

**The Department of
Geography & Planning
2020 Awards**

PAC

UTAGA



Geography & Planning
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Puneh Jamshidi & Jenny Jung UTAGA Co-Presidents



We would like to congratulate the three UTAGA Award winners: Michael Tomczak winning the Honorary President Award, John Borrows winning the Distinguished Alum Award, and Natalia Zdaniuk winning the Outstanding Service Award. All three winners have supported the geography and planning department in important ways. Michael, we would like to thank you for your donations to the JM Tomczak Ontario Graduate Scholarship that support our geography graduate students every year. John Borrows, thank you for your extensive contributions to Indigenous legal rights and traditions, treaties and land claims, and constitutional and environmental law. You have led an exceptional career that has brought honour to the Department of Geography & Planning. Natalia, we would like to thank you for your outstanding work that contributes to the smooth day to day operations of the department. We would also like to congratulate all student award winners, including the recipients of the UTAGA Outstanding Performance Awards! We look forward to celebrating with you in-person when it's safe again.

Message from the Executives UTAGA

Edwin Li PAC Chair, 2018-2020



I am proud to present the PAC Honorary Chair Award to Abigail Moriah, who has made outstanding contributions to the learning experience of graduate planning students and helped foster a stronger drive for equity and inclusion with both students and alum of the program. Furthermore, it is our honour to present the Distinguished Planning Alumnus Award to Ian Graham and Shayne Ramsay. Ian and Shayne have led careers of exceptional distinction in Toronto and British Columbia respectively, and their outstanding achievement and leadership serve as great role models to our graduate planning students. I am also thrilled to recognize Paul Hess and Brent Fairbairn as recipients of the PAC Outstanding Service Award. Their exceptional support and dedication to PAC, students and alum of the planning program have reached beyond the classrooms and the Committee which made them a most worthy recipient of this award. Finally, I am delighted to congratulate all the students on your various awards. I hope you will cherish the recognition and support you receive today, and I have every faith that you will become future city builders. Thank you for being a leader among your peers, and congratulations again to all the 2020 award recipients.

Message from the Executives PAC

Award Descriptions

PAC Distinguished Alumnus Award

This award is given to planning alumni who have led a career of exceptional distinction and brought honour to the department.

PAC Honorary Chair Award

This award is given to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the development of the Department of Geography & Planning or its programs, and its alumni.

PAC Outstanding Service Award

This award is presented to individuals who have made outstanding voluntary contributions to the Department of Geography & Planning, its programs, its students or its alumni.

UTAGA Fenton Chin Outstanding Service Award

This award is presented to individuals who have made outstanding voluntary contributions to the Department of Geography & Planning, its programs, its students or its alumni. The award is named in honour of Fenton Chin (B.A. '94) in recognition of his 18 years of service on UTAGA. He joined UTAGA in 1995 as a member-at-large and became president in 2010. He was also a regular contributor to GeoPlan, the department's alumni newsletter.

UTAGA Distinguished Alumnus Award

This award is given to geography alumni who have led a career of exceptional distinction and brought honour to the department.

UTAGA Honorary President Award

This award is given to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the development of the Department of Geography & Planning or its programs, and its alumni.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

John Borrows



John Borrows B.A., M.A., J.D., LL.M. (Toronto), Ph.D. (Osgoode Hall Law School), LL.D. (Hons., Dalhousie, York, SFU, Queen's & Law Society of Ontario), D.H.L. (Toronto), F.R.S.C., is the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Law at the University of Victoria Law School in British Columbia. His publications include, *Recovering Canada; The Resurgence of Indigenous Law* (Donald Smiley Award for the best book in Canadian Political Science, 2002), *Canada's Indigenous Constitution* (Canadian Law and Society Best Book Award 2011), *Drawing Out Law: A Spirit's Guide* (2010), *Freedom and Indigenous Constitutionalism* ((Donald Smiley Award for the best book in Canadian Political Science, 2016), *The Right Relationship* (with Michael Coyle, ed.), *Resurgence and Reconciliation* (with Michael Asch, Jim Tully, eds.), *Law's Indigenous Ethics* (2020 Best subsequent Book Award from Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, 2019 W. Wes Pue Best book award from the Canadian Law and Society Association). He is the 2017 Killam Prize winner in Social Sciences and the 2019 Molson Prize Winner from the Canada Council for the Arts, the 2020 Governor General's Innovation Award. John is Anishinaabe/Ojibway and a member of the Chippewa of the Nawash First Nation in Ontario, Canada.

Michael Tomczak



Michael Tomczak has been a long-term supporter of the Department of Geography & Planning. Thanks to his endowment and establishment of the J.M. Tomczak Ontario Graduate Scholarship, the department has been able to recognize and support outstanding graduate students for the last eighteen years.

Born and raised in Toronto, Michael attended the University of Toronto, majoring in (economic) Geography, earned a BA in 1974 and then—after two years of world travel bookended by contract employment—completed his MA in 1977. Refocussing his studies and career plans, he completed an MBA in 1979 and began his career in the field of trade finance, first at Export Development Canada and then at Scotiabank. In 1988, he transferred to New York with Scotiabank’s investment banking arm, and was instrumental in building the Bank’s corporate-client derivatives businesses, first in the U.S.A., and latterly in the Latin America and Caribbean regions. He spent 2 ½ years heading the “client desk” at Scotia’s Mexican subsidiary in Mexico City, leading up to his early retirement in 2011. He then repatriated to Canada and resides in Toronto. He has enjoyed every minute of his retirement! Michael has been married to Naomi for almost 45 years, and they have two daughters: the elder lives in Bangkok with her Thai husband—and their first grandchild, a boy—and the younger resides in Toronto with her partner.

UTAGA Fenton Chin Outstanding Service Award

Natalia Zdaniuk



Natalia Zdaniuk is the Events & Communications Coordinator for the Department of Geography & Planning. Formerly a human geography student, she now utilizes her experiential knowledge of UofT and the department to support its various administrative functions. As part of her role she works with the Planning Alumni Committee (PAC) and University of Toronto Association of Geography Alumni (UTAGA) to organize events and outreach, including the annual UTAGA lecture series, the PAC Spring Social, and award activities. Her interest and education in social, cultural, and political geography continues to play a role in both her personal life – including community building and fiction writing, as well as in her position at the department.

Natalia would like to thank Puneht Jamshidi and the rest of the UTAGA team for this award.

Shayne Ramsay



Since May 2000, Shayne Ramsay has been the CEO of BC Housing. He was responsible for setting up the Homeowner Protection Office in 1998 and also served as its first CEO. Prior to being appointed CEO, Shayne was director of development services for BC Housing, and director of housing policy and program development with the former Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in B.C.

In addition to his work as CEO, Shayne serves as chair of the Board of Directors for the Crown Corporation Employer's Association, an agency that represents human resource issues for the provincial crown corporations in British Columbia. He is also chair of Housing Partnership Canada, a peer network and business collaboration of social housing leaders committed to innovation. Shayne has a graduate degree in urban planning from the University of Toronto.

Ian Graham



Ian Graham is the publisher and sole owner of NRU Publishing Inc., a company that publishes two weekly newsletters on planning and development in the City of Toronto and the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. Ian has overseen the publication operations for 24 years and focuses his efforts on growing circulation and advertising functions of the company. He also ensures that its content is timely, well written, accurate, and 'must have' to those involved with urban planning in the region. Ian is also Director for R.E. Millward & Associates Ltd. As a professional planner with 34 years of experience, Ian is involved with the firm's land use and urban planning projects, including policy studies, Official Plan amendments, rezoning applications, land use examinations, and the writing of zoning by-laws. He works for clients in both public and private sectors. Prior to joining the firm, Ian was Project Manager (Acting) with the City of Toronto's City Planning Division working on the City's new harmonized Zoning By-law, enacted by City Council in May 2013.

Born in Montreal, Ian is a graduate of the UofT (MScPl, 1986) and McMaster University (BA-Geography, 1984). He is a member of the Canadian Institute of Planners, a registered professional planner in Ontario, a member of the American Planning Association, the Ontario Association of Land Economists, and BILD. He is on the board of Bishop's College School in Sherbrooke, QC, Montrose Property Holdings Ltd. and Ecowaste Industries Ltd. in Richmond, BC.

Ian resides in Toronto and has four children: Georgina (27); Lucinda (25); Charles (25); and Sophie (21).

Abigail Moriah



Abigail is a connector, facilitator and planner specializing in affordable housing. Her early years of work and volunteering in Halifax's North End community inspired her to pursue planning with an interest in an approach that is community-centred, equity-based and builds bridges across practitioners, scholars and community.

Passionate about inclusion in planning, she launched the Black Planning Project in 2018, worked with planning students and early career BIPOC professionals in 2019 to co-found Mentorship Initiative for Indigenous, Black and Planners of colour (MIPOC), and is a founding member the Black Planning and Urbanists Association. These initiatives connect, support and create access for BIPOC planners and contribute to knowledge and highlight Black perspectives in practice. Abigail has worked on affordable housing development with New Commons Development and Toronto Community Housing. Prior to this she worked with community-based organizations. She volunteers at CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals, is on the Housing Committee for BlackNorth Initiative, a member of CASRI and has sat on several community-based research committees.

Paul Hess



Paul Hess is the former Director of the Planning Program, and a current Associate Professor at the University of Toronto in the Department of Geography and Planning. As director he worked closely with PAC to strengthen student programming and alumni initiatives. His teaching practice and research interests include streets as public space, pedestrian environments and design, suburban form and redevelopment, and planning and design history. His current SSHRC grant examines changing North American street design practices and the ways they create socially inclusive and exclusive places (to which he is including street reallocations under COVID such as temporary bike lanes, shared streets, and “streataries”). Other projects including examining the effectiveness of planning strategies to retrofit suburban arterial corridors, changing street and public space landscapes with gentrification, and the history of planning, modernist apartments in the post-war Toronto (with Prof. Robert Lewis). His students are involved in studying active transportation and public space topics in diverse settings including Toronto, New York, Moscow, and Mexico City.

Brent Fairbairn



Brent Fairbairn graduated from the Department of Geography & Planning MscPl program in 2013. After working briefly in the STEPS Initiative, non-profit community art organization, he joined the City of Toronto, first with the Planning Department's Graphics & Visualization unit, and then with the Transportation Planning section where he currently serves.

As PAC Secretary since 2015, Brent helped to overhaul the Committee's filing system and set up 'Histories-at-a-Glance', a way of preserving institutional knowledge as individual Committee members come and go over the years. In addition, he is responsible for taking minutes at each Committee meeting and keeping records in order.

About the Organizations

UTAGA

The University of Toronto Association of Geography Alumni (UTAGA) represents all of the department's alumni. Upon graduating, alumni are given the option to receive UTAGA updates by email, which include: 1) Notification of upcoming events such as our annual lecture series, field trips, workshops, and celebrations, 2) The GeoPlan – our annual alumni newsletter and 3) A yearly invitation to attend the annual general meeting and join the executive.

We are always happy to hear from our alumni and encourage keeping in touch and getting involved!

If you're interested in learning more about UTAGA or have questions, please contact the Department's Events & Communications Coordinator: events@geog.utoronto.ca or 416-946-3148

[Click here to learn more about UTAGA.](#)

PAC

Established in 1996, the Planning Alumni Committee (PAC) works to enrich the learning experiences of graduate planning students at the University of Toronto. Thanks to the generous donations made to our Friends of Planning Fund, we are able to fund scholarships, student travel for conferences and field trips, alumni matching and mentoring, workshops and planning skills modules, all of which offer students a competitive advantage after they graduate. Our programs draw in approximately 60 students enrolled in the Masters program

for multiple engagements—the events have become so popular that we yearly expand our offerings, this year with two new planning skills modules. In addition, program alumni participate in the Fall Mixer, mentoring and pairing initiatives, all of which are mutually rewarding engagements that most recently saw over 70 alumni directly involved.

[Click here to learn more about PAC.](#)

Thank

You!
