Youth Resiliency | PG 6
Professor Trish Van Ketwyk links youth and the arts community

Mexico Calling | PG 8
Renison supports communities at home and abroad

A Peaceful Goal | PG 12
Our Studies in Islam program gives students a “lived experience”
FROM THE EDITOR

I remember when I first came to Renison 15 years ago, staff, faculty, students, volunteers and donors alike all came by my office to welcome me and to offer support. I felt a sense of community immediately and knew that I had made a good decision when I accepted a position here.

When I ask people what makes Renison different or how is Renison unique, I often receive the same response – Renison is a community. It is the community that makes the difference and especially how Renison accepts people into their caring community comprised of many different personalities and spirits. I can cite many examples of how that happens – as alumni and friends of Renison, you have probably experienced it as well.

This edition of Renison Reports holds many examples of our community – whether it is caring for our own internally or looking at the broader picture of communities, close to home or further afield.

Jonathan Collaton, Student Life Coordinator, talks about student life and how resident and academic students are part of the Renison community. Watch the video of Danika, first year SDS student who lives at Renison with her seeing eye dog, Ulie, and has felt the strong sense of community that lives at the College (bit.ly/DanikaUliew).

On page six, Professor Trish Van Katwyk speaks about her research on youth resiliency and how the Ross and Doris Dixon Foundation, a local foundation, helped with the project.

And, of course, our alumni keep close to their Renison community through regular updates in Grapevine. I encourage you to stop and consider how your connection to the Renison community has made a difference in your life and, if you have time, drop us a line or two sharing your story.

We’d love to share your story with the rest of our community!

Caroline Tanswell
Director of Institutional Advancement
Around the College

Renison’s newest building opened for classes in April, in time for ELI students; the grand opening is planned for October 28, 2015

Professor Dan Andreae was awarded the Governor General’s Caring Canadian Award for his exceptional contribution to Canadian society including volunteering, inspirational community leadership and excellence in education (February)

The Renison Institute of Ministry had a busy winter term with workshops, special events, and non-credit courses (January-May)

SDS student Amanda Buchnea earned a coveted spot at the 2015 Undergraduate Ethics Symposium in Indianapolis (April)

Fizza Shaji and two other Renison students took top honours in the Canadian National Japanese Speech Contest (April)

A non-fiction piece by Professor Yan Li was published in an issue of People’s Literature magazine, a top publication in China (March)

SSW students collaborated on case studies with student teams from health programs in the area for an IPEC event (March)

Residents celebrated the end of the year at Wind Out; this year’s theme was “The Roaring 20s” and our residents all got into the spirit (April)

The King Sejong Institute in Korea confirmed an extended agreement for language and culture classes at Renison (April)

A set of Buddhist dictionaries was donated to Renison by the Fo Quang Shan Temple in Toronto (March)

Tanya Missere-Mihas and Julia Williams were part of a panel at an international TESOL Convention (March)
ny community’s identity is fashioned by story: the stories of where we come from, who we are, where we hope to go. I am trained as a historian. Historians are in the business of stories: story gathering, story telling, and story interpretation. One thing I know about stories – they are a complicated business. Any story is never just one story – it is made up of so many interlocking pieces. But to BE a story there is something that holds all those voices and experiences together – a moment, an event, a purpose – a thread that runs through.

This community is drawn together by a single thread – our thread is Renison University College – and that which draws us together is also the story we are telling together. Of course that one story is comprised in turn of so many threads – the threads we carry with us – our past, our hopes, our fears, our dreams, our abilities, our passion for contributing to this world – those things which make us uniquely us. Those threads – the ones we carry with us, and those our forebears carried with them – they are Renison. We are Renison. We become the story.

When we look up and look around we see an amazing tapestry - a tapestry comprised of many unique and splendid threads.

Renison connects people across wide diversities.

We look up and we see our founders, now largely gone on before us, who had a vision for an Anglican college at the University of Waterloo which would embrace the humanities, creating an educational world which both engaged and served the world. We see staff, administrators, and faculty who have carried the Renison work and defined its meaning for decades, and we see others who have joined the story recently – experience, wisdom, boundless energy, innovative creativity together giving us the Renison of today. We see leaders from so very many paths: leaders from church, from university, from social service agencies, from education – education that embraces the teaching of every age and stage from preschooler to elder. We see government leaders: municipal, regional, provincial, and federal. We see international partners and friends.

From the imagination of those who were our past we come, summoned now through our inheritance to imagine Renison’s future - and not only our future but the future of the world as it looks - because Renison is in it.

The Renison thread runs from this place and changes the world we inhabit.

Can you see them? That splendid cornucopia of threads – decades of our legacy, some now finished and others just beginning: our students and graduates empowered through their Renison education to serve this world: as social change agents, social workers, linguists, communicators, religionists, interculturally and multilingually able citizens, prepared to serve, prepared to imagine a new day – along with their teachers – not afraid to demand a world more humane, more just, more accountable, and eager to spend themselves to make it so.

See with me. If we can see it, it can be so. As surely as our founders imagined what we might become, we now standing on the sure foundation of their work, are summoned to imagine the future and in our seeing make it so.

Education changes lives. Changed lives change the world.

There is a poem by William Stafford which I love. It’s called “Never Let Go of the Thread”:

There’s a thread you follow. 
It goes among things that change. 
But it doesn’t change. 
People wonder about what you are pursuing. 
You have to explain about the thread. 
Sometimes it’s hard for others to see.

While you hold it you can’t get lost. 
Tragedies happen; people get hurt or die; and you suffer and get old. 
Nothing you do can stop time’s unfolding. 
You don’t ever let go of the thread.

Thank you for bringing the unique and wonderful thread which is you to the Renison project – not just today, but in all the other days in which you have shared yourself here and in sharing have become this story – our story – the Renison thread running out into the world. So then we see ourselves: the Renison thread in the hands of many committed hearts, intent on mending the tears of this world with our labour and love.

May the words that we write together be the first beautiful sentences in Renison’s next amazing chapter.

Wendy L. Fletcher
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Gwen Bisset has joined the Social Development Studies (SDS) department as an Academic Advisor and Administrative Assistant, effective December 2014. A native of Kitchener, Gwen is a graduate of the University of Waterloo (BA, Honours Psychology) along with having completed her Bachelor of Education degree at Nipissing University. She has taught children and youth in Waterloo Region; in London, England; and in Hagi (Yamaguchi), Japan. She brings several years of administrative experience with her as she has most recently worked at Wilfrid Laurier University in various support positions with the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Social Work, and the Faculty of Education. With her skills in providing advice and service to students and expertise in administration, Gwen has been a welcome addition to the SDS department.

Tanya Young has joined Renison in the new role of Student Services Social Worker. She is an alumna of the University of Waterloo, where she completed her Honours Bachelor of Arts with a major in Psychology and interdisciplinary option in Legal Studies and Criminology. From there Tanya went on to complete her Master of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University. She brings over 15 years of experience working with a diverse client base, in roles at Lutherwood as a Clinician in Mental Health Services, as well as with the Front Door Program. Most recently, Tanya worked in the Urgent Response Clinic at Grand River Hospital, providing support to youth in crisis. Additionally, she is trained and has experience as a Practicum Supervisor. Tanya is known for her creative skills in developing and delivering therapeutic and psycho-educational groups and workshops that provide practical tools. With having attended courses at Renison and St. Jerome’s during her undergraduate degree, Tanya is thrilled to be returning to Renison in this new role. With her knowledge of various treatment modalities, skills in risk assessment and crisis intervention and past experience in developing and facilitating programs to promote wellness, we are confident that Tanya’s role will greatly enhance our capacity to support both students and staff at Renison.
Youth are not heard or seen as fully as they can be...they are erased, ignored and identities are imposed on them.

Professor Trish Van Katwyk

Youth are using self-harm at greater and greater rates, yet it remains relatively misunderstood, according to Trish Van Katwyk, Assistant Professor at Renison’s School of Social Work. “I’ve worked as a psychiatric crisis worker, and was with people who had harmed themselves in terrible ways, but who had no intention of dying, who craved connection and love, who were wanting peace and well-being,” says Van Katwyk. Experiences like these have inspired Van Katwyk to develop unique arts-based opportunities to give voice to youth, empowering them to talk about their experiences through art, writing, and dance. “I wanted to understand more, and thought about ways in which art could be used to gather stories and then educate the wider community about issues that are so often misunderstood,” says Van Katwyk.

She is currently planning an initiative that will use dance as a medium to tell the story of self-harming in the youth community. “Dance came to mind as an incredible art form that could embrace without words a profound story. And it has a performance component to it, so that the story could be told to others.” It will bring young people together to share their stories of self-harm with the group. These experiences will then be interpreted, choreographed, and performed professionally by a local dance company. “The students who are part of this project will be engaged in the storytelling...they will be asking, listening, and documenting the stories of self-harm. And they will witness and record the process where the spoken stories become choreographed and transformed into dance,” says Van Katwyk. This project is still in the early stages of planning, but if it does move forward, it is hoped that the final production will open to the public at a performance centre in Waterloo at the end of summer 2015.

This isn’t the first program she has spearheaded that allows youth to share their message via the arts community. In the spring of 2014, Van Katwyk ran a series of workshops for young people aged 16-30 that used art to explore their own experiences and definitions of resilience. Youth were provided art supplies and instruction from professional artists in various mediums (clay sculpting, photography, video, painting, and graffiti). The resulting pieces were then displayed as part of an art show in a Guelph gallery, which was well-attended and well-received by local communities.
In winter 2015, she initiated a second project that brought youth together to share their stories of encounters with the police. Through this group collaboration, their stories were gathered and written into compilations that are being produced as graphic novels, or comic books. Two youth artists are working with a professional illustrator to complete these stories. The final products will be distributed to police services across the province in summer 2015, becoming educational tools for about how to improve police relations with youth, which Van Katwyk says is a key element to empowerment. “It is a project whose main purpose is for the police and community to listen to what is being said. And it is the youth who are educating the police!”

Both of these opportunities were of no cost to the participants, made possible not only by the ingenuity of Professor Van Katwyk but also by generous donations by the Ross and Doris Dixon Family Foundation.

One of the major themes that she encountered throughout her research was the element of distrust or broken trust. “I think there is a socially constructed idea about youth that has manufactured a huge lack of trust between youth and adults. Adults are suspicious of youth, and youth are suspicious of adults,” says Van Katwyk. She wanted to find ways to break this cycle and build trust. In the first art workshop last spring, Van Katwyk and the other organisers took a hands-off approach to opening up the conversation about resilience, allowing youth to take control of the workshop and facilitate the discussion independently. This method allowed the participants to feel empowered and in control. Van Katwyk was quite impacted by the personal stories shared and also by the way in which the solidarity had occurred.

Since that first session, many youth have continued to find growth and success. One participant has proudly contributed his art to a public art show, while another has taken on other leadership roles in his community as a result of the sense of competence he developed in the project.

Van Katwyk is excited by the outcomes so far, and can’t wait to see what happens next. “I would like to think that these projects provided a recognizing experience, so that the involved youth could fully comprehend the validity of their stance, perspective. I have heard very positive feedback from a number of these youth, as well as from parents and community members.”
Students connected with communities on our home soil and beyond borders in this unique and experiential social work course.

BY KARI PASICK STEWART

When Bachelor of Social Work student Phi Hoang signed up for the Canada-Mexico International Learning Experience (CMILE), he was surprised when one of his most memorable moments happened right on Canadian soil. “We visited a closed-down Residential school in Ontario. Just hearing the stories...feeling the emotions...and the heaviness of the experience. There is literally no way I can explain it – you would have to walk through those doors yourself.”

CMILE is an experiential learning opportunity that lets students earn a course credit through hands-on experiences in Canada and Mexico. It allows students to learn about challenges facing citizens in both countries through direct interaction with local citizens and community members. Students also learn about collective actions and responses to challenges in these communities, especially as they strive to meet the needs of their most vulnerable members.

This course takes place over the span of four months, with 10 days spent visiting various communities in Mexico. The learning happens through reflection on direct encounters and dialogue with citizens, community members, and peers. Commonalities and differences between the two countries are explored.

“There isn’t a typical day except that each day involves a combination of site visits, lectures, dialogue, and time for the students to reflect together on what they have heard and seen,” says Marilyn Malton, Director of Renison’s Institute of Ministry and one of the coordinators of the CMILE program. In Canada, a day can include an interactive history lesson and a talk from First Nations leaders about current challenges, visiting the Kitchener Market with a exercise to try to feed a family on minimum wage, dialoguing with a newcomer to Canada about the challenges of making a new home here, or visiting a hostel to learn about what people in our community are doing to support people who have less than ideal living conditions.

In Mexico, students share meals together in a residential setting with local people. A day can include visiting a grassroots organization that brings people with physical disabilities and able-bodied people together to create work opportunities, dialoguing with leaders of national social movements to learn about their work, or visiting a farm to see first hand the challenges farmers face in Mexico.
“Learning about stories and struggles and triumphs ‘on-site’ has a huge impact. Students consistently reflect that it is one thing to read about an issue or community work; it is quite another to experience that work first hand,” says Malton.

But it also has a positive impact on the communities that are part of the focus of this course. Students create an action plan following their learning experiences in Canada and Mexico. For example, at one of the community agencies they visited in Mexico this year, the students heard about the effective networking approaches the group uses and about some barriers to their outreach. The group stated their need to produce an informational video for their website. In consultation and partnership with the agency, students created a video to be posted on the agency’s website that built on the strengths and strategies of the people in the organization. Participants have also been involved in speaking with local Members of Parliament about the need for corporate responsibility after hearing from Mexican people about the negative impact of Canadian mining companies in Mexico.

Kathy Hogarth, Assistant Professor in Renison’s School of Social Work and the faculty member coordinating this course, says that students gain a lot from this course. “Experiential learning is quite unlike traditional teaching and learning methods. In this design students become an integral part of their own learning outcomes. For years later, students talk about the impact this course has on their lives and their career outcomes. This course is not only about experiencing and learning about a different culture and the nuances of our own culture but challenging students to see themselves as agents of social change, to engage in their communities, both locally and internationally, and to create change using the experiences they’ve gained to partly inform their actions.”

Hoang says that this experience has heightened his awareness and sensitivity to cultural issues, a skill he knows will help him in his career. “I think of my experience as sensitivity and cultural competency training. I believe that this has definitely helped me become more sensitive to Aboriginal issues and cultural issues. Simply put, it has better equipped me with the tools that are useful in a social work setting... but there is always more training and experiences like this needed. We can never have enough sensitivity and cultural competency training.”
A STUDENT COMMUNITY THAT GIVES

Renison has always had a vibrant student life community. This year, our students showed their generous spirit through support of local non-profit organizations.

BY JONATHAN COLLATON

This year Renison students have worked to strengthen the Renison community in a variety of ways. Our resident students banded together and challenged the other colleges during the first ever College Cup in March and scored a victory for Renison. The College Cup was their chance to come together as one college and work as a team in a variety of events including a scavenger hunt and a soccer tournament in the snow. Renison pride was on full display.

A great example of the work our academic students have done this year is their fundraising efforts for Monica Place. Monica Place has been a staple of the Kitchener community since 1968 and has a long history of supporting young pregnant women in need as well as young mothers with children. From September 2014 until March 2015 the SDS Society, with the support of the Renison Academic Student Council, raised funds through a variety of methods including their incredibly popular Haircuts for Hope event in January. On April 14th a donation of $2,216 was delivered to Monica Place in Kitchener on behalf of Renison’s Social Development Studies Student Society. Part of this donation was a large contribution by our Principal, Wendy Fletcher, and her fiancé Mike Gibson, showing their willingness to support student initiatives within the Renison community.
Renison resident Stephanie Sluys just finished up her first season as goalie for the University of Waterloo women’s hockey team, a performance that earned her the Warrior Rookie of the Year award. As a first-year Kinesiology student and Renison resident, Sluys was also awarded the Chartwell’s Scholarship for her outstanding academic average as a varsity athlete (she finished the year with an honours average).

Sluys says that her successful year wasn’t possible without the support of Renison residence, including the Warrior Academic Leadership Community (WALC), which brings varsity athletes to live at Renison while developing their leadership skills as they navigate their first year together. “WALC has certainly helped me succeed as an athlete and student this year. It provided excellent connections and resources when I had questions regarding both athletics and academics. It provided me with a place to turn when I wasn’t sure where to go. People within the community often had the same struggles and questions, so it was nice to collaborate and come up with solutions together,” says Sluys. She says that the community she lives in definitely impacts how she performs as both a student and athlete. “The things that I do outside of the rink come with me to the rink. So when I am in a great mood because I had a fun evening with the WALC, I certainly perform better at practice the next morning. Even the stress relief provided by having somewhere to turn translates into improved academic performance in the classroom,” says Sluys.
These principles are the driving force behind the Studies in Islam program at Renison. Students’ learning experiences go beyond the classroom and into the community, where lessons can make a positive impact.

BY KARI PASICK STEWART

When Rachel Montanaro-Yavnai took her first Studies in Islam (SI) course at Renison, she knew nothing about the religion or culture shared by more than 1.6 billion people around the world. “Coming from a Catholic elementary and high school and being half Jewish, there was little opportunity to learn about Islam,” says Montanaro-Yavnai. But one of her first assignments took her and her mother to a mosque near her home in Toronto. “One woman noticed my mom and I wandering around the foyer and volunteered to show us around. Within moments of talking to her she was addressing us as her ‘sisters’, and was more than willing to talk to us about Islam and answer any questions we had,” she says.

All students taking 100-level SI courses are required to take part in a practical learning experience like this, visiting a faith community other than their own. Within moments of talking to her she was addressing us as her ‘sisters’, and was more than willing to talk to us about Islam and answer any questions we had,” she says.

Pandit says that the students’ experiential learning is one of the fundamentals of the program. “We try our best to acknowledge and value the ‘lived experience’ of our students,” says Pandit. This includes experiential learning as well as the actual life experiences that each student brings into the classroom, and great efforts are made to ensure that students can share those experiences in a positive way.

“We aim to create an atmosphere of safety and accountability in a classroom where they can have conversations about subjects that can sometimes be very difficult,” says Pandit.

Pandit says that each class aims to produce critical thinkers in a world of “media sound bytes” that often accompany news stories about Muslims and Islam. SI provides many different outlets for this kind of learning, including integrating fine arts into classes and creating opportunities to engage with the community.

For example, Professor Soheila Esfahani teaches the class Calligraphy to Conceptual Art: Text as an Image in Islamic and East Asian Visual Arts, where students create art using Arabic characters. Since most students taking the course don’t know any Arabic language, this helps promote that idea that you don’t have to understand the language to feel a connection to the culture. Their final art pieces were displayed publicly at Renison for staff, faculty, and other students to view. (Some students were even approached by people who wanted to purchase their art!)

Professor Amir Al-Azraki uses techniques from his background in theatre to teach Arabic language courses. “Techniques such as role-play and improvisation provide students with the opportunity to practise and apply the foreign language; it stimulates their passive linguistic competence, makes language acquisition enjoyable, motivating and authentic, and gives them confidence and self-esteem. Drama techniques also help students to learn about the culture of the
We aim to create an atmosphere of safety and accountability in a classroom where they can have conversations that can sometimes be very difficult.

Professor Idrisa Pandit

Another key component of the program is the principle of community outreach. The SI Speaker Series and Interfaith workshops provide access to the larger community, hosting panel-style seminars with guest speakers across all faiths multiple times a year. These events are always open to anyone who wishes to attend. Pandit also speaks in the community in various forums – talks, lectures, panels, or seminars – on Muslims and Islam and the importance of building interfaith connections.

While activities in the community are an important part of this program, it is the curriculum and faculty that keep students coming back. Montanaro-Yavnaí says that she loves how SI courses are small, focused, and touch on a huge variety of topics. “I’m strengthening my ability to approach a topic from multiple perspectives, and actively discuss how this affects the content we are learning. There are a lot of chances to actively participate and share your opinion, which helps facilitate deeper comprehension.”
THE INAUGURAL SDS SOCIAL

This unique outreach event aimed to encourage grade eleven students to pursue a career in the social sciences by introducing them to students, faculty, and alumni of Social Development Studies.

BY KARI PASICK STEWART

On May 9, 2015, nearly 50 high school students from across Ontario came to Renison for an overnight experiential learning experience called the SDS Social. Open to grade eleven students who are in a social science class, this event offered workshops, mock lectures, a keynote speaker, and interaction with current students and alumni. Participants were also treated to the “real” residence experience complete with getting keys to their dorm rooms, meeting their roommates for the first time, and sitting down to meals together in the cafeteria.

Alezandra Sallows, Renison’s Undergraduate Recruitment Coordinator and the organizer of this event, says the SDS Social helped expose high school students to the idea that careers do exist in the social sciences. “We wanted to offer an engaging, educational, and fun learning experience for outstanding grade eleven social science students.” Sallows says that she hopes it fosters an awareness of Renison’s programs, especially Social Development Studies (SDS), which students can apply to directly from high school.

Students were excited to be invited to this event. One student said that this experience helped her picture what she wants to do after she has completed high school. “I learned a lot and feel much more confident about pursuing a future in the social sciences. I would definitely encourage students to take this opportunity. It’s such a fun event, we made lots of new friends, and I was able to imagine myself as a future student.”

Participants attended workshops and lectures by SDS Professor Sharon Roberts, SDS Professor Christine Logel, SDS Professor Denise Marigold, and Speech Communications Professor Tim Paci. After dinner in the Great Hall, they were treated to keynote Talli Osborne, an inspirational speaker who spreads the message about loving yourself and staying positive. (Find out why Sir Richard Branson has called Talli “one of the most beautiful people in the world” at talliosborne.ca.)

In the evening, students snacked on chocolate covered treats from the chocolate fountain and participated in social activities with UWaterloo’s Muay Thai Club and Improv Club.

Sallows said that although this is the first time this event has run, she wants to see this happen annually. “We’ll definitely host this event next year. Students loved having the opportunity to experience university life, meet new friends, and hear the various speakers. It was such a success because of the incredible students and volunteers that attended!”
Keynote speaker Talli Osborne talks about being born missing her arms and bones in her legs, and how her upbringing and determination allow her to do anything she sets her mind to.
Our annual Founders’ Day event is a celebration of the driving principles, values, and beliefs of the College since its founding in 1959. Congratulations to this year’s honourees, and thank you for your continued support of Renison.

BY BRENDON BEDFORD

The Right Rev. Robert Bennett, Anglican Bishop of Huron and Visitor to Renison University College, and Mr. Greg Bechard, Executive Director of Elmira District Community Living, were both named Honorary Senior Fellows of the College at this year’s Founders’ Day celebrations.

Bishop Bennett was recognized for his many contributions to the community and Diocese of Huron as a whole, in which Renison is located, and also for his ongoing and committed support of Renison’s pursuit of higher learning and service to others.

Mr. Bechard was recognized by Renison for his important and tireless work in assisting those with developmental disabilities to achieve their full potential and live independently through his Snow Goose Project. The Snow Goose Project provides full scholarships, which include both tuition and accommodation, to two Renison students who in return live alongside the tenants of the Snow Goose Project in separate apartments. Their role is simply to be “a good friend and neighbour” to the tenants thereby developing relationships and allowing the tenants to better acclimate to independent living.

“We are so pleased to celebrate the accomplishments of all the recipients, in the midst of our community,” said The Right Rev. Ralph Spence, Chancellor of Renison University College. “By allowing the College to honour them, all the recipients of these distinctions honour us. Their good service, their hard work, and their dedication to making our community and our world a better place make them so very deserving of the accolades they have received.”

Fellowship was granted to Dr. Tom Brenner for his long and distinguished service as a professor and Academic Dean of Renison. Honorary Membership was granted to Ms. Barbara Checketts, Ms. Deborah Clark, Mrs. Lois Clifford, and Ms. Mary Jane Crusoe for their decades of service to the College as members of the staff. Two Distinguished Alumni were named, Mr. Brian Drew and Ms. Leslie Woo, in recognition of their success and achievements in the wider community.
Dr. Thomas Brenner began teaching at Renison in the 1970s and in 1988 also took on the role of Warden of Residence. Always a popular professor, Dr. Brenner finished his time at Renison in 2014 in the role of Academic Dean.

Barbara Checketts served at Renison since 1978, most recently as Executive Officer. In her various roles, she provided invaluable support not only to six Principals, but also to six Chancellors, and ten Chairs of the Board of Governors.

Deborah Clark supported and developed field education in the Social Work program throughout her career, serving at Renison from 1990-2013.

Lois Clifford had served as Librarian of Renison University College from 2000-2013 and was heavily involved in the planning and launch of Renison’s Lusi Wong Library in 2005.

Mary Jane Crusoe began working in Renison’s Office of the Registrar in 1982 and served as the Registrar of the College from 1996-2014.

Brian Drew serves as Senior Policy Advisor to the Government of Ontario on the implementation of the Presto electronic fare card and has worked extensively in the public transportation sector. He is a founding member of the Renison residence floor ‘Animal’.

Leslie Woo serves as Vice-President of Policy, Planning and Innovation of Metrolinx and is the driving force behind the GTA’s first ever regional transportation plan - The Big Move. She is highly committed to supporting and recognizing women within the urban planning and development field.
A GIFT TO HONOUR LOVING PARENTS

Renison’s Ministry Centre was officially dedicated and named on May 17, 2015, exactly 72 years after Marjorie MacLean and Frederick Luscott were married, a fitting tribute to the generous support of the Luscott family.

BY BARBARA SCHUMACHER

Marjorie MacLean and Frederick Luscott were married on May 17th, 1943 at St. Agnes’ Church in Long Branch, West Toronto. Marjorie was just five years old when she first met Fred, a student in the Sunday School class of seven-year-olds taught by her mother. That marked the beginning of a lifelong partnership for this couple, dedicated to hospitality, stewardship of resources, and sharing of talents, time and energy.

Marj and Fred were lifelong committed lay members of the Anglican Church of Canada. Fred enjoyed singing in the choir and Marj, as a member of the altar guild, created clergy vestments, choir gowns and altar linens. In their retirement years, they settled in Elmira to be close to family.

University of Waterloo ties were formed over the years with daughter Barbara as UWaterloo’s Medical Director, daughter Kathleen engaged in medical practice for a short time at both UWaterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) Health Services, Kathleen’s husband Paul as assistant chaplain at Renison, son Kevin as an engineering student and then employed in Electrical and Computer Engineering, and daughter-in-law Brenda as a graduate of UWaterloo and WLU. Marjorie and Fred frequently worshipped at Renison’s Chapel of St. Bede and supported the fellowship of the Renison community. They also enjoyed attending the Bishop’s breakfasts at the College and many bible study series, Lenten devotions, and workshops.

On the anniversary of their wedding and ten years since Frederick’s death, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren gathered to honour Marjorie and Frederick with a gift to support the hospitality, fellowship and caring of Renison’s Ministry Centre. Although they did not attend university as students, Frederick and Marjorie valued education and were eager learners in this place. We know they would be delighted to support present and future students - enquirers, seekers, artists, innovators, and adventurers, all.
The Luscott family at the dedication.
I am very grateful to Renison College for the opportunities my studies there paved the way for! There was a time in my life that post-secondary education felt inaccessible, but Renison College proved otherwise.

I remember in Grade 11, students at my high school in the Newmarket area were encouraged to look through the information books of the various universities across Ontario. We were perusing the books to begin to think about the programs we might want to apply to. I came across Renison College’s Social Development Studies program, and was immediately drawn to the interrelated disciplines of sociology, psychology, and social work that the program offered. I was interested in assisting hurting people in our society, and felt that the Social Development Studies program was the logical choice to meet my interests. However, upon graduating high school, my family and I realized that we didn’t have the appropriate funds for me to attend postsecondary education. I resigned myself to volunteering, finding contract jobs in the social service fields (as well as other odd jobs) while trying to save for university. I ended up falling in love with a lovely woman, and we got married and promptly started a family.

It was at this point in my life that I felt that I might never achieve my dream of postsecondary education. The costs associated with studies seemed to be unattainable for a young family that was striving to make ends meet. During my time away from school (6 years), I even began to doubt my academic abilities. However, I never forgot about that promising Social Development Studies program at Renison, though now my thoughts wistfully harboured the faint sadness of a dream lost.

One day, while accessing the internet, I decided to search for the Renison Social Development Studies program out of curiosity to read about the program I thought I’d never be able to take. I was surprised, delighted, and a bit scared to realize that the program at the time was offered completely by distance education, meaning that I could study from my home 1.5 hours away from campus. I also realized that, with the format of ‘paying as you go’, I could save up enough money to pay for courses as I took them, meaning that I didn’t...
have to go into massive debt to study. Was it too good to be true? Could I possibly be audacious enough to achieve my dream of university studies? I sent in an application, mostly believing that I would be rejected, but holding out faint hope that the impossible was possible.

I was overjoyed to receive my acceptance letter, but also intimidated as I wondered if my time away from school might hinder me from being able to study effectively. My fears were soon calmed, as the accessible distance education format of Renison’s courses enabled me to study in a way that helped me to absorb the material. Even though I was a distance education student, I was surprised at how the Renison staff and faculty welcomed and communicated with me, helping me to feel like I was a valued member of the community. In fact, Dale Payne, professor for several of my Social Development Studies courses, went out of his way to encourage me, giving me valuable research opportunities and, upon graduating, allowing me the honour to guest speak for several years at his on-campus Family Violence seminar. As I progressed through my studies, I was able to have my way of seeing the world grow and challenged through the excellent instructors that Renison provided, and the courses offered in the program provided for a well-rounded education.

Due to the accessibility and affordability of the courses of the Renison Distance Education program, I was able to complete my Bachelor of Arts degree in 3 years. Convocation Day was a wonderful celebration, as I traveled with my family to Waterloo for the ceremony. I will never forget being led by the bagpiper through the university grounds during the procession and was humbled to receive the Principal’s Award for Academic Achievement during the ceremony. I’d finally fulfilled the dream that seemed so elusive, and I couldn’t have done it without the support and inspiration of the Renison faculty and staff.

My story doesn’t end at Renison, of course. With the excellent foundation of education in my Bachelor of Arts in Social Development Studies from Renison, I went on to complete Bachelor and Master of Social Work degrees (York University). During my Master of Social Work studies at York I was awarded for having the Top Research Paper of the graduating class, an honour no doubt aided by my experience of doing an Independent Study at Renison with Dale Payne during my undergraduate years. Currently, I work as the Clinical Coordinator and a Therapist in the Adult Program at York Region Abuse Program, an agency that provides trauma-focused therapy for people who have experienced or witnessed abuse in their childhood. I am also a Part-time Faculty member at York and Lakehead (Orillia) Universities, teaching in the Bachelor of Social Work programs at each university, and even taking on a Master of Social Work course from time to time at York University. I have also had the opportunity to travel to places like Kenya, Rwanda, Malawi, and the Dominican Republic, to teach at universities or provide training to community leaders in the areas of trauma and counselling. This spring I will be teaching a course on Addictions at a university in Lithuania. All of these tremendous opportunities find their roots in that special time studying in Renison’s program, where I was built up not only in my knowledge, but also in my confidence to believe that my dream of assisting the hurting in our society can become a reality. I am forever grateful to Renison for allowing me the opportunity to pursue my dreams!

Kerry Surman, BA (English) gingernut24@live.com

Kerry is looking forward to her 2015-16 sabbatical from Algonquin College in Ottawa after eleven years of teaching technical communication. She plans to use the time to complete her doctoral research in education (Nipissing) and to paddle in as many dragonboat festivals as possible.

Anne Gloger, BA (SDS) aegloger@gmail.com

Since graduation, Anne Gloger has developed and cultivated her skills as a network builder, collaborator and community development leader. Currently Anne is the founding Director of East Scarborough Storefront. Her work is based in an underserved area of Scarborough known as Kingston Galloway Orton Park and is dedicated to developing practical and meaningful connections between and among people,
Anne's unique approach to this work is founded on the idea that complex social issues require collaborative solutions. Her work at The Storefront includes facilitating collaborative initiatives with residents, social service agencies, academics, corporations, governments, architects, lawyers, urban planners, artists, property owners and anyone else with an interest in improving life in Kingston Galloway Orton Park.

Anne has won several awards, including the William P. Hubbard Award for Race Relations, the Leading Women Building Communities Award, the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee medal, the 2014 Vital People’s Award and, with architect, design and property owner partners, a Bhayana Collaboration Award. Organizations, communities, activists and students from across the country have been inspired and motivated by The Storefront story. In direct response to requests for more information on The Storefront approach to Community Development, Anne is currently leading The Storefront’s innovative learning and sharing agenda which includes actively demonstrating the impact of the approach by embedding an evaluative framework and writing about, teaching and finding innovative ways to use The Storefront example to influence new possibilities for our country’s place based and collaborative strategies.

The East Scarborough Storefront and Anne’s work in building collaborative communities are highlighted in the 2012 book; The Little Community that Could by Cathy Mann.

Ed tenyenhuis, BASc (Electrical Engineering)

I graduated from Waterloo in Electrical Engineering in 1990. I worked for ABB Transformers in Guelph as a design engineer from 1990-1995. I then moved to Sweden from 1995-1997 to work in R&D for ABB and then moved to Raleigh, North Carolina to continue working in R&D for ABB. In 2000, we moved back to Guelph to return to ABB where I was Engineering Manager & later Quality Manager until 2005. This factory closed and since then I have led a Transformer Service group for ABB in Brampton (Operations Manager).

I completed my Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering at North Carolina State University in 2000.

I met my future wife in 1990 in Guelph and we married in 1992. We now have 5 children, and my oldest daughter is in 2nd year university at St. Francis Xavier in Nova Scotia. (I did take my daughter through UW and Renison but she was keen to go east.) We presently live in Guelph.

My major interests when not working are renovations (we have a 100+ year old house), travelling, outdoor sports and our church.

Mark Holford, BASc (Chemical Engineering)

Residence Floor(s): FUBAR, Loft mark@rockycreekwinery.ca

I got married shortly after graduating, moved out West (Calgary), started a family, moved back East (Sarnia) then made a big move out further West into the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, BC.

After working in the pulp and paper industry for a while, I decided to really set down roots by starting our own winery. I am currently the owner/winemaker at Rocky Creek Winery.

Linda MacKay, BA (SDS)

After completing her undergrad at Renison, Linda went to Laurier for her Master’s degree in Social Work. The lure of U of Waterloo’s campus beckoned, and Linda has built her clinical counselling career at U of Waterloo’s Counselling & Psychological Services. She has been honoured to do some sessional teaching at Renison in the
SDS program over the years, and she is the satellite counsellor at Waterloo’s Stratford Campus. Most recently she, along with two associates, opened The Space Within, a private practice in Stratford, where she lives with her husband, Stratford Festival actor Brian Tree. The Space Within is an urban oasis in the core of Stratford, dedicated to mindfulness-based healing and trainings. They have cultivated an eclectic team of health practitioners to address any concern for body, mind and soul. Linda has been certified in LifeForce® Yoga for depression and anxiety and incorporates these healing practices in her work with youth and adults. She continues to balance her schedule here in Waterloo and in Stratford. www.thespacewithin.ca

2010

Billy Ratemo, BMath (Actuarial Science, Finance Option)
Residence Floor(s): Tree Top

2006 - Lived on Tree Top, got the roommate I hoped to get (Tom Krolak from Kitchener - cool fun guy and easy to get along with).

2007 - Lived off campus with five friends from Renison. We lived on Candlewood Crescent on the bus 12 route from 2007 until 2010. We all played in the annual Renison FUBAR alumni football games in those years (an event we would never miss out on). Snow football in the winter and tennis in the summer were our favourite activities.

2010/2011 - My roommates and I all graduated in this space of time. One of my roommates (Jonathan) got married to a fellow Renisoner (Steph) and they met on Tree Top in 2006. They have one daughter now. Kind of reminds me of Ronak & Heather but neither were Renison Dons.

Late 2011 - I left Candlewood Crescent and moved back to Kenya to rejoin my family back home and begin my Actuarial career. I joined Jublee Insurance Kenya (www.jubileeinsurance.com) in early 2012 and have been working as an Analyst in its Actuarial department since then.

What I miss about Renison - First, the proximity to the SLC & MC (the buildings I frequented most). Second, table tennis and pool in the lounges, which were absolutely necessary as a stress reliever during exam time. Third, the new library (at the time) which was very convenient in the winter when I needed a place to work on assignments (just wished it was open until midnight). Fourth, the friendliness of the Dons. Jeff Newell [Director of Residence] does a great job in recruiting the best Dons. Heather Kendall was my Don in 2006 and she was well suited to handle our co-ed floor and an international student (myself) who she strategically had live right across from her door in case I had any concerns.

In Memoriam


On Saturday, March 14, The Right Reverend Charles Robert (Bob) Townshend died at home surrounded by people who love him. Bob was a retired Suffragan Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Huron. He was ordained deacon on May 13, 1962 and priested on May 19, 1963. He was consecrated bishop on September 12, 1984 and served as the Bishop of St. Clair and later the Bishop of Georgian Bay. In addition to diocesan service, he also served as a member of the Board of Governors of Renison University College. He will be greatly missed by all those who knew him.

Grace Schmidt (1964-2015)

After a courageous battle with breast cancer, Grace Schmidt passed away in February 2015. Grace was a tutor in Renison’s Writing Centre from 2009-2013. On behalf of the whole Renison community, our heartfelt sympathies go out to her friends and family.
GRAND OPENING OF NEW BUILDING &
& ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURS. OCT. 28, 2015
4:30 PM (AGM) & 5:00 PM (GRAND OPENING)
Renison will be holding the grand opening of its newest addition to the College campus. Built to house the expanded English Language Institute, the new building features 14 classrooms, three student lounges, meeting rooms, and staff and faculty offices. We invite you to attend the grand opening and reception in the building’s new atrium, which will follow our brief annual general meeting.

uwaterloo.ca/renison/events/grand-opening-2015

SAVE THE DATE! EAST ASIAN FESTIVAL
SAT. OCT. 3, 2015
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM, RENISON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
Fun for everyone - come and enjoy many activities such as performances, face painting, calligraphy, and origami. New this year - food trucks offering Asian and Canadian cuisine, plus a Beer and Wine Garden!

TORONTO BLUE JAYS VS. TAMPA BAY RAYS
SUN. JULY 19, 2015
11:00 AM (VIP RECEPTION AT REALSPORTS BAR & GRILL)
$20 per person includes Jays ticket, VIP reception, food, and refreshments at RealSports Bar & Grill in Toronto. Children are welcome. Please check Renison’s event website for more details.
uwaterloo.ca/renison/blue-jays

If you are interested in supporting the work at Renison University College, please contact Caroline Tanswell, Director of Institutional Advancement, at 519.884.4404 ext. 28605 or caroline.tanswell@uwaterloo.ca. Or, you can donate online at bit.ly/SupportRENISON.