



Western

Annual IMPACT

2015 REPORT TO ANNUAL DONORS



Computing the best cure for cancer

At the age of 14, Jenna Butler, BSc'09, PhD'15, discovered her life focus. Her mother passed away from pancreatic cancer and that untimely loss set Jenna on a determined path: to cure cancer.

"My mom was a teacher. She inspired me to learn when she was alive but in her death, gave me a course of study," says the 27-year-old mother of two and recent Western graduate.

As she grew up, Jenna came to understand that while she might not be the one to cure cancer, she desperately wanted to make an impact in any way possible.

One of her undergraduate professors at Western turned her on to bioinformatics – an interdisciplinary field that develops methods and software tools for understanding biological data.

"I always liked science, but I was trying to force myself to excel in biology when really my true interest and aptitude was math and computers," she says.

Once in a field more suited to her, Jenna began to attack the cancer epidemic by creating computer simulations of the growth of different types of tumours. Her doctoral research used these simulations to predict

which combination of drug treatments would be most effective for certain types of cancers.

During her PhD, Butler was fortunate to receive donor support and funding in the form of an **Ontario Graduate Scholarship** (OGS). She says the award allowed her to avoid taking on a part-time job and kept her out of debt while focusing on her research. It also allowed her a certain amount of school-life balance, as she got married and had two children all while knee-deep in her research.

"The OGS gave me the time to explore what I really wanted to research and, at the same time, I didn't have to put the rest of my life on hold to do so," says Jenna. "The scholarship also gave me a lot of confidence. It helped affirm that not only could I do it, but that others believed I could too."

For the immediate future, Jenna and her family are off to Seattle, where she's accepted a position as a software development engineer at Microsoft. She feels the industry experience is particularly important in her field and will help her in the long run if she plans to return to academia.

"I am so thankful for every scholarship and opportunity and believe that God has put me on this path so that I can make a difference."

Jenna Butler, BSc'09, PhD'15, developed a computer simulation program that predicts the best combination drug treatments for different types of cancer. She received a \$15,000 Ontario Graduate Scholarship in support of her research efforts.

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Be Extraordinary.

The Campaign for Western



It's all about our students

Every day, I'm inspired by our students, who are embarking on their personal journeys at Western.

These journeys can take them to other parts of the world for academics, service or sports. These journeys provide opportunities for them to spend their days learning, studying, researching, debating and participating. And these journeys are supported by our Western community of staff, faculty, donors and friends who get to play a small role in their adventure.

Having worked at Western for 10 years, I know that without financial support from donors, like you, many of our students would not be able to pursue their journey at Western. I'm proud we are able to provide them with the best academic experience – and we make a commitment to give them the resources they need to achieve their dreams.

Our commitment includes providing scholarships and bursaries that support our students' academic pursuits. Through awards for graduate student research and overseas learning experiences to funding for athletic teams and student programs, our desire is to give our students every opportunity to achieve their goals.

Your generosity makes it possible to deliver on our commitment. Thank you for giving to Western and supporting our students and their academic journeys.

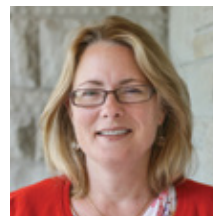
In this newsletter, you will read about donors, like you, who believe in the value of giving back, as well as about students who benefited from your generosity.

Take Jenna Butler, BSc'09, PhD'15. Her computer simulations are providing hard data about the best treatment combinations for various forms of cancer. Her research has the potential to save lives.

Or take Rachel Goldstein, BA'17, who received a Global Opportunities Award to visit war-torn Rwanda. She travelled there to make a difference in the lives of Rwandans and, in return, came home a changed person.

Last year, more than 11,650 donors, including you, provided \$10.7 million to support Western students through our Annual & Leadership Giving program. Thank you for your generosity.

At Western, it's all about our students. Through your gifts, you are equipping them with opportunities and experiences that will last a lifetime.



Sincerely,

Kendra Lealess
Director, Annual & Leadership Giving

The cost of fundraising

Western University is committed to openness and transparency in our fundraising and charitable operations.

Our three-year average cost per dollar is just eight per cent (eight cents for each dollar raised), well below the Canada Revenue Agency recommended threshold of 35 per cent. No funds received from donors are used for fundraising expenses. All fundraising expenses are supported by the University.

Western is a current Ethical Code Program Participant with Imagine Canada. The Ethical Code trustmark signals to donors that we comply with the Code's fundraising and financial accountability standards.

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Annual donor recognition

The Leaders' Circles recognize Western's generous donors who make gifts of \$1,000 up to \$24,999 during each fiscal year. Benefits of membership include invitations to Western events, special communications and recognition on our donor board in Alumni Hall and online.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS INCLUDE:

- *Deans' Circle, annual donors of \$1,000 to \$2,499*
- *President's Circle, annual donors of \$2,500 to \$4,999*
- *Governors' Circle, annual donors of \$5,000 to \$9,999*
- *Chancellor's Circle, annual donors of \$10,000 to \$24,999*

Individual donors who cumulatively give \$25,000 or more are recognized in The 1878 Societies. For more information on Western's donor recognition programs, please visit:

giving.westernu.ca/your-impact/recognition

Finding meaning half a world away

Rachel Goldstein admits she never understood the power one person could have on a seemingly infinite world. That is until a service-learning trip to Rwanda in the summer of 2014, one backed by a donor-funded **Global Opportunities Award**, changed her mind.

"I went to Rwanda wondering if I would help a single person, wondering if our team would help anyone," says the Arts & Humanities and Biology student. "I left knowing that almost 250 students had listened to our message."

"The trip has taught me that even if only one student puts their new knowledge into practice, our work will contribute to improving that one person's quality of life. That is the ultimate goal of service-learning – give what you can and receive an invaluable experience in return."

Rachel's journey began with the *Rwanda: Culture, Society and Reconstruction* course in the Department of French Studies, taught by professor Henri Boyi. Following an initial four-month, in-class component where students learn about the culture and history of the central African nation, the course ends in a five-week international service-learning experience in Rwanda.

Rachel and four fellow students were placed at Centre Marembo, an organization that supports abused and disadvantaged youth, and included sexual health education and community outreach.

Rachel's team was assigned to a local high school in Kigali, where they worked with Rwandan youth, teaching about family planning, reproductive anatomy, sexually transmitted infections and

prevention, as well as methods of contraception.

"We received hundreds of questions in regards to menstruation during our time at the high school," Rachel says. "The students would ask us what was wrong with their bodies. Some thought that these natural processes meant that they were sick. Culturally, it is not common to have someone talk openly about such things as menstruation."

Because of the language barrier and her general discomfort teaching for the first time, the class did not initially go as smoothly as she hoped. But Rachel and her peers learned, adapted, and improved the lessons exponentially over five weeks.

By receiving the Global Opportunities Award in 2014, Rachel was able to travel 12,000 km to what she considers "to be the strongest and most beautiful country in the world." In 2015 she returned to Rwanda as the team leader for the course. This year she again spent time with the Centre Marembo as they worked to realize their new vision of creating a safe space for former street girls and providing them with education.

"This experiential learning trip was the most incredible opportunity. Within those five short weeks, I encountered more inspirational men and women than I had in my entire life. Being able to work with the Rwandan people as they build a brighter future for themselves has truly allowed my intercultural competence to grow."

To learn more about Global Opportunities Awards, please visit: giving.westernu.ca/where-to-give/go-awards



Rachel Goldstein (right), BA'17, interacts with students at the Centre Marembo in Rwanda.



Ryan Dunn, BA'06, makes monthly donations to Western to give back to the University that gave him so much.

Sustaining the student experience

Ryan Dunn, BA'06, always knew he wanted to give back to Western, a place he credits for helping him develop and grow into the person he is today.

Those thoughts turned into action when he received a call from a Western student asking him if he would consider giving back to his alma mater.

For the 33-year-old alumnus, who was president of the University Students' Council (USC) in 2005 and 2006, a small but ongoing monthly gift turned out to be the perfect vehicle to provide current Western students with the same extraordinary experiences he feels fortunate to have benefited from as a student.

"It really is the best undergraduate experience in Canada. Western made a huge impact on my life and I always reminisce fondly about my time there," says Ryan, who currently works in Toronto as a regulatory affairs manager with Fidelity Investments Canada. "When the phone call came, it was the perfect trigger to give back to an institution that gave me so much."

One of his fondest memories included taking in a holiday concert performed by Western Music students at Talbot College. It's for this reason –

and an admiration for the passion and enthusiasm of Western's music students – that he gives half his monthly donation to the **Don Wright Faculty of Music**.

"I have a soft spot in my heart for music students," he says. "It's a very unique student community, unlike any other on campus, that I think is important to celebrate and support."

The other half of Ryan's monthly donation supports the **Student Development Centre**, which he feels is a natural fit due to his desire to help students get the most out of their Western Experience – in and out of the classroom.

For Ryan, it's not the amount of the donation that's important but the consistency. He knows that, for the equivalent cost of a couple of Starbucks coffees each month, his gift provides regular support that goes directly to enhancing the student experience.

"When I look back and see who I was when I walked onto campus that first day and know that who I've become now is a direct result of the learning and experiences Western gave me; it's worth its weight in gold to me to give that same experience to current students."

Keeping Mustangs afloat

Cathy Buckingham, BA'79 (Hon.), doesn't want Mustang varsity swimmers to miss out on the opportunity to compete because of financial circumstances – which was her situation when she joined the Western team in the late 1970s.

A competitive swimmer from the time she was in elementary school in Scarborough, Ont., she chose to attend Western because of the talent and coaching of the varsity swim team. However, a year into her degree in Physical Education, Cathy had to give up her place on the swim team to make time for a job.

"In order to put myself through school, I could not swim," Cathy says. "I needed to work."

Because of this experience, Cathy, who is president and CEO for TNR Industrial Doors in Barrie, Ont., makes consistent annual gifts to Western's swim team through the **Adopt A Mustang program**.

She gives so that current Western student-athletes won't be forced into making a difficult decision between work and sport.

"It's so important to help student-athletes because without the proper funding, they just can't do it," says Cathy.

The Adopt A Mustang program supports the ongoing financial needs of Western's sports teams, keeps teams competitive on provincial, national and international levels, and allows athletes to focus on training rather than fundraising for their team.

For Cathy, it's as important to give on an annual basis, as it is to give at all. She prefers picking an amount that she can comfortably give each and every year, rather than trying to make a large, one-time donation.

"It makes a significant impact on the team to know they have a certain amount to work with each year – it's much easier to budget," she says. "Plus, can you imagine what the team could do if every ex-swimmer made an annual donation?"



Western alumna **Cathy Buckingham, BA'79 (Hon.)**, supports Adopt A Mustang to give current student-athletes the gift of sport.

As a lifelong athlete, Cathy believes involvement in sport or athletics provides more than just physical benefits – it also provides transferrable skills, such as discipline and preparedness, and rounds you out as a person.

"You don't have to be the best athlete to gain something from the world of athletics. Experiences in sport and team play can help you understand and navigate interrelationships in the business world and life as well," she says. "It feels really good to give back to something that gave so much to me."

To learn more about Adopt A Mustang, please visit:
giving.westernu.ca/adopt-a-mustang

“ Last year was very difficult for me due to personal circumstances — I sadly lost some important friends — but the support I received through a donor-funded scholarship encouraged me to keep going and helped me get through some very tough times. I am sincerely grateful and hope that one day, after I gain enough experience, I will become an engineering consultant.”

Name: Akeem Hinds

Age: 24

Hometown: Currently London, Ont., moved from Barbados at age 17

Program: Mechanical and Materials Engineering with Professional Internship

Year: Third year completed, currently on internship at Honda of Canada Mfg.



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