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University of Lethbridge Alumni Association inducts four members into Alumni Honour Society

The University of Lethbridge Alumni Association's (ULAA) Alumni Honour Society is adding four new members for 2022, recognizing significant contributions the inductees are making to their respective communities.

The new honour society members reflect the breadth and depth of the ULethbridge alumni family and showcase the valuable work alumni are doing throughout the province, the country and worldwide.

“While our new inductees have all taken their own path since graduating from ULethbridge and established themselves in different careers, a common theme is that they all have made it a priority to give back to their communities,” says Deirdre McKenna (BA '94) ULAA president. “Whether it is through philanthropy, as volunteers or through their respective careers, these outstanding individuals are making a positive impact and bettering the world around them.”

2022 Alumni Honour Society Inductees

Drew Beauchamp (BMgt '06)

Andrew (Drew) Beauchamp excels at leadership. An army reservist with the Calgary Highlanders before attending the University of Lethbridge, he continued his part-time military service locally throughout his undergraduate studies. He later accepted a full-time position with the Army Reserves, and in 2008, deployed to Afghanistan. There, he led a platoon of 45 army reservists, who protected resupply convoys and provided security at the main entrance to Kandahar Airfield. Back in Canada as a reservist, Beauchamp led all the Calgary-based army reserve soldiers during the 2013 Alberta floods. Today, in addition to being a program lead in human resources at Alberta Health Services, he is pursuing a Master of Public Administration through the Royal Military College. Beauchamp is also now commanding officer of the Calgary Highlanders.

Cyndi Bester (BMus '95, MEd '01)

Cynthia (Cyndi) Bester has an expansive record of achievement. An award-winning business leader, she has travelled the world as a concert pianist, co-written four

bestselling books and taken the stage as a competitive bodybuilder. During her business career, Bester has helmed successful companies specializing in registry services, health care and workplace safety. Today, as chief executive officer of the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce, she has spearheaded a wide range of policy initiatives aimed at strengthening the local business community. A tireless volunteer who has received national recognition for her philanthropic efforts, she currently serves on the University of Lethbridge Senate, Co-Chairs the Reconciliation Lethbridge Advisory Committee and is a member of the Community Wellbeing and Safety Advisory Committee. Cyndi Bester also sits on the board of directors of Economic Development Lethbridge.

Brad Dersch (BA/BEEd '01)

Brad Dersch has long been passionate about sports. While attending the University of Lethbridge, he played varsity hockey and was twice named an Academic All-Canadian by the national governing body of university sport. He went on to work as a physical education teacher and administrator for the Lethbridge School Division, becoming principal of G.S. Lakie Middle School this fall. Over the years, in addition to completing graduate studies at Gonzaga University, Dersch has coached dozens of school- and community-based teams. Many of his former players, in fact, have gone on to compete at the post-secondary and professional levels. Last spring, in honour of his commitment to developing local youth as athletes and citizens through coaching, Dersch received the Shaun Ward Sport Champion Award from Lethbridge Sport Council.

Michael Mankowski (BMgt '10)

Michael Mankowski owned a video production company in Fort McMurray when the 2016 wildfire devastated his hometown. Following the disaster, the Red Cross asked him to interview local residents. Their touching stories inspired Mankowski to write an animated film about the fire, and later, to study animation at Vancouver Film School. His 2021 film, *Back Home Again*, features an all-star cast, including Michael J. Fox, Catherine O'Hara and Lorne Cardinal. To date, *Back Home Again* has won the Jury Award for Best Short Film and the Audience Choice Award for Best Dramatic Film at the Edmonton International Film Festival and Leo awards for Best Animated Program and Best Screenwriting from the Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Foundation of British Columbia. Most recently, Mankowski's film enjoyed an Oscar-qualifying theatrical run.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/alumni-honour-society-welcomes-four-new-members>

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