

IMPACT

WINTER 2021

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Royal Roads
UNIVERSITY

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\$25,000 matching fund for alumni donations made before March 31.

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"We all have a story to share. How we use it can influence the greater good."

Erin Oldman paying it forward

The first award recipient of the Victoria Foundation Rachel and Ernest Fox Award.

ALUMNI APPEAL

RRUFutureForward.ca

\$25 makes a difference you can count on.

This year marks our 25th anniversary.

As we celebrate our past, it's time to look forward and re-envision the future. What does Royal Roads look like in the next 25 years and beyond?

The Future Forward alumni appeal was built to help inspire growth and innovation, create extraordinary leaders and transform lives and now we are well on our way to accomplishing that. Founding Members of our new Alumni Giving Circle have created a \$25,000 matching fund to double donations made by alumni before March 31.

To celebrate our milestone year, we're inviting you to make a gift of \$25 or more to support three vital areas of growth in our next 25 years. With over 25,000 alumni, just imagine what a gift of \$25 could do!

Visit RRUFutureForward.ca to see how your gift could make an impact. ■

FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE ALUMNI GIVING CIRCLE:

- Allan MacLauchlan
- David Hood
- Domenico Iannidinardo
- Glenda Tarnowski
- Graham Johnstone
- Jean Brown
- Madame JM Chang
- Nancy Coldham
- Oladapo Bankole
- Ramya Reddy
- Rowland Nichol
- William Archer
- Anonymous

Strong links between Taiwan & Royal Roads.

TAIWAN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HAS MUCH TO CELEBRATE, INCLUDING A 10TH ANNIVERSARY.

Royal Roads University has built a reputation for attracting students from around the world, with learners travelling—or studying remotely, both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic—from afar.

It might surprise some to learn that among the top three sources of foreign students at the university is Taiwan, an island of just 36,000 square kilometres—for reference, Vancouver Island is 31,000 sq. km—and 23.6 million people.

And just as Taiwan punches above its weight in representation among the Royal Roads student body, its alumni have an outsize loyalty to the school where they studied even though they did not attend class at the Victoria, BC campus but in a specialized program hosted at a local university.

Nowhere is that loyalty expressed more earnestly than in the Taiwan Alumni Association, which on Dec. 12 celebrated its 10th anniversary.

TAA was founded in 2010 by three passionate alumni: Walter Chu, Bright Lin and C.F. Tsai. To this day, it is one of the largest Master of Business Administration alumni associations in Taiwan, with 1,800 alumni and close to 500 Royal Roads grads who are regularly involved, says Lin, the group's chair. Since its founding, TAA members have supported Royal Roads students by creating a number of awards. In 2015 former Chair Madame J.M. Chang established the RRU Royal Scholarship to promote intercultural experiences.

The goal of the association, which is registered with and formally recognized by the Taiwan government, is for its members to network and to contribute to their communities, says Lin, 66.

The ties between the association and Royal Roads remains strong, with the group even hosting a global alumni summit in 2014. Post-pandemic, RRU leaders hope to travel to Taiwan to reconnect with Lin and other TAA members. In the meantime, Lin said the Taiwan Alumni Association is aiming to network with other Royal Roads University alumni associations around the world to establish new relationships, connect online and, one day, meet in person. ■



When this photo was taken Taiwan had gone 200 days without a locally transmitted Covid-19 case. At press, Taiwan has had only 917 cases and eight deaths since the beginning of the pandemic.

ALUMNI DONOR

For Glenda Tarnowski, life is truly full of heart.

Leadership grad establishes the first student award focused on healthcare.



Her story took shape at an early age with the cardiac-related deaths of her sister and father, resulting in her career choice and eventual work as a nurse in cardiac surgical care.

Sometimes life hits hard," says Glenda Tarnowski, Director of Professional Practice at the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta. "We have to choose to use our experiences and memories to make a difference today. Tomorrow is not promised."

As a lifelong-learner, Tarnowski enrolled at Royal Roads to complete a Master of Arts in Leadership (2017) with a Health Leadership specialization. She returned in

2019 to pursue a graduate certificate in Corporate Social Innovation (CSI).

"The MA had fuelled the fire," she says. "To be professional and to lead, you need to realize that self-development and self-care are where it begins," says Tarnowski. "You can take on any academic journey with books, but to acquire the full meaning you need to look deeply at your values and beliefs in order to awaken your authentic self."

She credits the faculty at Royal Roads for creating space for students to wrestle with their own mental models and self-awareness. "Awakening is a challenging process," she says. "But it's necessary in order to be an effective leader, to be resilient and authentic."

True to her commitment to give back in all aspects of her life, her annual donation established Royal Roads' first student award with a focus on healthcare: the Tarnowski Empowered Professional Award. The award encourages people to

use their learning in new ways to impact leadership practices in healthcare.

"I can encourage a student to realize their fullest potential," she says. "The award lets them know that what they do is valued and the financial support helps them to keep moving forward in their journey."

Tarnowski encourages Royal Roads alumni to reflect on their own contributions. "Our experience is a gift we can pay forward, so that another person has the opportunity to awaken and grow as a person and a professional," she says. "That can create a positive change for the individual and the world."

"We all have a story to share. How we use it can influence the greater good."

All donations to support healthcare professionals through the Tarnowski Empowered Professional Award are welcome at **advancement.royalroads.ca/make-your-gift-online.**

For information on how to set up your own student award, please contact Royal Roads' Advancement Team at **advancement@royalroads.ca** or call toll free **1.866.207.0080**. ■

"We all have a story to share. How we use it can influence the greater good."

"We have to choose to use our experiences and memories to make a difference today."

For Tarnowski, this is what sets apart the Royal Roads leadership program and its graduates.

LEADERSHIP AND LEGACY

March 25, 2021

On Zoom

Join us for a free, fun, informative lunch-hour session on the power of sharing your story, community leadership and exploring your goals to give back.

Email us for details and to register at advancement@royalroads.ca



AWARD RECIPIENT: ERIN OLDMAN

Paying it forward, around the world.

The first recipient of the Victoria Foundation Rachel and Ernest Fox Legacy Award.

Just before Christmas in 2016, Erin Oldman’s doctor advised her to take a break.

She’d spent most of the previous decade working as a safety officer and volunteering for organizations supporting mental health.

Ironically, the work had taken a toll on Oldman’s own health. Diagnosed with chronic stress, she took a trip to Bali.

“When the time came to board the flight home on Christmas Eve, however, I found myself reluctant to do so,” says Oldman. “I decided to forfeit the airline ticket and go back to the beach where I had spent much of the previous week.”

That decision changed her life.

On Christmas Day, she met Prof. Ken Christie, with the School of Humanitarian Studies at Royal Roads University. Christie suggested Oldman pursue a Master of Arts degree in Human Security and Peacebuilding at Royal Roads.

“I protested strongly this was a very long shot, considering I had barely attained a high school certification,” says Oldman. “Ken was persistent, and his confidence sparked something inside me that would refuse to be extinguished.”

Oldman completed her degree in 2020 and became the first recipient of the \$25,000 Victoria Foundation Rachel and Ernest Fox Legacy Award.

The Foxes left their estate to the Victoria Foundation to support a fund offering loans to post-secondary students. While it was an exciting opportunity, it also created a challenge, according to Sara Neely, the foundation’s director of philanthropic services.

“We wanted to honour the Foxes’ wishes but managing that type of fund, where money gets repaid, wasn’t something we had experience with,” says Neely.



“It seemed that fate was offering me an incredible and rare opportunity.”

In 2009, the Foundation and Royal Roads established the Rachel and Ernest Fox Loan program, the first of its kind in Canada. That same fund has made the new Victoria Foundation Rachel and Ernest Fox Legacy Award possible—and opened up new possibilities for Oldman. The award is designated for students at Royal Roads who demonstrate the capacity to make a profound change in society.

Oldman is using most of her award to establish a charity called International Humanitarian Assessments, helping people in war-torn Syria, and she has no doubt she made the right decision on that beach.

“It seemed that fate was offering me an incredible and rare opportunity,” Oldman says. “I’ve already invested in learning how to be of greater help to others. With this financial bequest in hand, now is the time to invest in others to do the same.”

Rachel and Ernest Fox would no doubt agree. ■



Take a moment

Remember to stop and smell the flowers. With social distancing in effect, we invite you to visit Hatley Park Gardens as the spring blooms begin to arrive. Complimentary access 10am-4pm daily.