

# ALUMNI connections

## Close to home and around the globe

Ron Minks, EMBA'16

### SPRING 2018

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# Message from the dean

50 years of business education in Calgary



Jim Dewald, Dean, Haskayne School of Business. Photo by Kelly Hofer

**T**he stories in this issue of *Alumni Connections* showcase the impact that business education can make, not just here in Calgary, but around the globe. Through 50 years of business education in Calgary, your business school now numbers over 25,000 alumni in more than 80 countries around the world. Having a strong and robust alumni network benefits the school and you, our alumni.

You will read stories about life-changing international student experiences such as the Experiencing Japanese Business program where students visit Tokyo and Kyoto to learn about international business first-hand.

There are also great alumni stories such as Kali Taylor whose Haskayne education helped her capture a position at the United Nations in Geneva where she helps implement the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Or there's Davy Goh who opened a boutique consulting firm in Singapore to cap a 25-year career in global banks, 11 of which were as vice-president of the Development Bank of Singapore.

These stories help bring to life how our school and our students are making an impact abroad, and I am proud to share these with you. I also believe there is room for us to grow internationally, particularly in attracting more students from abroad to study at Haskayne. Traditionally, we have drawn most of our students from Canada, particularly in and around Calgary, but that may be changing. In 2017, Canadian universities saw record international enrolments and a significant spike in applications to study in Canada. The international market will play a larger role for us as we expand our programming and as our reputation continues to grow stronger.

I always enjoy hearing from alumni about how they have applied their Haskayne education in their careers and encourage you to get in touch with us to share your story.

Sincerely,  
**Jim Dewald**  
Dean, Haskayne School of Business



**We'd love to hear from you!**  
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# From Calgary to Geneva

Kali Taylor is advancing sustainability around the world

By Jennifer Allford

**I**t took Kali Taylor, BComm'10, a little time to get used to hiking in the Swiss Alps rather than the Canadian Rockies. The adjustment had nothing to do with altitude and everything to do with density. "I always joke when you're hiking in the Alps you'll run into a herd of cows and a farm house. Whereas if you're hiking in the Rockies you may run into a bear and you won't see another person the entire time."

Taylor has been hiking the Alps since moving to Geneva in 2015 to work with the United Nations. At the International Institute for Sustainable Development, she helps implement the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — 17 global goals that cover a wide range of issues including ending poverty, improving education and reducing emissions to combat climate change. Taylor, co-founder and board chair of Student Energy, a not-for-profit that encourages youth leadership in sustainability, represents the NGO viewpoint, provides expertise on systems change and innovation and helps develop partnerships for SDGs.

Living in Europe, Taylor is seeing first-hand how different areas of the world are advancing different goals. "I was born and raised in a small town in Alberta — and I adore Canada — but I love that you can take public transit everywhere and that people live more densely," she says. "I ride my bike everywhere in Geneva, rain or shine. And it's really easy to take the train between cities so you can move around without having to have an individual car."

None of that surprised Taylor. She'd been to Europe before — she went to Spain on a high school trip and spent a semester studying at the University of Limerick in Ireland, during her third year, pursuing energy management at Haskayne. But she didn't expect such a different pace. "Europe has a really great culture of work-life balance," she says. "Working long hours isn't glorified here, in fact it's looked down upon. Everything

closes at 7 p.m., so if you want to get groceries, you have to leave the office by six."

In her off hours, Taylor is "digging into French lessons" and traveling. She plans on working in Geneva for "some time" before coming back to Canada. And while there is an enormous amount of work to do around sustainability, she's optimistic.

"I learned in my early career in climate and energy that sometimes these problems seem really stuck before they start to move quickly," she says. "You really see that in climate change. When I started working in the energy industry in Calgary, solar power was 72 per cent more expensive than it is now, not even 10 years later."

She's encouraged that the SDGs have moved beyond developing nations to be embraced by Western countries as well. And she sees individuals and nations coming together to work on issues in new ways.

"It's not going to be an easy road or something that is just going to happen," says Taylor. "It's going to require trying new models, rethinking the way we work together and what types of structures we build around competition and economic systems. But I think these things start slow and then move fast."



Kali Taylor, BComm'10





## A seat at the table

### Dawn Farrell working to advance women leaders at home and abroad

In the news photo, “First daughter” Ivanka Trump is flanked by the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on one side and the president and CEO of TransAlta Corporation, Dawn Farrell, BComm'83, MA'85, on the other. They're sitting around a table along with the U.S. president and nine other high-powered executives, all women, at the first meeting of the Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders.

The council's title may be a little complicated, but its aim is simple: To better understand and encourage what it takes to get more women into

business leadership. “It's a pretty gutsy move,” Farrell told the media in February 2017 when the council was announced and the photo was taken. “I was pretty pleased to be asked to be part of that.”

Farrell is no stranger to sitting around high-powered boardroom tables. As well as leading TransAlta since 2012, she's a member of an international leaders group, the Trilateral Commission, and she sits on a number of boards, including the Chemours Company, the Conference Board of Canada and the Business Council of Canada.

She's also used to being the only woman in the boardroom, a situation that doesn't intimidate her partly, she thinks, because of her dad, an avid outdoorsman. “My dad tortured me my whole life,” she quipped at the Sticky Floors and Glass Ceilings panel during last fall's Alumni Weekend.

Save the date and see sessions like this at this year's  
**Alumni Weekend Sept. 7–9, 2018**

“I had to go fishing or shoot a bow and arrow or sit in a tree stand and wait for a bear to come by. But when I got into university and I got to the corporate world, I didn't know that I wasn't ‘invited’ to be there,” she says. “There is something about the way in which fathers interact with their daughters that gives you the confidence to be at the table and not even question your right to be there.”

Now, Farrell is doing all she can to get other women to join her at that table. From reviewing her employees' salaries every couple of years and inevitably giving the women raises to match the men, to diligently keeping an eye on the numbers of women at different levels of management in the company, Farrell is determined to bring more women into leadership.

“At TransAlta when we set out to have 50 per cent women on our board, I had to go find the women,” she says. “The headhunters bring the same list of males to choose for your board, but I brought my list of women. I could ensure that every single board in Canada had women representation because I happen to know where

all those women are.” (TransAlta's board is currently 40 per cent women. Management is 45 per cent).

She's learning more about women in leadership through some “perplexing” research coming from the cross-border council. While women graduate with great marks and get great jobs, they are less likely to go out and start big businesses. The research shows men are more comfortable raising capital and starting businesses.

Farrell suspects the council will find that confidence, or lack thereof, may be one of the factors keeping women from surging forward in business leadership. And she can't help but think back to all those hunting trips with her dad. “I talk to my guys at work, the traders and engineers, and I ask them, ‘What about your 16-year-old daughters?’” says Farrell. “What are you doing to make sure that the girls know they have more options and that they can become entrepreneurs?”

Building and keeping that confidence is the key to success for all leaders. “Never lose your confidence,” she says. “Do what you want to do.”

“

*What are you doing to make sure that girls know that they can become entrepreneurs?”*



Rebecca Sullivan, professor, Women's Studies Program;  
Dawn Farrell, CEO, TransAlta Corp.; and Manjit Mihas,  
co-founder, Minhas Breweries, Distilleries and Wineries.

# Global perspectives on energy industry coming to Calgary

By Stephane Massinon

“  
Exposure to different viewpoints is an important part of a university education and of lifelong learning.”

Exposure to challenging views can make any business more nimble and innovative

**B**y seeking out the outsider's view on your challenges, a new perspective can be gained to tackle a problem in a new and different way. For Canada's energy industry, the need for innovation and new approaches to growing challenges is imperative — not only for the health of the industry, but also the health of Canada's economy.

As people in the industry continue to seek innovative solutions to challenges such as a lack of new pipelines and the effects of climate-change policies, there is a lot to gain in hearing how others view Canada. It's this thought that makes the new Progress Energy International Speaker Series so exciting to David Milia, MBA'11, the director of Energy & Environment Initiatives at Haskayne. The series brings major figures from the energy world — ones that are internationally renowned and respected — to Calgary to share their thoughts on the global energy landscape.

“With this series, we really want to expand the Canadian industry's views by bringing in people who will challenge their thoughts and pre-conceived notions from a highly competent standpoint of global experience,” he says.

The first Progress Energy International Speaker Series was a significant success, as former U.S. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz drew a sold out crowd downtown to share his perspective on energy security, climate change and the need for innovation in the energy industry.

The annual series — made possible thanks to a \$1-million gift from Progress Energy — will bring major international energy experts to Calgary for the next four years.

“We are excited to partner with the Haskayne School of Business in bringing influential, visionary speakers from the world stage to Calgary,” said President and CEO of Progress Energy Mark Fitzgerald.

“Exposure to different viewpoints is an important part of a university education and of

lifelong learning. The Progress Energy International Speaker Series is a great fit for us. We are a company that values diversity of thought and believes it makes a business stronger.”

Milia says the feedback from attendees to the inaugural event was overwhelmingly positive. For 2018, he is aiming to double the size of the event to accommodate more than 700 people and make the annual speech a hotly anticipated event for the industry. After Mr. Moniz's speech, Milia says audience members indicated a strong desire for the next speaker to bring a perspective from outside of North America. Milia says this year's speaker — and indeed the speakers for all future events — will always bring a unique perspective.



David Milia, MBA'11; Ernst Moniz; Jim Dewald, Dean, Haskayne School of Business. Photo by Kelly Hofer



“  
Strategic  
analysis we did  
at Haskayne was  
extremely relevant  
to this situation.”

# Enoch Cree Nation's innovative financing

## Indigenous Executive MBA graduate helping Enoch Cree Nation set up innovative financing

By Doug Ferguson

As it builds on the success of one of the largest developments of its kind in Canada, a First Nation community near Edmonton is seeking to gain more control over its financial destiny.

“A normal business would be able to go to a bank and get a long-term loan that would be 10 or 20 years in term, whereas with First Nations, the maximum term is a five-year loan at a higher rate of interest,” says Ron Minks, EMBA'16, chief operations officer of the Enoch Cree Nation.

A leader in First Nations economic development, Enoch was the first in Canada to successfully negotiate a multi-million-dollar bond out of the U.S. that attracted both Canadian and American

investors, says Minks. It enabled Enoch to gain full control of the River Cree Resort and Casino in 2014, buying out Las Vegas-based minority partner Paragon Gaming less than eight years into what was originally a 25-year agreement to manage the project.

One of the largest of its kind in Canada, the \$186-million development opened in 2006 on the reserve. It ranges from a 249-room Marriott hotel to two NHL-sized hockey rinks, all located about an 11-minute drive from West Edmonton Mall.

Such successes have meant overcoming obstacles unknown to non-indigenous entrepreneurs, says Minks, a member of Enoch who earned an Executive MBA with a distinction in finance in 2016 at the Haskayne School of Business.

First Nations land can't be used as collateral for loans because it is held in common for all band members by the federal government, meaning it can't be sold to repay debts, he says. Along with shorter terms for loans and higher interest rates, “it makes it very difficult to fund economic development initiatives,” says Minks.

Enoch is trying to set up proper financing for its debt structure, he says. “I remember how we did strategic analysis and modelling at Haskayne, and it was extremely relevant to this situation,” he says. “Prior to taking the MBA program, I would not have even known that was something to consider.”

Enoch helped establish the Alberta Indian Investment Corp. on the reserve in 1987 to provide loan and equity financing to indigenous entrepreneurs across the province. Helping such people realize their dreams is a vital part of First Nation efforts to gain more sovereignty, says Minks.

Enoch recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the City of Edmonton to jointly promote economic development. “We have identified four key areas of economic development that we want to work together on,” says Minks, adding that these include cultural and other tourism, green energy, housing, and joint sports and recreation.

Enoch is also looking far outside Edmonton to promote economic development. It is considering working with a Japanese entrepreneur to grow a food garnish called tonburi for sale in Japan, says Minks.

Also known as “vegetarian caviar,” tonburi consists of the processed seeds of a type of ragweed whose cultivation as a specialty crop is declining in Japan due to farmer retirement, he says. The proposal came about through a chance meeting during an international study trip to Tokyo by Minks as part of his MBA training.

Enoch is considering using some of its land to test whether it can commercially grow the plants. The proposal is currently being negotiated with the federal government to allay concerns about such plants, which are regarded as weeds in Canada.

Minks says the opportunity is only part of what he gained from the MBA program. “It was fantastic,” he says about his education at Haskayne. “It was very difficult, but it was extremely rewarding.”

Alberta Haskayne Executive MBA

[haskayne.ucalgary.ca/programs/emba/Alberta-Haskayne-EMBA](http://haskayne.ucalgary.ca/programs/emba/Alberta-Haskayne-EMBA)



# Experiencing Japan to understand international business

By Jennifer Allford

**T**he first time Leighton Wilks, BA'00, MBA'07, went to Japan he was blown away by the work ethic and surprised to learn high schools don't hire janitors — students clean the buildings. Wilks, an organizational behaviour instructor at Haskayne, was teaching English and learning all things Japanese.

"I came to see how understanding cultural differences can have a huge impact on how we do business or interact with people in foreign places," he says. "So I came back and did a thesis-based MBA program at Haskayne because I wanted to look specifically at cross-cultural management."

Later, during the final stages of his PhD, Wilks joined the faculty and was mentored by Associate Professor Teri Bryant. She was developing a program to take students to Japan to see cultural differences first-hand. When she retired, the two continued to work together to make the Experiencing Japanese Business program a reality. Last year, Wilks and Bryant accompanied 22 students to Japan. In 2018, they'll take 24.

"It's an eye-opening opportunity," says Wilks. "We spend about two weeks in Tokyo and a week in Kyoto. We do factory tours, we meet with universities, and the rest of the time we're exploring Japan and experiencing the culture."



Leighton Wilks (BA'00, MBA'07)

Before they go, students take a block-week course to get the knowledge they need to help understand and interpret Japan. Once they arrive, they learn a host of "unwritten rules" about doing business in the country. While no one gets too upset if a Westerner doesn't present a business card with two hands or bow properly, other communication is much more important. For example knowing that "maybe" often means "no."

"In a lot of Asian cultures there's an unwillingness to say 'no' to people because it causes a loss of face, it's a little bit embarrassing," says Wilks. "So often they will be more indirect in communication, saying, 'That will be difficult,' or, 'Maybe we can do that.' People who understand the culture understand that's a hard 'no.'"

Harrison Chen, a final-year business technology management student, was on the first trip to Japan. He'd heard a lot about the country's strict social order and the importance of showing respect. "Once you start to walk the streets you see how it actually permeates the day-to-day level," he says. "People walk on certain parts of the sidewalk differently, they walk up the stairs

differently, even something as simple as eating is very different."

The knowledge gained on the streets of Japan will help students understand cultures in other countries too. While the program focuses on Japanese business practices and exposes students to business and career opportunities in that country, it also aims to develop "cross-cultural intelligence" to develop a career anywhere in the world.

"The business world is changing so rapidly," says Chen, who works part-time at TransCanada Pipelines. "Just having an understanding and awareness of different cultures and how you might be able to integrate with potential business partners is really important. From a personal standpoint, being able to understand how people from other parts of the world operate is a really good exercise."

Wilks received a University of Calgary Internationalization Achievement Award for his contributions as an academic staff member to internationalization activities at Haskayne including his role in making the Experiencing Japanese Business program a reality.

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International business education:  
Experiencing Japanese Business 2017 trip



# Respect and Admiration of various cultures help you succeed

By Jennifer Allford

Since studying accounting at UCalgary three decades ago, Davy Goh, BComm'87, has built a brilliant career understanding his clients' business processes like sales cycles, pricing grids and channel distribution for everything from bitcoin to bitumen



**Davy Goh**  
BComm'87



**Josh Methot**  
BComm'09



**Sarine Mustapha**  
BComm'00



**Alexandra Nuth**  
BComm'11



**Sam Effah**  
BComm'14



**Kai Hochhausen**  
BA'05, MBA'14

**B**ut the global banker learned one of his most important business lessons within days of arriving in Calgary from Singapore in the 1980s. The culture of doing business in various countries. “In Asia we’ll say ‘You smell nice.’ But when I first came, I’d say, ‘You smell nice’, and people would be shocked, says Goh, senior banker at CSFB, CitiBank, ABN AMRO Bank as well as DBS Bank.

Different cultures have different social norms and practices – and he’s reminded of that all the time in boardrooms from China to Canada. “A few years back I was coming back to Canada to bridge Asian capital for Canadian oil and gas companies,” he says. “I met with a lot of chairmen and CEOs and it was quite formal and cordial with legal documents and business commercial term sheets. If you go to Asia, you’re invited to lunch or dinner where you talk and build the relationship. Or, we have a drink and get to know each other better. It’s a very different language.”

Goh has become business bilingual since he tried to compliment his classmates’ fragrances on campus. After finishing his degree, he stayed in Calgary for two years to work in public accounting before heading back to Singapore and launching his banking career. His work

financing million-dollar business deals takes him all over Asia, including China, Philippines, Myanmar, Indonesia and Malaysia. “The takeaway is that you learn and appreciate different cultures,” he says. Respect and admiration for the various cultures is the key to success.

Over the years, Goh has encountered plenty of cultural differences and learned about many of them the hard way. But those early business stumbles have helped him enormously in the long run. “The best way to succeed is to learn and fail,” he says. “When you learn and fail, you want to move fast, so you’re willing to take risk. But those who want to learn and never want to fail tend to go a lot slower and not make things happen.”

Goh credits his Canadian education for helping him make good business decisions that drive growth for his clients. “Education in Singapore is pretty much learn about the rules, apply the rules well, follow the rules and play within the rules,” he says. “The Haskayne School of Business actually provokes you to think outside the box and challenge the knowledge as well. Question the question. Is the question relevant? You can never get the right answer to an irrelevant question.”

## Haskayne alumni spotlight

[haskayne.ucalgary.ca/alumni/alumni-spotlight](https://haskayne.ucalgary.ca/alumni/alumni-spotlight)





Sergei Scurfield, BComm '89, LLB '03 and  
Nick Scurfield, BComm '17. Photo by Donald Molyneux

# Scurfield family

Three generations and three decades of support

By Stephane Massinon

The year was 1986. After years of construction, Scurfield Hall opened its doors to become the new home of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Management. On the very first day the building opened for classes, Sergei Scurfield took his seat in Scurfield Hall 257.

"I do remember it. Walking in, I took my seat and was quite motivated to do well. I took my seat in the front row of the class and Dr. Bob (Schulz) was my first instructor," says Sergei, BComm '89, LLB '03. "I took the attitude to keep my head down and try to get the work done."

Dr. Bob remembers it was an Introduction to Business course at 8 a.m. in the building's biggest classroom.

"Sergei was great in class, prepared and participated well. He always had great insights, and never once mentioned his father or that he was a Scurfield — preferring to let his personal thinking do the talking rather than his name," says Dr. Bob.

Sergei's father, Ralph Scurfield, was a legendary Calgary businessman who pledged \$8 million, split between his family and company, for a new home to the business school. He never saw the completed facility he had played an instrumental role in building. In February 1985, while Scurfield Hall was under construction, the president and CEO of Nu-West Group Ltd. died in a skiing accident.

"To be admitted into the faculty the same year that the building opened, was special. It was humbling. Walking down the hallway and passing the portrait of my father every day, it was a humbling experience," says Sergei.

Sonia Scurfield says her husband, Ralph, became particularly interested in helping the university's business school, after returning from courses he took at the Harvard School of Business in the seventies.

"At Harvard, he realized that what Calgary needed was a building for the business school that they had in five different places," she recalls. "He came back really gung-ho and thought the government would go for this because the Calgary campus was expanding."

When it became apparent to him that the provincial government would not do it on its

own, Sonia recalls he came home one day and said, "The only way that thing will get built is if I do it."

"I'm certain he would be proud of how the school has grown," says Sergei. "It's become such an integral part of the university and the city of Calgary."

"At that time of his life, he was very much thinking of how Calgary could grow. He was part of bringing the Flames to Calgary, not to bring hockey to Calgary, but to bring the Olympics to Calgary. To get the Olympics, we needed the Saddledome. To make that feasible, we needed the Flames. That's the way his mind was set in those days."

Three decades later, as the school now known as the Haskayne School of Business, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2017, Nick Scurfield, Sergei's son, graduated with a BComm to complete his studies and mark three generations of Scurfields at the school.

"When I was a first-year student, it was a little intimidating. I felt I had a lot to live up to, a lot to prove," said Nick. "That was highly motivating. Coming into Scurfield Hall and seeing the portrait of my grandfather, it was really cool because I never knew my grandfather."

"He passed away before I was born, so I always heard a lot of things about him and always looked up to him. It almost felt like I finally got to meet him to see portraits on the wall and meet people who he influenced."

On a trip to the building in late 2017, Sergei recalled fondly his time at university. He would go on to law school and has practised as a lawyer since graduating with a law degree in 2003.

"I'm proud of my degree here. I believe the school of business is an excellent school and believe it has an excellent reputation. Having a BComm from the University of Calgary, I'm very proud of that. I can't think of another university that I would have wanted to go to."

"To have a world-class facility right here in our city, right here in our province, is a huge advantage to people who live here."

“

*To have a world-class facility right here in our city is a huge advantage.”*



# Back on campus for Haskayne's 50th anniversary celebrations



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