



SUBJECT	ALUMNI UBC ACTIVITY REPORT
SUBMITTED TO	People, Community & International Committee
MEETING DATE	June 1, 2020
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	For information only - No action requested

LEAD EXECUTIVE	Heather McCaw, Vice-President, Development and Alumni Engagement
SUPPORTED BY	Natalie Cook-Zywicki, Associate Vice-President, Alumni and Executive Director, alumni UBC

PRIOR SUBMISSIONS [Delete section that does not apply.]

This is a standing report, provided to the Board most recently on: [April 6, 2020](#); [February 5, 2020](#); [November 26, 2019](#); [September 12, 2019](#).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

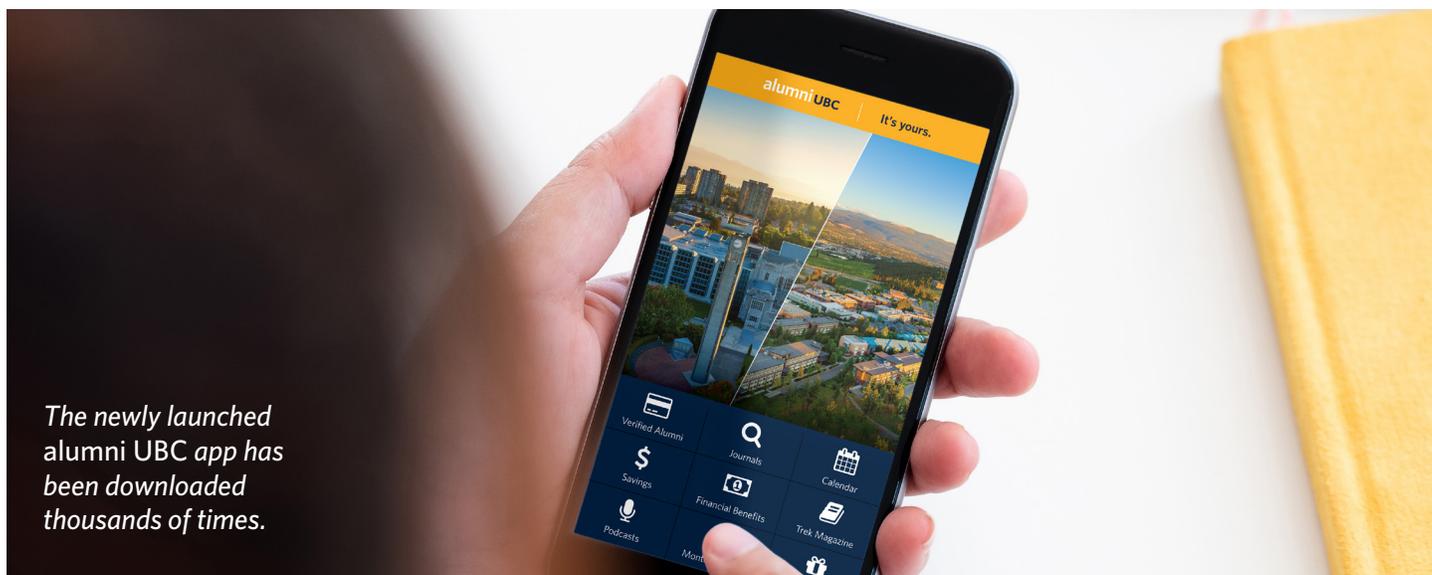
Alumni UBC is pleased to announce we exceeded our engagement targets for another year. By the end of FY20, 78,322 alumni engaged with UBC in some way. Of that, more than 26,000 engaged in ways that supported the mission of the university – this is what we refer to as deeper engagement.

In this report, we share some highlights of the last six weeks of this quarter including the launch of our new alumni app, our new COVID-19 related content for the community and our ongoing career development programming.

APPENDICES

1. *alumni UBC* Update

alumniUBC UPDATE



The newly launched alumni UBC app has been downloaded thousands of times.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALUMNI UBC / AVP, ALUMNI

“Change the world” is an expression commonly used by universities to publicly express their aspirations – and it’s true that universities are often the source of world-changing discoveries, ideas or innovations. But now the world has changed around us within the space of a few weeks, and the immediate challenge for institutions like ours is to negotiate the profound disruption of COVID-19 while still delivering on our social obligations. How can we continue to provide a richly experiential education for our students, for example, or ensure continuity for vital research? And in the case of *alumni UBC*, how do we compellingly engage our community in support of this institution’s work and provide them with relevant information and services?

Alumni based in various locations around the world regularly meet up in person to socialize and network, or to listen to and ask questions of UBC leaders and experts, and this report includes accounts of our last few in-person events. The one that sticks out for me was a well-attended after-work social in New York City in February. This alumni network had begun to flourish in recent months, and I hope that we can find effective ways to maintain this social momentum and sense of community over the coming months. I am heartened to learn that NYC’s alumni Facebook group has seen a threefold increase.

alumni UBC was already embarking upon a greatly enhanced digital strategy for our communications, and the COVID-19 lockdown has underlined the importance of finding novel uses for online platforms that allow for two-way exchanges and deliver

a powerful sense of connection and community. Some of our staff members have already contributed their digital skills to help produce, in short order, an ongoing UBC webinar series on COVID-19, featuring insights and advice from UBC experts. The first two webinars sold out with 1,400 registrants. We’ve also been collaborating on a virtual graduation experience for early June. Given the unprecedented context, it will likely be just as memorable as the in-person equivalent, but hopefully, in many ways, it will also feel just as special.

We’ve already seen an increase in the uptake of online offerings. In March, two hundred new members joined our career program’s online book club, and the launch of our long-planned app has already resulted in 4,000 downloads, with the majority of users eager to make the most of the easy access it gives them to a quality selection of online journals.

Although we look for continuity wherever we can find it, we’re also adjusting to new realities and different ways of doing business. I know this team is up to it, and we are all grateful to be working for an organization that will be part of the solution to this global challenge – not only through the advanced research it is contributing to our understanding of pandemics, but also through its social leadership and pioneering spirit.

Natalie Cook Zywicki

*Executive Director, UBC Alumni Association
AVP Alumni*

GOAL 1 | BROADER ENGAGEMENT

Ensure more alumni benefit from the collective resources of UBC and the global alumni network, and more students become familiar with *alumni UBC*.

UBC ON THE HILL

On March 9, **Santa J. Ono** and Senator **Yonah Martin**, *BEd'87*, co-hosted an evening reception at the elegant Sir John A. Macdonald Building on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Nearly 200 alumni and friends – the largest gathering in Ottawa to date – mingled over hors d'oeuvres with UBC leaders, faculty members, current students, alumni, government officials, MPs (including **The Hon. Elizabeth May**), and other friends of UBC.

A brief speaking program featured remarks from **Natalie Cook Zywicki**, **Santa J. Ono**, and **Senator Martin**, and concluded with a video that shared plenty of reasons to feel proud about UBC. The reception was presented in partnership with UBC Government Relations and the innovative UBC Women in House Program hosted by the UBC School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, which is aimed at promoting a greater level of female representation in the Canadian government. Students of the program were appreciative of this opportunity to connect with alumni and government attendees, and they made some valuable connections.



MP Elizabeth May (second from right) attended a reception on the Hill.

CAREER PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Online Book Club

The next online book for the club to explore was selected by popular vote. From three possible titles, participants selected *Educated* by Tara Westover. The first reading period started on March 19, in the midst of the pandemic. When our newsletter reminder was sent out, almost 200 more alumni joined the club, which is a partnership between *alumni UBC*, the Faculty of Arts and the Sauder School of Business. It had 1,384 members as of March 31.

Here are a few quotes from the book club's online forum:

"As a certified extrovert, working from home and social distancing is making me go a little stir crazy – so I'm really excited to discuss a common interest with all of you. I actually picked up Educated last week without awareness of this club. Seems like a sign! Looking forward to it."

"Hi everyone! My name is Sam, and I graduated with my JD in 2015. I started reading Educated a few months ago, but life got in the way and I never finished it. So I am happy to have a good excuse to help me pick it up again! Also, I appreciate the opportunity for some extra community during this weird time of social distancing."

"I am really excited to see the book club is meeting again. When I completed my Master of Educational Technology in 2012 I enjoyed meeting on campus for Alumni Book Club gatherings. Now, with everyone stuck at home or somewhere safe, we are able to connect again online to share our reading."

Engaging Employees through Career Discussions (webinar) March 3, 2020

Knowing how to increase employee engagement remains elusive for many managers at a time when more and more employees are craving career development in the workplace. This webinar featured alumna **Colleen Egli**, BA'09, who shared insights with nearly 100 participants on how they can increase employee engagement in their organization, regardless of their position.

The Art of Adaptive Leadership | Feb 26

In partnership with the UBC Sauder Executive Education program, the *alumni UBC* Careers program piloted an early morning in-person workshop at Robson Square. Just over 120 guests attended this breakfast event, which featured **Adel Gamar**, MPA, MEd, BEd, an instructor with the Sauder School of Business. The Adaptive Leadership framework is a practical toolkit that helps leaders and organizations adapt and thrive in complex and rapidly changing environments. In this interactive session, Gamar uncovered how adaptive leadership can help individuals and organizations learn anew and thrive in competitive professional contexts.

STUDENT TUITION CONTEST

The initial goal for this year's student tuition contest was to attract 5,000 entries, boosted by additional on-campus promotions, but in late March COVID-19 closed the campus. Promotion moved online. A mention in the AMS newsletter and the support of UBCO's student-related campus partners led to a strong increase in contest entries. Additionally, members of the newly formed Student Alumni Council were encouraged to share information about the contest via their networks. With two weeks remaining, we have 3,660 entries with additional Facebook ads scheduled. Last year, there were 2,400 entries.



This year's entries for the tuition contest far exceed last year's.



Sauder's Adel Gamar presents an early morning workshop at Robson Square.



COVID-19 WEBINARS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes that are taking place across the globe to slow the virus, we launched a webinar series featuring related research from UBC experts. On March 31, 900 alumni and friends participated in the first webinar: *How can we reduce COVID-19 anxiety?*

UBC experts **Dr. Steven Taylor**, *PhD'91* (professor and clinical psychologist, UBC Department of Psychiatry; author of *The Psychology of Pandemics: Preparing for the next global outbreak of infectious disease*) and **Dr. Richard Lester** (physician and associate professor in Global Health, UBC Division of Infectious Diseases; founder and scientific director, WeITel) addressed many of the more than 200 questions submitted by viewers, with the goal of helping people find ways to manage their own anxiety and help others do the same. The conversation was moderated by **Kathryn Gretsinger**, *MJ'06* (UBC Graduate School of Journalism; senior faculty advisor to the UBC president). The UBC President's Pandemic Recovery Initiative is being promoted alongside the webinars. This is a fund to provide emergency relief for students and to accelerate advanced research.



alumni UBC launched a webinar series on COVID-19, featuring UBC experts.

LAUNCH A CAREER IN CANADA

This annual networking event, dedicated to supporting the career development of UBC's international students, was held at the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre and is a partnership with the UBC Centre for Student Involvement and Careers. It attracted more than 80 students, who connected with more than 50 alumni industry professionals – many of whom were once international students themselves – to learn how they were able to make a successful transition from UBC post-graduation to the Canadian workplace.

Prior to the roundtable networking portion of the evening, alumni and students heard from a panel of graduates who shared insights about starting their careers in Canada: **Farhan Hussain**, *BA'18*, media specialist, UBC Studios; **Hamza Sader**, *BASc'13*, SlidePath engineer, WhiteWater West Industries; **Love-Ese Chile**, *PhD'17*, principal researcher and consultant, Grey to Green Sustainable Solutions; and **Aimie Lee**, *BCom'17*, SEO specialist, Lululemon. **Njoki Mburu**, a fourth year Global Resource Systems student in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems, was moderator and facilitated the networking.

ALUMNIGHTS:

Networking Social in New York City

On February 20, new regional representatives for *alumni UBC* in New York City hosted a casual networking social at Houston Hall. Despite a last-minute change in venue, more than 30 alumni gathered to socialize over drinks and appetizers at the end of the work day. New York has seen increased engagement from its alumni community in recent months, with membership in its Facebook group tripling to nearly 150 in just one month.

Toronto Raptors vs. Golden State Warriors

Last year, Canadians across the country – and expats all over the world – got behind the Toronto Raptors during their triumphant playoff run. On March 5, *alumni UBC* hosted a special alumNIGHTS event in San Francisco to cheer on the Raptors at a re-match of last year's NBA Finals championship series against the Warriors. More than 80 alumni and friends participated, including the Consul General of Canada in San Francisco, **Rana Sarkar**, who attended with his family. As well as taking in the game, guests could check out the new state-of-the-art Chase Center and also received a food & beverage gift card from UBC. This successful program was presented in partnership with the Sauder School of Business and the faculties of Applied Science and Arts.

CRITICAL DIALOGUES ON SUSTAINABILITY AND SPORT EVENTS

In recognition of the 10th anniversary of the Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, the Centre for Sport and Sustainability in the UBC School of Kinesiology hosted a public dialogue about the legacies and impacts of sport and sport events. Held on March 9, the event was open to all. The speaking panel included the lead researchers on the 2010 Olympic Games Impact study, a student representative from the UBC Sustainability Ambassadors program, a leader in the Recreation Facilities portfolio at UBC, and a long-time consultant in sport and sustainability management. The event also featured a short presentation about the Sport Event Carbon Footprint Estimator Tool, which helps sport managers assess impact.



Alumni enjoyed a Raptors game in good company.

GOAL 2 | DEEPER ENGAGEMENT

Deepen connection with key alumni, so UBC benefits from their voice, influence, skills and capacity.

ALUMNI HELP OUT WITH STUDENT ADMISSIONS PROCESS

More than 130 alumni helped during student application season by volunteering to read applicant profiles as part of UBC's Broad-based Admissions procedure. Each personal profile is read twice to ensure selected students will flourish at UBC, not only because of their high grades but also because of the experiences and ambition they bring with them. With the help of alumni volunteers, UBC is able to manage more than 35,000 applications each year.

STUDENT ALUMNI COUNCIL FILLS POSITIONS

Following extensive marketing efforts throughout January, 95 students applied for the Student Alumni Council (SAC). About half of them were interviewed via a group interview process, and 27 positions have been offered and accepted. The SAC includes student leaders from all years and seven different faculties. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are currently pursuing online training and onboarding options for them. Over the summer, SAC will focus on producing a UBC Spirit Book for distribution to all first-year students. Working in collaboration with the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers, and with Student Housing, we hope to introduce the SAC to new students and hand out the Spirit Book to them during Jump Start and Imagine in late August and early September.

ARTS CAREER CONVERSATIONS

The Faculty of Arts and the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers have been partnering on a three-part series that wrapped with "The Art of Tech" on January 23 and "Reality Bites" on March 3. The Art of Tech focused on career opportunities in the booming tech sector, where communications, critical thinking, and collaboration are all in high demand - making Arts students particularly well suited to the industry. Reality Bites involved honest conversations over dinner to help Arts students prepare for the realities of life after graduation, including discussions about career planning, financial responsibilities and more. The two events brought in a combined 29 alumni and more than 140 students keen to make professional connections.



SPOTLIGHT ON MENTAL HEALTH (FEATURING HUMBLE THE POET)

On March 10, Dean of Education **Blye Frank** hosted a talk and panel discussion on mental health, featuring Humble the Poet. A former school teacher, **Humble The Poet** (Kanwer Singh) is now a best-selling author, hip-hop artist, designer, filmmaker, influencer and public speaker in the area of education, leadership and self-development. This event had over 100 attendees, including many members of the South Asian community who were keen to learn how they (personally or through their organization) could be more involved in the faculty's work.



A Faculty of Education event on mental health was well supported in the community.

ALUMNI UBC TRAVEL CLUB

Introduction to Birding, Honduras

Nature lovers joined expert **Catherine Jardine** at the Pico Bonito Lodge in Honduras for an introductory tour on tropical birding and wildlife. Honduras is a dream destination for nature lovers, particularly those who love seeing interesting and beautiful birds. More than 700 bird species have been recorded there. This tour was a wonderful opportunity to combine a growing interest in birding with an enviable winter getaway at the luxurious lodge, which is set in 400 acres of national park wilderness. Study leader Catherine Jardine is a data analyst with Bird Studies Canada who is based at the organization's National Data Centre in Delta, BC. She has conducted field projects in remote locations around the world and is the Bander-in-Charge at the Iona Island Bird Observatory.

Galapagos by Private Yacht

UBC travellers enjoyed a remarkable expedition in the Galapagos Islands with **Dolph Schluter**, a professor of evolutionary biology and a Canada Research Chair in the Department of Zoology. Professor Schluter's early research was on the evolutionary ecology and morphology of the famous Darwin's Finches, and involved extensive periods of time in the Galapagos. The group explored several of these magical islands during an eight-day cruise on a private yacht.

Southern India with Chef Vikram Vij

alumni UBC foodies were treated to a spectacular and delicious South India Culinary Adventure with Chef **Vikram Vij**, an Indian-born Canadian chef, cookbook author, and television personality. This curated gastronomic tour offered participants full immersion in the incredible tastes of India while teaching them about regional contexts and various aspects of food preparation. They also enjoyed several interactive cooking lessons with Vij and local chefs. Vij is a passionate supporter of the sustainable food industry and has championed many causes, including the Vancouver Aquarium's Ocean Wise Sustainable Seafood Program and the UBC Farm. Vij's Kitchen is a state-of-the-art culinary facility at UBC's Faculty of Land and Food Systems that is dedicated to teaching the chefs and nutritionists of the future about ethnic food and cuisine. In recognition of his many contributions to the Vancouver community, Vij was awarded an honorary doctorate from UBC in 2016.



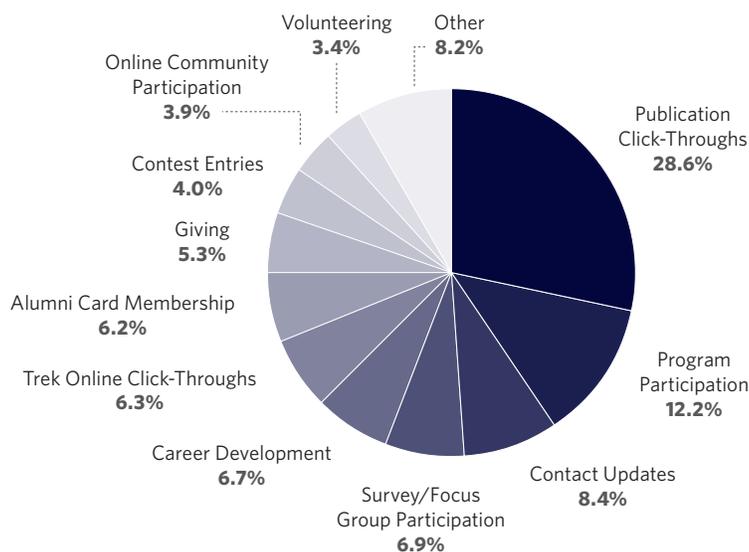
UBC travellers sampled the tastes of India on a curated culinary tour with Vikram Vij.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

ALUMNI ENGAGED BY FACULTY 2019-20

	Q4 RESULTS	ANNUAL GOAL	# PRIMARY CONTACTABLE ALUMNI	% CONTACTABLE ENGAGED	2019 RESULTS
UBC Okanagan	4,018	4,000	16,832	24%	3,609
UBC Vancouver					
Applied Science	10,174	12,000	37,704	27%	10,825
Arts	16,442	15,000	74,383	22%	14,801
Dentistry	1,420	1,400	2,903	49%	1,489
Education	9,424	8,200	45,600	21%	8,118
Forestry	2,735	2,250	5,658	48%	2,129
Land and Food Systems	2,397	2,100	8,846	27%	2,187
Medicine	6,701	6,500	15,551	43%	6,567
Peter A. Allard School of Law	4,146	4,100	9,583	43%	4,156
Pharmaceutical Sciences	1,860	2,000	5,625	33%	2,361
Sauder School of Business	9,107	9,800	34,207	27%	9,783
Science	9,800	9,500	38,091	26%	9,693
Other	98				70
Total	78,322	76,000	293,234	20%	75,788

ENGAGEMENT DRIVERS



SPRING ALUMNI PROGRAMMING

For more details please see the [calendar](#).

APRIL 6	COURSE: Intentional Career Growth <i>Online</i>	APRIL 30	WEBINAR: Career Management - facing change during COVID-19 <i>Online</i>
APR 8	WEBINAR: UBC-led study gives hope for COVID-19 treatment <i>Online</i>	MAY 5	WEBINAR: Design Your Life Pt. 1 <i>Online</i>
APRIL 21	WEBINAR: Emotional Intelligence - The Foundation for Your Career & Leadership Success <i>Online</i>	MAY 6	WEBINAR: Leverage Your Perfectionism <i>Online</i>
APRIL 22	WEBINAR: COVID-19 Web Series: <i>Family Matters: Effective Ways to Learn from Home</i> <i>Online</i>	MAY 6	EVENT: My Career Story – Recent Grads <i>Online</i>
APRIL 23	WEBINAR: COVID-19 Web Series: <i>The Economy and Sustainability. What does the Future Hold?</i> <i>Online</i>	MAY 7	WORKSHOP: Design Your Life Pt. 2 <i>Online</i>
APRIL 28	WEBINAR: Difficult Conversations <i>Online</i>	MAY 20-28	EVENT: Spring Graduation <i>Online</i>
APRIL 29	WEBINAR: COVID-19 Web Series: <i>Healthy Aging, supporting seniors in isolation</i> <i>Online</i>	MAY 28	WEBINAR: Overcoming Impostor Syndrome <i>Online</i>
		JUNE 5	EVENT: alumNIGHTS Pride <i>Online</i>

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