

# Emeritus Awards

## CELEBRATING DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Emeritus is an honorary title given to retiring or retired faculty or professional staff to recognize their outstanding contribution to teaching, service, or leadership in an organization.

Langara is proud to award the Emeritus/Emerita designation to the following recipients since the College introduced the [Emeritus/Emerita Designation Policy](#) in 2013.

2013	2014	2015	2016
Antony Holland Mike Holmwood Doug Soo	JJ Denholm Patricia McKenzie Norman Olenick	Alister Browne Cynthia Flood Abbe Nielsen	Martin Gerson Suki Grewal Jane Heyman Linda Holmes
2017	2018	2019	
Robert Dykstra Gwyneth Lewis Peter Prontzos Theodore Ryniak	Frances Grunberg Scott Plear Barbara Wuhrer	Deanna Douglas Cheryle McKeeman Peter Norwood	

Bios below are listed in the order of recipients' last name.



### ALISTER BROWNE - FACULTY EMERITUS, PHILOSOPHY (AWARDED IN 2015)

Alister Browne was an instructor in the Philosophy Department from 1987 to 2005, serving two six-year terms as Department Chair. He has given eleven talks in the Langara Community Lecture Series, authored course materials still in use by the Philosophy Department, and articulated two courses (Biomedical Ethics & Critical Thinking and Business Ethics) that are requirements in the Langara School of Management and Langara School of Nursing.

Browne's contributions to the Philosophy and Bioethics communities are profound, with 54 peer-reviewed publications. From 1995-2003, while at UBC, he served as Director of UBC's Division of Health Care Ethics, and subsequently as the Ethics Theme Director of the Medical School, then retired as a Clinical Professor in 2013. He has served on Ethics Committees of several area hospitals for over 30 years and as a Board Member of the BC Civil Liberties Association.



### JAMES JOHNSTONE DENHOLM - PRINCIPAL EMERITUS, VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LANGARA CAMPUS (AWARDED IN 2014)

James Johnstone Denholm was the Principal of Vancouver Community College's Langara campus from 1972 to 1988. He provided strong consistent leadership at a time when the BC college system was in flux. Under his steady hand, Langara became a significant player in BC's post-secondary education system.

Dr. Denholm believes that the world will step aside for those who know where they are going. He is proud of the contribution he has made to the development of Langara's exceptional learning environment and quality programming that continues to meet the needs of the community.



**DEANNA DOUGLAS – VICE-PRESIDENT EMERITA, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE  
(AWARDED IN 2019)**

Deanna Douglas became Langara's first Bursar when the College gained independence in 1994. She was instrumental in developing Langara's first administrative team. Working collaboratively within the organization, Deanna's expertise in financial planning and monitoring led Langara to a strong position of financial sustainability with a foundation for future growth. She was a key player in the development of the 25-year campus masterplan. Prior to retirement in 2013, Deanna held the positions of Vice-President, Administration & Finance, and Vice President, Enrolment Management.



**ROBERT DYKSTRA - FACULTY EMERITUS, JOURNALISM (AWARDED IN 2017)**

Rob Dykstra dedicated much of his professional life to teaching generations of journalists - more than 1,000 in total. He retired in 2016 after 32 years of service at Langara as instructor, coordinator, and chair of the Langara Journalism Program, as well as chair of the Creative Arts Division. He oversaw the introduction of new courses, launched the Langara Journalism Review, and taught almost every course in the Journalism Program curriculum. Dykstra created opportunities to connect students with industry professionals; and facilitated student internships and entry-level jobs. Notably, he is a recipient of the Langara Leadership Excellence Award (2005-2006), and more recently, the Bill Good Award, in recognition for his significant contribution to the field of journalism.



**CYNTHIA FLOOD - FACULTY EMERITA, ENGLISH (AWARDED IN 2015)**

Cynthia Flood began her academic career at Langara College as an instructor in the English Department in 1971, until retiring in 2001. She served as Coordinator of the Women's Studies Department and as Assistant Chair in the English Department, as well as a Board Member on the Langara Faculty Association. Throughout her career she was an unfailingly supportive colleague, especially of junior faculty, demonstrating remarkable leadership within the College.

While teaching, Flood established her writing career, publishing the story collections *The Animals In Their Elements* and *My Father Took A Cake To France*. Her novel *Making A Stone of The Heart*, plus more short fiction, *The English Stories* and the most recent *Red Girl Rat Boy*, have appeared since her retirement, garnering much praise and several literary awards. In addition to her literary and academic contributions, Flood's work as a political activist in the women's movement, unions, and anti-war organizations has been notable.



**DR. MARTIN GERSON - VICE-PRESIDENT ACADEMIC AND PROVOST EMERITUS  
(AWARDED IN 2016)**

Dr. Martin Gerson's 38-year career at Langara was characterized by distinguished service as a faculty member in the Mathematics Department, Faculty Association President, Division Chair, Dean of Instruction, and the College's first Vice-President Academic and Provost. His service to the College, internally and externally, professionally and personally, constitutes an unparalleled contribution in the history of the institution. Throughout his career, Dr. Gerson was highly respected and warmly regarded by the Langara community as an ethical leader and trusted colleague who embodied our highly valued collegial model. In 2012 Dr. Gerson was given the Idahlynn Karre International Exemplary Leadership Award by The Chair Academy for making a significant contribution to academic and administrative leadership in his work.



**SUKI GREWAL - FACULTY EMERITA, NURSING (AWARDED IN 2016)**

Suki Grewal taught in the Langara College School of Nursing from 2003 to 2015. She brought an intense focus on cultural safety, global health, research, and scholarship, and has positively influenced the School of Nursing's curriculum. Grewal continues to be a tireless community volunteer and advocate. She has served as an advisory committee member for the BC Cancer Agency for the Oral Cancer Prevention Program among the South Asian Community; a Canadian consultant for the Royal Institute of Nursing in Punjab, India; and a member of the "We Can" committee focused on domestic violence. Her research into South Asian health issues has also been widely published in various health related journals.



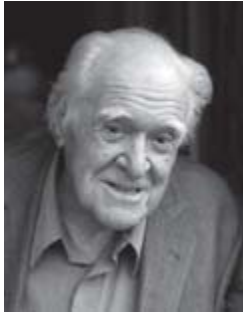
**FRANCES GRUNBERG - FACULTY EMERITA, SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER (AWARDED IN 2018)**

Frances Grunberg is a recognized expert in the field of child abuse and neglect in BC and beyond. She has led the Child Abuse Team in Vancouver, the Child Protection Consultation Service, and the development of the Risk Assessment Model commissioned by the Ministry for Children and Families. Frances has also consulted for UNICEF on violence against women and children in Sierra Leone. In addition to her widely recognized work on child maltreatment, Frances has worked on the development of curriculum at Langara, both in the Department of Social Service and as the leader in developing Langara's new Diploma in Gerontology.



**JANE HEYMAN - FACULTY EMERITA, THEATRE ARTS (AWARDED IN 2016)**

Jane Heyman is a Jessie award-winning director who worked as a full-time member of the Theatre Arts faculty between 1985 and 2005. She served as the department's first Associate Director from 1991 until her retirement, and was instrumental in building Studio 58 into a nationally renowned program. Heyman remains deeply connected to the department, as a member of the Theatre Arts Advisory Committee, and periodic director of student productions, including February 2016's *The Train Carr*. After retirement, she created the Jane Heyman Fund for Creative Collaboration, and most recently co-chaired the Studio 58 Legacy Fund, which has raised over \$130,000 since the fall of 2014. She also co-founded Vancouver's Performing Arts Lodge (PAL), a unique social housing and theatre complex in Coal Harbour that provides a home for senior performing arts professionals.



**ANTONY HOLLAND - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR EMERITUS, THEATRE ARTS AT STUDIO 58 (AWARDED IN 2013)**

Antony Holland, one of Canada's most acclaimed actors, was the founder of Langara's nationally-recognized theatre arts program, Theatre Arts at Studio 58. Holland officially retired in 1985, but continued to support Studio 58 operations by acting, directing, and mentoring students until he passed on in 2015. In his exceptional career he earned three Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards (two for Best Performance as a Lead Actor and Lifetime Achievement distinction), the Sam Payne Award for Humanity, Integrity and Encouragement of New Talent, and the Union of BC Performers Award of Excellence. Holland was an inductee of the BC Entertainment Hall of Fame, and was named as a member of the Order of Canada in 2014.



**LINDA HOLMES - PRESIDENT EMERITA (AWARDED IN 2016)**

Linda Holmes was the founding President of Langara College. During the Langara Faculty Association strike in 1992, Holmes represented Langara in the negotiation with the Ministry of Advanced Education to transform the institution into a stand-alone College. Since that time, Langara has prospered and grown physically as a result of her leadership in the development and approval of the Master Plan for Facility Development. Holmes helped create a unique and valued identity for Langara College and ensured that Langara built a reputation for program quality and excellence. Prior to stepping into the presidency, she was a Nursing faculty member, Career Program Division Chair, and Dean of Administration and Student Services.



**MICHAEL HOLMWOOD - FACULTY EMERITUS, BIOLOGY (AWARDED IN 2013)**

Holmwood is a Langara pioneer. He recognized the potential of technology to positively shape pedagogy. His vision was instrumental in founding Langara's Educational Technology Department and the delivery the College's first online science course. While at Langara, he served for two terms as Chair of the Biology Department and as Divisional Chair for Math and Science. Holmwood is the recipient of the ACCC Teaching Excellence Award (1997-98) as well as the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education's Canadian Community College Professor of the Year Award (1998).



**GWYNETH LEWIS - FACULTY EMERITA, CLASSICAL STUDIES (AWARDED IN 2017)**

Gwyneth Lewis developed Langara classical studies into the rigorous and respected program of study it is today. This program, unique among two-year institutions, has helped students prepare for and launch into careers in diverse fields. Throughout her career in the Department of History, Latin, and Political Science, and the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Lewis exhibited an extraordinary dedication to her students, the program, the field of classical studies, and to Langara. Lewis changed the lives of countless students, helping them view history and the world from new perspectives. As a scholar, Lewis gave lectures at the Langara Lecture Series, the Classical Association of Canada, Pharos, and was involved in the leadership of several prominent classical associations, including the Vancouver chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America. She continues to pursue research in Greek epigraphy and Greek and Latin influence on English.



**CHERYL MCKEEMAN – FACULTY EMERITA, MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS (AWARDED IN 2019)**

Throughout Cheryl McKeeman's 37 years of service, she was instrumental in shaping the Langara Faculty Association, championing the rights of students, and mentoring successors. She developed and taught courses in statistics and mathematics and incorporated applied data analysis and real-life data-collection projects to ensure students became informed consumers of data. Cheryl played a foundational role in building and maintaining a culture of collegiality, cooperation, and collaboration amongst faculty and management at Langara.



**PATRICIA MCKENZIE - FACULTY EMERITA, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (AWARDED IN 2014)**

Patricia McKenzie served as an instructor and department chair in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) department from 1979 to 1998. Patricia was instrumental in the cutting-edge design of a double intake system and the Early Childhood Special Education Program. Her work led to innovations that set the Langara ECE program apart from others, innovations that continue to attract students today. She was a passionate teacher and a mentor to many of the current instructors. As an active volunteer in the community, she developed programs and supported non-profit organizations that continue to enrich the lives of many. Patricia passed away peacefully in 2017, but will always be remembered for her dedication and commitment to early childhood education, and as a strong advocate for services for children and families in our community.



**ABBE NIELSEN - FACULTY EMERITA, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (AWARDED IN 2015)**

Abbe Nielsen was a popular accounting instructor in Langara's Business Administration Department from 1989 until she retired in 2012. In 1997, she became the Department Chair, guiding the department through a period of significant growth and change by building consensus and recruiting exceptional new Langara instructors and staff. In retirement, she continues to serve the School of Management as an informal but active advisor to the current leadership team. Prior to Langara she was an instructor at both UBC and BCIT.

Nielsen also has considerable experience working with and volunteering for not-for-profit and cooperative organizations. She is a former President of the Board of Directors at REACH Community Health Centre and was appointed to the first Board of Directors of what is now known as the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. Currently, Nielsen is the Treasurer of the RainCity Housing and Support Society.



**PETER NORWOOD – FACULTY EMERITUS, LANGARA SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT (AWARDED IN 2019)**

Peter Norwood is an innovative and engaged educator who helped expand Langara's degree offerings by spearheading the creation of the Bachelor of Business Administration. He was the first Department Chair of the Langara School of Management. Peter also guided the development of Langara's curriculum to support Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) Canada's Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance. He is the recipient of the CPA Canada Volunteer Award, the Ritchie McCloy Award for Volunteerism, and Langara's Leadership Excellence Award.




**NORMAN F.E. OLENICK - FACULTY EMERITUS, KINESIOLOGY (AWARDED IN 2014)**

Norman Olenick is a Langara Kinesiology pioneer. He served as the department chair when it was still known as the Department of Physical Education and Recreation. During his tenure, he implemented the Recreation Leadership Diploma Program, the first two-year diploma in the field offered by a BC college; helped expand academic transfer courses and diplomas; and assisted in the development of Langara's Athletics and Intramurals programs.

In 2013, the Kinesiology Faculty Leadership Scholarship was established in Norm's honour. A volunteer with several provincial and national organizations, he has received several awards for his contributions, including the Queen Elizabeth Silver Jubilee Medal in 2013.


**SCOTT PLEAR - FACULTY EMERITUS, FINE ARTS (AWARDED IN 2018)**

Scott Plear was a faculty member in the Department of Fine Arts from 1986 to 2013. Throughout this time, he served as both Department and Division Chair while continuing to work professionally as a painter. Scott is known for teaching and mentoring his colleagues and always offering generous encouragement, advice, and support. Scott's generosity is reflected in his willingness to loan and donate his art work to the college. Langara is fortunate to have these canvases to enhance the campus and inspire future artists. Scott was elected to the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 2004 and his work has been exhibited internationally at the Eva Cohn Gallery in Chicago, the British Columbia House in England, and the Mobile International Artists' Workshop Exhibit in Zambia.


**PETER PRONTZOS - FACULTY EMERITUS, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (AWARDED IN 2017)**

Peter Prontzos' contributions to the College span over 25 years and include teaching in both political science and interdisciplinary studies. He created new courses in political science, latin american studies, and peace and conflict studies, and contributed to an international education program in Greece, as well as educational tours to Greece with Langara's Department of Continuing Studies. Prontzos served as coordinator of political science, and sat on the hiring committees for both the economics and journalism departments. He was a founding member of the "Transforming Langara Committee," which promoted sustainability at the College. Prontzos was a perennial speaker at the Langara Community Lecture Series for two decades and presented at the Langara Employee Development Centre professional development seminars. Since retiring in 2015, he continues to lead tours to Greece with Continuing Studies.


**THEODORE RYNIAC - FACULTY EMERITUS, PHYSICS (AWARDED IN 2017)**

Born in Poland, and immigrating to Canada in 1928, Ryniak has an accomplished and varied career. After joining the Canadian Air Force as a wireless mechanic during the war, Ryniak attended U.B.C., completing his Masters of Education. Initially teaching elementary school, moving to high school and then adult education, Ryniak has been an inspiring physics teacher. He is an innovator who deeply influenced the high school physics curriculum, co-writing a core text used in the curriculum. He was an inaugural member of Vancouver City College, which later became Langara College and as Department Head, Ryniak continuously upgraded the physics lab program, while designing courses for photography and journalism.



### DOUG SOO - DEAN EMERITUS, CONTINUING STUDIES (AWARDED IN 2013)

Doug Soo was Langara's first Dean of Continuing Studies. During the 16 years he was at the helm of Continuing Studies, the division grew to become one of the largest and most successful providers of adult education in BC. A well-known educator and community builder, he served on the boards and committees of a variety of organizations, including the United Way of the Lower Mainland, the Canadian Cancer Society, Crisis Centre BC, and Vancity Credit Union. He was awarded the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada Commemorative Medal for Service to the Community, and was named an Honorary Life Member by the Association for Community Education in BC in 1994. Soo passed away suddenly in 2014 doing what he loved, hiking on Grouse Mountain with friends.



### BARBARA WUHRER - FACULTY EMERITA, LANGARA SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT (AWARDED IN 2018)

Barbara Wuhrer started her career in post secondary education in 1976 and came to Langara in 1984 when the College was still part of Vancouver Community College (VCC). In the 42 years that she's worked in higher education, Barbara has made significant contributions as an instructor in multiple departments including Langara's School of Management and the Department of Computing Science and Information Systems. Barbara received professional recognition for her work in pioneering initiatives to develop and implement new systems for online, mixed mode, and in-class course delivery. She also worked as Project Manager for the Educational Technology Department and Langara's School of Management to implement software College-wide.