

Queen's University Alumni Association



Greetings QUAA Volunteer Leaders,

At this time last year we were just over a month into Canada's first lockdown and the WHO officially declaring COVID-19 a pandemic. With new information coming in every day, we at the QUAA Board were grappling with understanding the impact of COVID-19 in our programming and volunteers and were rapidly reacting to a fast-changing environment.

Looking back on the year, **it has been incredible to see how our fellow alumni volunteers adapted to remain connected with one-another through re-imagined events and initiatives.**

In 2020-2021, Branches engaged alumni and pivoted from in-person to virtual events seamlessly. A few memorable events held virtually by our Branches included the Ottawa Branch panel on reconciliation, the Calgary Branch Wine and Cheese event, and the recent panel on Spring Wellness held by the Toronto Branch. Our **Chapters, Booster Clubs, and Faculty-oriented engagement groups** similarly continued to innovate and create new ways for alumni engagement, as seen by QBAC's launch of the [Queen's Black Alumni Network platform](#) and the **creation of the soon to be launched [Queer Alumni Chapter](#).**

On the **Homecoming** front, while almost everyone would have preferred to have been in Kingston for it, our first-ever Virtual Homecoming engaged nearly 2,000 Queen's alumni and friends from across the Globe – many of whom have not been engaged for years and would normally not be able to engage due to the logistical challenges of traveling back to Kingston. This upcoming Fall we will have, yet again, a [fully Virtual Homecoming](#), but we hope to resume the in-person experience in 2022 while also maintaining a virtual component for years to come.

While we didn't have an **Awards Gala** in 2020, it was my pleasure to have celebrated last year's recipients during our Virtual Homecoming – including surprising [Hugh Christie](#) (Artsci'78, Law'81) with a guest appearance from his daughter Heather (Artsci'09) all the way from London, England. Nominations are [now open](#) for the 2022 Alumni Awards (due date is June 2nd – so get your nominations in soon). I also recently had the honour – alongside AMS President Jared Den Otter and SGPS President Justine Aman – to present awards in the first ever [University-wide Teaching Awards reception](#), where we recognized two recipients of the Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching: Dr. Holly Ogden and Dr. Anne Petitjean.

This past year we also **continued to raise the profile of the QUAA** – especially through our increased presence on social media channels ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)) and recent publications in the Alumni Review – while also **improving Board transparency and awareness** (e.g., by establishing a new nomination / application process for vacant Board positions). I would like to personally thank Graeme Matichuk (Artsci'16) for having served as the Director of Digital Media these past few years. Graeme joined our Board in an entirely new role and helped us build our digital presence to what it is right now. We have big shoes to fill in this newly vacant position on the Board.

On the **University Governance** side, we have partaken in important conversations about the future of the University (e.g., recently co-hosting an alumni Town Hall with Principal Deane on [The Conversation](#)). I also had the privilege to have served on several important university committees such as The [Macdonald Hall Building Name Consultation Advisory Committee to the Dean](#), The **Advisory Committee to the Principal Regarding the Selection of a Candidate to Serve as Queen's University's 15th Chancellor**, The **External Relations and Development Committee** of the Board of Trustees, **University Council**, and the **Honorary Degrees Committee**. The members of our Board have also played an important role in other university matters relating mainly to branding (stay tuned to a revamped QUAA logo coming out soon), philanthropy, campus naming policies, and Athletics. My hope is to get Assembly members further involved in university matters – acting as a feedback loop for the Principal (as we are hoping to do with this AGM by having Principal Patrick Deane as a guest).

It's important to also note that the 2021 QUAA has a **fundamentally different Governance composition compared to only two years ago**, with an extensive consultation that resulted in a 91% vote in favour of **reforming our Alumni Assembly** – turning it into a more representative body that looks to have increased engagement throughout the year and benefited our volunteer leaders from its collective expertise via knowledge sharing. While we can still do more to create additional collaborations and engagement, I've been encouraged by how we have begun to increasingly connect as a group through a Virtual Orientation, the 2020 AGM, and more recently, a virtual roundtable focused on engagement. You can access the latest version of our **By-laws and Constitution** [here](#).

Looking ahead, I am hoping we as a QUAA Board can be more proactive about the re-imagination of our portfolios (this will be the focus of our upcoming Board retreat in May). Some of the topics that are top of mind for me right now and that I envision continuing to be / become priorities include: (1) further advancing **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenization** efforts (see detailed update below), (2), the **expansion of our Chapters portfolio** to create more opportunities for identity-based and special interest-based engagement, (3) doubling efforts to **help graduating students with their transition to the workforce**, (4) exploring ways to **further reach and engage our Graduate alumni**, and (5) **fostering a culture of philanthropy among our volunteer leaders**.

Most importantly, and to wrap up, **we have an amazing group of volunteers** and I therefore have no doubt we will continue to rise to the challenges ahead. Thank you for everything you did for our community in 2020-2021, and I look forward to engaging in a discussion during our AGM on continuing reimagining how we collaborate as a group of volunteer leaders in building a "better normal" and serving our alumni community in all its diversity.

Cha Gheill,

Rico Garcia, Artsci'13

57th Volunteer President, Queen's University Alumni Association
Chair, QUAA Board of Directors

Mission: "To reach out and foster a lifelong association with **Queen's**, to engage our members in the life and work of the University, and to serve the alumni community in all its diversity."

Vision: The QUAA Board will **engage, develop, and celebrate** outstanding **Queen's** alumni volunteer leaders.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Indigeneity:

Last year, the Board outlined our commitments to EDII, with tangible goals we hoped to accomplish around the recruitment, retention, and recognition of all alumni volunteers and the creation of safe and inclusive spaces within the Queen's community-digital and otherwise. We are pleased to report that we have started to bring many of these goals to action within the last few months:

🇳🇵 **QUAA Awards:** Through updates to our application processes and forms, we are actively seeking and engaging nominations of alumni representing diverse communities, backgrounds, and abilities for this year's QUAA Awards

🇳🇵 **Inclusive Events and Gatherings:** Virtual Homecoming and the integration of virtual events at Queen's has improved accessibility and inclusion for many alumni, but we know there is a long way to go and continue to strive for increased participation among alumni in historically excluded groups

🇳🇵 **EDII Advocacy and Education:** Through the 2021 Alumni Volunteer Series, we are creating opportunities for education and virtual spaces for alumni to share their personal experiences and professional insights into Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigeneity. The first Alumni Volunteer Series event was held on March 6 – featuring Yinka Adegbusi (ArtSci'13), Zhaodi Culbreath (Sc'08), and Chu Wang (Com'15), hosted by Tuba Chishti (ArtSci'15). They all spoke candidly and openly about their experiences as Queen's students and expertise on topics related to diversity, inclusion, and intersectionality

Beyond the Board:

Reunions

🇳🇵 After attending the QUAA Non-Traditional Queen's Experiences: An Alumni Panel event, Sc'72 Reunion Coordinator, Bruce Miller, felt compelled to share his takeaways from the event with his fellow classmates as an incentive to give to their class fund. Namely, the highlighted need to fund resources to help students overcome barriers to access, inclusion, and success at Queen's

Branches

🇳🇵 The Toronto Branch, led by Branch President, Aliya Hollingsworth, Artsci'13, continues to create opportunities for diverse voices to be heard and experiences to be shared, such as through their Quarterly Virtual Meetings.

2020 - 2021

QUAA Board of Directors

Yinka Adegbusi, Artsci'13
Director, Alumni Constituency Groups

Tuba Chishti, Artsci'15
Director, Alumni Volunteer Summit

Rico Garcia, Artsci'13
President, QUAA

Lisa Hood, Artsci'04
Executive Vice-President, Volunteer Recruitment & Recognition

Leigh Kalin, Artsci'92
Ex-Officio, Associate VP (Alumni Relations & Annual Giving)

Jasmit Kaur, Artsci'17
Director, Young Alumni

Jackie Lewis, Artsci'11
Director, Special Projects

Graeme Matichuk, Artsci'16
Director, Digital Media

Allan McGavin, Com'08, Law'12
Director, Global Branch Network

Colin McLeod, Artsci'10
Executive Vice-President, Operations

Kathy Owen, Arts'67
Director, QUAA Awards

Julia Reid, Artsci'08
Director, Marketing & Communications

Allison Williams, Artsci'09
Director, Alumni Giving

Irene Wood, Artsci'79
Director, Reunion Coordinator

- 🇳🇵 Moderated by Branch President, Kimberly Molina, Artsci'07, the Ottawa Branch held a panel on Reconciliation and Remembrance, providing insight into the commemoration of public figures and policies in a time of rapidly changing societal values relating to Indigenous issues, racism, and gender

Alumni Chapters

- 🇳🇵 The Queen's Black Alumni Chapter has seen a drastic increase in its reach and membership over the last year, focusing heavily on recruitment and launching the Queen's Black Alumni Network (QBAN) as a platform for members to effectively find and connect with each other.
- 🇳🇵 We are also thrilled to announce that the LGBTQ+ Chapter is well underway and in its early stages

QSAA

- 🇳🇵 With the goal of supporting an initiative committed to diversity and inclusion through this year's Tricolour Giving Initiative, the Queen's Student Alumni Association chose to support the Robert Sutherland-Harry Jerome Entrance Award. This award goes to Black students entering the first year of any direct-entry undergraduate degree program at Queen's University on the basis of demonstrated financial need, academic achievement and contribution to the Black community or other volunteer activities.

Supporting the Strategic Framework

Financial Sustainability

- **100%** participation from the QUAA Board of Directors in annual giving for over 11 years!

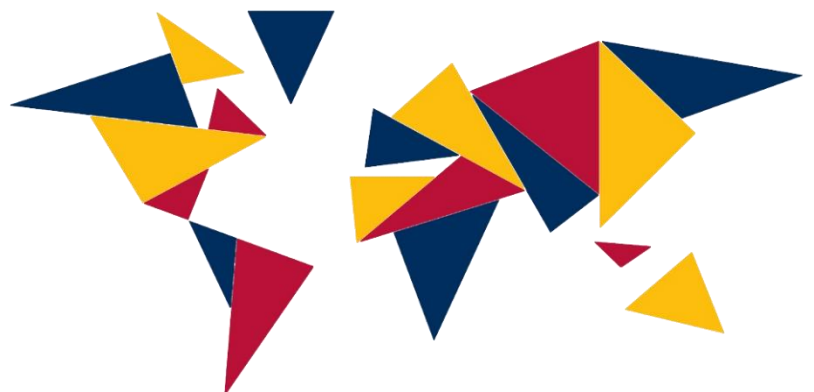
Queen's Global Alumni Network

164,647 Number of Queen's alumni

152 Number of countries in which Queen's alumni live around the world

1,608 Number of Alumni Volunteers

37 Number of Active Alumni Branches



Welcoming 2020 Grads

2020 Grad Calling Initiative

Members of the Class of 2020 have experienced unique challenge in their transition from students to alumni, as many traditional graduation milestones have been postponed or cancelled. In addition, this group of alumni is facing one of the most challenging employment markets in recent history. With that in mind, Advancement recruited alumni, staff, and QSAA volunteers to reach out and make personal connections with 2020 alumni.

Quick Facts

- 136 volunteers recruited, including 11 QSAA members
- 100 volunteers completed orientation
- 24 Staff members participated
- Outreach done to over 3000 graduates

Notebook Project

This campaign was designed to build bridges that connects Queen's to our communities, local and global, that will benefit a greater good. Queen's not only engaged our alumni with a gift that acknowledges their unique situation and experiences, but that also provided a pathway for them to begin a journey of giving.

Giving Back

A portion of the cost of each Notebook was allocated to charity in honor of the Class of 2020 with direct input from the grads themselves.

The Class of 2020 alumni received an email asking them choose from eight charities, short-listed by the QUAA Board of Directors.

- Collecting 2,631 votes from 7,126 Notebook recipients (37% response rate), the most votes was Food Banks Canada (24.9%), then Youth Without Shelter (21.6%); and Downie Wenjack Fund (12.7%)
- This initiative kicked off the 180 for 180 campaign launched at the beginning of 2021, in honour of Queen's 180th year.
 - **180 for 180:** We're inviting the Class of 2020 to join us on a journey of giving by spending 180 minutes to turn something 180 degrees for good.



Snapshot of Virtual Queen's Events (May 2020-April 2021)

Virtual

Agnes Etherington
Gift of Art: Virtual
Announcement
June 23, 2020



Virtual

Conversations Confronting
COVID-19: Innovation Pivots
June 24, 2020



Virtual

Town Hall – COVID-19:
Insights from AVP Stephanie
Simpson and Principal Patrick
Deane
July 22, 2020



Virtual

Conversations Confronting
COVID-19: Aging
July 22, 2020



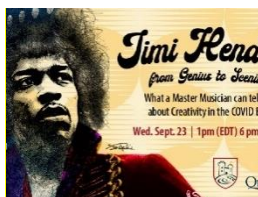
Virtual

Townhall for BISC Alumni
August 28, 2020



Virtual

BISC Mini Lecture Series – Jimi
Hendrix from Genius to
Scenius
September 23, 2020



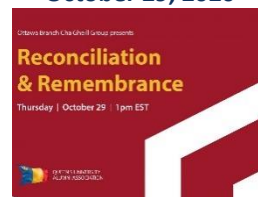
Virtual

Queen's Virtual Homecoming
October 17, 2020



Virtual

Ottawa Branch
Cha Gheill Panel on
Reconciliation and
Remembrance
October 29, 2020



Virtual

ASUS
Life After ArtSci: Alumni
Networking Summit
November 7, 2020



Virtual

Ottawa Branch
Financial Planning in the Age
of COVID-19
November 25, 2020



Virtual

Calgary Branch
Wine and Cheese Event
December 8, 2020



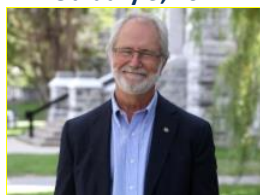
Virtual

Bell Let's Talk: Mental Health
in Diverse Communities
January 22, 2021



Virtual

Continuing the Conversation:
Town Hall with QAAA
President, Rico Garcia
Principal Patrick Deane
February 3, 2021



Virtual

QAAA AVS
Non-Traditional Queen's
Experiences: An Alumni Panel
March 6, 2021



Virtual

University-Wide Teaching
Award Reception
March 24, 2021



Virtual

Toronto Branch
Spring Wellness Panel
March 31, 2021



Homecoming 2020

Total Registrants

2,100

First-Ever Queen's Virtual Homecoming

On Saturday, October 17th, 2020, QUAA President, Rico Garcia (ArtSci'13) and CBC Reporter, Shelagh Rogers (ArtSci'77) co-hosted the first-ever Queen's Virtual Homecoming. Throughout the day, alumni and friends celebrated the Tricolour Guard, re-lived Athletics highlights, and heard inspiring alumni stories. Other programming included a Q&A with the Agnes Etherington Art Centre as well as the Office of Indigenous Initiatives and Reconciliation. Alumni Award recipients were recognized as well, including Elke Beecken, MEd'84 (Herbert J. Hamilton Volunteer Service Award), Allan McGavin, Com'08, Law'12 (Marsha Lampman Branch Volunteer Award), Rebecca Maciver, Artsci'12, PhD'20 (Outstanding Student Award), Jacklyn Lewis, Artsci'11 (Rising Star Volunteer Award), Queen's Black Alumni Chapter (Initiative of the Year), and Gillian Baker, Artsci'20 (QSAA Volunteer of Distinction Award). Congratulations! This segment also featured a memorable appearance from Alumni Achievement Award recipient Hugh Christie and a touching surprise from his daughter, Heather. We also enjoyed musical entertainment throughout the day from artists such as Jay Smith (Smitty Kingston) and The Tragically Hip's, Gord Sinclair.



Following the Live Event, attendees broke out into the Faculty and Group Sessions. Each Faculty put together an hour of programming, with exciting content including panel discussions, interviews, and interactive host discussions. Classes also enjoyed their reunions virtually last year over Zoom. We hope you will all join us at this year's virtual Homecoming!

Stay connected



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