

2026

Alumni Awards of Excellence



CAPILANO
UNIVERSITY

Capilano University Alumni Association (CUAA) Excellence Award

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All proceeds will go directly
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in their final year of study who
demonstrate dedication and
community engagement beyond
the classroom while maintaining
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This support aims to ease their
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to nurturing future leaders.

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A space to celebrate

Capilano University and CUAA are pleased to present the 17th annual **Alumni Awards of Excellence**.

We proudly celebrate the 2026 recipients—extraordinary alumni whose ideas, leadership and impact are helping ignite the future.

Embodying CapU's brand essences of being **Open, Expressive, Dedicated, Relevant and Enterprising**, these five recipients are catalysts for positive change.

Thank you for joining us to celebrate our CapU Alumni and highlight the powerful contributions they have made to the communities in which they live and work.

Evening program

7:00–9:30 pm

7:00 pm: Cocktail reception

Cocktail reception

7:35 pm: Welcome & opening remarks

Dr. Jason Dewling, President,
Capilano University

Thomas Affolter, Capilano
University alum

Music by Nelson Boschman

8:00 pm: Awards & panel discussion

Open Award: Farah Rattansi

Expressive Award: Gordon Inglis

Dedicated Award: Himikalas Pam Baker

Relevant Award: Tom McPherson

Enterprising Award: Alison Taylor

8:45 pm: Thank you & closing remarks

Matthew Smith, Board Chair, CUAA

8:50–9:30 pm: Extended networking

Alumni Awards of Excellence

A sincere thank you to everyone who took the time to submit a nomination for the Alumni Awards of Excellence. We received a record number of nominations this year, a testament to the remarkable leadership and innovation of CapU alumni. We would like to recognize our nominees for their outstanding achievements and meaningful contributions to their professional field and community.

Selection committee panel

Each nomination received was thoughtfully assessed and scored based on the award category criteria and additional criteria, including spirit, passion, innovation, personal achievement and collaboration.

Thank you to our dedicated selection committee for reviewing all nominations and confirming our five award recipients.

Selection committee panel (continued)



H el ene Leboucher

*Executive Assistant to
the Vice-President,
Academic and Provost,
Capilano University*



Sam Tecele

*Board of Governors,
Capilano University*



Kate Phifer

*Capilano University
Alumni Association
(CUAA) Board Member*



Maria Valiouk

*Divisional Supervisor Faculty
of Education, Health & Human
Development and School of
Access & Academic Preparation,
Capilano University*

Capilano University Alumni Association

Our Vision

The CUAA envisions a future where investment in the success of our students and alumni inspires our members, strengthens the CapU experience and fosters excellence in our communities.

Our Mission

The CUAA will achieve this vision by supporting and developing our members, fostering student success and celebrating achievements in our communities.

Our Commitment

The CUAA exists for a single reason—YOU. Tonight is also our opportunity to demonstrate that you, as a CapU alumni, can count on us as you continue your journey.

CapilanoU.ca/alumni

A message from the chair



**Matthew
Smith**

*Capilano University
Alumni Association*

The Capilano University Alumni Association (CUAA) is very proud to celebrate and recognize the accomplishments of our 2026 Alumni Awards of Excellence recipients. What an honour it is for the University to acknowledge each of you for your hard work and commitment to your chosen paths.

CapU has so many deserving and accomplished alumni who are leaders in their communities. As alumni, we are all bonded by our

common experience and love for our university. CapU is such a special place, and I know our 100,000+ alumni all join me in congratulating each recipient on their achievements. Each of you inspires us to continue growing, to strive for new heights and to give back more in our communities.

I reflect fondly on my time at CapU, and I am so thankful for the opportunity to serve on the CUAA board and give back to a university that has given me so much.

My sincere congratulations to all recipients and nominees. I look forward to engaging with many of our alumni in the year ahead!

Sincerely,

Matthew Smith

Board Chair, Capilano University
Alumni Association

A message from the president



**Dr. Jason
Dewling**

*President
Capilano University*

Thank you for joining us for this special evening as we ignite the future by celebrating five outstanding CapU alumni.

As someone who just started at CapU, I'm already impressed by the bold ideas, courageous leadership and boundary-pushing spirit of tonight's alumni award recipients. They don't wait for the future; they create it.

Tonight, we honour their achievements and recommit ourselves to creating distinct university experiences that inspire imagination, strengthen

connections and fuel a healthier, more vibrant future for alumni, students and the communities we serve.

I look forward to getting to know all of tonight's recipients and connecting with the CapU alumni community of leaders and changemakers.

All the best,

Dr. Jason Dewling

President, Capilano University

Evening host



Thomas Affolter

Capilano University alum

Thomas Affolter is a filmmaker and co-founder with his three brothers of Foreshadow Films, a Vancouver-based production company. His diverse work spans from comedies to dramas, earning over 75 awards and nominations, including three Canadian Screen Awards, four Leo Awards, and even a Special Jury mention at the Tribeca Film Festival. In addition to his own films, Thomas has directed over 100 commercials for brands such as Disney, Netflix, and Cirque du Soleil. A Capilano University alum, he earned a CCAA National Scholar award while playing varsity volleyball.

Open Award

Fostering community connection, cultivating spaces of belonging and prioritizing equity-building.

Farah Rattansi

*Bachelor of Arts–Applied
Behaviour Analysis (Autism)
Capilano University
2016*

Four Facts about Farah:

- Birthplace: Toronto, ON
- Where you live now: West Vancouver, BC
- On the bucket list: Legacy
- One word describing your time at CapU: Transformative

Presented by:



TD Insurance



Dr. Farah Rattansi is the founder and clinical director of My Empower Therapy, a leading, multi award-winning pediatric therapy organization across British Columbia. A 2025 Surrey Women Excellence Large Business Award winner, Surrey Now-Leader Community Leadership Excellence Award recipient, and two-time International Stevie Award winner, she leads the expansion of compassionate, evidence-based care for children with autism and developmental challenges through inclusive, community-focused programs.

Farah epitomizes the CapU brand essence, Open, through providing inclusive, accessible autism care rooted in community and belonging.

[More on Farah](#)

Expressive Award

Authentic expressions of intersectionality and personal character.

Gordon Inglis

*Media Resources Diploma
Capilano University
1986*

Four Facts about Gordon:

- Birthplace: Vancouver, BC
- Where you live now: Vancouver, BC
- On the bucket list: Ghibli Theme Park
- One word describing your time at CapU: Vertigo



Gordon Inglis is the division manager of Multimedia, Web and Design at Metro Vancouver and a leader in civic media production. His creative direction has shaped award-winning public campaigns and immersive experiences, earning Telly, Leo, and Juno Awards for excellence in storytelling and innovation.

Gordon epitomizes the CapU brand essence, Expressive, by using innovative storytelling to amplify diverse voices and bring Vancouver's communities to life.

[More on Gordon](#)

Dedicated Award

Actions that demonstrate our caring and community. Ensuring accessibility on all fronts.

Himikalas Pam Baker

*Textile Arts Diploma
Capilano University
1994*

Four Facts about Himikalas Pam Baker:

- Birthplace: Vancouver, BC
- Where you live now: Capilano Reserve (West Vancouver)
- On the bucket list: Travel
- One word describing your time at CapU: Welcoming

Presented by:

Neptune
TERMINALS



Dedicated Award **Himikalas Pam Baker**

Himikalas Pam Baker (Himikalas/Sewid-duuk) is a Squamish/Kwakiutl/Tlingit/Haida fashion designer, artist and entrepreneur. Founder of Touch of Culture and a 2025 BC Achievement Indigenous Business Award recipient, Himikalas Pam Baker designed regalia for the 2010 Olympics and has had a 35-year career creating West Coast designs, mentoring Indigenous artists, and presenting collections worldwide from Canada to Paris.

Himikalas Pam Baker epitomizes the CapU brand essence, Dedicated, by reshaping fashion into a place of learning, collaboration, and empowerment for Indigenous artists.

[More on Himikalas Pam Baker](#)

Relevant Award

Storytelling and sharing lived experiences. Continuing to address the needs of our communities and society.

Tom McPherson

*Outdoor Recreation Management Program
Capilano University
2005*

Four Facts about Tom:

- Birthplace: Ajax, ON
- Where you live now: Sechelt, BC
- On the bucket list: Patagonia
- One word describing your time at CapU: Wayfinder



Tom McPherson, founder of Seaforth Expeditions, is a mariner and wildlife guide who has led thousands across Coastal B.C. and Alaska. He guides filmmakers and photographers in capturing the elusive sea wolf, bringing global attention through Netflix's *Island of the Sea Wolves* (4 Emmys) and NBC's *The Americas*, narrated by Tom Hanks, highlighting the fragility and beauty of the Pacific Northwest's coastal ecosystems.

[More on Tom](#)

Enterprising Award

Co-creating new opportunities.
The bravery to adapt and evolve, at pace.

Alison Taylor

*Associate of Arts Degree
Capilano University
2005*

Four Facts about Alison:

- Birthplace: London, England
- Where you live now: North Vancouver, BC
- On the bucket list: Vibe Coding an App on Grief
- One word describing your time at CapU: Transformational



Alison Taylor is the co-founder and co-CEO of Jane App, a global practice management platform for healthcare professionals. Drawing on her experience running her own clinic, she has developed Jane App into a comprehensive solution that improves patient care and clinic operations. She was recognized as one of the 2025 BCBusiness Women of the Year for her leadership and innovation in healthcare technology.

[More on Alison](#)

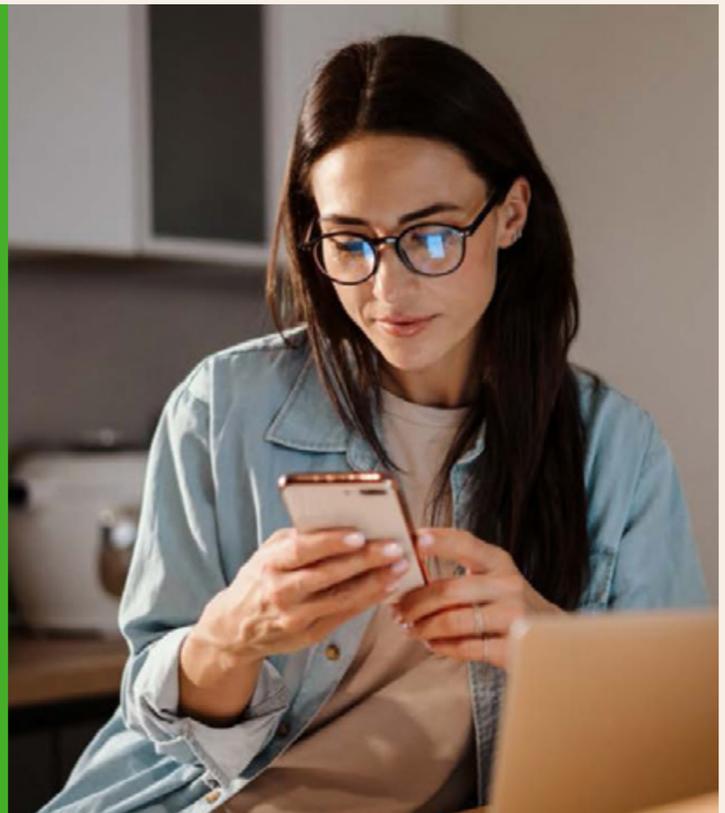
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Congratulations, CapU Alumni!

We're proud to partner with CapU to support students and education on the North Shore.

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Connect with us at alumni@capilanou.ca

