Stantec Inc.).

1970s

2 | DR. ANITA BEST, BA’71, Honorary D.Litt.’09, recently received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Newfoundland and Labrador Folk Arts Society. Dr. Best has been involved in the Folk Arts Society and its annual festival for over 30 years. She has spent her career cataloguing, celebrating and preserving our province’s rich cultural and musical heritage.

3 | DR. COLLEEN A. HANRAHAN, BA’71, completed a PhD in public policy and administration from Walden University this year and was also named winner of a national essay competition sponsored by the Justice Emmett Hall Memorial Foundation. Her essay addressed principles of the Canada Health Act, and drew upon her doctoral research. She is the managing director of the Institute for the Advancement of Public Policy Inc., located in St. John’s, N.L.

1980s

4 | DANIEL M. BOONE Q.C., BA’85, has been inducted into the fellowship of the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL). The ACTL is comprised of more than 5,800 acclaimed trial lawyers from North America, and only one per cent of the practicing bar from each jurisdiction are invited into its fellowship. Mr. Boone is a partner with the law firm Stewart McKelvey in St. John’s, N.L.

1990s

5 | STEVEN SINCLAIR, B.Sc.’98, has been named vice-president, systems development at the Chicago Board Options Exchange, the largest U.S. options exchange and creator of listed options.

6 | KAREN HARPER, B.Eng.’95, has been named president of Charles River Analytics. Ms. Harper joined the Cambridge, Mass., based defence contractor and intelligent systems provider in 1997 and has risen steadily through the ranks. Before taking on this new role, she served as senior vice-president, directing the research and development activities of the company’s government services divisions.

2000s

7 | GEMMA HICKLEY, BA’03, is founder of The Pathways Foundation, an organization devoted to providing support for men and women who have experienced abuse within religious institutions. This past summer, Ms. Hickey completed a 900-kilometre Hope Walk across the island of Newfoundland to raise funds for The Pathways Foundation.

8 | MARK ARMSTRONG PEDDIGREW, BA’02, is the CEO and founder of Cartography. The New York City-based jewelry company is becoming known for its unique pieces that are popular among well-known celebrities such as Rufus Wainwright, Adam Levine of Maroon 5 and Bruno Mars. His latest collection “Talk to me like the Sea”, is inspired by deserted Newfoundland communities.

2010s

9 | JOSEPH TEO, BA’14, BBA’14, and SAHAND SEIFI, M.Sc.’15 have created a new social media collaboration tool, HeyOrca, for marketing agencies and freelance marketers.
The two friends and business partners met while working together at a part-time job on the St. John’s campus. HeyOrca allows marketers and agencies to collaborate on social media content, preview posts before they go live, and track content changes and approvals.

10 | SANDI BALL, B.Ed.’13, is a social media superstar. The education graduate, originally from Brookfield, N.L., is the creator of CutePolish, the most popular nail art channel on YouTube. Ms. Ball has more than 2.5 million subscribers to her channel and her nail tutorials have been viewed over 300 million times.

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MUC’48
Feb. 2, 2014
“I bought my first condoms here. Wishfully. And I swear old Kennedy must have told Mom because she tried, not two days later to have ‘the talk’. Christ.” Tom was speaking to his sister Geraldine as they walked toward the front door of the pharmacy. Daylight was reflecting hot off the windshields of cars parked in the lot. Tom recalled, as a boy, burning letters into the wood of their back deck using a magnifying glass to focus the sun’s rays. “Rhonda Goodridge.”

“Rhonda Goodridge? Like that was ever going to happen.”

Tom laughed.

“Were you red? Did you die?” Geraldine asked.

“Buying them?”

“Still mortified. No joke, when I think back on it.”

“I wonder if that feeling of remembering a great embarrassment isn’t … I dunno … deeper?”

“It doesn’t diminish with time. All other feelings do, shame you can’t shake. Sometimes when you remember something embarrassing that you’d managed to forget, when you remember it, years later, it’s worse.”

Tom opened the door, visibly relieved to be stepping into the air conditioned interior. Record breaking heat they’d heard on the radio on the drive over. They walked toward the pharmacist’s counter at the rear of the store.

“They sell groceries now.” Geraldine said, noticing shelves of cans of soup and beans, coolers with milk and juice and pop.

“Everywhere sells everything now, it’s the last act, the peak before the crash, max sales … and then ‘poof’ retail will be no more.”

“You think?”

“That’s what we are advising our clients. Showmooming is destroying the business. All shopping will be online via your smartphone; drones and robots delivering the purchases to your front door.”

“Remember the television show *Here Come The Seventies*?” Geraldine asked.

They had reached the druggist’s counter, elevated like a stage. Tom handed the prescription to a scrubbed young woman in a clean white lab coat, she glanced at the slip of paper and said, “Five minutes?”

Tom nodded assent. Geraldine followed him as he moved away from the counter.

“‘Something the Seventies’? No,” he said.

“Before your time.” Geraldine was the oldest of five siblings. Tom, oldest of the three boys, always carried on as if he was senior. He assumed and asserted that authority before he’d been old enough to have any at all. “The show predicted a future,” she said, “with computers and robots and the like. Never believed it, doubt anybody did, and here it is ….”

“Here we are,” said Tom, “in your future.”

Tom picked up a medical kit of some mysterious application, boxed and shrink-wrapped rubber hosing and sacs, turned it over in his hands and laid it back on the shelf. He moved further down the aisle.

“What is Billy’s prescription for?” Geraldine asked.

“His PTSD, I presume.”

“No, I mean for what particular medication.”

“Don’t know, don’t care.”

This seemed improbable to Geraldine.

“How many times have you dropped it off?” she asked.

“Dozens. I’m not being dragged into it.”

“He’s your brother.”

“He wasn’t conscripted,” Tom said. Geraldine noticed Tom cocking his head, trying to hear something. She did likewise. From across the store, five or six aisles away there was the sound of a boy whimpering and then a female voice, quaking with rage. “Jesus Christ, Jackson. Where? Where?”

“Do you wonder,” Geraldine asked, “if the prescription stuff and the medical marijuana…..”

“He doesn’t smoke the medical marijuana, he says it’s no good. His army buddies from Afghanistan
re-established the old trade in black hash. I think he smokes that. Smells absolutely delicious whatever it is. *Here Come The Seventies.*

“I think it’s our place to ... I don’t know, look out for him. He’s our baby brother.”

“Baby? No. He’s a man. How old was Mom when she had him?”

“What’s that got to do with anything?”

Tom had opened his mouth to speak but was pre-empted by another blast of fury from the other side of the pharmacy. It was the woman again. “I swear, Jackson, I could strangle you. Where? Was it even this store? Are you sure?”

“Coulda been the Dollar Store.” The boy was now sobbing. “I don’t know.”

“Well know fast. It was two days ago Jackson, how can you not remember! I could ...” the woman issued a growl of rage, something feral.

“Do you think...?” Geraldine asked Tom.

“I do not.” Tom replied.

“Please Mom, I’m sorry ...” said the boy.

“I’ll sorry you,” snarled the woman. “I don’t see anything of the sort here Jackson. What Dollar Store? Where?”

“I don’t know where it was.”

“Jackson, you remember, you remember right now or I swear, I swear I will ...”

Geraldine took Tom by the arm and whispered, “She’s going to hit him. She is going to strike that child.”

“What do you want me to do?”

“Tell someone. Do something.”

“It is not our business.”

“If she is going to hit him it is. It is.”

Tom looked skyward in exasperation, and in doing so acknowledged that Geraldine was right. He marched toward the conflict, Geraldine trailing.

Tom rounded the corner turning into the aisle and then stopped.

“Goddamn you, Jackson,” the woman screeched.

Geraldine looked out from behind her big little brother, almost as if she were hiding behind him.

Further down the aisle was a stunning woman, olive-skinned, jet black hair pulled back, in an emerald shift, bent slightly to better aim her recriminations, to have her scolding delivered point blank to the boy’s ear. The boy was racked with sobs, his face drenched with tears, desperate and afraid his eyes frantically scanning the shelves displaying toys and novelty items. There were inflatable pool toys tagged, NOT A LIFE PRESERVER, flimsy badminton sets, a more substantial croquet set covered in dust, cheap sunglasses destined to be lost in the sand or the surf, floats and noodles. All the things the drones would soon be delivering.

There was every kind of amusement but no handcuffs like the dull metal ones the boy had evidently slipped on his mother’s now raw wrists.

“Where, Jackson? Think! Where did you buy them?”

Born in Botwood, N.L., award-winning author Edward Riche has lived most of his life in St. John’s where he writes for the page, stage, radio and screen. He has many critically acclaimed titles to his credit and his most recent novel, *Easy to Like,* was published by House of Anansi Press in September of 2011. Mr. Riche was Memorial University’s writer-in-residence in 2014.
This year, Memorial University launched our first internationalization strategy and created a new internationalization office ... but really, what is internationalization, and how can we, the alumni and friends of Memorial, engage with it? I’ve been working in the field of internationalization of higher education for many years now and I tend to divide it into what happens at home and what happens abroad.

What happens abroad tends to occur rather naturally: travel, research relationships and interesting work in new places. In my office, we like to know about our activities and people abroad for a few reasons: to help people stay safe when travelling; to support equitable access to overseas experiences; to encourage strategic partnerships; and to ensure that Memorial’s great reputation is promoted through our overseas presence.

So, what is our challenge in internationalization abroad? Canadian universities overall send only about three per cent of students on overseas experiences – whether for study, work or research. At Memorial, we see similar low numbers. While costs and inflexible home university curriculum are the top two barriers to Canadian student uptake, surprisingly, almost 40 per cent of students do not see the value of an overseas experience. To address this, collectively we are working with the Canadian Bureau for International Education on this challenge by encouraging federal and provincial governments to take seriously the need for our young people to gain the skills that come with an overseas experience. The United States and Australia have recently launched initiatives to encourage their students to go abroad, while countries like Germany have set targets of 50 per cent.

Our young people need to hear from the community, from employers and from their parents: going abroad is important – it will widen their horizons and help them develop new skills. At the university, it is our job to ensure the internal barriers to going abroad are reduced, but we need to know that if we build it, they will go!

Internationalization at home is really about developing intercultural skills in our students to prepare them for a globalized future. While multicultural describes a population, intercultural describes the interaction between cultures. Canada is a multicultural country, but that doesn’t mean we know how to respond to different cultures with awareness and sensitivity. Intercultural learning is actually transformational learning – a demanding challenge for any university.

We are a friendly place, but in my role I repeatedly hear that newcomers – students and faculty – have a tough time making friends. A national survey recently found that a majority of international students do not have any Canadian friends. Beyond perhaps feeling sorry for these newcomers, why should this matter to the average student? Well, it is a missed opportunity for learning, in a place where learning is what we are all about! Classroom and extracurricular interaction between different cultures allows for impactful learning about new world views, which in turn leads to creative and innovative ideas and solutions. The first action of the strategic plan is my personal favourite – motivating our young people to engage with new languages and cultures.

So how can you help? I hope that, in reading this short introduction to internationalization at Memorial, you have identified a way that you can support our vision, through your influence, your experience or your networks. I would love to hear from you! You can reach me at sknutson@mun.ca.
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