

# Rosseau Review

FALL 2022





**Extraordinary  
learning  
is in our nature.**  
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## Message from the Head of School

### The gift we share

Richard Wagamese is a favourite author of mine, as he is for many people.

He wrote about loss, something he felt acutely in his lifetime. But he also wrote about respect and humility; about the courage we find within ourselves and the strength we take from others. That's particularly true in his last book, *One Drum: Stories and Ceremonies for a Planet*. There he wrote:

*"We're all going somewhere. We can feel that. We just don't want to make the journey alone — and we never have. In the primitive times that were our common beginning, we were wanderers. All of us. Every contemporary culture shares this origin. We followed game and other food. We foraged to survive. Every night, fires were lit and everyone gathered around them. .... They felt secure from the hard dark around them. They felt safe in the company of each other. They felt belonging and worth and acceptance."*

Of course, Wagamese wasn't writing about Rosseau Lake College, not literally at least. But I think that passage speaks perfectly to what the school is.

#### "We are all going somewhere."

The range of learning here is impressive, particularly for such an intentionally small campus community. Students spend hours a day committed to academics, focusing on math, biology, science; music, language, the fine arts. There is a wonderful spectrum of engagement, a balance of traditional learning and innovative learning, where experiential learning is infused into every aspect of the curriculum. The faculty are dedicated to ensuring that the students get to where they are going. They work to ensure that they are equipped with the skills and habits of mind needed to leave our campus, when the time comes, and head off to new, exciting journeys.

#### "We just don't want to make the journey alone ..."

The heart and soul of our school has been, and will always be, our people. We see on a daily basis our team, backed by incredibly supportive and committed parents and alumni, reaching for new possibilities with the program. This leads to the elevated student experience we are known for, a transformative experience for all students that is based in an experience of belonging, worth, and acceptance.

#### "... and we never have."

RLC has a long history, with more than a half century of students coming and going. Most of them, thankfully, don't stay away for long. This past spring we had a group of alumni from the 1960s and 1970s spend a weekend on campus. They spoke with each other as if they had never left. Almost every conversation with alumni navigates down memory lane and touches on significant, impactful relationships with teachers. There are stories of outtrips, co-curriculars, house events—even stern yet required conversations—that center around RLC's shared values of community, gratitude, resilience, authenticity, and diversity. This fall we'll be hosting a group of alumni from the 1980s, and I'm sure the stories will be equally significant, impactful and cherished. As we chart our future and next steps for RLC, people—alumni, students, friends, families—will always be at our core.

Wagamese finished the passage quoted above by saying that, "wonder is the gift we share — if we allow it." He combines the capacity for wonder—something that we all, as humans, are innately given—with the need to "allow it," to be open to it, and to do something with it. Wonder and action are sides of a coin. Indeed, we cherish what we have here at RLC—a very unique place, on arguably the most beautiful natural land—while knowing there is important work to do. In the years ahead we'll

continue building on our strong foundations. We'll continue the journey toward a future of increased inclusivity, and an even greater connectedness with each other and with our land. Per our mission statement, we'll continue in the work of educating the next generation to become "conscientious stewards of our ever-changing world."

Victoria Grant is a great friend of RLC, and one of the key architects of our Seven Generations initiative. In a conversation on campus last fall she spoke about the Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund, a national organization she helped create. She said of her work there that "our philosophy is that there is brilliance and ingenuity in our communities" and that, "when we talk to our donors, we say 'come walk with us, and we'll create a better world.'" I think that's what Wagamese was talking about, too. We're talented, and we're supported; we share a capacity for wonder, and a desire for a better world. We are wanderers. We are all going somewhere. Come walk with us.

## Board of Directors appoints Scott Hayter as chair of the board

On behalf of the Rosseau Lake College Board of Directors, I am very pleased to announce the newly-appointed chair of the board, Scott Hayter.

Scott joined RLC's board on April 5, 2020. A graduate of the Royal Military College, Canada, Scott began his military career in 1976 before moving to the private school sector in 1988 as deputy head of a boys' boarding school in Niagara, Canada, where he was responsible for, among other things, fundraising and alumni affairs. Accepting increasingly senior roles over 30 years at independent schools and universities in Canada and the United Kingdom, as well as a vice president role at Wilfrid Laurier University, Scott has led fundraising initiatives totalling over \$250 million throughout his career. Scott and his wife Sue split their time between Cambridge and Port Carling.

Our past chair of the board, Christine Holmes, began her role in January, 2020, and has led our school with courage and integrity through some significant challenges. Her impressive contributions to our school and community are inspiring. While her term as chair of the board came to a close at the end of June, her membership in our RLC community will be timeless. A celebration of Christine's role as chair of the board was held on the

Saturday of Closing Day Weekend. I cannot begin to thank Christine enough for her mentorship and guidance. Her support and love for RLC has been invaluable, and I will deeply miss working officially with her.

Scott is ready for the challenge, and I am so excited to work with him as our next chair of the board. We all know Scott's enthusiasm, expertise, and experience will truly enhance RLC's forward movement.

Sincerely,



**Dave Krocker**  
Head of School



Scott Hayter

### What if?

The founders of Rosseau Lake College didn't want to build a school, they wanted to change the world.

"I had a bit of a crush on Rosseau Lake for a long time," says Principal Graham Vogt. While working at other independent schools in various roles, he says the school always exerted a pull, partially because of where it was—it's easy to harbour dreams of a life in this part of the world—though more for what it was. "The outdoor focus was appealing," he says, "and how that intersected with the delivery of the curriculum." Vogt says he and his wife, who is now also on faculty, "idealized it as a place where our own personal pedagogies, based on our own values systems, maybe would have a chance to take off and thrive. ... In the summertime, whenever we were in this area, we'd drive by, sometimes drive in, and just wonder, 'What if?'"

If there is a tradition at Rosseau Lake, that's it: a shared set of values and pedagogies, and a disposition to ask, "What if?" The school was founded by Roger Morris and Maurice East, both of whom weren't professional educators, though they believed in the power of education to change a young person's life. The founding headmaster, Ronald H. Perry, felt the same way. He was an amateur naturalist and expert canoeist. During the war he was a squadron leader in the RCAF. Perry had recently vacated his position as headmaster at Ashbury College in Ottawa, seemingly content to step away from his career in education and settle into retirement. When he learned of the concept of Rosseau Lake, he changed his mind. He would serve as head at the school for the next eight years.

Morris, East, and Perry were moved by developments in the world of education around experiential learning and were directly influenced by the work of Kurt Hahn. As an educator, Hahn founded schools in Germany and the United Kingdom, as well as three co-curricular programs that are now delivered around the world: Round Square, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and Outward Bound. All expressed what Hahn wanted education to do—or what he felt education could do better—namely, to give students a sense of purpose

and prepare them in mind, body, and intellect to go out and change the world for the better. Today there are terms for this, such as outdoor education, wholistic learning, and experiential learning. While Hahn didn't use those exact terms, every school that uses those terms to describe itself, including Rosseau Lake, is referencing the impact he had. Famously, Hahn believed "there is more in us than we know."

It's that idea that animated Morris and East to create a school. When a property came available—56 acres in a natural setting, on a lake, with some buildings in place—it was that question that tugged at their lapels: What if?

### A uniquely Canadian experience

There were 27 boys in the first cohort, and founder Roger Morris's son Bill was one of them. He remembers it as a unique time. "Part of our curriculum was helping improve the school," he says. That included everything from raking leaves to picking up brush to tending the extensive gardens. Physical exercise was an important part of daily life, and everyone was encouraged to be active. While we might describe it as outdoor education today, at the time, says Morris with a chuckle, "we just didn't know any better." He loved it. "There was plenty of time to explore, and we still had all the outbuildings of the estate. ... Some of the best times of our lives were with guys who really did become our brothers."

The school became coed in 1983, so in time there were sisters, too. It's telling that those are the words—brothers, sisters—that alumni use when talking about the relationships they made while at the school. The winters can be cold, though there's a sense of getting through them together, as a team. "The reason the school is important to us is because we feel that's part of our fabric," says Vogt. "We are a school that finds its way through challenge and helps students find their way through challenge."

It's a place to build an amount of resiliency and resolve," to ask questions, to consider the possibilities and to work together to realise them. "That is at the core. It seems to be a part of who we are."

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"The truth is though, we need Novembers, and rain. We need setbacks and failures, stress and sadness, moustaches and bad hair days, tragedy and disappointment. We need these and all other challenges, not only because they make us stronger, but also because they allow the light in the rest of our lives to shine even more brightly."

— **Robert Carreau,**  
past head of school,  
Rosseau Lake College

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# Sharing a love for the RLC trails

Our lead line, “Extraordinary learning is in our nature,” means a number of things. This is one of them.

by Brian Betsworth '90

My connection to the land at Rosseau Lake College began in February 1985. My wise mother and father, Cathy and Bill Betsworth (RLC Treasurer, '86-'90) had heard of a small school in Muskoka which might suit my academic and social growth needs. In retrospect, it probably also saved our family and their marriage to dispatch 14-year-old-me away from Toronto for a few adolescent years.

During my first winter semester at RLC, Mr. Andy Jackson (RLC Faculty 82-86) led our Grade 9 class on a cross-country ski overnight following a trail to the meadow across McCarthy Street. We built quinzees and a fire pit to camp outside. In the months following, we cross-country skied, snowshoed, and hiked this trail. I discovered that the trail loops around behind the back field, across campus, and down to a lakeside portion where runners are just feet away from the water's edge. The trail is an amazing resource!

I became intimately familiar with the trail, spending many hours enjoying the nature that RLC uniquely offers among most other Ontario schools. And I have fond memories of learning to use power tools to clear underbrush and groom the ski trail with Mr. Ray Wheldon (formerly RLC maintenance and super handyman). As an alumni, in recent years when I visit campus, I always try to run, bike, or walk the trail.

I had a number of good chats about the importance of the RLC trail with Mr. Robert Carreau. He, too, not only enjoyed the trail but spent hours and days and weekends in the spring with a chainsaw in hand clearing it and expanding the scope. His vision was to ultimately host CAIS school races and local ski loppets on the trail. Robert and I discussed the Indigenous history and connection to the RLC land and we shared beliefs and perspectives about the importance of preserving and respecting it. “The trails, the land,

the trees, indeed the spirit of the earth and the Ancestors, speak to us there.”

RLC changed my life. The lake, trees, bedrock, and the spirit of the school community connected me to the special lakeside property immediately. Though some elements of the school have changed, these natural elements and the nurturing community have not.





# Interview with Samantha Brett '04

In 2014 Samantha Brett '04 founded IronOaks Environmental Management Inc., a consulting firm addressing resource management and sustainability, and reconciling the impacts of development and colonization on Indigenous culture, communities, and the environment.

By Kim Bissonette Morton '88



**Anyone who knows you well, knows you are happiest being outside. Is that why you felt RLC was such a good fit for you?**

I always loved being outdoors exploring the local wilderness of the Muskoka and Georgian Bay regions throughout my youth. To attend RLC felt second-nature to me. It was as though I were going to school in my own backyard, immersed in the natural world, one with the changing of the seasons. RLC was a place of calm, focus, and inspiration.

**After RLC, you went on to complete an undergraduate degree in physical and environmental geography and a graduate degree in environment and management. What influenced those decisions?**

I think I saw value in that at a young age, and I knew how much I enjoyed exploring the marshes, forests, and rocky shorelines of the Muskoka region. I was always wanting to understand nature at a deeper level in order to share it with others and also to protect it for future enjoyment. While out cycling in the area I would always notice when a local trail had been impacted from use, or when development was taking place in the region at an alarming rate. I noticed the shoreline changing on Lake Rosseau as more boat traffic and cottage docks began to close in on each other. This sort of rampant development is not necessarily unique to Muskoka, although the exclusivity of it is. ... If we are going to build, we need to do it properly, sustainably, and speak for the things that can't speak for themselves (nature!).

Throughout my years of experience in the field, I have also earned my Professional Agrologist designation in both Alberta and British Columbia (this makes me a soils nerd!).

**Tell us a little bit about your company IronOaks Environmental Management?**

My company originated in 2014 when there was a downturn in the Canadian energy market and I was seeking employment. I said to myself "why wait for a job when I can create one?" So, IronOaks was born and I've been busy ever since. My services have evolved over the years. I started with offering expertise in Canadian environmental regulation and compliance in the oil and gas construction industry, to nurturing economic reconciliation with Indigenous communities in the west, and now work in the sustainability discipline. My most recent client was the Trans Mountain Expansion Project where I provided environmental compliance and pipeline construction expertise. Now I am currently working with a new client, Rise Consulting, on some exciting Indigenous engagement and sustainability projects in accordance with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business.

The IronOaks logo is an acorn, and I chose this because of the symbolism associated with the luckiest nut in the world: "from small acorns grow the mighty oak." The acorn represents good luck, abundance, new ideas, growth, strength and power, hard work and perseverance, and potential. I deliver on these qualities in the work I do with my clients.

## Where did your interest in Indigenous relations and land rights come from?

While living in the west, it became extremely evident to me that the Canadian education system and high school curriculum excludes some very real truths from Canadian history and how Indigenous people and settlers interacted upon first contact. While working in the oil and gas industry, I have been exposed more than ever to not only world-class environment best practice and expertise, but also to respectful and meaningful Indigenous consultation, relationship building, inclusion, and cultural diversity. I have always been genuinely interested in cultural anthropology, and when I lived in Ontario, I enjoyed going to Manitoulin Island to visit the Unceded Territory of the Wiikwemkoong People where they host a competitive powwow each summer. It was a life-changing and enriching experience; I highly recommend it.

There are also several Indigenous communities in the Parry Sound region. During my time at RLC, we were fortunate enough to go to school alongside some Indigenous youth. I will always remember the beautiful ceremonies and dances that I witnessed on campus from Indigenous day-students who wanted to share their culture with us. I guess that exposure stuck with me, and while living in British Columbia for 12 years I learned more about the diversity of Indigenous people in Canada than I ever had before. I think as Canadians we need to put in the time and effort to better acknowledge and understand the history of Indigenous people in this country. Truth and reconciliation are only words if not put into action, and I decided to personally commit to this journey several years ago. I have chosen to be a non-Indigenous ally so that I can show my support for Indigenous people in Canada so they can heal, prosper, and celebrate their cultural heritage with acceptance and appreciation. I encourage everyone to start a reconciliation journey.

## You were selected to participate on Boom or Bust “Millennial Entrepreneur” with Tony Clement. How did it feel to be part of this panel of entrepreneurs?

It was a lot of fun! It was a new experience for me, [and] it was a welcomed experience. I feel I was able to provide a unique perspective being the only

panelist “representing” the west. We were asked various questions about the unique challenges and benefits of the COVID-19 pandemic on business owners, and more specifically, Millennial business owners. You’ll have to watch it to see my responses; spoiler alert—Tony coined me as “The Optimist” by the end of the show!

## After the show aired, you Zoomed into an RLC Independent Study class to talk about your experiences as an entrepreneur.

Giving back to RLC is important to me not only because I am an alumni at RLC, but because I also grew up in the community of Rosseau. I want students to know about the diversity of people that have come from that place, and I want students to know that they can do anything they put their minds to. Ultimately, find your north and follow it; you can do anything in this life, but you can’t do everything. So, stay focused, have fun, and keep laughing, learning, and staying active in that beautiful place I call home!

## During your four years as an RLC student you were recognized as being a major force athletically, but best known for your skills on a bike. How has that translated to your life in the years since RLC?

I am certainly still passionate about cycling, although the amount of time I spent on a bike then has been severely compromised over the past few years with some time spent “adulting”! ... My career took hold right out of university and it took me to some far away and interesting places, often times where I couldn’t bring a bike or simply didn’t have the time to get out like I used to. That is now starting to balance out, and cycling, skiing, hiking, and fly fishing are all current outdoor physical pursuits I regularly enjoy with my family.

## By the way, congratulations on the newest addition to your family! How do you find the time to run your own business and raise a young family?

Thank you! Finding time is always challenging, however, I do it the same way my husband pursues his career. We have a great balance together and tremendous respect for each other’s time.

We support each other's goals. We have a good routine with our children (most days!), and we set reasonable expectations for ourselves and each other. Running my own business takes effort; I treat it as my 9 a.m.–5 p.m. job, even though there is also a 5 a.m.–9 a.m. and a 7 p.m.–12 midnight shift some days! To put it in perspective, I started in 2014 and I just had my business branded with a logo and started a website this year. It took me seven years to develop a logo! Thank goodness for maternity

leave, otherwise I don't know when I would have found the time to work on my company. I have been fortunate to win contracts through referrals in the industry, and for that I am truly grateful. Being a business owner has pros and cons, but so far, I've valued the flexibility that being a business owner offers me. Good things take time, and I have been really focused on doing it my way and making sure my brand is sustainable and well-established before growing beyond my current capabilities.

## A new look for the Timberwolves

In 1995–1996, the staff and students voted for “Timberwolves” as a school spirit and athletic program icon. It was the first time RLC had had a mascot or icon. According to a history buff and former business manager turned athletic director at RLC, Jim Cox, Timberwolves was the nickname of a World War I battalion from the local area. The timber wolf was also selected because it is native to the Great Lakes region and the Student Council liked the characteristics of a timber wolf. In 1995, an icon was created and used on athletic wear and school spirit banners. This year we updated the logo with a fresh look that references the core values of the school.

The shape references the talking circle or medicine wheel in indigenous culture.

The wolf is calm and howling proudly



The shape of the fur references the character of Anishinaabe art.

Gold represents the warmth of the sun and the vibrant moon.



## “Hardcore” never stops seizing new opportunities

By Tony Carlson

Everyone knew him as Hardcore

It’s a nickname that suits the adventurous spirit of Dylan Cunningham ’07 who made the most of his six years at Rosseau Lake College, jumping into each new challenge with both feet—sometimes literally.

And it still fits the man who continues to search for new opportunities to test himself and to live up to a mantra he learned at RLC—“Best of Self.”

Now a heli-skiing and back-country guide in the Rockies from his base in Canmore, Alberta, Dylan cut a wide swath through RLC both academically and in the demanding outdoor endeavours the school is known for.

He was, for instance, the first RLC student to complete the gruelling Canadian Ski Marathon, in the Gold level of the Coureurs des Bois category, a 160-km ski tour over two days, the longest and oldest Nordic ski event on the continent.

## Conquering Mount Robson

Since graduating in 2007, Dylan has continued to make a mark for himself. For example, he achieved something that only two other mortals have ever done: skiing the legendary north face of Mount Robson.

It's a steep 800-metre face, measured at a sustained 52 degrees. Compare that to the toughest runs at most ski hills around the world which typically do not exceed 45 degrees for brief distances.

"It was intense, but not terrifying," he says, drawing a line that perhaps only an experienced extreme skier can truly understand. "But fear is part of the experience, as long as it is controllable."

Hardcore indeed.

The descent was a result of years dedicated to adventuring in the mountains after extensive training. "Skiing something of that calibre had long been a dream and a process. I had self doubts, but I had felt prepared and comfortable both with the skiing and the mental process."

In the end, the descent was not so much an achievement but a deeply valued experience for Dylan. "What made it special was getting to rise up against a daunting challenge and the memories of being high up on the mountain overlooking the rest of the Rocky Mountains with the two friends who were with me on the climb to the summit."

## Guarding the glaciers

He has no hard plans to tackle other such icons, saying that while it is accurate to describe him as an extreme skier, it is not what defines him.

"I am more drawn to the inter- and intrapersonal experiences I have in my mountain environment. As a consequence, I try to be open to recognizing and seizing opportunities as they arise."

One such opportunity is his work with Guardians of the Ice, a fledgling project that draws on the expertise of artists and scientists to raise awareness

of how the swiftly melting Columbia Ice Field is a bellwether for the negative effects of climate change.

## Early start at RLC

Dylan gives RLC a great deal of credit for the choices he has made.

He came to RLC at age 11, having no real sense of what he was getting into even though the family had a cottage on Lake Rosseau.

"I stayed for a weekend the year before enrolling to try it out. I thought it was awesome then and still did six years later when I graduated. Even today, I think it is one of the best things that ever happened in my life."

Though he spent Grade 8 in the Bricks, he was a Clarkson House fixture every other year, including House Captain in Grade 11 and Head Prefect the next year. He starred at Varsity soccer, whitewater paddling, and led the Nordic ski team in his senior years. But he also hit the books to earn a place on the Excellent Standing List through his senior years.

Dylan is the first to admit he was no angel—"I was as much of a train wreck as any teenager"—but in everything he did, he lived up to his nickname.

Some of his classmates will remember, for instance, the incident of the bicycle and the bus. For some reason known only to teenaged boys, there came a day when it was decided to break a bicycle by tossing it off the roof of an old school bus parked in the back field. Dylan committed fully to the plan, so hardcore in fact that somehow his pants got caught in the bike's pedals and he fell down from the roof himself, landing on top of the bike.

He was also part of the memorable March Break class trip to Mount Kenya, where the students not only climbed to the peak, but also broke ground for a new water cistern and experienced a safari in the Great Rift valley.

"Every one of us on that trip got deathly ill. It was a spiritual journey," he says, with an enigmatic smile.

## A community of mentors

Dylan is still amazed at the commitment of the RLC faculty and staff who armed him with skills and attitudes that fuel his success today.

"The three biggest themes I took from RLC are still very important to me: love of outdoors; the adventurous spirit in everything we did; and most important how engaged and multi-talented all the staff were."

He is reluctant to single out any staff for guiding him through his formative years. “The amount of energy from everyone that went into helping students be able to do something positive with our lives was on a whole different level.”

When pressed, however, he cites a few in particular for keeping him on track: Angus Murray and Peggy Foster who led the outdoor program, Kary Hepworth who coached the Nordic team and her husband Scott who went beyond being Dylan’s formal mentor to become a close friend. He also

remembers Kim Postma for her pragmatism and compassion in looking out for students.

“The level of care they showed me was incredible. It went way beyond teaching, coaching, or mentoring and became almost familial.”

Little wonder Dylan is still a hardcore fan of RLC.

“It’s an amazing little ecosystem—a community that facilitates people to discover, embrace, and live out ‘best of self’ in a real way, expressing themselves and contributing to the world in the best possible ways.”



# “we need joyful, good people”

## A profile of Head of School Dave Krocker

By Glen Herbert



When we met one morning, instead of sitting in his office, we walked a trail that circles the campus. On the way we stopped at the teepee near the entrance to the property, which was a gift from the Wasauksing First Nation, and is maintained by members of that community. Dave Krocker noted that that morning he had hosted a staff meeting there. We ducked through the entryway and stood on either side of the firepit. After a moment he said, as much to himself as to me, “Isn’t it great?” It really is. “As I said when we were in here this morning, this is maybe the most unique faculty meeting that I’ve ever had.” The embers of the fire were still glowing, the smell of the woodsmoke still in the air. The fire had been lit for warmth—it had been a cold fall morning, snow seemingly not that far off—as well as all the other things we associate with a campfire: gathering, sharing a moment, looking at something other than screens.

The connections with the First Nation communities and the uniqueness of having such a range of learning spaces are things that Krocker visibly relishes. One of the things that he loves about RLC is how the campus disrupts expectations and, in turn, encourages new ways of thinking, inspires new ideas, and develops deep relationships. “We need to be building innovators, creators, thinkers, problem solvers, communicators,” he says. Just as important if not more so—actually, when he said this, it was clear that this was the more important end of the equation—“we need joyful, good people.”

All of those things—innovation, disruption, joy—have arguably been the defining aspects of Krocker’s career in education. When he started his career in Alberta, the province had just launched the Alberta initiative for school improvement. As a result, he and two colleagues found themselves in the

enviable position of having a million-dollar grant with which to improve education, seemingly in any way they saw fit. “We blew it up, literally,” he said, meaning that they used the grant to redesign the school and, with it, the style of academic delivery used there. They removed walls and partitions; “we combined the entire thing into an experiential humanities program.” The smaller spaces that had been there prior—no doubt set with rows of desks facing the front of the room—were repurposed to allow for collaboration, experiential learning, and a move away from chalk and talk. After the redesign, the students would meet in groups, facing each other rather than the front of the room.

It wasn’t about being different just to be different, just as true innovation isn’t just doing the opposite of what’s been done before. Rather, as Krocker describes it, it was a renegotiation of the learning experience with the intention of granting the students the skills, postures, and literacies that they would need as they moved ahead in education and in life. Times were changing; this was near the advent of the digital age. These were kids, in his estimation, that would need to work together to solve problems, rather than recalling facts or rendering data. Yes, math was important, but so was delivering your thoughts and ideas effectively while being attentive to the thoughts and ideas of others. Krocker sees that experience—having the responsibility but also the freedom to think in bold ways about education—as a defining moment in his career. “I was a brand new teacher, and that really set the appetite of thinking differently about learning and the possibilities of teaching.”

From Alberta, Krocker set off to see the world, eventually filling administrative roles at the International School in Bangkok, Lakefield College School, and the Colegio Interamericano

in Guatemala City. “I have a very strong sense of adventure, no question,” he says. “I’ve always loved that sense of, ‘I don’t know this, and I’ve got to really figure this out.’ That sense of actually not knowing the answer, of not being comfortable. I loved being pushed.” When I ask what he feels the hiring committee at RLC saw in him, he says “I think that experience and exposure to the world, that sense of the possibilities of what can be.”

On the face of it, RLC doesn’t look much like those schools in Bangkok or Guatemala City. They aren’t located on lakes in rural Ontario, for one. But what they share is that they attract students from around the world. Within them, success requires that students learn to work together, as uncomfortable as that can be at times. It’s a style of learning that RLC excels in, which was Krocker’s attraction to it initially. Getting kids from around the world managing a canoe trip, for example, can be a uniquely valuable learning experience in lots of unforeseen ways. Which is why he says, “I believe our major strategic advantage as a school is our diversity.” It grants a sense of the world, yes, but also “the challenges of a true multicultural environment.” Simply by living together over the school year the students naturally navigate cultural norms, become aware of their own and others’ sensitivities, and learn how to fit into a community that, at times, can present competing interests.

Krocker has said that leadership is about reflection and asking the right questions, “making sure that you take the time to consider all angles.” He was brought on, in part, to bring that kind of deliberate reflection. He’s notably keen to listen, and as we talk, he comments on things that he took away from a recent parent survey. The parents had praise, but also posed some hard questions, including a pressing need for additional staff housing. He says, “I love that our parents are identifying these things.”

He listens to the students as well, stopping to talk with them as he moves about the campus, and makes a point of meeting and greeting them every morning. “The best ideas come from your users,” he says. “The kids live this—they eat the food, they sit in the classrooms, they live the schedule we create—and they come up with the most amazing ideas.” This is as much about what the school is doing right as it is about things they feel could be improved. To be sure, that kind of student agency is something he holds close to his heart. He speaks of a recent survey that was created and completed

by students. He gave them the headings—campus life, academics, co-curriculars, food service—and asked them to design questions because, simply, “they know the right questions to ask.” Students were involved after the data was collected as well, gathering the feedback and using it to inform action strategies. “They have to be part of it, because they know it.”

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“I’ve always loved that sense of, ‘I don’t know this, and I’ve got to really figure this out.’ That sense of actually not knowing the answer, of not being comfortable. I loved being pushed.”

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In his time as the head of school, Krocker will oversee a major capital campaign. It will bring new facilities as well as upgrades on existing facilities. That could mean a bold departure, though Krocker’s intention is to keep things traditional and sympathetic to the school’s history and the region of the world it sits within. He anticipates growth, though he is careful with that concept, knowing that growth can mean different things. “I think the growth we’re looking for is to become even more intentional about the value of relationships.” That’s something that has defined the culture of RLC since its inception, but he knows that it shouldn’t—in fact, that it can’t—be taken for granted. He says, “the other area of absolute growth that has to happen is around sustainability and innovation, of really developing stewardship.” Environmental stewardship is part of that—it’s hard to imagine a school that lives this closely or as in tune with the natural environment—but also stewardship of the community of the school and, ultimately, all the various communities that the students will participate within as they move on in their education and their lives.

Krocker feels that the campus, both through its size and location, has a unique ability to bring all of those things forward. That the place, ultimately, plays a role. At one point during our walk we pass a copse of trees where an outdoor ed class had recently slept out in hammocks. “I don’t know of another school where, you know, when it’s going



down to two degrees at night, there are kids happily sleeping outside.” There are very few schools at which it would even be an option.

As we walk we spot some fresh deer tracks. Moose are here from time to time. Closer to the shoreline there are some buildings from the original estate which reflect the historic use of the property. Turning, there’s the view across the lake. After a pause he says, “I’ve really landed somewhere

special.” It’s clear that he’s not thinking of the natural beauty, or at least only of that. He feels that this leadership role, at this school, at this point in time, is one that his career to date has been preparing him for, if not overtly pointing toward. “This needs to be the best small school in the country,” he says. No doubt, if it isn’t already, it will be.





“ ... all of us are given a chance to have our own magic ... ”

For Judy Chen, RLC is synonymous with one thing: Opportunity.

When Judy Chen delivered her community talk to the school this spring, she spoke about how she came here four years ago from China to begin Grade 9. She arrived a bit late that year, just after opening day, so the following day she set out on a canoe trip. She'd never been in a canoe before. Days after uprooting all that she knew—friends, family, country, coming half a world away—she was in Killarney, paddling a portion of the Canadian Shield. As Graham Vogt said recently, “she didn't even blink an eye.”

Judy admitted that coming to RLC wasn't part of a grand plan. Even the country itself—studying in Canada—wasn't part of any plan. “You could say that ending up in Rosseau was an accident,” she says. “Luckily, it was one of those good ones.” At home, during her Grade 8 year, a friend was attending an RLC admittance interview. Judy asked if she could tag along, maybe curious as to what Rosseau was all about, or why her friend would consider going there. While at the interview, she heard that a spot was available, and was asked if she would like to take it. “I was not prepared at all,” she says, “but I just thought, ‘why not?’ It could just be fun.” Two months later, give or take a day or two, she was in Killarney, not blinking an eye. A door had opened, and she had walked through it.

During her talk, she said that her story is about “holding on to those great opportunities.” “If I didn't just go for it at the beginning, there is no way that I'd be sitting here today and talking with all of you.” She feels that coming to understand why Rosseau was the right place for her, even after she'd spent some time here, “is another piece in my journey. ... We have the opportunity to do stuff, like sleep out, field trips. Fun activities, like animal tracking, and so on.” She adds, “the experience that this place can provide to us is the reason why I chose to stay. And I know that there is less and less opportunity out there to do the things we do here after I graduate.”

Judy concluded her talk addressing her peers directly, saying that, “I really wish that all of you enjoy the time you spend here. And when it comes to the day when you need to leave this place, you leave with the unique experience, valuable memories, and meaningful relationships. Really just make your time here worth it. ... I believe that, here, all of us are given a chance to have our own magic, which helps us not only determine who we are, but also find the ones we really care about.”

The end of the school year is a time of goodbyes, but also of new beginnings. Next year, Judy is off again, heading to university. There will be more experiences, other journeys though she'll be taking something of RLC—the memories, the friends, the growth—with her.



# Everything begins with a relationship

During a visit this spring, Victoria Grant spoke about community, equity, and what it means to be open to the world

By Glen Herbert

“It was a really interesting meeting,” says Victoria Grant of her first time visiting Rosseau Lake College. That was 2018, and she had been introduced to the school by alumnus Kelly Carrick ’85. The meeting, with then head of school Robert Carreau, was ostensibly to discuss RLC’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report. As they spoke that day, Carreau outlined the Seven Generations program, then a nascent initiative. They also discussed strategies for introducing the principles of reconciliation into all aspects of student life.

It’s safe to say that, at the time, many Canadians likely saw reconciliation as a matter of policy: it was a means of addressing the impacts of residential schools on Indigenous communities. It was an important report, to be sure, and one which addressed the issue at a national level. Still, Grant, characteristically, brought the conversation to a more personal level. “As I said to Robert,” she recalled recently, “ask yourself: What would make an Indigenous student feel comfortable here? How can they see themselves within the school?”

On the face of it, she was asking exactly that: What would make Indigenous students feel comfortable here? The school had welcomed many from local First Nations communities and had inaugurated a bursary program to benefit more. But Grant’s larger point was that there is a need to understand the perspective of those entering an institution that wasn’t, at least initially, crafted with them in mind. It could be as simple as, say, seeing the international flags in the dining hall—they represent all nations that students had arrived from—yet absent are those of the First Nations students. The process of reconciliation, within the school community, was an opportunity to reconsider how we approach diversity, particularly here, given all the lessons that had been learned.

## Building community

As Grant demonstrated during that meeting and also through her advocacy, reconciliation isn’t only about how we address the past, or any aspect of our history, it’s also about how we approach and understand each other. You, me, the people down the street. “We all have to relearn something,” she says. For her, reconciliation is ultimately “about how we build relationships,” and she has spent decades doing exactly that. (She’s often described as a philanthropist, which she is, though during a visit to RLC she commented that “I would describe myself as a community builder.”)

Early on, she says, “I realized that part of what I was seeing was that people didn’t really have any kind of understanding or knowledge of Indigenous people.” To address that gap, Grant brought people together, literally, into a room. She hosted workshops to provide opportunities for individuals, this on a very local level, to begin the process of discovering who they are, and what they can mean to each other. The workshops offered a chance to “really talk about the history, the past, our true shared history.” When she was invested into the Order of Canada in 2021, the citation from the Governor General’s office recognized that work, noting Grant’s effort to “bridge the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous culture, businesses and communities, through ... facilitation and mediation.” Grant’s work grew, at times taking various forms. In 2020, she was instrumental in the creation of the Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund (IPRF) an Indigenous-led initiative to address urgent needs.

Since that first visit to the campus, she’s had a significant impact on curriculum and delivery at RLC. It’s not an exaggeration to say that she has been instrumental in shaping the delivery of



Victoria Grant in conversation with Sadie Turner '22 during a streaming Fireside Chat.

the Seven Generations program and, with it, the direction of the school itself. She helped draft the role of Seven Generations lead, bringing all the concepts to life. Content is a part of the program—the school has integrated indigegogy, or Indigenous ways of knowing and teaching, into the curriculum. But the way content is introduced, and learning conducted, reflects the approach that Grant has long employed in her work: bringing people together, providing a space where they can learn from each other. “The school is a whole school,” she says. From Austrian to Anishinabek, “it comes together with many different cultures. You come together [and] you learn from each other.”

“When we talk to our donors, we say ‘come walk with us, and we’ll create a better world for us,’” she said of her work with the IPRF. “Our

philosophy is there is brilliance and ingenuity in our communities.” Turning to Sadie, a student, she said, “you’re the brilliance and ingenuity. And how do I know that? Because you’re here. ... We want to support that, so that our children will do what they need to do in order to come back and build up our communities in a better way and a better place.”

It’s a process of support—making people feel comfortable being the thinnest end of the wedge—though Grant was clear that not all people need the same things. Grant made the distinction between equality—where everybody gets the same—and equity, where everyone gets what they require. “Each of my boys are incredibly different,” she said. “I have three sons. And if I treated them equally none of them would be getting what they need. But if I treat them with equity, they all get what they need. Sometimes there’s more need in some places, and we just have to figure that out to get to a place that’s fair.”

### Leading by example

It’s telling that, when parents and students talk about their experience at RLC, they often talk first about community. Marcus Schenck, father of a current student, recently said, “we were really impressed by the sense of community ... our son actually never dared to speak in front of larger groups. At RLC, he spoke to the whole school in month two.” Said another student, “I feel really accepted here, and that’s an incredible feeling.”

It is, and, as Grant knows intimately, those things don’t just happen. They require attention, care, and, ultimately, love. “That’s what that word philanthropy means,” she said. “It talks about love of humankind. That’s what philanthropy means, literally.” She admits that for many the word has come to refer to a process of donation, funding social and civic projects, “but in true philanthropy, it means to do things for the love of humankind.”

As Grant has shown in her work and by her example, that will be a lasting legacy of the process of reconciliation: relearning how we understand community, how we approach others, and how we express love of humankind. In part, it’s because of her, that those things are evident, not only in the delivery of Indigenous teaching at Rosseau Lake College, but in all teaching. Everything begins with a relationship. Grant helps build communities, and, through her friendship and inspiration, Rosseau Lake College is one of them.



### Taking education outdoors

“I remember my dad showing me on a map where it was,” says Martin Birthelmer ‘87, “and I was like ‘What’s all that stuff around it?’ And my dad says, ‘The woods.’ ”

By Glen Herbert

“It’s a lifestyle,” says Graeme Smith. “Outdoor education isn’t separate from education or environmental education. It’s all interwoven.” Smith is the outdoor education lead at Rosseau Lake College, a role he’s filled since 2017. When I ask him, “Ok, but what is it,” he says, “It’s the title of my class, for one. I teach outdoor education, which is an extension of the curriculum plan.” He does, and it is, though of course it’s more than that. “You can think of outdoor education as having three facets,” he continues, “education of the outdoors, education for the outdoors, and education in the outdoors.”

Education of the outdoors is often what people think of first. It’s learning how to canoe and applying that skill to navigate from one place to another. It’s the lessons that come from physical exertion and the satisfaction of reaching a goal. Education for the outdoors is learning about the environment, about what is happening to the ecosystems, or understanding the geography of the region by travelling across it. “We are integrating concepts of the outdoors into our classes. For example, in geography we relate it to something like maple syrup, we can tie the two concepts together and make it experiential. ... the content directly relates to the outdoor environment.”

Education in the outdoors is just that: a math teacher taking her class outside on a sunny day to learn math, or an English teacher taking his class outside to discuss a book. There are outdoor classrooms and learning spaces scattered across the campus, including a teepee and a natural amphitheatre by the water’s edge, which instructors make consistent use of. A signature spot is the Knot, a dais set on a hill overlooking the water’s edge. Windows line the indoor spaces, so even there, nature is never all that far away. It’s also a source

of a unique joy. Says an alumnus, “Almost without fail, every spare I had in the winter, I’d throw on my snow pants, my big winter coat. I’d find someone else who had spare, and we’d go sledding; we’d go build snowmen. One of my favourite pictures I have from RLC is this big snowman I built on a spare in between my math classes. We had 50 minutes, and we just went outside and built a snowman.” After a pause he adds, “Winter is awesome.”

And then there’s the lake itself. One week this past spring temperatures were unseasonably warm. It was the first hint of the summer that was on its way and the faculty decided that they’d get the entire school out on the lake, together. And they did. Students, teachers, administrators. The head of school was out there, too. Using dozens of kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddle boards—they literally used everything available—they made their way out and around the lighthouse and back. It wasn’t perhaps the most academic experience, but it was galvanizing, joyful, and energizing all the same.

### Where learning occurs

The value of all those various experiences can be hard to perceive in the moment. But again, as Smith says, outdoor education is a lifestyle. “I hate to preach to my students,” he says. “But one of the biggest issues facing the generation coming into the workforce is an inability to focus. Focus, resiliency, working effectively with others—those things that are at a higher level of skill and critical thinking that you get through being immersed in those difficult, new, out-of-your-comfort-zone situations. Which is a huge component of outdoor ed: pushing yourself out of your comfort zone. Because that’s where learning occurs.”

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**“There’s education in the outdoors and there’s education for the outdoors, and they’re both related. It includes everything from reading under a tree to mastering survival skills.”**

**—Graeme Smith**

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It’s easy, perhaps, to see outdoor education as somewhat quaint. You don’t need to use a compass, for example, to get to navigate the subway. You don’t need to know how to tie six different knots in under five minutes to do, well, anything. A cynical person might say that these aren’t the skills that employers are looking for. When I ask Smith about that, he says that anyone who thinks that is missing the point; the lasting lessons are many, a sense of accomplishment prime among them. “The fact that you can.” Little victories are victories all the same. “Even things like knot tying,” says Smith. “A lot of kids struggle with the tactile process of tying a knot. But once they learn a couple and realize the applications, it’s really simple stuff, but it becomes really important and useful to them.”

Smith says that people often focus on the hard skills, but what the working world wants, increasingly, are what he thinks of as the “warm skills”: problem solving, decision making, critical thinking. Lessons that, he feels, nature has a knack of teaching, efficiently and effectively. “You know, ‘which knot do I tie,’ or ‘it’s pouring rain, should we get off the lake or continue to our campsite.’ All those skills—it’s maybe hard to see them when they’re in the context of a canoe trip—but if you’re in a situation where you need to think quickly on your feet, those experiences, those skills, they transfer over.” The experience of triaging teaches you to think effectively; finding calm in the midst of a challenge teaches strategies for finding calm. “It’s hard to see those lessons in the moment,” he admits, “but there’s a transfer of learning. You know, six months down the road that resiliency piece becomes apparent. You’re prepping for exams, and thinking, well, nothing is as bad as it was when I was portaging through pouring rain and bugs on a canoe trip.”

And empathy. “You know, it’s pretty easy to put yourself in someone else’s shoes when you’re both miserable, struggling through a portage together. So, there is that power of going through a challenging experience with someone else, and it fosters that empathy piece. For me, personally, I want to work with colleagues who are empathetic. So, it’s developing those social skills that seem to be fading with things like social media and screen time. And I hate to be like the older generation and come down on them, but I’m now 15 years into my career of working with children, and even in that time I’ve seen a change from pre-smartphone to now.”

## That’s why we’re here

Some students enrol at RLC because they are keen, experienced outdoors people, but most aren’t. “Some students arrive and they’re just completely out of their element,” says Smith. He mentions a student who arrived never having been to Canada, or been in a canoe, and or lived in an English-speaking environment. Then, two days off the plane, she’s on an outtrip paddling across a rugged portion of the Canadian Shield.

Smith clearly loves these kinds of stories. “They’re getting on a boat for the first time that isn’t big. It’s a little boat. And it’s being propelled by something that isn’t a motor. And to see those moments really click, where they’re saying, ‘Wow, this is fun, it’s exciting!’ They’re learning new things, taking part in a completely different style of education than they’ve experienced before. That’s what I love about my job,” he says. “When you get the people who







don't think they're inclined, or feel that they're not ready for outdoor ed, who then participate and see the benefits of it when they're done."

When I ask Smith what he hopes students take away with them from their experience at RLC, he says, "I want them to get a strong academic education. That's why we're here." This is a preparatory school, after all. Students enrol to gain the skills, postures, and behaviours that will allow them to succeed in post-secondary programs, in Canada and around the world. But, as Head of School Dave Krockner has said, "if we're only preparing students for the next four years, then we aren't doing our jobs."

From the core curriculum, to character, to self-discovery, that's what outdoor education offers. By the time students graduate from the school they have earned a world-class diploma and have been accepted to the post-secondary programs of their choice. They've also spent 40 nights on outtrips and overnights, explored hundreds of kilometres of trails, and paddled some of the most beautiful lakes and rivers in the world. They've experienced struggle and success and learned something of themselves. They've used a compass and tied knots. They've seen the northern lights, and they have felt the joys of working together, closely, to solve real problems. They've learned what it means to be in the world, and to change the world. Some wonder who outdoor education is for. But at the end of the day, for Smith, it's the same as wondering who education, in and of itself, is for. It's for everyone.



# What does it mean to be well?

It's a question that all schools ask.  
They don't all arrive at the same answer.

By Glen Herbert

“There is a culture of fixing,” says Tasha Forster, with more than a hint of dismay. “It’s that idea that there is something wrong with you, or that we need to fix you.”

Her point is that, too often, mental health is considered in the way we might think of, say, a broken bone or a viral infection. “There’s a push to be happy,” she says. “But part of wellness is just being able to name and notice and understand your feelings. To know that it’s OK, and that it’s OK to have challenges.” For her, a better operational definition of wellness is “that feeling of resilience. Can you face challenges, and can you bounce back? Do you have strategies for dealing with stress?”

Forster arrived at Rosseau Lake College during the pandemic, taking the role of mental health and wellness coordinator. If there was a time when we all needed to know that it was OK to have challenges, that was certainly it. Through positions with the Peel board, as well as at international schools, she brought nearly two decades of experience of working with young people at a key time in their lives, one when they are actively growing into a sense of themselves and how they relate to the world.

Throughout her working life, Forster has sought to stretch an understanding of what wellness means, and to broaden the strategies that faculties and students use to address it. Historically, programs of care were located within designated guidance offices, often near the administration suite. The experience of entering care was the same as going to the principal’s office: you went when you were called, and otherwise hoped you weren’t. It was a recipe for issues of mental health to go unnoticed. And, sadly, many were. One of the things that drew Forster to RLC was a chance to really work contrary to that model. To offer an environment of care, to build self-awareness and wellness strategies; to help students learn to face challenges before they arise, and to build resiliency.

## “Just notice”

The culture of RLC, created over the 50 years of its life, was an obvious asset. “I love the way this place just throws its arms around people,” Forster says, and it’s clear that she’s felt that herself. The location is an asset, too. “We’re not overwhelmed by honking horns and busy streets,” which is a kind of peace that young people need, particularly now. “There’s that serious academic side, but they can actually play with each other, go exploring in the forest, build a fort. They can go for a paddle, swim, jump into the water. That playful side, I think, is so good for them.”

Forster hopes to use that as the background to establishing wellness as a habit in the students’ lives—a behaviour, not a goal—something she reinforces through a range of innovative programs and practices. Many days she leads a mindfulness exercise during the morning school-wide assembly. There she asks everyone, students to administrators, to put distractions aside for a moment to focus on their breath, to notice how they’re feeling, and, as she often says, “to do that without judging.” She wants students to learn that happiness is just one of many feelings they’ll have; it’s not a prize to be won, just as sadness isn’t a failure to rise to the moment. “Just notice your connections to those around you,” she says during a morning assembly, “and to your environment. To everything.”

## “Not everyone needs to take a deep breath”

There are larger initiatives as well. One morning we spoke—Forster’s a music teacher and an accredited yoga instructor, in addition to her role as wellness lead—she had led a yoga class on the swim dock. It’s hard to imagine a more peaceful place. It was early on a fresh spring day, the sun chasing the last of the morning mist off the lake.

“Not everyone needs to take a deep breath,” she says, “Some people, they need something else.” True enough, and, from lifting weights, to scrapbooking, the events of the day underscored that we need to have lots of tools in our tool kits. Some classes offered strategies for dealing with stress, or how to eat well, while others focused more on the self-awareness piece and finding ways to just notice.

### “How do we create a climate of caring?”

There are, of course, formal structures within the counselling program. As we talk, Forster opens a document on her laptop outlining the circle of care. It includes everything you’d expect to see, from health services, to guidance, to academic counselling, to crisis management. It’s telling that students meet with faculty mentors twice a week. That’s a lot, in the grander scheme, and you’d be hard pressed to find a school that offers as consistent a program with such a range of entry points. This is not a school where acute problems go unnoticed or unaddressed.

But there are informal structures as well, with all pointing to a desire to evaluate and re-evaluate

best practices, as indicated by a list of questions at the top of the document. “How can we ensure that students, staff, and families are aware of the supports available to them?” Others underscore a desire to look further than the obvious. “How do we collaborate with community partners?”

That they are currently doing all those things and more is no deterrent to considering how they can continue to evolve. While she might not point to it, as we talk, it’s clear that not all questions are weighted equally, and that one stands perhaps slightly ahead of the others: “How do we create a climate of caring?”

“Wellness is different for different people,” says Forster. “But I think it’s that overall sense of, ‘do you feel like you’re in a good spot?’” She feels that RLC is particularly well positioned to achieve that in all the ways “being in a good spot” can mean. It’s the environment, and the culture, and the time that students have to just stretch out a bit; to work hard, but also to notice the world around them. But it’s also because of people like Forster who, despite all the successes of the wellness program, are nevertheless prone to asking all those questions—How do we respond? How do we support? What do we have? What do we need?—and finding new, meaningful ways to answer them.



# Creating the world we wish to see

## RLC gains full membership in Round Square

By Glen Herbert

This past April, we received notification that RLC's application to become a full Global Member of Round Square was approved. Full membership brings a range of benefits, though also a formal recognition that the values of the school are aligned with those of more than 200 participating schools from around the world.

Tia Saley, instructor and the program coordinator, describes Round Square as an academic version of Outward Bound, a description that is particularly apt given that the two share the same genesis: both were established by the same person, Kurt Hahn. As an educator in the early part of the 20th century, Hahn founded schools in Germany and the United Kingdom, as well as co-curricular programs that are now delivered around the world. He famously said that, "there exists within everyone a grand passion, an outlandish thirst for adventure, a desire to live boldly and vividly through the journey of life."



Visiting the Salem School, Salem Germany, during the RSIC 2022

His programs were intended to allow opportunities for young adults to slake that thirst. Round Square is based on six pillars, which are called the IDEALS, an acronym for international understanding, democracy, environmental stewardship, adventure, leadership, and service. International conferences bring students and educators together from around the world to work toward common goals.

### Taking part in a global movement

Saley has worked with Round Square in various capacities for more than two decades, including a position on staff at Round Square itself. In 2019 she organized a delegation from RLC to attend the Round Square International Conference (RSIC) in India, the last in-person event prior to the pandemic. The theme was "The World We Wish to See," and it coincided with the 150th anniversary of Gandhi's birth. The opening speaker was Kailash Satyarthi, a child's rights activist who was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 2014. There was a performance artist and an electronic music producer. On the final day of the conference, participants took part in a three-kilometre run along with Major D.P. Singh, a retired officer of the Indian Army and a war veteran known as India's first blade runner, as he ran on prosthetic legs. ("D.P. Singh's biggest inspiration was Terry Fox, which he talked a great deal about," says Saley, noting a nice Canadian connection. "Fox's determination helped him get through his healing process and started him running.")

While in India the students had a chance to experience the natural environment as well. They went up into the mountains and went white water rafting on the Ganges. "There are some pretty memorable things you get to do as part of the experience," Saley says. More than a window on the world, it situates the students as participants within the global context. "We're in this peaceful, beautiful



calm,” Saley says of the RLC campus, “but then we get to have this flavour of all these other things as well.”

### Getting back to the world

During the pandemic, RLC students attended virtual conferences, including one this spring hosted by a school in Paris. The theme was leadership through the lens and influence of music. In May, RLC students headed to the Bahamas to take part in a Round Square reciprocal experience, with students from the Bahamas coming here in January.

The first in-person RSIC post pandemic took place this September 19-24th. The theme is “Take Less, Be More” and began with three days at Oxford

University with breakout groups hosted at schools throughout the United Kingdom for the remainder of the week, followed by post-conference tours to Germany, Scotland, and Wales. The conference focussed on what it means to be a true global citizen, to “carefully consider what we take from our environment and from the people around us,” says a student organizer. “To always put back more than we take.” The student organizers chose the theme in part because of how it extends some of the things we’ve learned through the experience of the pandemic. Being together again, face-to-face was an important aspect of the experience. They shared thoughts and perspectives on what it means to be a global citizen in today’s world.

And RLC students were there.

## Class Notes

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### 1970's

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Following our 55th Closing Ceremony, we hosted the Class of 1969-1972 on campus for their 50th anniversary celebration. We loved sharing stories from the past with this great group of alumni - **Grant Wilson '72, Jim Wallace '70, John Shelly '69, Jeff Mitchell '72, John Gehrke '72, Bill Morris '73, John East '71, Gregory Roy '73 with Greg Devenish '71 and Jonathan Marks '72** joining for cocktails on Zoom.



**Rick Somerville '70** and Maria Ciampini were married on June 18th, 2022. They love looking for photo opportunities in nature, exploring backroads, parks, hiking, and kayaking together.



**Jeff Mitchell '72** writes that “after 44 years, it is time to hang up my insurance spurs and retire. RoseAnn and I will spend more time traveling, and even more time at the cottage. In addition, we will be moving back to Windsor, where we first met.”

### 1980's

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At 6 am on April 22 **Bill Bremner '83** wrote from Singapore that, “I managed to drag Janis (my wife) out of bed, ‘C’mon! We’ll do the Hekkla. It’ll be fun!’ She groaned but, as always, was 100% game for the challenge. And off we went in the pre-dawn darkness and 95% humidity of equatorial Singapore...my old RLS crest proudly pinned to my chest. Three hours later we emerged from the jungle of Singapore’s largest national park and counted down the final 0.05 km of the 17km Hekkla. We did this in honour of Robert Carreau and all of the wonderful friends and memories I made while attending our great school.”



**Musonda Kidd '89, James Sutcliffe '86 and Jonathan Alderson '87** ran the 2022 Hekklette in Toronto, ON. The Hekkla and Hekklette raised over \$10,000 for the Robert Carreau Memorial Trail.

### 1990's

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The past year has been a whirlwind for **Jennifer Jerrett '90**. Knowing she was adopted Jennifer, has always wondered about her birth family, so the search began. Not only did she find and meet her birth mother, she also found and met 3 half siblings



on her birth father's side. She also became a Nana this year. Her grandson Owen arrived 18 days early on May 4, 2022. Everyone is happy and healthy!

## 2000's

"22 years after he walked into the first class I ever taught (Grade 12 English), I got to reunite with **Aaron Siegel '02** who is the newest volunteer at my current workplace," writes **Kim Sandwiches**. It's such a small world. Kim is the Executive Director and Senior Customer Service Coordinator at Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.



**Lindsay Morris '06** and her dog Memphis sporting the RLC scarf.

## 2010's

**Bill Zhou '13** and **Gabriel Guo '17** visited campus in the fall and caught up with Mrs Biss and some of the other staff.



Lots of young alumni at the Parry Sound pub night this spring!

Mrs Pakozdi and Mrs Biss enjoyed a campus visit from these alumni in June: **Lily Hu '19, Rachel Ding '19, Jennifer Feng '17, Dan Hseih '19, Dave Dai '17, Tina Tang '20**. So nice to have RLC family back on campus.

**Melizza ClaydenTabobondung '17** and **Mrs. Christopher** met for a coffee on a rainy morning in Halifax. Melizza graduated from Dalhousie and is currently working as a Sustainable Tourism Coordinator at the Georgian Bay Mnidoo Gamii Biosphere. We also had the pleasure of seeing Melizza on campus for the 2nd Annual Pow Wow in June.



**Courtney Tabobondung '20** also visited campus for the 2nd Annual Pow Wow. Courtney started this event as part of her RLC Discover Day Project in 2019.

In June, **Bethany Good '94** successfully defended her PhD thesis at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses on how technology and new media use among children and adolescents is addressed by and integrated into social work practice.



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