



**McGILL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
REPORTS FROM  
THE PRESIDENT AND  
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
2018-2019**

PRESENTED ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
162<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



McGILL UNIVERSITY FACULTY CLUB  
MONTREAL, QUEBEC

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2019



## REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Presented on the occasion of the Annual General Meeting

The past year—my first as President of the McGill Alumni Association—has been eventful, energizing and personally very rewarding. Highlights include:

- The 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Leacock luncheon which was held on Friday, October 12, 2018, and featured the CBC's Steve Patterson; 536 guests attended, a sold-out crowd;
- McGill24, which was held on March 13, raised \$2.3M, an increase of 21% over 2018. Approximately one gift was made every 16 seconds, for a total of 5,244 donations, an increase of 15% over 2018. Twenty-four alumni events took place in 12 countries with over 900 participants. The MAA provided \$10,000 in matching funds as an incentive to student and young alumni giving;
- Another very successful MAA Honours & Awards Banquet—also sold out—was held on May 8th, gathering more than 300 guests to celebrate the incredible achievements of many students, alumni, friends, faculty and staff of McGill – from Canada, the USA and Europe. The Award of Merit went to Lorne Trottier, BEng'70, MEng'73, DSc'06;
- Finally, 53 student groups received funding from the MAA for a total of \$16,000.

Over the past year there has been much discussion about the role of the MAA and whether or how we represent the University's alumni. Of course a small number of alumni cannot represent the diversity of 275,000 McGill graduates around the world. Rather, we sit at the intersection of alumni, the University and the student body of future alumni—all part of one interconnected community. Our role is to encourage alumni to be engaged and involved with the University, and in matters of interest and importance to its mission.

So in this context, I want to say a few words about the commemoration and renaming process, and specifically, the discussions on campus concerning the renaming of the men's varsity team, the Redmen. A consultation process is not a perfect democracy. It is not about counting numbers and majority rule. It is about ensuring that all voices have a forum to be heard, and that diverse perspectives are considered before assessing the information at hand and making a decision.

The MAA Board's involvement was not to advocate for a particular position, but rather, to ensure that the University communicated developments to all members of the community in a timely manner and, in its consultation process, provided a platform to capture the views of all alumni who wished to participate, and to directly outreach where possible and feasible.

One of my personal highlights of the past year was the Beatty Lecture featuring American writer Roxanne Gay. As President of Brain Canada, a brain research organization, I understand the science behind trauma and its long-lasting impact. Roxanne's writing brought this understanding to life, expressing so vividly the soul-crushing loneliness of a trauma kept hidden for too long, of a voice that was not heard. I found myself thinking a lot about Roxanne and why, when we get too comfortable that our views are on the right side, we need to open our hearts to those who did not have a voice, and who hid their trauma, and begin the healing with concrete actions. We are then all made stronger.



McGill

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Serving as President of the MAA is a tremendous privilege and an honour. When I took on this role, I committed to raising awareness about the value of diversity and inclusion, and the need to move from recognition—necessary but not sufficient—into action. This theme is one of three pillars which are being developed for the MAA Board Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2022. The other two pillars are defining our support of the Bicentennial Campaign, and growing and strengthening our volunteer outreach.

I have been humbled by the support I have had from the members of the Board and the University community at large. I want to recognize and thank in particular the past Presidents who have worked closely with me and provided valued input and guidance, Bob Babinski, Alan Desnoyers, Tina Hobday, as well as Vice-President Luciano D’lorio, and the University Advancement team, especially Gabrielle Korn and Kathy Bowman.

The highlight of our annual meetings are the presentations by student sponsorship recipients. I want to close with the thought that whenever you need to feel hopeful, be inspired by our future leaders. Their talent, dedication and commitment to making the world better is a reminder of the power of the McGill community and values, and what is possible when great minds and hearts come together and we create the space for everyone to pursue their dreams. As the late United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan once said: “you are never too young to lead and never too old to learn.”

Respectfully submitted,

Inez Jabalpurwala  
September 19, 2019



## REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Alumni Relations and Annual Giving at-a-Glance, 2018-2019

The celebration of a bicentennial anniversary is a momentous, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. In anticipation of McGill's 200<sup>th</sup> celebrations, Alumni Relations and Annual Giving concentrated the units' efforts in 2018-2019 on deepening alumni engagement through an array of activities on campus, around the world and in the digital realm. Opportunities to enhance connections between alumni and their alma mater, and between themselves, were developed or refined, and scaled for even greater participation. Activities were global in nature and coordinated in partnership with many University Advancement colleagues, as well as other campus and McGill Alumni Association stakeholders.

Reflecting this collective effort, this report provides a snapshot of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving activities for this fiscal year.

#### Demographics

- The global alumni network comprises 275,000 individuals in 185+ countries
- The number of alumni for whom we have contact information is 247,464
- The McGill Alumni Association welcomed 9,303 new graduates to its global network

#### Alumni Engagement

Strategic, well-executed events continue to be a mainstay of University Advancement's outreach goals. Events keep McGill's brand awareness high, our mission of learning, teaching and research tangible, and our relationships with alumni, prospects and donors strong. In this fiscal year, the unit supported a greater number of Faculty-based events, gift announcements and donor recognition opportunities. The team continues to apply strategies that align with the University's fundraising priorities, supported by more efficient scheduling, invitation/registration and data-capturing technologies.

#### Event-based numbers

- Total number of events, 475
- Events initiated by alumni branches, 150, and by the Faculties, 101
- Total unique attendees, 14,036
- Total first time attendees, 4,232
- Total number of Homecoming events, 84, total attendees, 3,855
- Total number of class reunions, 21, total attendees, 608
- Total number of reunion class giving programs, 29, donors, 527, dollars, \$1.19M

Alumni Relations best practices are evolving to define and measure engagement under a broader spectrum of activities. Engagement is becoming the rubric that captures event participation, giving, volunteering and communications.

In terms of volunteering, alumni hold a wide variety of important roles in support of McGill and its students. Volunteer roles include, but are not limited to: governance positions on University or McGill Alumni Association boards and committees, on campus and around the world; mentoring, job shadowing and other career exploration opportunities for students, in person or online; subject-matter expert panel



participants, leaders of a master class, Dobson Cup judges, etc.; social media ambassadors in the regions and for campaigns like McGill24; affinity, reunion class or peer-to-peer fundraising, and more.

### Broad-based engagement numbers

- Total engaged alumni, 41,884
- Total volunteers, 12,227
- Total individual donors, 27,923

### Campus Partnerships

Alumni Relations and Annual Giving continues to build programs that engage students and young alumni and instill a culture of philanthropy in our next generation of donors and ambassadors. At the same time, these programs allow us to cultivate campus partnerships and contribute positively to campus life. Be it through student yield and recruitment activities, the enhancement of career development and exploration opportunities such as job shadowing, advocacy efforts in support of higher education, student-initiated crowdfunding campaigns or our newly inaugurated corporate alumni engagement program, we continue to respond to support McGill's student-focused priorities through innovative digital outreach and targeted volunteering opportunities.

### Campus partnership numbers

- Central administrative or Faculty/School partners, 31
- Student group and association partners, 39
- Number of Student and Young Alumni program initiatives, 40
- Number of student group beneficiaries of MAA support, 53 that received \$16,000
- Number of alumni branch beneficiaries of UA and MAA support, 29 that received \$18,000

### Job shadowing numbers

*Held during Reading Week, February 2019*

- Alumni participants, 85
- Geographic coverage: Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, New York and Boston
- Student participants, 97
- Shadow placements, 132

### Affinity Programs

Affinity programs, such as credit card and insurance offerings, provide McGill with revenue in support of alumni and student programming priorities, while offering Canadian-based alumni and friends competitive or discounted rates on a variety of exclusive services. Alumni Educational Travel, collaboratively sourced through a consortium of Canadian universities, continues to provide interested travelers with unique and content-rich explorations around the globe. The newly launched BMO McGill Alumni MasterCard, together with a robust offering of life, health, dental, auto and home insurance programs, likewise generates funds for services and events, providing preferred rates on a breadth of coverage options.

### Affinity program numbers

- 30 Alumni Educational Travel programs with 235 travellers
- 15,143 insurance policy holders



## Annual Giving

Overall numbers for McGill Fund donors and achievements broke records again this fiscal year, surpassing estimated goals by 2% and 4% respectively. The unit is particularly proud of once again defying the North America-wide trend towards decreasing donor numbers, growing McGill's donor base for a second year running! Working closely with our writers and digital experts in Communications, we were inspired by the notion of "disruption" inspired the introduction of changes to solicitation strategies, including an emphasis on visual demonstrations of impact, use of audience-appropriate language and humour, and non-traditional solicitation occasions, like Halloween. The result: our loyal donors increased their generosity and new donors entered the fold.

Strong results can also be attributed to the exponential increase in student crowdfunding projects, the growing support by students, young alumni and the campus community for the McGill24 giving day campaign, more strategic collaboration on reunion class giving between central and Faculty-based teams, and the introduction of tools developed by our Systems colleagues that facilitate corporate matching gifts. In partnership with Donor Relations, the unit likewise inducted Loyalty and Leadership donors into their respective recognition circles, and began the process of centrally repatriating all acknowledgement and stewardship correspondence to ensure timely and consistent impact-focused recognition of gifts, and a more efficient use of resources.

## Annual Giving numbers

- Total donors, 26,457
- Total dollars, \$12.5M
- First-time donors, 6,410
- Crowdfunding donors, 2,914, and dollars, \$582,647
- McGill24 donors, 4,701, new donors, 1,857, and dollars, \$2.3M
- Phonathon conversations, 40,868, and pledges, 10,284
- Matching gifts, 620, and dollars, \$96,513

## A year of winning programs, as recognized by our peers

Collaborative efforts with University Advancement colleagues led to the following recognition from our peers:

- Council for the Advancement and Support of Education: District 1 Silver Award, New Alumni Relations Program Initiatives: Welcome Class of ...
- Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education: Gold Award, Best Student and/or Young Alumni Initiative, LifeAYD Program (Life After Your Degree)

Respectfully submitted,

Gabrielle Korn  
September 19, 2019