



INSPIRING NORTHERN POTENTIAL

YukonU Foundation Impact Report 2019-2020



*Your support helped break trail
on the journey to become*

*Canada's first
northern university.*



Erik Pinkerton Photography

Thank you

for your generosity this year.

“This fall, I will begin Liberal Arts studies at YukonU, focusing on writing and northern culture/social studies. I am inspired to go into this field by my community... I hope to graduate and focus on storytelling and community writing, showcasing my home, the Yukon. The entrance award will allow me to take courses that will help advance my career path straight out of secondary school. Having a dedicated university in the Yukon, run by a faculty who understand what it means to be from here, has opened so much possibility for my potential.”

Carson Kiesling

YukonU Entrance Award Recipient

**Given the small population of Yukon,
every YukonU graduate will
have the potential to create
positive change.**



Greetings

from Canada's first northern university

Some might say that the trail to university status was a journey 50 years in the making. For many, it started with the 1973 landmark document *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*, presented to Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau by Elijah Smith and a delegation of Yukon First Nation leaders. One of the report's key findings highlighted a need for a university in the Yukon. Since then, many passionate individuals and supporters like you have advocated for a Canadian university north of 60°.

At YukonU we have an exciting path before us. While we are now officially a university, the work of transitioning our day-to-day operations to reflect our new status has just begun. We're committed to realizing our full potential as Canada's first northern university.

We look forward to your continued engagement with YukonU, and with our students as they pursue their learning and career goals.

Warm regards,

Dr. Maggie Matear

*Interim President and Vice Chancellor
Yukon University*

In May 2020, Yukon College became
Yukon University

We have much to celebrate! First of all, we would like to celebrate you, our donors and partners, who have made more than 50 years of ambitions for a Canadian university north of 60° a reality.

In the 2019–20 year, support from partners like you helped Yukon University (YukonU) reach a number of significant milestones, including:



- › Our ability to be **nimble and responsive** was demonstrated by bringing instruction online when face-to-face classes were suspended in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- › YukonU **student financial awards** continue to increase in number and diversity so that barriers to higher education can be removed for deserving students.
- › The functional program for the **science building** was completed and work continues toward the 2024 opening.
- › Yukon College took the **top spot for number of paid student researchers**, compared to similarly sized institutions, in "Canada's Top 50 Research Colleges" listing in 2019.

But most importantly, your support is
empowering the leaders of tomorrow
 with skills and knowledge to build vibrant,
 healthy, and prosperous communities –
 throughout Yukon, across Canada and beyond.



Photo: archbould.com

“Many people have asked me recently if my vision for the University has been realized and I say absolutely. It is not about the name, but more about the culture we have created together. One that recognizes that every adult in Yukon and the North who has a desire to learn, must be afforded a place at the University – and a pathway. A culture that seeks excellence and also innovation focused on the North. A culture that embraces consensus, consultation and collaboration. And one that is committed to reconciliation. This was my vision and that is what I believe together we have achieved.”

Dr. Karen Barnes

Founding President and
Vice Chancellor, Yukon University
2011-2020

Your support is inspiring northern learners to

reach for their highest potential

Last year, **over 1,250 students** were enrolled in **40 programs** at Yukon University. Generous gifts from supporters like you provided **\$36,000+** in scholarships and bursaries to **41** of these students.

Your investment is creating high-quality learning experiences that are uniquely relevant to a northern context. Your support is positioning Yukon University as a leader in education that bridges Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing with Western approaches. Your gift is affording northern learners, like Lisa Hutton — whose story is shared on the next page — with a community of support that will strengthen their contributions to vibrant communities in the North.



Photo: Sheena Greenlaw

Community of support

embraces Lisa Hutton to achieve a remarkable list of "firsts"



“Higher education is a benefit to everyone but not always available due to location or cost, etc. ... the advantage of having a university right here in Yukon Territory is that it will open the doors to so many more people.”

Lisa Hutton

*Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Governance,
Yukon University*

This spring, Lisa Hutton made history as one of the first graduates, of the first "made-in-Yukon" degree, at Canada's first northern university. That's a lot of firsts but there is one more to add to this remarkable list. Lisa is the first person in her immediate family to earn a degree – but she will surely tell you that she didn't do it alone.

"The biggest impact I felt through my post-secondary learning journey was all of the support – first from my employer, as I could not have accomplished any of this without that. Then there has been the support of my family and friends; each and every doubt that I had over the years was waylaid and put to rest so that I could get on with my studies. And finally, the University and its staff, the instructors, the campus – all of it made this learning journey memorable. The advantage of a northern university located within the Yukon alleviated the stress of being away from home. The ability to take the courses online or in person, part-time or full-time, made it easier to keep working and supporting myself. The relatively small campus meant more one-on-one learning time and the advantage of being a part of a community – a community of support throughout the University from the instructors, to the learning centre, counselling services, Indigenous spaces and Elders available to seek guidance from."

Hutton, a member of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in based in Dawson City, the Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Governance with broadening her understanding of what it means to be Indigenous, "of where we came from and just how much we have had to overcome to be where we are today," she says.

"The courses offered throughout the degree have really deepened my knowledge of Indigenous issues that will continue to benefit me personally and professionally every day... The degree in Indigenous Governance provides a backdrop in understanding the importance of the trilateral self-governing agreements shared between the individual First Nations, Canada, and Yukon in the landscape of which we live. In a world of reconciliation, the degree broadens the understanding of students in the history of Indigenous peoples, their rights, and their ways of knowing and being. It is important that we have a shared understanding of the history of this great nation, which includes the history of Indigenous peoples, their struggles, and their successes."

For now, Lisa is focusing on rest and reflection to return her full energy to her work as a negotiator for the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. Her hope for other aspiring learners? She hopes that the "community of support" that embraced her is available to others so that they too may continue to develop skills and experiences to thrive in an ever-changing world.

By complementing academic learning

with opportunities for personal and individual growth, donor-supported Student Development Awards are igniting students' learning beyond YukonU

For students living and studying in Yukon, a trip to our nation's capital to meet peers from across the country and to showcase their hard work on innovative research projects to government officials and policy makers is the chance of a lifetime. The generosity of Tony Maiorino and Karen McNally toward Student Development Awards made this chance a reality for three YukonU students. As part of the February 2020 CICan (Colleges & Institutes Canada) on the Hill, the two-day "Student Showcase" saw YukonU students —Ira Mamis, Jagger Jamieson, and Mariam Jacob— present two outstanding examples of northern-inspired applied research.

Through their project, "Strong Minds Make a Strong North," Ira and Jagger created a narrative of what mental health looks like at YukonU and in the North. By incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, and providing Labrador tea and a fireplace in Ottawa, the pair spread positivity-TEA by infusing a little piece of Yukon into their presentation. Their project detailed action items that they hope to accomplish in the coming months to promote, improve, and demystify mental health and wellness at YukonU. For Jagger, the opportunity marked a tremendous personal growth opportunity – it was his first time travelling!

Also representing YukonU with her research on northern energy innovation was Mariam Jacob, Office Administration Student and Research Assistant at the YukonU Research Centre (YRC). Mariam worked with the YRC team on feasibility studies to determine if and how renewable, solar energy could be integrated into the remote community of Beaver Creek's power grid to provide stable, reliable, and safe power.

Having Yukon represented by three students, out of 50 total, at the CICan on the Hill + Student Showcase speaks volumes to YukonU students' leading work in applied research.

“Going to Ottawa for CICan on the Hill ... is one of the best memories in my academic life. I really enjoyed it. I am thankful to all who supported me to achieve this.”

Mariam Jacob

Student Development Award Recipient

“We are quite honoured to help give students at YukonU experiences that are 'par for the course' for students south of 60°. We were passionately inspired to support Mariam, Ira, and Jagger to have this opportunity.”

Tony Maiorino and Karen McNally
Student Development Award Donors



The Honourable Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry), Jagger Jamieson (YukonU Environmental Conservation Sciences Degree Student), Ira Mamis (YukonU Bachelor of Social Work Student), and the Honourable Larry Bagnell (MP for Yukon) at CICan on the Hill.



Mariam Jacobs (Research Assistant at YukonU Research Centre) with the Honourable Bardish Chagger (Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth) at CICan on the Hill.

The power of community coming together

honours Paul & Helen Flaherty's endeavour of easing students' financial burdens



Jessica Jacobs, Paul Flaherty Bursary recipient
Photo: Christian Kuntz

In 2016, while serving as Yukon College's Board of Governors Chair, Paul Flaherty, together with his wife, Helen, created a bursary to ensure opportunities for students to achieve their post-secondary educational goals.

Hearing directly from students on challenges they face in their educational journeys, Paul and Helen saw how precarious this first step of returning to post-secondary education can be. They endeavoured to support and encourage students at this initial stage through the Paul Flaherty Bursary.

When Paul passed away last November, 36 friends and six family members, Bell Canada, and NorthwesTel came together in an inspiring tribute to Paul's legacy. Their gifts increased annual funding available through the bursary nine-fold. Providing financial support for a range of needs from computer equipment and training, to one-on-one tutoring, grocery cards, or mental health and wellness support, the awards are tailored to individual student needs.

The Paul Flaherty Bursary now supports six students each year to ensure they have the means to achieve their educational goals – a powerful example of how community can come together to invest in students' potential.

Building on
**PAUL AND HELEN'S
SUPPORT FOR
YUKON UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS**
the contributions of

6 FAMILY
MEMBERS

36 FRIENDS

 NorthwesTel

Bell

increased
the number
of bursaries
to six

**More than 30 institutions, organizations,
and the McConnell Foundation join forces to**

advance post-secondary reconciliation

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission underscored the central responsibility of the education sector to reconcile relationships with Indigenous communities. The inaugural "Summer Institute: Perspectives in Reconciliation" took place August 9-15, 2019 across Yukon, hosted by Yukon College, Vancouver Island University, and the McConnell Foundation, with support from Colleges and Institutes Canada and Universities Canada.

The institute saw 31 presidents and leaders from Canadian colleges and universities identify and advance pathways for reconciliation, learn from one another's lessons and best practices, and take inspiration from each other's reconciliation journeys with the goal of accelerating and scaling up these efforts. The Summer Institute provided delegates with fresh perspectives on reconciliation, inspiration about what is possible, new relationships to support their journey, and a shining example of how, together, we can enact meaningful change.

Elder Liz Moses shares knowledge with Summer Institute participants. Photo: Alistair Maitland Photography



SOS (Support Our Students) North

rallies community support to help meet the unprecedented needs of YukonU students caused by COVID-19

On May 5, 2020, the Yukon University Foundation launched the SOS (Support Our Students) North giving circle to carry students and recent graduates into the spring and summer with food security, increased access to emergency financial assistance, as well as access to mental health and Elder on Campus supports via phone, email, or video conferencing.

"Normally, at this point in the school year, students are leaving to take on summer jobs or start a new career. This year is unprecedented. For many, part-time work has ended due to the pandemic and summer employment is unavailable, leaving students unable to meet their basic needs," said Wally Rude, Registrar and Dean of Enrolment Services at the time of the SOS North campaign launch.

Rude added that supports for students, including access to the Student Emergency Fund, usually close during the spring and summer, but there was a real need to keep the supports available this year. President Karen Barnes appealed to faculty and staff, who answered the call with over \$2K in donations on #GivingTuesdayNOW – an international day of giving and unity to meet the need caused by COVID-19. Through a donation matching challenge in partnership with the Rotary Club of Whitehorse, the community rallied to bring total campaign donations to over \$10K to directly support students in a time of dire need. Additionally, in April, United Way Yukon generously donated 50 much-needed grocery cards for YukonU students as part of their COVID Community Response.

"I feel blessed to be a beneficiary [of the Student Emergency Fund] at a challenging time of transition. Sometimes all it takes is a hand up to alleviate the accumulated stresses of school and life circumstances combined. I am really grateful for this bit of help. A wave of relief washed over me after [I found out I would receive this] kindness and support."

YukonU Student Emergency Fund Recipient



See yourself in YukonU

The Campus Store at YukonU is a warm and welcoming place for every member of the YukonU community. Not only does it have all the textbooks that students need for their courses, it also has delicious Bean North coffee, breakfast and lunch items crafted by students in the Culinary Arts program, and clothing and gift items to fit a wide variety of needs, tastes, and budgets. All of this is served up with smiles and humour by Tammi Wallace, Nisa Falkiner, and the YukonU students who work at the store part-time. They are excited to be able to share the fantastic collection of YukonU gear – created in partnership with #YukonBuilt Clothing Company – and a fun variety of YukonU accessories.

If you'd like to donate a hoodie to a deserving YukonU student, call **867 668 8840**!

If you'd like to **see yourself in YukonU** gear, you can order online at campusstore.yukonu.ca or by calling **867 668 8840**.



Realizing our potential

as Canada's first northern university is rooted in support from partners like you.

We have identified the funding priorities that will help root our future success. Building support for Phase I of the comprehensive campaign is our top priority:

TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

tools and spaces to root student success



INSPIRING NORTHERN POTENTIAL

empower the leaders of tomorrow

NORTHERN RESEARCH & INNOVATION

fostering exceptional learning opportunities

Pandemic reveals YukonU's

resilience, innovation, and commitment to caring

Faculty demonstrated their
students first

philosophy through many examples including returning from out of territory, making donations to support those in challenging circumstances, and even postponing retirement to ensure students got through to the end of semester.



When COVID forced changes to the operations of the communal kitchen in student housing, Culinary Arts students and YukonU staff and faculty served

4,848 meals
in a **39-day period**

to students and families living in Campus Housing!



The first step YukonU's Academic Support Centre (ASC) instructors took, when face-to-face classes were suspended, was reaching out to each ASC student to ensure they were OK.





End of term campfire in spring 2017 with the Elders on Campus, students, and staff. Photo: Debra-Leigh Reti and Leonard Sheldon

CIBC investment supports

wellness and wisdom

for students through Virtual Elders program

Many YukonU students face challenges to their academic success beyond course work. As part of YukonU's cultural and wellness initiatives, Elders on Campus has been highly-successful in supporting students in their learning journey. When COVID-19 forced a pause on this popular face-to-face program, as well as our May 2020 YukonU launch events, CIBC stepped up to re-direct a portion of their investment intended for the community celebration to the development of the Virtual Elders program. The re-imagined format aims to lessen the significant impacts the pandemic is having on students by re-establishing connections between students and Elders. The new program format has also brought about new opportunities to engage Elders from across Yukon, not just those located in Whitehorse, to share their wisdom through online meetings and support to students. It's a win-win.

As important, central members of Indigenous communities, Elders have a high degree of knowledge of traditional teachings, ceremony, and healing practices. An anonymous student wrote:

“*Having a way of communicating with Elders would give me a sense of guidance and belonging. As an online student, connecting with Elders has been difficult and during times of personal struggle, I would have appreciated their experience and advice.*”

YukonU Innovation & Entrepreneurship

leverages CanNor and Yukon Government investments to help Yukon businesses pivot in the midst of the global pandemic

Almost overnight, COVID-19 made it difficult, if not impossible, for many businesses to operate status quo. In April, YukonU Innovation & Entrepreneurship launched *PIVOT*. to help Yukon companies minimize the effects of COVID-19 by re-imagining aspects of their business model. Developed in partnership with and supported by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) and Government of Yukon, Department of Economic Development, *PIVOT*. provided up to three months of customized, expert support for Yukon entrepreneurs to assess, respond, and adapt their business in the vastly-changed environment spurred by the global health pandemic.

“Yukon businesses are the backbone of our communities ... [PIVOT.] put in place the tools and supports to help our businesses remain vibrant and grow even more resilient.”

Lauren Manekin Beille

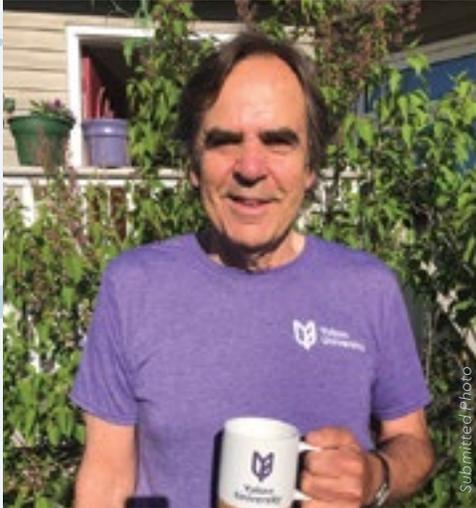
*Manager of Innovation & Entrepreneurship
YukonU*

“PIVOT. provided me with the support I needed when it felt like the whole world was changing. It gave me access to a network of talented people who quickly helped me see how to leverage my strengths to adapt and meet the challenges my company was facing. As a result, I've been able to make my business more resilient and responsive to a shifting marketplace.”

Kelly Milner

Shot in the Dark Productions





Thank you
for your support to inspire
northern potential

Dear YukonU Partners and Supporters,

WE DID IT!!

With your help and the hard work of many, many people, and in spite of a global health pandemic, Yukon College officially became Yukon University on May 19, 2020. This is a once-in-a-lifetime achievement that we can all be proud of!

As Canada's first university north of 60°, Yukon University is not only Yukon's university, but also Canada's university.

Yukon University Foundation is a group of Yukon College alumni and friends of YukonU who volunteer their time to help make YukonU a success. The Foundation Board is excited by the support of individuals, corporations, and foundations from throughout Canada who have joined with us to Inspire Northern Potential through student supports, research and innovation, and infrastructure and technology.

It has been a successful year in spite of the challenges stemming from COVID-19. We are grateful for the leadership of Dr. Karen Barnes, Founding President of YukonU, who retired at the end of June and to Joy Waters, Chair of Yukon University Foundation, who passed away in July 2020. We will miss them both.

We look forward to connecting with you and YukonU's community—locally and nationally—to celebrate our university and nurture its future success.

We thank those who have supported our work over the last year and we invite those of you who see yourself in the future of YukonU to reach out to the Foundation by contacting Kelly Proudfoot at 867 336 0109 or any of the Board members.

Rod Snow
Acting Chair
Yukon University Foundation



In Memoriam

Joy Waters

Yukon University Foundation Chair 2018-2020

In her short time as Chair of the YukonU Foundation, Joy shared her knowledge of the community and territory, as well as her vision for Yukon University. She passed away after a lengthy battle with cancer on July 27, 2020. Her gentle guidance and deep wisdom will be missed.

Yukon University Foundation Board of Directors

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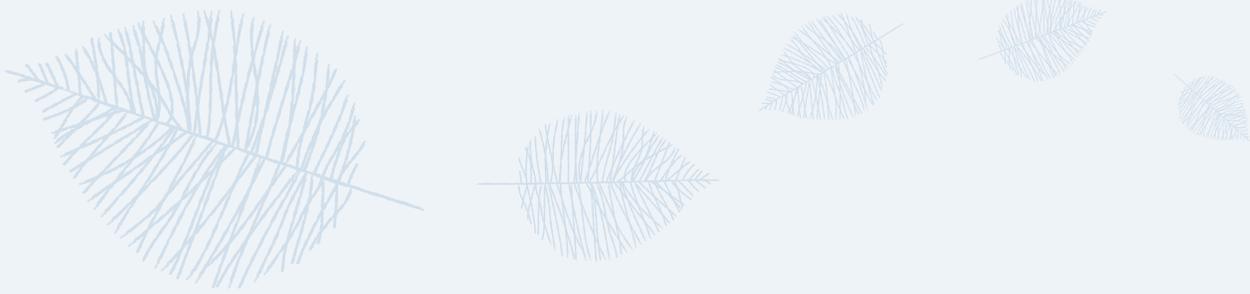
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In recognition of their generous support,
Thank you to our donors

Thank you to our community partner



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Photo: Alistair Maitland

Together, we thrive.

Thank you for supporting Yukon University this year.

For further information, please contact:

Dr. Maggie Matear

*Interim President and
Vice Chancellor*

867 668 8704
mmatear@yukonu.ca

yukonU.ca

Kelly Proudfoot

Director, Development

867 336 0109
kproudfoot@yukonu.ca

yukonufoundation.ca

Jay Dobson

Development Officer

867 332 3533
jdobson@yukonu.ca

