
The IDRC Alumni provides opportunities for former IDRC employees to maintain personal and professional links, and supports continuing dialogue on development issues.

Bulletin

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Annual General Meeting & Luncheon: Tuesday, November 3, 2015

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Thanks to Michèle Wilson for Translation

Wish to support the IDRC Alumni Association? Contributions can be made annually or over a three-year period:

1 year	\$20
2 years	\$35
3 years	\$50

Cheques payable to the **IDRC Alumni Association**.

Return to: Donna Bickford, 1195 Priory Lane, Ottawa, ON, Canada. K1C 1Z8

Electronic transfer is also possible for Alumni across Canada and in other parts of the world who have Canadian accounts. For details contact Gerald Bourrier <bici@sympatico.ca>

From the Chair

Rob Robertson

Honouring Rachel



As an Association, we've always cared about the place that brought us together and the people it continues to serve. We've done this most notably by providing IDRC with a donation, to make an annual award to a young researcher selected by a Regional Office. The Centre has generously more than matched this donation.

Our Association's funding of the activity has come from two sources. First, the Association has directed a significant portion of the annual support contributions you make, to this worthy venture. And second, it can now be told, that our friend and colleague Rachel DesRosiers made a large annual contribution to the award. Like clockwork, before every Annual Meeting, a large cheque would arrive from Rachel. She wanted no recognition for this. It was simply her way of continuing to support work she valued from her days as an IDRC manager.

Knowing of Rachel's generosity and commitment to the Association, the members of the Executive were especially grieved to learn of her sudden passing earlier in the year. We now wish to honour her contribution and her memory by calling the annual grant ***The Rachel DesRosiers Alumni Award***. With the wonderful cooperation of the Centre's Vice-President of Resources, Sylvain Dufour, IDRC has created a line item for this award so that donors can contribute directly to it and receive a charitable receipt. Of course the Association will continue to support it from general revenues, but I also urge all of our members to consider contributing to the award when you are deciding on your charitable gifts for the year. You can send a cheque payable to IDRC, noting it is for the Rachel DesRosiers Alumni Award to: *Director of Finance and Administration, IDRC, Box 8500, Ottawa Ontario Canada, K1G 3H9*. Your Association looks forward to many more years of making a small contribution to development research, while honouring someone who made a very large contribution to it.

Alumni News

Rawwida Baksh

Rawwida worked at IDRC from October 2006 to February 2011 when she led the Women's Rights and Citizenship (WRC) programme. She enjoyed working with the dynamic WRC team and the wider 'family' of IDRC colleagues who were mainstreaming gender equality in their programmes.



Rawwida at International Women's Day march for gender equality, New York City, 8th March 2015

A key accomplishment was using the research on "Gender and Decentralization" supported by WRC in Africa, Asia and Latin America as a catalyst for convening an international conference, held in Mexico City in 2008 with over 600 global participants. The policy recommendations from the conference have influenced policy-making in local governments as well as through global partners, such as UN/HABITAT, UNDP, UNIFEM (now UN Women), the World Bank, etc.

Another accomplishment was the organization of IDRC events at the annual meetings of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which presented the results of IDRC-supported research on gender issues such as decentralization and the economy, to feminists and gender experts in the intergovernmental organizations, governments across the world, women's organizations and wider civil society organizations.

Rawwida remembers IDRC as a 'can do' institution. Senior managers were keen for IDRC to be a centre of excellence for gender equality. WRC team members pushed the frontiers in supporting institutions to translate research findings into policy and social change. The interns were 'buzzy' to undertake challenging tasks such as the background research and justification for the new WRC theme on "Gender and Democratic Governance". An ex-WRC intern, Rebecca Hall, currently doing a PhD at York University, has contributed an excellent chapter to *The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movements*, critically interrogating state policy and programming on gender-based violence in North America. Administrative staff were 'on their game', arranging the regular 'virtual' team meetings that Rawwida was leading in order to manage teams in diverse locations, which has since become an everyday part of her global work.

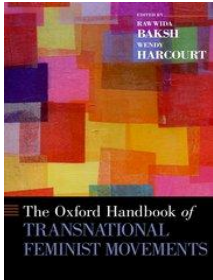
Since leaving IDRC, Rawwida returned to Trinidad & Tobago in 2011. After 16 years of international work at the Commonwealth Secretariat (London, UK) and IDRC, she wished to 'give back' to the region that had provided the foundation for her work on women's empowerment, gender equality and international development.

Rawwida has been working simultaneously at the national, regional and international levels, assisting Caribbean governments in developing national gender policies and leading a team of gender experts to prepare 10 country gender assessments to inform the Caribbean Development Bank's support to its borrowing member countries. She wrote a regular Sunday column on women's rights and gender equality for a national newspaper in commemoration of Trinidad & Tobago's 50th independence anniversary in 2012. Her compilation and editing of *The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movements* is featured below. Doing voluntary work with UN Women's Global Civil Society Advisory Group (GCSAG), the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA), and the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWIL) rounds out a busy life. Rawwida may be contacted at rawwida@gmail.com

Rob Robertson

Alumni in Print

The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movements. Rawwida Baksh and Wendy Harcourt (Eds.)



Provides critical reflection on the accomplishments of transnational feminist movements over the past half-century.

Rawwida writes:

One of the questions we ask in the book is, “Has patriarchy reached its tipping point?” We argue that while feminist movements have challenged gender discrimination and inequalities, there are continuing and increasing gender differentials within and across countries in both the global South and North. Women still have unequal access to fundamental human rights such as food and shelter. Their bodily integrity and sexual and reproductive rights are deeply contested. Women in the global South and North perform the lion’s share of care and social reproduction, are segregated into low-paying occupations, earn less than men for work of equal value, and have unequal control over economic resources. There are still gender gaps in health, education, employment, poverty, entrepreneurship, and decision-making. Violence against women continues in epidemic proportions across the world.

More at: <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-transnational-feminist-movements-9780199943494?prevSortField=9&start=80&q=oxford%20handbook%20political&lang=en&cc=us&prevNumResPerPage=20>

Alumni on Stage

Terry Smutylo



Terry’s brother, Allen, had his play *The Portrait: 1969-Tobermory-O. C. Vail* debut at the Stratford Spring Works Festival on May 17 and 18. The production ran as part of Owen Sound Little Theatre's 2014-15 season at the Roxy Theatre. The play includes eight songs, written by Allen, with music composed and performed by Terry. One of the songs is found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6E8Jh2JTMo>

The Portrait is based on a true story from Allen’s life as a young artist, when he lived in Tobermory in 1969. The play is the story of the friendship between the young artist and O.C. (Orrie) Vail, an ornery old fisherman who, begrudgingly, allows young Allen to draw him at work for a major canvas. The government is trying to make way for a new ferry terminal by expropriating Vail's land; the generations join to fight for one common goal.

Allen has written two books. The second, *The Memory of Water* was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award for English Non-Fiction in 2014.

To appreciate Allen’s painting visit his website at: <http://www.allensmutylo.com/>

Gallery



Jacques Habib Sy, former programme officer in the Communication Division at WARO and EARO, here as délégué général pour l'organisation du XV^e Sommet de la francophonie in November 2014.

Fatmata Aidara Thiaw, for 28 years projects and administration manager at WARO, here as conseillère spéciale au délégué général à la francophonie. After IDRC Fatmata worked for the Académie des sciences et techniques du Sénégal as programme officer for the African Science Academy Development Initiative.

Presentation of the OUP book to Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director, UN Women, at the book launch held at the Intergenerational Dialogue, ECOSOC Chamber, UN Headquarters, 13th March 2015. L to R: Lakshmi Puri, Rawwida Baksh, Wendy Harcourt, and Lopa Banerjee (UN Women).



Where are they now?

Fawzy Kishk



Spotted on the web at: <http://alex.academia.edu/FawzyKishk> where Fawzy is a Faculty Member in the Department of Soil and Water Sciences at Alexandria University.

It's in the cards....



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Letters to the Editor


I recall once when I was trying hard to get a job in EES, I sent Dr. Mousseau Tremblay a letter saying that I would work one month for free. If at the end of the month he was satisfied, we could talk about a proper job, and if he was not satisfied, I would walk away at no cost to IDRC. He called me in, and with broken voice and tear in his eye, said there was nothing he could do for me. I said "no problem, I understand". Two months later he called me in again and gave me an opportunity to compete for a one year consulting contract - which I was eventually awarded - to work on the Technology for Local Enterprises Programme. He had a huge, rough, uncut diamond rock sitting in his office on display. Always thought of him as a 'diamond in the rough', but a true gem nonetheless.

Arun Abraham

The IDRC Alumni on Facebook



Shaun Bona has joined the Alumni Executive to animate the Alumni presence on Facebook.

Expect to hear from Shaun as he encourages you to  .

IN MEMORIAM

David Spurgeon
1925-2015



David was IDRC's first Director of Communications. In the *IDRC Alumni Bulletin* of September 2013 we celebrated his being recognized with an honorary life membership in the Canadian Science Writers' Association in Montreal on June 7 of that year.

For more on David's life before and after IDRC see: <http://journalisme-scientifique.podcastmcq.org/en/treatment-of-science-by-the-media3.php>

A full obituary is found at:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/science-writer-david-spurgeon-took-a-human-interest-focus/article24053800/>

Alumni remember David:

David Spurgeon My Mentor

"Who is the best science writer in Canada", asked David Hopper, IDRC's first President. "His name is David Spurgeon and he works for The Globe and Mail, answered his Human Resources Director. "Tell him that I offer him to be Director of the Communications Division. "

"I am not interested", came back the answer.

"Give me that Spurgeon's phone number. I'll call him", resolved Hopper.

According to the legend, David Spurgeon agreed to take on the job on the condition he would be allowed to continue to do some journalism. And David continued to file stories for *Nature*, *Scientific American*, and launched the science policy magazine *Science Forum*. Under him, Clyde Sanger and I, both former journalists, continued freelancing for various publications. Sure, we were doing it first for ourselves, but often our stories were about IDRC, and IDRC got something out of it. Try to do something like this today, in any Crown corporation!

David Spurgeon, made it possible.

But David's commitment to science journalism went far beyond his own interest. Under his leadership, IDRC initiated several innovative programs to grow indigenous science journalism capabilities in Africa and Asia.

Because of him, I was able to stay in touch with the science journalism community. From him, I learned that science journalism was international. To him, I owe the motivation that eventually made me Director of the World Federation of Science Journalists.

Thank you David!

Jean-Marc Fleury

David Spurgeon was one of the first people I met outside the particular unit where I was working at IDRC, early in 1975. A gentleman, as well as a consummate professional.

Gisèle Morin Labatut

I did know David, not from IDRC so much but through the Canadian Science Writers' Association when I was on their Board of Directors. He was a great science writer and an inspiration.

Louise Behan



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at "IDRC Alumni" group and / or "IDRC" page.*



<https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/556623107712593/>
