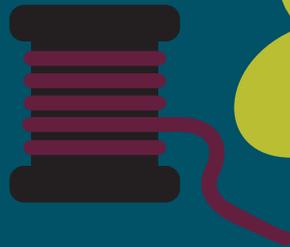
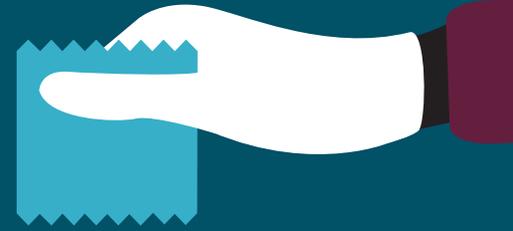
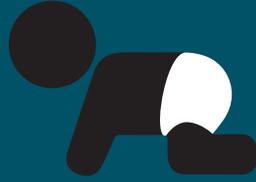


# The Human Ecology Story



# The Power of Story

Whether you are a textile scientist or a family counselling expert, how does being situated in the Department of Human Ecology influence scholarship and teaching? Given our diverse individual academic interests, this question was of great interest in contemplating how we describe the collective purpose of our department. To gain clearer articulation of a common purpose and vision for the future among Human Ecology faculty members, the department held a day-long spring retreat to develop a compelling story that reflects our past, present and future—our visionary narrative.

When well-developed, a story can unite people behind a common purpose and direction, fuel creativity, and provide workplace motivation. Borrowing from leadership, neuropsychology, and advertising literature, storytelling is identified as a key way to explain who you are and what you believe as an institution.

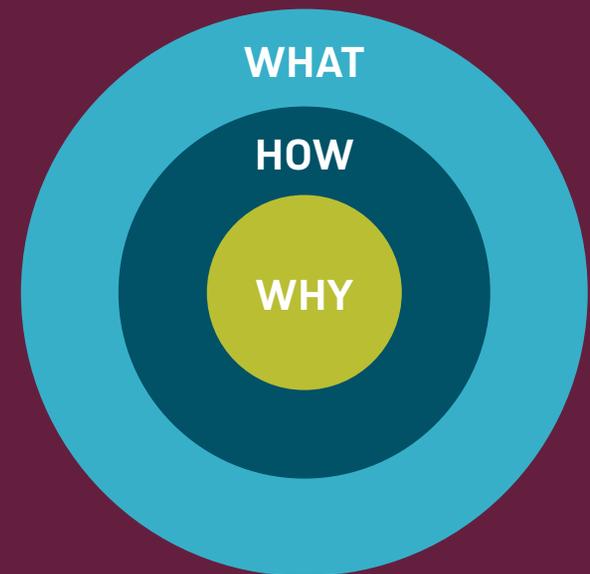
To begin our story, we explored our collective understanding of the history of Home Economics and Human Ecology. And it is a

long history—2018 marks the centennial of the creation of the Department Household Economics at the U of A!

Faculty members were then asked to share their own stories of how they came to be part of the Human Ecology department. The follow-up to this task was to identify common elements in our personal stories that could be viewed as defining characteristics of Human Ecology. Commonalties which emerged from people's stories included valuing work that has a practical application in society and takes a generalist perspective, and which reflects a desire for helping people. This helped us to appreciate that as a group we do experience some shared values, regardless of individuals' specialized areas of study. Based on evidence that stories are useful inside of organizations to communicate transcendent purpose, which refers to the reason why an organization exists and how it can improve lives, we embarked on further exploring our purpose.

## Why: The Core of the Story

In moving towards creating a statement of common purpose, we were encouraged to think not only about what we do, and how we do it, but to also ask "why" we do what we do. According to Simon Sinek (2011), while "how" and "what" are significant in terms of how an organization functions, it is the "why" which inspires people (both inside and outside of the organization) and creates unity. Sinek puts these together in what he calls the "Golden Circle."



## Our Story: What, How & Why

Working in small groups during our retreat, faculty members considered the creation of their own versions of the Human Ecology “Golden Circle.” There was general agreement on what we do: teaching, research, and information dissemination in the areas of family science and clothing, textiles, and material culture, as well as university/community service.

Defining how we do these things elicited a range of responses with differing levels of specificity. Taking a holistic, contextual, applied, multidisciplinary, and collaborative approach to researching the practical problems of everyday life were some of the common hallmarks of a human ecology perspective that were noted. “Looking at people’s near environments,” “taking global perspectives,” and “linking policy, practice and research” identified more detailed responses to the “how” question.

## Tell Your Story

If you have a story to share with us about your path to studying in the department, and/or how your work is connected to “enhancing everyday life” we want to hear from you! We’d like to have a collection of stories to share as we approach the 100th anniversary of Home Economics at the U of A in 2018.

Please send your comments to Lori Moran at [lmoran@ualberta.ca](mailto:lmoran@ualberta.ca).

And finally, the why behind these efforts was described in many similar ways reflecting common aims to: “improve well-being,” “improve people’s lives,” “influence people’s quality of life,” “create human betterment,” and “impact lives.” Using this information, we arrived at a core purpose statement for the Department of Human Ecology: **Advancing scholarship to enhance everyday life.**

All faculty members then had an opportunity to craft their own story about Human Ecology—reflecting individual scholarship but rooted in our agreed upon purpose. We will continue to refine our stories and share them with colleagues from outside the department, prospective students, members of the public, potential donors, and partners as a means to increase the profile of the department.



# Enhancing Everyday Life

## BSc. In Human Ecology

### IT'S ABOUT CHANGING LIVES.

#### ♥ Family Science Major

No other environment affects people as profoundly as the family. Family Science students learn about family dynamics, issues, and strategies for working with families across the life course, through education, counselling, and intervention.

#### ♥ Clothing, Textiles & Material Culture Major

Clothing, Textiles & Material Culture students study objects and aspects of our built environment, with an emphasis on textiles and apparel, including those items which are produced for the global fashion industry. Students explore how and why these products are designed, manufactured, quality tested, sold, and consumed.

## Human Ecology Graduate Program

#### ♥ MA, PhD in Material Culture

#### ♥ MSc, PhD in Aging

#### ♥ MSc, PhD in Textile & Apparel Science

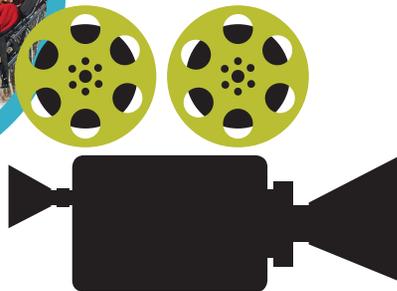
#### ♥ MSc, PhD in Children, Youth & Families

## Premier's Council Disabilities Award

In December 2016, Associate Professor **Megan Strickfaden** was recognized by the Province of Alberta Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities with the 2016 Award of Excellence in Education. This award recognizes an educator who has made a significant contribution to a barrier-free and inclusive educational program. Two of Dr. Strickfaden's projects were highlighted. The first was a short video titled *Light in the Borderlands*. Screened at festivals in Canada and Europe, it focuses on urban spaces and was filmed by three legally blind Edmonton residents. Dr. Strickfaden says, "these projects are about what people can see, as opposed to what they can't see." The second project cited involved designing outdoor sportswear for the seated sportsperson engaging in winter activities such as trail riding and sit-skiing. Through her pedagogy and research, Dr. Strickfaden was acknowledged as having significantly impacted the practice of many students and professionals by inspiring them to frame their practice with a commitment to inclusion.



◀ *Danny Wein (right) can now take extended outings in winter, thanks to the clothing system co-designed by Megan Strickfaden (left). Photo by Jessica Fern Facette.*



## SSHRC Award Winner

Associate Professor **Anne Bissonnette**, and Curator of the department's Clothing and Textile Collection, was recently awarded a SSHRC (Social Science & Humanities Research Council) research grant. The research will examine the effects of the French Revolution on European and American styles, exploring how 1790s fashion drastically changed to affect and reflect the social order. During this notable decade, clothing was implicated in the changing political, artistic, and ideological landscapes of Europe. As people searched for new systems of government, the meaning of dress in France took on additional importance. The research will begin in France and expand to places traditionally affected by French style: the UK, Germany, the US and Canada. Finding, accessing and analyzing surviving clothing and depictions of dress such as portraits and fashion plates from the 1790s will help to understand the evolution of more democratic and body-conscious styles. This project examines the intertwining of fashion with political, cultural, and social histories of a decade that remains murky in the field of dress history.



▲ *Dr. Anne Bissonnette*

## Research Project with Whitefish Lake First Nation

Protective Clothing and Equipment Research Facility (PCERF) researchers, **Dr. Jane Batcheller**, **Dr. ShuQin Wen**, and **Stephen Paskaluk** worked with the Goodfish Lake Business Corporation (GFLBC) to investigate the effects of industrial drycleaning on coveralls worn by workers in the oil sands industry. The Whitefish Lake First Nation, through the GFLBC, provides industrial drycleaning services to the Alberta oil and gas industry and is committed to keeping garments clean and free of flammable contaminants for workers in an industry where flash fires are a known workplace hazard. The research project at PCERF will help quantify the effectiveness of the GFLBC drycleaning process and will also determine the impact of repeated use and multiple drycleaning cycles on the thermal protection and flame resistance of the drycleaned coveralls.



◀ *Dr. Jane Batcheller learns about the drycleaning process from Brandon Whitford, customer service representative at GFLBC drycleaning facility.*

## NSERC Award Winner

Associate Professor **Rachel McQueen** has been studying odour retention in textiles since beginning her PhD in 2003. This year she was awarded five years of funding with a Discovery Grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). Her NSERC funded research program entitled “A multidisciplinary approach to characterizing odour retention within textiles,” involves investigating the mechanisms behind how odour is taken up and released by different fibres, and understanding what role bacteria play in intensifying odour within textiles. Sensory evaluation of body odour via human wear trials will comprise part of the project. Dr. McQueen has worked with a number of industry partners on the “odour problem,” as it is a major concern for clothing companies, particularly those selling polyester garments. The new NSERC funding will enable deeper investigation into the science helping us understand why our polyester t-shirts smell so much worse than our wool or cotton t-shirts after wear.



▲ *Dr. Rachel McQueen*

## Aging & Caregiving

*Master's degree graduate student Andrew Magnaye, shares the story of how his family ties inspire his research.*

My time in the Department of Human Ecology has drastically changed the way that I think about aging, family caregiving and families in general. What really ignited the spark in my desire to conduct research within Human Ecology was when my grandmother started to show signs of decline because of her age. She is still to this day the strongest, most resilient and most-loving person I know. However, as she got older her needs became harder and harder to meet. My selfless mother serves as my grandmother's primary caregiver while maintaining full-time employment at the job she has held for more than 30 years. We talk everyday over the phone and she always tells me that she wishes there were more hours in the day. She also tells me that she feels like she's working two jobs, caring for my grandmother and her paid employment. I know that she struggles to balance both and I often wish I could take her place and be there for my grandmother as they both have always been there for me.

It's apparent that my research interest in family caregivers, especially those like my mother who balance paid work with family care comes from a very real place. However, my mother is not the only one struggling to balance these two competing worlds. In Canada, 5.6 million employed family caregivers face the same everyday battles that my family is all too familiar with. That is why I have committed my thesis research to this population of family caregivers. The purpose will be to conduct a study using a human ecological framework that examines the consequences and assesses the needs of caregiver-employees providing care to family members and/or friends with a long-term health condition while simultaneously balancing their paid work.



► *Master's student Andrew Magnaye (center back) with family*

## TRAILL (Transitions and Impact on Later Life) Project

Assistant professor **Joohong Min** reports that in August 2016 the research team met to discuss and prioritize major family transitions across the life course—that is, major life events that bring about changes in people's role or status which may accumulate over time and impact older adults' health, wealth, and happiness. After considerable discussion the team chose to focus on two common transitions: (1) changes in marital status, including divorce, re-marriage, widowhood and bereavement, and (2) caregiving to family members with long term health conditions. Subsequently, two working groups were formed to examine the trajectories of stability and change in marriage and caregiving across the life course. Presentations based on preliminary work took place at the 2017 International Community, Work and Family Research Conference in Milan and the Canadian Population Society Conference in Toronto.

► (L-R) *Dr. Janet Fast and Dr. Joohong Min with the TRAILL Research Team*



## Child Care in Alberta

Associate Professor **Rhonda Breitreuz** and Kerryn Colen, Project Manager, presented “Who Cares: The Experiences of Child Care in Albertan Families,” at the May 2017 Community, Work and Family International Conference held in Milan, Italy. The researchers are exploring the use of unregulated child care in Alberta. Drawing on data gathered from across the province, they show that when only 20% of pre-school children have access to regulated child care, employed mothers are turning to unregulated alternatives. Although families have high trust in family and friend care, there are important tradeoffs:

- relationship costs (asking Grandma to babysit a few too many times);
- lack of developmentally enriching environments (too much television or too much Kraft dinner); and,
- maternal employment costs (necessity to compromise career aspirations due to inconsistency of child care options).

Breitreuz and Colen agree that rather than viewing unregulated child care as sufficient to meet the needs of employed mothers, it should be recognized that a formal, regulated child care system is needed.



◀ Dr. Rhonda Breitreuz

## Homeless Youth

Assistant Professor **Dr. Pushpanjali Dashora** completed a pilot project exploring the impact of a housing program on the mental health and well-being of homeless youth living in Edmonton. The study evaluated a 20-unit housing program with supports provided on-site. The purpose of the support services is to address issues of homelessness (such as shelter), and concurrent disorders (such as addictions and mental health issues), and to facilitate integration into mainstream services. Preliminary findings suggest positive outcomes for youth such as fewer depressive symptoms and higher self-efficacy scores. In addition, participants reported being able to achieve major goals such as “becoming clean” due to having a safe and secure shelter. This study will help pioneer a new knowledge base on how the program model works within a “housing first” program in Canada.



▲ Dr. Pushpanjali Dashora

## Predicting Marital Quality?

Assistant Professor **Adam Galovan** and colleagues published an article last fall looking at various character traits such as humility, compassion, and positivity and their effects on marital quality. They found that humility was a robust predictor of marital quality. Moving forward, Dr. Galovan is interested in exploring a theory of positive marital quality that incorporates several philosophical ideas regarding how perceptions influence the cognition and actions that are related to happy relationships.



▲ Dr. Adam Galovan

## GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE

# Aging Out of Family

**Ropa Mamutse**, an international student from Zimbabwe, recently completed a course-based Master of Science degree in Family Ecology & Practice. Supervised by **Dr. Rhonda Breitkreuz** and Ted Campbell, the Director of Caring Services for a youth-services organization, Ropa conducted a project called "Aging out of Family." Her work explored the experiences of at-risk youth that "age-out" of youth-serving organizations. She conducted focus groups with youth who attended a drop-in youth centre and found that they benefited greatly from the services that the centre provided. However, when youth aged-out—got too old to utilize these services—they were no longer able to access the organization. Youth found this distressing. Some described the transition out of youth services as a loss of family. They also indicated feeling ill-prepared to access adult-serving organizations. Ropa's research suggests that youth need additional transition supports, as well as further skill development, to help them access adult services and supports. Now that Ropa is finished her MSc., she plans to continue to work with at-risk youth in Edmonton as an outreach worker.



◀ Ropa Mamutse, MSc.



# Graduate Program

## Graduate Student Awards 2016-17

### Victoria Bleeks

*Doris Badir Graduate Research Fellowship  
in Human Ecology*

### Josee Chartrand

*Edmonton & District Quilters' Guild Founders  
Graduate Scholarship*

*Helen DeSilva Buchanan Memorial Graduate  
Scholarship in Clothing and Textiles*

### Karly Coleman

*Dianne Kieren Graduate Award in Human  
Ecology*

### Nicole Furtak

*Alice E Brewer Graduate Travel Award*

### Rebecca Horne

*Engberg Graduate Scholarship in International  
Home Economics*

*Louise Davies Memorial Graduate Scholarship*

### Sumit Mandal

*Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize*

### Janice Rieger

*President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction*

### Adolfo Ruiz

*President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction*

### Robyn Stobbs

*President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction*

## Congratulations 2016–2017 Convocants!

### NOVEMBER 2016

- ♥ PhD **Sumit Mandal**
- ♥ PhD **Janice Rieger**
- ♥ PhD **Sandra Tullio-Pow**
- ♥ MSc **Vanessa Ostapchuk**

### JUNE 2017

- ♥ PhD **Sharon Anderson**
- ♥ MA **Stephanie Huolt**
- ♥ MA **Sarah Woodyard**

# Undergraduate Program

## Telio Award for Apparel Design

Fourth year undergraduate student **Lauren Degenstein** was the recipient of a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Telio Fabrics, a prestigious Montreal textile company with a long history of generously supporting aspiring Canadian designers. Students in the apparel design class Hecol 454, taught by Vlada Blinova, worked diligently to meet the contest criteria. They were tasked with identifying a target market, building a business plan, explaining their design inspiration, and then had the job of creating an innovative design to reach their designated consumer.



▲ 4<sup>th</sup> year student Lauren Degenstein with her award-winning design. Photo by Helen Metalla, ALES Communication.

## Practicum Program Research Study

Practicum Coordinator **Kathryn Chandler**, and colleagues **Dr. Sherry Ann Chapman** and **Dr. Deanna Williamson** have completed their TLEF-funded needs assessment of Human Ecology practicum program field supervisors. The survey revealed that supervisors' main goals in working with the practicum program are to "help students transition into their career" and "to give back." An important finding is that the current program appears to be working well for most respondents. Among less experienced supervisors greater interest was

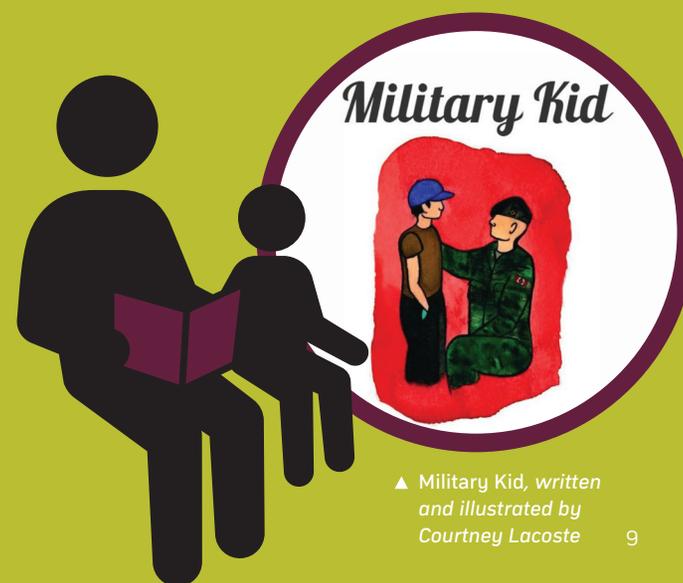
expressed for: an online forum, more practicum program background information, additional advance contact with students, and a website with practicum resources. Improved website content will be undertaken going forward. Human Ecology is fortunate to have such engaged community partners committed to experiential learning.



## UNDERGRADUATE PRACTICUM- STUDENT PROFILE

### Courtney Lacoste's Story

In my final semester in Human Ecology, I was fortunate to complete my practicum with the Edmonton Garrison Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC). As a practicum requirement, each student must complete an individual project. With a background in the arts and a passion for working with children, I decided to create a children's book. Applying models and theories learned in Human Ecology, my book *Military Kid* aims to normalize the emotional experiences endured by children of military families preparing for a duty-related parental absence, particularly deployment and training. Without having gone through an extended absence of family myself, it was challenging to ensure that the book accurately reflected the experience of military families. I am grateful to have received guidance and feedback from many supportive MFRC colleagues to create a resource that I am proud of. I often read my own copy for comfort now that my partner, a service member with the Canadian Armed Forces, is deployed.



▲ *Military Kid*, written and illustrated by Courtney Lacoste

## Successful New Alumni Weekend Event

The Department of Human Ecology and Alumni Affairs introduced a Saturday Tea to allow alumni to get reacquainted, be introduced to faculty members, and to learn about ongoing research programs. Dr. Janet Fast, Dr. Rachel McQueen and Dr. Matt Johnson each gave short presentations highlighting respectively, research advances in aging, textile science, and couple relationships. The event was very well attended and the positive feedback has resulted in its addition to this year's Alumni Weekend events—September 23, 2017.

## 2017 Empey Lecture

Edward Hertzman, as U.S. retail and supply chain expert, delivered the 2017 Empey Lecture entitled “Is the Apparel Industry Irresponsible?—The Shifting Landscapes of Retailing and Global Apparel Sourcing.” While noting the immense success of fast fashion retailers such as Zara, and consumers’ addiction to cheap and trendy clothing, Hertzman cautioned that “business as usual” sourcing practices which rely on distant, low wage workers, are not sustainable. Major changes in the retail landscape are on the horizon. A video recording of the presentation is available here: <https://www.ualberta.ca/human-ecology/seminars-lectures>.

## 2017 AHEA Conference

“Catalyzing Change through Collective Leadership” was the theme of the 2017 Alberta Human Ecology and Home Economics Association (AHEA) spring conference. The topic elicited strong participation from Human Ecology faculty, practicum and graduate students. Presenters included Dr. Janet Fast who discussed “Working Together to Improve Services and Supports for Seniors and their Families” and



◀ (L-R) Drs. Matt Johnson, Rachel McQueen, Deanna Williamson, Janet Fast at September 2016 Alumni Tea.



Human Ecology alumna Patti Laboucane-Benson whose presentation was entitled “We are all Called to Action: Historic Trauma, Healing and Reconciliation.” Remember that if you are a graduate of the University of Alberta in Human Ecology, Nutrition & Food Science or Education majoring in Human Ecology, you may join AHEA. For more information contact [registrar@ahea.ab.ca](mailto:registrar@ahea.ab.ca).

# Clothing & Textile Collection

## Prestigious Award for Eyeglass Exhibition

**Dr. Anne Bissonnette** co-curated the exhibition *Eyewear: Fashion with Vision* with students in her “Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Dress in the Western World” class. Each student selected a garment from the Clothing and Textiles Collection and learned how to handle, observe, and contextualize it using material culture methodologies. In addition to extensive media coverage of the exhibition, its academic merits were recognized with a Richard Martin Award for Excellence in

the Exhibition of Costume from the Costume Society of America (CSA). This is the first time the Award has recognized a student exhibition; typical awardees have included major institutions like the Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto).



## Rosenberg Quilts

Within the Clothing and Textiles Collection, the size and scope of the Rosenberg Quilt Collection has attracted a great deal of interest from the public, quilt guild members, and scholars. In 2006, the department received a donation of 677 antique quilts from retired Toronto dealer Gloria Rosenberg. Spanning over 100 years, from the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, these quilts provide

outstanding examples of quilting traditions, techniques, and materials. Members of the Alberta Quilt Study Society regularly visit and generously support the Collection to enhance their group’s aim to promote an understanding, appreciation and knowledge of quilt making and its heritage in Alberta and beyond.

► *June 2017—Visiting Alberta Quilt Study Society members study selected quilt artifacts from the Clothing and Textile Collection in the Department of Human Ecology.*

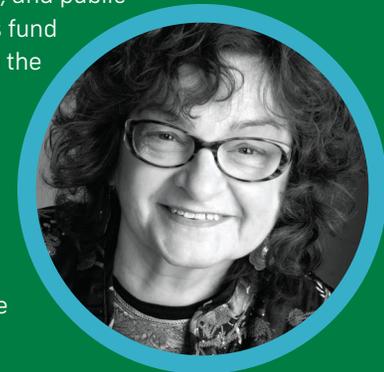


## Anne Lambert Honorific Naming

Human Ecology is delighted to announce plans for the honorific renaming of the Clothing and Textiles Collection to the Anne Lambert Clothing and Textiles Collection. As former curator and a dress historian, Anne played a pivotal role in establishing and developing the Collection over the course of her 36-year career at the University of Alberta. Established in 1972, this unique collection houses more than 23,000 clothing and textile-related artifacts with local, national, and international significance spanning over 350 years of history.

To ensure the protection and long life of artifacts collected under Anne Lambert’s leadership, a new fund-development initiative is underway. Its aim is to support the creation of an endowed textile conservator position. Clothing and textiles are among the most fragile of artifacts to collect and display. A textile conservator would allow us to maintain our international standards of care and properly address the needs of artifacts for storage and display and enable the continued use of artifacts for teaching, research, and public exhibition. **Your support** of this fund raising effort will be integral to the future of the Collection.

Additional details about a formal renaming celebration and launch of the textile conservator fund-raising campaign will be provided on the Human Ecology website ([hecol.ualberta.ca](http://hecol.ualberta.ca)) in September, 2017.



▲ Anne Lambert

# Chair's Message

The stories comprising this year's annual report highlight what I believe is the Department of Human Ecology's greatest strength: the positive social impact of our research and education programs. We focus on topics that are relevant to people in their everyday lives with the aim of enhancing their quality of life at home, at work, and in the community. That Human Ecology scholarship has widespread influence is enabled by the rich collaborative networks in which faculty members are engaged. The relevance of our work is recognized and appreciated by a wide array of community organizations, industry partners, and policy makers. For example, in recent years faculty members' expertise has been sought by Homeward Trust, Edmonton John Howard Society, Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, End Poverty Edmonton, Alberta Homelessness Research Consortium, Alberta Abilities

Lodges Society, Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton, Goodfish Lake Business Corporation, Alberta Ministry of Community and Social Services, Alberta Status of Women, Alberta Health Services, the Canadian Museum of History, the National Gallery of Canada, Canadian General Standards Board, Employment and Social Development Canada, Veterans Affairs Canada, the Senate of Canada, Mark's, Cotton Incorporated, Nike, and Lululemon. These connections provide a very good reminder of our purpose and value, and speak to the many challenging and diverse opportunities awaiting Human Ecology graduates and prospective students.

**Dr. Deanna Williamson**  
Department Chair,  
Human Ecology



## Home Economics Centennial in 2018

Did you know? Next year, 2018, marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Home Economics at the University of Alberta.

- 1918** Department of Household Economics established under the Faculty of Arts and Science
- 1928** The Department becomes the School of Household Economics
- 1963** School of Household Economics becomes part of newly organized Faculty of Science
- 1965** Opening of new Household Economics Building
- 1976** School of Household Economics is granted Faculty status; name is changed to Faculty of Home Economics
- 1993** Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry unites with Faculty of Home Economics to become Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics. As part of this merger, the Departments of Clothing and Textiles and Family Studies merged to become the Department of Human Ecology
- 2007** Faculty changes its name to the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences

In recognition of the centennial year, Dr. Sherry Ann Chapman will deliver the March 2018 **Empey Lecture**. She will examine the evolution of Home Economics/Human Ecology with a look at our history, accomplishments and future directions. A special Human Ecology Alumni Week event in September 2018 is also in the works—details to follow at <https://www.ualberta.ca/alumni/events/alumni-weekend>.



*Enhancing Everyday Life*