

# InTouch

A Semi-Annual Newsletter

Issue No 1 - Summer 2008

## Kwantlen Polytechnic University

What an exciting time to be a part of the Kwantlen family! When the provincial government announced in April that Kwantlen would be renamed Kwantlen Polytechnic University and be granted full university status, I was thrilled. In actuality, we've been a university in every way but name for years – offering full baccalaureate degrees since 1995. As alumni, this announcement means more to us than meets the eye. The face value of our education is only as good as the current reputation of our alma mater. As Kwantlen Polytechnic University expands and improves its

programming, our credentials look better and better to potential employers and clients.

I am also pleased to announce that we will be incorporating an official Kwantlen University Alumni Association this summer. Over the next few months, we will be putting out a call for nominations to join our inaugural Board of Directors. We're looking for alumni who are keen on giving back to the institution that gave them their start. Contact the alumni office if you or someone you know is interested in joining us.

Over the last few months, our Alumni department has hosted several networking events and reunions, with more planned for the near future. This issue of *InTouch* features photos and stories about some of these hugely successful inaugural events.

I'm also pleased to announce the five recipients of this year's Distinguished Alumni Awards. Sendip, Jaswinder, Monty, Mark and Denise have accomplished a lot since graduation and I'm sure you'll be both

impressed and touched when you read their stories on the following pages. Congratulations to you all.

I hope you enjoy this long-overdue issue of *InTouch*. We'll be looking for more alumni stories for future issues, so call the Alumni office today and tell us what you're up to.




## Kwantlen Establishes Official Alumni Association



**Kwantlen**  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
ALUMNI

As part of Kwantlen's transition into a full university, an official Alumni Association is currently being established as a separate registered society with the BC Registry of Societies. Shane King (Dip Acct 1992), Chair of the Alumni Advisory Council (a sub-committee of the Kwantlen University College Foundation), is heading up the Association with the help of Kristan Ash (BBA 2003) and Glenn Pace (Dip Int Design 1992). Over the next several months, the committee will be drafting a constitution and by-laws and will begin recruiting members for the inaugural Board of Directors. The Kwantlen University Alumni Association will be responsible for all alumni events and activities, including reunions, the Distinguished Alumni awards, affinity partnerships and alumni communications. The Association will also provide two representatives to the Kwantlen Board of Governors. If you are a Kwantlen graduate and are interested in joining the Association at this very exciting time in its development, please contact the Alumni Office today for more information.

# Congratulations Distinguished Alumni

*When the call for nominations went out, we had no idea just how successful and accomplished the nominees would be. It was a difficult choice, but five individuals were chosen as our 2008 Distinguished Alumni. Here are their stories.*

## Sendip Gill



Ambitious, charming and successful, Sendip Gill is the CEO of SRS Packaging Services, a company she purchased while completing the BBA Entrepreneurial Leadership Co-op program at Kwantlen in 2005.

At 24 years old, her list of awards and recognition is extraordinary. When she received Business in Vancouver's Top 40 Under 40 Business Award, she was both the first East Indian woman as well as the youngest female to ever achieve this prestigious honour. She's also been recognized by the Surrey Board of Trade, the Surrey/Delta Immigrant Services Society, and was nominated for the

## Jaswinder Singh Sandhu



A counselor, an author, an academic and a community volunteer. Since graduating from Kwantlen in 1996 with a Diploma in Criminology, Jas Sandhu has been busy.

As a youth addictions counselor at Peace Arch Community Services, Jas works one-on-one with youth that have found themselves using drugs to escape from the realities and pressures of being a teen. He's fantastic in the local high schools, where he is often asked to speak. He can engage students effortlessly with his remarkable sense of humour, his wit and candid honesty.

With his wife, Kwantlen instructor, Kamala Nayar, Jas co-authored "The Socially Involved

## Denise Thomas

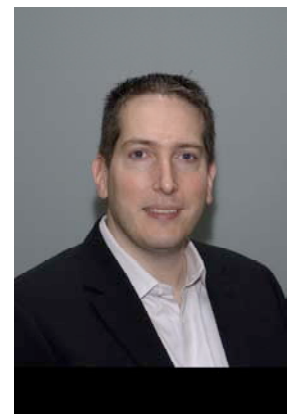


In 2001, as a Nursing student at Kwantlen, Denise travelled with her class to Nepal on a five-week nursing practice that would change her life forever.

During the trip, she sought an independent placement at Mother Teresa's Home for the Destitute and Dying – a placement that made working with marginalized populations her life and career goal.

After graduating, she was hired by St. Paul's Hospital in the HIV/AIDS Acute Care ward and was shortly made the head nurse of the Immunodeficiency Clinic. She was the 2003 recipient of the Nursing Newcomer of the Year Award and has sat on a number of committees and boards.

## Monty Sikka and Mark Catroppa



Since 2001, Mark Catroppa and Monty Sikka have grown their small mail-order pharmacy into a multi-million dollar, multi-faceted corporation. With strong roots in Surrey, they have kept their headquarters here, and currently employ over 150 people. They are currently the largest mail-order pharmacy in Canada with over a million customers world-wide. Their success in the pharmaceutical industry has allowed them to pursue real estate ventures throughout the lower mainland. Current projects in Comox, Victoria, Osoyoos and Edmonton include the construction of a Jack-Nicklaus Golf Course and Sheraton Hotel. They are entrepreneurs in every sense of the word. From humble beginnings, they have used hard work and determination to achieve success.

Their company, Pivotal Partners, is known for its philosophies on healthy living. Employees enjoy a state-of-the-art gym facility, complimentary personal training and subsidized weight-loss programming, as well as access to health and fitness experts. Known by staff for their generosity, Monty and Mark provide many other perks, including free lunches, tickets to sporting events, complimentary flights, funding for educational and career development, generous bonuses, and they are currently establishing a subsidized daycare for staff members with young children.

**Sendip, continued**

YMCA Women of Distinction Award.

Her company, based in Port Kells in Surrey, BC, has an impressive client list. Companies like Air Canada, BC Lottery Corporation, Murphy Wall Beds and BC Hydro, have put their trust in her business expertise. Within a year of purchasing the company, sales had doubled under her leadership.

"Sendip is a young woman that will continue to inspire us for many years to come," remarked Bevin Heath Ansley, Associate Dean at Kwantlen. "I nominated her for this award without hesitation. She is truly a great role model for the younger generation and has proven that nothing is impossible when you are following your dream."

Sendip is honoured to be recognized by Kwantlen. "I am grateful to Kwantlen for this award and for my wonderful experience as a student. It was my instructors who gave me the knowledge and motivation I needed to purchase and successfully run SRS Packaging."



**Jaswinder, continued**

Renunciate: Guru Nānak's Discourse to the Nāth Yogis," in 2007. The book is described as "an important work in this emerging field [of Sikh study in the English language]," by Pashaura Singh of the University of California at Riverside.

Jas was nominated for this award by Dean of Learner Resources, Cathy MacDonald. As co-founder of the BC Foundation for the Study of Sikhism, Jas was instrumental in the recent donation of \$10,000 to the library for the establishment of a collection dedicated to the study of Sikhism and the Punjab. "I was honoured to nominate Jas for this award. He has done so much for Kwantlen," remarked Cathy.

After graduating from Kwantlen, Jas went on to receive his BA from Simon Fraser University and his Masters in Education from UBC. He is an instructor at the Justice Institute of BC, has presented at numerous conferences and seminars and has published several articles.



**Denise, continued**

When given an opportunity to volunteer with the Clinton Foundation to work with HIV/AIDS patients in Lesotho, Africa, Denise jumped at the chance. She was subsequently hired by the Foundation to coordinate two initiatives in Lesotho. The mentorship program involves the training of international medical professionals to mentor local doctors and nurses in the efficient functioning of clinics, patient care and drug administration. The expert patient program trains local HIV-positive people to work with the local medical professionals in a country with a severe shortage of qualified personnel. The enormous success of both programs has drawn considerable interest from other African Nations coping with the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS.

Denise was nominated for this award by three Kwantlen instructors, who describe her as 'an angel.' "She is an incredible human being. She is so kind and genuine, people are drawn to her. I am proud and honoured to know her," said Connie Ordish, the Nursing instructor that travelled to Nepal with Denise in 2001.

Denise plans to continue her Nursing career, caring for marginalized populations in Canada and abroad.

**Monty and Mark, continued**

Their generosity also extends outside the company. Mark and his wife, Kristin, have made significant personal donations in support of Prostate Cancer research, Multiple Sclerosis and other health-related causes.

Monty, having moved to Canada from India at the age of 18, supports several international projects. He has recently set up a family foundation with his wife, Renee, in support of medical aid and education for under-privileged children in India.

Having met at Kwantlen in an Accounting class, their friendship has developed into a business partnership second-to-none.



Do you know a graduate that has done something remarkable and would like to nominate them for the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award? Nomination forms will be available online in November 2008 at [www.kwantlen.ca/alumni](http://www.kwantlen.ca/alumni).



## Fashion Alumni Reunite

On Wednesday, April 2, immediately following the 2008 Graduation Fashion Show, over 50 alumni from Kwantlen's Fashion program, gathered at the River Rock Casino for an evening of reminiscing.

Carlie Wong, a finalist on *Project Runway Canada* and 2006 graduate, hosted the event.

The event was proudly sponsored by Sandra Sung Bridal, a great friend and supporter of Kwantlen. A loyal donor, Sandra Sung has

provided Fashion students with an annual award since 2004. "We are pleased to be able to support our future designers with an award and in sponsoring this event," said Richard Wong on behalf of Sandra. "We also have mentorship opportunities for our young graduates. We're eager to assist Kwantlen grads in their fashion careers."

Faculty members were also invited to spend the evening catching up with familiar faces. One faculty member, in particular, was honoured at the event by her fellow instructors and former students. Julie Hobart retired last year after 32 years of teaching in the Fashion Program. "I wanted to do something special that would honour her

dedication to the students and the program," remarked Sharon Greeno, Fashion Instructor. "I thought that the creation of a scholarship for a Fashion student would be ideal." In total, \$10,000 was raised for the award and will be matched by the Kwantlen University College Foundation. The Julie Hobart S.O.S Award will be given to a graduating student who best exemplifies Julie's zest for learning and life.

The event was a first for the Fashion program with tentative plans to continue in the future. "Many alumni have been attending the Fashion Show for years. This is a way for them to meet up with old friends and stay connected with Kwantlen," remarked Mary Boni, Fashion Instructor.

*Sharon Greeno is selling custom designed butterfly necklaces as a fundraiser in support of the Julie Hobart S.O.S. Award. Contact her at [greenofashion@yahoo.ca](mailto:greenofashion@yahoo.ca) for more info.*



## Business as Usual for Business Grads

On May 14, more than 60 School of Business grads enjoyed an evening of good food and great networking. Held at Ravi Bar & Grill in Surrey and sponsored by Investors Group, the event

was 'business as usual' for the alumni in attendance, most of whom are graduates of the Entrepreneurial Leadership program. "The room was buzzing from the minute people started to arrive,"

remarked Shane King, Chair of the Alumni Advisory Council and Kwantlen Business graduate. "When it comes to the importance of networking, making connections and sharing information, these grads knew exactly what they were doing."

Indeed, many business cards and handshakes were exchanged as grads put into practice what they learned in business school as students.

"It was wonderful to see so many of my former students in action. They're doing really, really well out there and they aren't afraid to tell you about it," boasts Chamkaur Cheema, instructor in the Entrepreneurial Leadership program. "They're fabulous salespeople and Kwantlen ambassadors. I think all the Business instructors in attendance that evening were extremely proud."

This inaugural event will surely be an annual event from now on. "We'll have to find a bigger venue next year because once the word gets out about how enjoyable and valuable the evening was, business grads will be lined up to get in," states Shane.

More photos and information on future events can be found on the Kwantlen Entr Alumni and Kwantlen BBA Alumni Facebook groups.

## Kwantlen Polytechnic University

### At last, university status for Kwantlen

On April 22, Premier Gordon Campbell was at the Surrey Campus to announce that Kwantlen will be re-designated as a university and be re-named Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

This decision is the outcome of years of work by Kwantlen's many internal and external community members.

"As a university, our degrees will be more credible, and we'll be able to recruit more students locally, nationally, and internationally. As a university, we will be able to attract more charitable gifts and a larger share of research funding. Our new status will also help with faculty recruitment and it will improve our graduates' access to advanced degree studies," remarked Kwantlen President, Skip Triplett. "Our community members helped us achieve university status and we will not disappoint them."



The adjective 'polytechnic' speaks to the integration of theoretical and applied learning that is a distinguishing feature of many existing Kwantlen programs. The noun 'university' orients enhanced program possibilities yet to come. Together they signify what we now do and what will continue to be important in our new university. It will help define our focus and differentiate us from other post secondary institutions in British Columbia.

## New President for Kwantlen University College

Effective July 1, 2008, Kwantlen Polytechnic University will have a new President. Dr. David W. Atkinson will replace Skip Triplett who has served as President since 1999.

Dr. Atkinson's university experience includes that of President and Vice-Chancellor at Carleton University in Ottawa and prior to

that, President and Vice-Chancellor of Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario.



Dr. Atkinson says he was attracted to Kwantlen for several reasons: "It is a very exciting time to join an institution that places the needs of its students at the forefront of its activities. With outstanding programs in

trades and technology, sought-after career-focused diplomas, and a broad range of undergraduate degree programs, Kwantlen defines a new kind of comprehensiveness that responds to the needs of students, the demands of the marketplace for skilled and educated graduates, and the interests of the communities which it serves. I feel enormously privileged to continue the momentum initiated by Skip Triplett."

The extensive national search took over eight months and included a Presidential Search Advisory Committee (PSAC) that assisted Kwantlen's Board of Governors in identifying and selecting Kwantlen's next president. The PSAC represented the various constituencies found within the institution including students, faculty, staff, alumni, administrators and community members.

Dr. Atkinson has been actively involved in various community organizations and looks forward to becoming an active member of the many diverse communities that Kwantlen serves. He is married to Terry, who was Nursing Manager for Para-Med Niagara. They have twin sons - Jonathan is an engineer working in Niagara Falls and Zachary is an industrial designer working in Edmonton.

## Kwantlen Foundation Enjoys Most Successful Year

In their most successful year to-date, the Kwantlen University College Foundation tributes their fundraising success to many loyal and generous friends of the institution. "The generosity of our donors allowed us to nearly double funds raised last year," remarked Jeff Norris, Executive Director of the Foundation. "This money is being used to

fund capital projects, research initiatives and create new awards and bursaries."

In fact, over 100 new awards were set up this year. "There is nothing more powerful than seeing deserving students receive the financial support they need. When donors attend our awards ceremonies and meet the student that received their award, they're moved," explains Christine Brodie, Chair of the Foundation Board of Directors. In 2007, the Foundation disbursed one million dollars to students in scholarships and bursaries.

The Foundation also received a major donation to the Institute for Sustainable Horticulture. Jimmy Gaskin of Gaskin Farms, based in Richmond, BC, pledged \$50,000 to the project. When completed, the ISH will serve as a network hub for the diverse horticulture industry. The Foundation is grateful for the generosity and foresight of Gaskin Farms and all of our ISH supporters.



**Kwantlen**  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
FOUNDATION

The Family Campaign, which is held annually in the Fall, saw an enormous increase in money raised from faculty, staff and board members. Nearly \$100,000 was raised - an increase of 54% from 2006. The majority of employees give bi-weekly via payroll deduction. Since the Foundation matches all staff gifts, a \$20 per-pay-period contribution is a \$1000 annual award for a student in need.

At a recognition event for SPARK donors, Bruce Kehler, was inspired. As a guest of a guest, he came to the event with little knowledge of the program or Kwantlen. By the end of the evening, he had pledged \$25,000 - \$5,000 each year for the next five years. A community partnership between Kwantlen, the Surrey school district and the SPARK Foundation, the program assists at-risk high-school students with cultural, economic or social boundaries by enrolling them in post-secondary studies.

The Kwantlen University College is the principal fundraising arm of the university. With a mission to raise funds to create quality, life-long learning opportunities for Kwantlen students to achieve personal, social and career success, it is comprised of a 17-member Board of Directors and five staff.



## Horticulture Alumnus Establishes Student Award

Wayne Saliken, a 2006 graduate of the Diploma in Horticulture Technology program, and owner of Saliken Landscaping and Luscious Lawns, established an award for a Landscape Design and Installation student in 2007.

"I appreciated my time at Kwantlen and felt the need to give back to future industry leaders, especially since I personally benefited from similar scholarship help when I needed it most," remarked Wayne. "Good people are

critical to this industry because of their passion for their work and I feel it is important that we all support this next generation.

In April, Wayne presented his award for the second time to Landscaping student, Jason Kenney. Jason was very familiar with Wayne and his company - he was working for Saliken at the time.

Wayne got started in the industry in 1988 as an employee for the City. From 1990 to 1997, he successfully ran Luscious Lawns, a lawn maintenance and cutting company, slowly moving towards more lawn care services.

In 2002, he ran into a well-respected professional landscaper that inspired him to go back to school. "I enrolled in the Landscaping program at Kwantlen immediately and I never looked back," states Wayne.

Saliken Landscaping is a proud member of the BCLNA and can be reached by email at [salikenlandscaping@shaw.ca](mailto:salikenlandscaping@shaw.ca) or by phone at (604) 538-9403.

Are you interested in setting up your own award for a Kwantlen student? Do you want to make a donation in honour of a classmate or instructor? Contact the Foundation Office at (604) 599-2010 or visit [www.kwantlen.ca/foundation](http://www.kwantlen.ca/foundation).

# Staying 'In Touch' with Kwantlen

There has never been a better time to get involved at Kwantlen. With the creation of a formal Alumni Association, we are looking for **volunteers** to fill a variety of roles. From joining the Board of Directors to volunteering at reunions and events, we have something for everyone with a desire to 'give back.'

You can also expect to see more information on alumni activities and events with the semi-annual publication of *InTouch* and regular e-newsletters. To ensure we have your correct contact information, go to the Alumni website and follow the link to **update your address**.

We are eager to hear from our grads and will be featuring many of you in future issues of *InTouch*. Please get in touch with the Alumni office and **share your story** today!

Interested in starting a **class reunion** or hosting an **alumni networking event**? The Alumni office is happy to help get you started. We're currently planning reunions for Interior Design (20 years) and Trades, so stay tuned for more information.



## Alumni Association

For more information, contact:  
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