Planned Gift Supports Award-Winning Journalism

Gwyneth Gunn was passionate about the power of education. Student Lisa Hale shares this passion. Thanks to Gunn’s frugal living and wise investments, Hale has an opportunity to fulfill her dream of working as a full-time journalist by learning from the best at the UBC School of Journalism.

Gunn’s passion for education stemmed from her own experiences. Growing up on the Prairies during the Depression, her brother Don gave her the financial support needed to complete grades 11 and 12. She carried the value of this education with her through her move to Vancouver and for the rest of her life. Happily working at the CBC for 30 years in the accounts department, Gunn was known for her stories, her love of politics and the peace movement, her compassion and keen intellect.

Gunn wanted to help others after she died and, believing in the power of education, bequeathed monies to UBC, Langara College and Emily Carr. One of the bursaries established in her name at UBC, the Gwyn and Aileen Gunn Bursary in Journalism, provides financial support to students who may otherwise not be able to pursue their studies.

Lisa Hale is a student who truly exemplifies why Gunn wanted to bequeath money to UBC. Already an award-winning journalist, Hale is a passionate storyteller who soaks up the education she is receiving as well as giving back through her role as a Canadian Studies instructor. The money has allowed her to follow her passions, reporting on indigenous communities in BC, researching a documentary on albinism for the CBC and travelling to Brazil with the International Reporting Program to create a documentary on development pressures. Her remarkable energy for compassionately telling stories that may otherwise go unheard would surely make Gunn proud.

Hale applied for her MA because she “wanted the opportunity to have mentorship with established journalists and learn the business from people who have been in the business”. She is

continued on page 4
Dean Emeritus Creates Legacy Gift

“UBC—it's sort of been my life, you know?” jokes Professor and Dean Emeritus John McNeill, who joined the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences in 1971 and served as Dean from 1985 to 1996.

For over four decades, John’s leadership has helped distinguish the Faculty as one of Canada’s best graduate programs and research environments. To help maintain this peerless reputation, John and his wife Sharon recently announced their intention to endow UBC with a legacy gift.

John began his career in grade nine as a delivery boy at a community pharmacy. Years later, as John was completing his Pharmacy degree at the University of Alberta, his mentor, Dr. Bernie Riedel, suggested graduate school. While in the master’s program John was a TA for his wife-to-be, Sharon, who was in the Pharmacy BSc program.

A decade later, John had earned a PhD in Pharmacology from the University of Michigan and was an assistant professor at Michigan State University. Dr. Riedel, now Dean of Pharmaceutical Sciences at UBC, called John up with a life-changing offer—a new job.

Although it meant leaving behind a well-funded lab, John seized the opportunity to return to Canada and began his career at UBC.

“There were challenges,” he recalls. “Teaching, budgeting, relationships with the public, but we were successful in many ways. So, I worked through the ranks—I became Dean on January 1, 1985.”

One of John’s greatest triumphs was updating the curriculum to reflect the evolving needs of his profession. He fondly remembers leading UBC to implement the first post-baccalaureate Doctor of Pharmacy program in Canada. Remarkably, he maintained his research lab and career while Dean, and mentored numerous students—his “secondary offspring.” For his outstanding research and contributions

continued on page 4
As UBC closes in on 100 years old, there are more students than ever before who are following in the academic footsteps of previous family generations. Almost every team at UBC now has at least one member whose mother, father or grandparents also attended UBC, and increasingly, also played on the same varsity team.

So does an intergenerational experience strengthen a family’s allegiance towards their university? Former Thunderbird volleyball player Rob Brett says that it does.

Rob is a second generation alumnus who played as a middle blocker from 1979 to 1984 while studying toward a Bachelor of Commerce degree. In the fall of 1981, he met an Arts student named Vicky Peters, whom he later married. Today, they have two sons, both gifted students and athletes. Liam, who is on UBC’s rowing team, is going into his third year in the Sauder School of Business. Their older son Cary received his Bachelor of Kinesiology (’12) and is working toward his teacher certification after five years of playing the same position for UBC as his father and wearing the same jersey number. UBC has factored mightily in the lives of the Brett family, so much so that they have made plans for a family legacy to provide perpetual financial support for future Thunderbird volleyball players.

“I’m very passionate about volleyball, and specifically about UBC volleyball,” says Rob, who is now a partner and chief financial officer of Burnaby based Mott Electric GP. “Playing on the Thunderbirds for five seasons was very good for Cary too, so we decided to put some funds back into the place we came from.”

While fond memories and a sense of gratitude may have influenced the decision to create a family legacy, the trick to getting it done is as pragmatic as it gets. With his CA background, Rob has considerable expertise in optimizing finances and tax planning. Working with UBC Gift and Estate Planning, he has put a plan in place for himself, Vicky and Cary to establish a scholarship endowment for future volleyball players through gifts in their wills.

“I think that we all have a responsibility to give back in whatever way we can,” says Rob.

“The cost of tuition in my first year at UBC is the same as what it costs Cary to park his car today,” says Vicky, a retired teacher. “I can’t imagine what it must be like for students who are trying to go to university today without some form of financial assistance. They just can’t do it.”

As for what the distant future holds, no one can be certain. But in the meantime, the Brett family can enjoy the satisfaction of knowing they will leave things for future generations a little better than how they found them.

The Brett Family Legacy

As UBC closes in on 100 years old, there are more students than ever before who are following in the academic footsteps of previous family generations. Almost every team at UBC now has at least one member whose mother, father or grandparents also attended UBC, and increasingly, also played on the same varsity team.

So does an intergenerational experience strengthen a family’s allegiance towards their university? Former Thunderbird volleyball player Rob Brett says that it does.

Rob is a second generation alumnus who played as a middle blocker from 1979 to 1984 while studying toward a Bachelor of Commerce degree. In the fall of 1981, he met an Arts student named Vicky Peters, whom he later married. Today, they have two sons, both gifted students and athletes. Liam, who is on UBC’s rowing team, is going into his third year in the Sauder School of Business. Their older son Cary received his Bachelor of Kinesiology (’12) and is working toward his teacher certification after five years of playing the same position for UBC as his father and wearing the same jersey number. UBC has factored mightily in the lives of the Brett family, so much so that they have made plans for a family legacy to provide perpetual financial support for future Thunderbird volleyball players.

“I’m very passionate about volleyball, and specifically about UBC volleyball,” says Rob, who is now a partner and chief financial officer of Burnaby based Mott Electric GP. “Playing on the Thunderbirds for five seasons was very good for Cary too, so we decided to put some funds back into the place we came from.”

While fond memories and a sense of gratitude may have influenced the decision to create a family legacy, the trick to getting it done is as pragmatic as it gets. With his CA background, Rob has considerable expertise in optimizing finances and tax planning. Working with UBC Gift and Estate Planning, he has put a plan in place for himself, Vicky and Cary to establish a scholarship endowment for future volleyball players through gifts in their wills.

“I think that we all have a responsibility to give back in whatever way we can,” says Rob.

“The cost of tuition in my first year at UBC is the same as what it costs Cary to park his car today,” says Vicky, a retired teacher. “I can’t imagine what it must be like for students who are trying to go to university today without some form of financial assistance. They just can’t do it.”

As for what the distant future holds, no one can be certain. But in the meantime, the Brett family can enjoy the satisfaction of knowing they will leave things for future generations a little better than how they found them. ✦
Planned Gift Supports Award-Winning Journalism  
continued from page 1

certainly doing that at UBC, describing her course as “a constant learning opportunity: either formally through research positions or informally through the professors who are so passionate about journalism and also available. I can stop in and talk to (journalist and national radio host) Kathryn Gretsinger about radio and it doesn’t have to be about required coursework, it could just be something I’m working on. It’s awesome.”

Thankful for Gunn’s “inspiring” bequest, Hale is herself hoping to have an impact on others through both her radio work and future student support: “I hope that some day I am in a position to pass that on and encourage other young people to continue in this profession.”◆

Dean Emeritus Creates Legacy Gift  
continued from page 2

to his discipline, he was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada—the nation’s highest academic honour.

John’s decision to donate stems from strong personal conviction. “I’ve noticed a remarkable change in attitude towards university education,” he says.

“Hardly anyone went in the 1950s. Now, education and training are incredibly important.”

An existing John H. McNeill Scholarship will be joined by the Sharon and John McNeill Scholarship. The criteria will be left for the Faculty to decide.

“I’ve had a very good life here,” says John. “My wife went back to school and got her BA here. Our two daughters studied here—one has her PhD and teaches in the English department. So, we’re really a UBC family.”◆

UBC GIFT AND ESTATE PLANNING

ELIZABETH KO, MBA  
Director  
604.822.8906  
elizabeth.ko@ubc.ca

BRIAN ALTWASSER, MBA  
Associate Director,  
Estates & Trusts  
604.822.2652  
brian.altwasser@ubc.ca

CHERYL STEVENS  
Associate Director  
604.822.1232  
cheryl.stevens@ubc.ca

MURRAY LANDA, LLB  
Associate Director  
604.827.4155  
murray.landa@ubc.ca

BOBBIE DUVALL  
Associate Director  
604.822.4794  
bobbie.duvall@ubc.ca

SANDRA MIMIC, CFP  
Development Officer  
UBC Okanagan Campus  
250.807.8532  
sandra.mimic@ubc.ca

The Estate Planning Review profiles planned gift issues and considerations. It is prepared for the benefit of alumni, faculty, staff and friends of the University of British Columbia. Statements made are general in nature and are not intended as legal or tax advice. We encourage potential donors to consult with their legal and/or tax advisors before finalizing gifts to UBC.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CREATING A LEGACY, PLEASE CONTACT:

GIFT & ESTATE PLANNING  
VANCOUVER CAMPUS  
500–5950 University Boulevard  
Vancouver, BC, Canada  
V6T 1Z3  
Fax: 604.822.8151

OKANAGAN CAMPUS  
3333 University Way  
Kelowna, BC, Canada  
V1V 1V7  
Fax: 250.807.9211

heritage.circle@ubc.ca  
www.startanevolution.ca

The plastic used to mail this newsletter is biodegradable.