



Dear fellow alumni, we hope this newsletter finds you well!

This edition is packed with updates and reflections from the reunions that took place over the summer, a chance to celebrate, reconnect, and strengthen the Pearson spirit across generations. You'll also find news and updates from the College itself, keeping you connected to what's happening on campus.

What's more, we're sharing ways for you to get involved in the alumni community, whether near or far.

As always, the PCAA is here to help foster connections with your peers, your cohort, and the wider Pearson network.

Updates on the College

Impressions from the 50th Reunion

The 50th anniversary reunion, held from August 1st to 4th, was attended by approximately 130 alumni and friends from years 1 through 5 from around the world. The reunion was preceded by a 1.5-day gathering of about 50 alumni from Years 1 and 2. It was an amazing few days. Absent classmates were sorely missed, as sadly, some couldn't get visas in time, and borders continue to separate many of us.

The reunion took place in great weather, reminding us what a paradise the College can be in the midst of summer, unlike the seven months of cold rain we all remember. Both Jason McBride, Head of College, and Lori Sterling, Year 2 Chair of the Board, spoke frankly about the mission, the initiatives underway, and the challenges ahead, all of which illustrate the quality of current leadership at both the College and Board levels. Consequently, most people felt optimistic about the College's situation and outlook:

- Jason held a Village Meeting and presented an overview of College operations and recent developments, including a financial overview, followed by an extensive Q&A session.
- Jason described the recent collective agreement process as arduous, but with it completed and in line with previous understandings, he was optimistic about moving forward.
- Jayne Hammond, Director of Advancement & External Relations, and Jineane Eason, Senior Manager of Donor Engagement & Gift Planning, discussed the state of giving, the levels of different endowed scholarships, and participation rates by year.
- Jason took alumni on a tour of the infrastructure projects: the pool is shut down due to cracks in the foundation, the electrical grid is undergoing complete rewiring, and the social innovation lab is under construction in the old LLT.
- Encouraging discussions were had with Jayne. Phoebe Mason, Alumni Engagement Manager, will be leaving the College, and recruiting for the position is ongoing. Future possibilities for collaboration with the PCAA were discussed, which could enhance segmented messaging for alumni and provide information on the College's endowment.

Other reunion highlights included:

- Musical events included two evenings of impromptu jam sessions in the Common Room, with mostly Year 4 musicians on piano, saxophone, and song, as well as a choir on various occasions, including the Memorial by the lookout.
- A silent auction was held, offering a diverse range of items, including books, paintings, honey, and various crafts. Approximately \$12k was raised through the auction.
- One alum anonymously offered a donation of \$50k to match donations from Years 1 to 5 at a 3:1 ratio if they hadn't donated in the past five years.
- Jason gave a presentation on the 'Ripple' program, which consists of five to seven weeks of sessions designed to help students and faculty navigate difficult conversations. The program emphasizes constructive dialogue over winning arguments and teaches participants how to identify when specific issues are a 'learning experience' or 'harmful and not right'.
- The usual range of activities was also had, including a walk to Matheson Lake and some interactive artistic projects, and plenty of long conversations. While the bar was well stocked, the food was not a highlight...



A view to the West from East Sooke Regional Park

College Finances

A small group of alumni offered to call around afterwards to classmates to help raise funds, match the large donation on offer, and increase the participation rate. Jayne led a few working calls to prepare, and also arranged a time with Anselme Hategekimana, Director of Finance and IT, who patiently clarified aspects of the College's finances.

As you probably know, the College's Statements are prepared under 'charitable accounting' principles, and also consolidate the endowment, which makes the numbers more difficult to interpret.

The good news is that when you take the 'operating result (shortfall)' and add the stipulated draw from the endowment (4%), the College has been close to break-even over the past five years. The initial impact of COVID-19, including student dislocation and higher costs, resulted in a relatively large loss in 2020. However, subsequent years saw a return to a small surplus, followed by a small deficit due to unexpected cost increases, such as food and insurance.

The numbers below are taken from the Financial Statements as of June 30 and in thousands of Canadian dollars. Still, they are presented differently here to convey that the College generally budgets a tight break-even point, without significant increases in borrowing or drawing down extra funds from the endowment.

| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Operational Shortfall | (2,747) | (1,366) | (1,464) | (2,583) | (2,017) |
| Endowment Draw (4%) | 1,605 | 1,632 | 1,631 | 1,738 | 1,732 |
| Net Result | (1,141) | 266 | 167 | (845) | (286) |

However, challenges remain ahead of us. Some costs are increasing, including faculty salaries relating to the collective agreement, van drivers, dining, and flights. There remain some large capital expenditures to continue renovating the 50-year-old infrastructure.

- The \$41.2M Renew & Re-found Campaign resulted in new metal roofs, renovated residences, and improvements to the docks and marine science space. The rebuild of the old LLT, which will become a large workspace with windows, has been fully funded by BMO, hence the BMO Social Innovation Lab. The rewiring of the electrical grid could not be postponed and will cost \$ 5M. It will be initially funded by a bank loan, repaid with an endowment capex draw annually, or through donations.
- Scholarship funding remains mixed, with the current balance consisting of 50% students on full scholarships, 25% on partial scholarships, and 25% paying the full fee. The College aims to prevent further decline into this model, and the goal remains to increase the availability of full scholarships.
- It had been suggested periodically over the years that the College would be more financially viable with a larger student body, say 300 in total. While it is true that spreading the fixed costs over more students would lower the cost per student, a few offsetting factors apply with greater numbers, such as a potential dining hall expansion and a need for additional classrooms. The adjacent land, part of the College's lease with the Government of Canada, is very hilly and unsuitable for building, and further parts have been allocated to the First Nations community as part of the claims settlement. More importantly, the significant capital expenditure required to expand infrastructure and the daunting task of finding an extra 100 scholarships present significant barriers to this solution.

The above explains why the College continues to fundraise, as things are tight. Alumni have contributed generously in the past, both large donations and smaller ones. The key now is to reactivate that support and increase both the participation rate and scholarship funds available.

Next time, we hope to present further information on the state of the endowment (\$50M), Revenue (\$10M), and Expenses (\$12M).

Pearson College Alumni Association Annual General Meeting

On behalf of the Pearson College Alumni Association, we're delighted to invite all Pearson alumni and the community and share this invitation to the PCAA Annual General Meeting:

Pearson College Alumni Association – Annual General Meeting

Saturday, October 18th at 1300 ET

[Zoom Link](#)

This Zoom link will be your entry point to the various discussions planned throughout the day, including the formal AGM business session. Before and after the AGM, we will also host Fireside Chat sessions, which will be either facilitated or moderated, as well as unstructured spaces, providing everyone with an opportunity to engage in discussions with others on themes and topics of shared interest. The themes were chosen with input from alumni.

9:30 - 10:30 ET ~ Fireside Chat

PCAA Initiatives Review & Growth: Discussion of People Count & Mentoring Initiatives

10:45 - 11:45 ET ~ Fireside Chat

Year Reps: Stories, Learnings, and the Art of Connecting Alums Over the Years

12:00 - 13:00 ET ~ Fireside Chat

AI & Technology: Impact on Our Lives & Society, Shaping Technology for Good

13:00 - 14:30 ET ~ PCAA Annual General Meeting & Town Hall

14:45 - 15:45 ET ~ Fireside Chat

Health, Mental Health & Wellness: Stories, Learnings, and Exchange

16:00 - 17:00 ET ~ Fireside Chat

Parenting & Happiness: Stories, Learnings, Exchange

[View the Full Schedule](#)

Similar to last year, Jason and Jayne will be leading the College Town Hall session with an opportunity for you to bring your most pressing questions about the College today.

We look forward to seeing you on October 18th!



Call for Volunteers

The College is looking to invite alumni on a voluntary basis and offers room and board, as well as covers local transportation costs. Here are the dates:

CAS Week: March 23 – 27

The following skill sets would be especially useful:

- Outdoorsy for Action Week in Bamfield
- Academic and wellness orientation for Academic and Wellness Week in Camp Imadene (just outside Lake Cowichan)
- “Basecamp” support for CAS Week (whether at the Navy cadet camp or on campus)
- Specialty skills linked to different CASes for CAS Week.

Interested alumni can reach out to alumni@pearsoncollege.ca

Alumni Initiatives – Global Village Speaker Series

Can Finance Save the Planet? How Climate Change Shapes the Economy - and what you can do about it

Join us on Saturday, October 11, 2025, at 1300 UTC when featured speaker Luka Milic from Toronto Metropolitan University will discuss the relationship between the global economy and climate change. This alumni event, organized by Laurie Houston, Year 3, invites all economists and climatologists to a lively and interactive discussion.

Register for the event here.

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/XFmwGhEATmSNFmbQWk_fwA

Marketplace & Bulletin Board

Older alumni may remember the great bulletin board in the dining hall. Every day, a great amount of time was spent looking through the various notices and messages. We dare to say that the College would not have run well without this important means of non-digital communication. We would like our PCAA Newsletter to have that same vibe.

This Newsletter section can be anything we want it to be. Please send us your messages, comments, and maybe even poems to share. You may also have a business, products, or services you would like to advertise. Job postings and volunteer positions could also find a home in the newsletter or on our [PCAA LinkedIn Page](#).

Please send these to your Year Rep, who will forward them to us for inclusion in the next newsletter. Don't be shy!

If you would like to send something more concrete, such as an article or story from this past reunion or information about an initiative you are involved in that other alumni may be interested in, please feel free to send that as well.

If this section gains significant traction, we can add it to our website.

Get Involved

The PCAA is working hard to strengthen connections, support alumni, and align our efforts with our shared values. Whether you want to stay in touch, contribute ideas, or help shape our direction, we'd love to hear from you.

We continue to seek alumni to get involved as Year Representatives. The Year Reps are the backbone of the PCAA, and without them, we would not have such an efficient network. We are looking for Year Reps for: Year 6 - Year 14 - Year 16 - Year 17 - Year 18 - Year 25 - Year 30 - Year 32 - Year 41 - Year 43 - Year 46 - Year 47 - Year 50

If you are in the year above or below these, please help us find a suitable Year Rep!

Finally, please get in touch to join the conversation and get involved!

Send us an email at pcaafb23@gmail.com

Or check out our website at pcalumni.org

PCAA Council

Carly Downs, Year 2

Analisa Balares, Year 19

Édouard Bourcier, Year 39

Stefan Harpe, Year 2

Alix Wilson, Year 20

Natalia Cabrera-Rovetta, Year 40

Pedro Guevara-Mann, Year 12

Eric Tse, Year 22

Keegen Payne, Year 40

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Pearson College



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