

Leadership Lives Here

STU LANG'S

Philanthropist Stu Lang '70 is redefining youth leadership
in Canada — starting with UCC's bold new vision

LEGACY

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IN MOTION



As the College’s 2029 bicentennial approaches, incredible investments are driving progress on future-forward curriculum, facilities and financial assistance offerings, all in service of developing young leaders who make a positive and lasting impact. One such investment is the **Lang Leadership Lab**, funded by Stu ’70 and Kim Lang.

leadership development. And it will be the home of intensive programs for students across the country. The first of those, the Summer Institute, launches in July 2026, with applications opening Dec. 15, 2025.

“We’ve been in the business of student leadership development since our founding,” says Vice-Principal of Learning and Academic Innovation Dr. Julia Kinnear. “But to have funding and resourcing in place is going to allow us to take things to the next level.”

The job of getting to the next level falls to inaugural Lang Leadership Lab Director Fiona Marshall. And as she begins to sink her teeth in, there’s no doubt the program will evolve and grow. But to understand where the Lang Leadership Lab came from and where it’s going next, it’s helpful to start with the program’s primary benefactor and one of the great loves of his life: football.

The lab will take a school-wide approach to leadership, embedding training at every age and stage. It will be home to two state-of-the-art learning and gathering spaces in the planned Rogers Building — a 130,000-square-foot landmark connecting the Prep and Upper School supported by a profoundly generous lead gift from Edward ’88 and Suzanne Rogers. The Lang Leadership Lab will also be a centre for the research and practise of the latest evidence-based approaches to

THE BIRTH OF THE LANG SCHOLAR PROGRAM

Head coach Stu Lang had a message for the young men of the University of Guelph Gryphons football team: “There are two classrooms on this campus. One is in that building and the other is on this field. The classroom is theory. The field is application.”

Lang, of course, was speaking from experience.

In addition to coaching football at the University of Guelph and UCC, he was a former CFL star who helped lead his team (now the Edmonton Elks) to five Grey Cup championships. He had also played at Queen’s University and UCC, where he learned many of life’s most valuable lessons.

“Whether it’s how to win, how to lose, how to overcome obstacles, how to play with pain, how to be a good teammate — all those things you learn on the field,” he says.

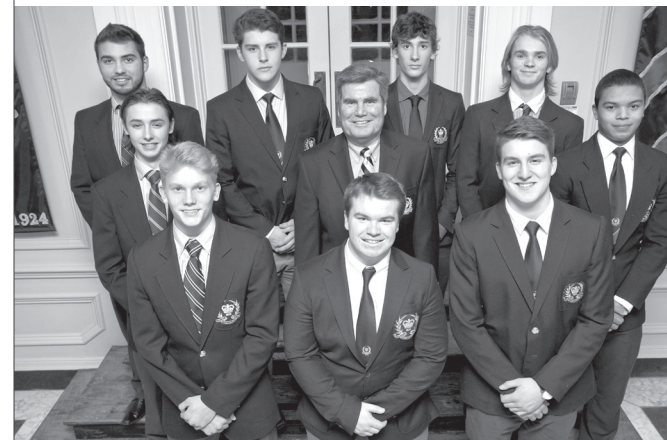
Even today, Lang still remembers the sting of a major loss to Trinity College School during his final year at UCC, when he was a team captain. After the football game, he was sobbing uncontrollably, with his father’s arm around him.

“It taught me how much I hated losing,” he says.

From 2010–15, Lang served as head football coach for the Gryphons, taking the team to new heights, winning the Yates Cup and placing second in the Ontario University Athletics Coach of the Year voting in 2012. Before that, Lang spent two years at his other alma mater, UCC, as the receivers coach for the football team.

It was during this time when Lang got to know David Shaw, now the director of legacy giving for the College, who invited him to coach and has since become one of Lang’s closest friends.

“I would drive in every day and help Dave,” Lang says. “And one day Dave said to me, ‘Stu, have you ever thought about creating the athletic version of the Rhodes Scholarship?’”



The first Lang Scholar cohort (left), from the 2013–14 academic year, and the latest.



Lang was immediately taken with the idea. The first selection criterion would be athletics, naturally. But Lang and Shaw also wanted to reward boys of great character, students with good grades and a commitment to service. Then, when UCC became involved, the program was expanded to emphasize leadership, taking the concept “far beyond” what he had originally imagined.

But Lang wasn’t just a dreamer. He was a doer “blessed with resources” to make such a scholarship happen, thanks to the success of CCL Industries, the family business that had gone from manufacturing lamps to aerosols, before becoming the world’s largest label company. He was also a man of service, inspired by the quiet humility and generosity of his father and the boundless kindness of his mother, who ensured the family home was always open to friends and taught him “more about love than anyone else.”

Plus, by the time Shaw approached him, Lang had already made a name for himself as a philanthropist, starting two foundations: Angel Gabriel and Damascus Road.

“There’s no better investment than young people,” he explains. “Because they have a longer runway to change the world.”

So, in 2013, Stu Lang made a major gift to the College’s landmark Think Ahead Campaign — the largest single donation in Canadian

independent school history. That same year, UCC launched the Lang Scholar Program, which would be a springboard for promising young men and the genesis of a leadership lab still many years in the future.

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

True to their namesake, Lang Scholars are all-rounders: students who excel both on the field and in the classroom. “They’re also just genuine people of character,” says Associate Director of Community Relations Leanne Gardner, manager of the Lang Scholar Program. “They care about their families, they care about their communities and they care about the things they get involved with.”

Each year approximately 15 students are enrolled in the program, which Gardner says is designed to help students with “big ambitions” become “really positive leaders in the world.” Then, in September, the new cohort participates in an off-site weekend retreat — their first opportunity to really bond as a group.

Brent Evans, director of UCC’s Norval Outdoor School, helps run the retreat and begins with a “little bit of team building,” which, in

the spirit of Stu Lang’s approach to education, is very experiential. “We want to cultivate real-world experiences that will develop leadership and then have the ability to reflect on those experiences,” says Evans. “That’s where Stu and I connect really, really well.”

Evans gives the example of teaching the Lang Scholars about flow state — that zone in which “time flies” and “everything’s working for you.” To do this, Evans has the Scholars assemble and disassemble toy cars until they’re so good at it they can do it in seconds. After, he makes them guess how long the activity lasted. Often, they underestimate by an hour — proof they were in a flow state. Once the Scholars understand the concept on a visceral level, they can learn how to apply it to their own lives.

After the September retreat, UCC supports the Lang Scholars in many ways, but the cornerstone of the program is mentorship. Each Lang Scholar is matched with a mentor from the UCC community to whom they can turn for guidance — someone who can teach them to turn theory into practice, to make good decisions under pressure, to lead.

“I’d like UCC to be known as the centre of excellence for leadership training at the youth level.”

— STU LANG





Another facet of the program is lunch-and-learns. At these events, prominent alumni and parents — many of whom have a tie to the sports world — are invited to meet with the Lang Scholars. “They talk to the Scholars about their path, what they experienced, things that went right, things that went wrong, what they learned,” says Gardner. “Our favourite part is the Q-and-A, where the Scholars can pepper the speaker with all questions they could possibly think of.” The speakers also give the Lang Scholars a book they have written or recommend — a growing collection that has become known as the “Lang Library.”

In keeping with Stu Lang’s philosophy of giving back, the Lang Scholars are also required to participate in service projects and are given \$10,000 each year for charitable projects. Inspired by Barry Hill ’62

and UCC’s commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action, these service projects have recently taken the form of partnerships with Indigenous communities.

One such partnership, now two years running, is with the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation in central Yukon. Last year, after weeks of careful preparation and coaching training, the Lang Scholars travelled with Gardner, Evans, Andrew McDougall (then the assistant head, now the head of the Upper School) and Dave Brown (Upper School director of athletics) to the remote community. There, the students ran phys-ed classes all week for children from kindergarten to Grade 9, and led rugby lessons and learn-to-skate sessions. For Evans, the experience was nothing less than “magical,” a chance for the Lang Scholars to lead — and to learn.

Lang Leadership Lab Director Fiona Marshall believes it’s crucial to understand how students “come to their own understanding of their purpose as leaders.”

GROWING THE PROGRAM

The Lang Scholar Program was so successful that, two years ago, Stu Lang funded a new addition to the program: the Lang National Scholarship. Open to all Grade 9 to 11 students outside the GTA in Canada, it’s a full scholarship, which includes boarding and a place in the Lang Scholar Program.

To qualify, students must be both exceptional athletes and strong leaders. Tapping into the extensive alumni network, the College sends out its coaches on recruitment missions to major sporting events like the Canada Summer Games in St. John’s, Nfld.

The scholarship is an extraordinary opportunity for young student-athletes, which gives them not just a world-class education, but the opportunity to really focus on their chosen sport. It’s also an opportunity to give back.

“They’re leaders the younger students look up to,” says Vice-Principal of Enrolment Management Melody Miu. Equally important, she says, is the diverse perspectives these students bring, which enriches the “entire boarding experience and classroom experience.”

Given the success of the Lang Scholar Program and the Lang National Scholarship, it would have been reasonable for Stu Lang to be content with his investment and to support UCC by continuing to show up at events, asking the Lang Scholars about their lives and passions

and ambitions. Yet where others might seek contentment, Lang sought opportunity.

In 2024, Lang, recognizing the dearth of women in leadership positions, made a major gift to establish the Lang Scholar Program at The Bishop Strachan School, Canada’s oldest independent all-girls’ school. Like its UCC counterpart, the Lang Scholar Program at BSS is designed to cultivate courageous leadership through a blend of mentorship, programming and service — all so young women are empowered to change the world.

“Building on nearly two centuries of leadership development, the new Lang Leadership Lab will strengthen our ability to cultivate those skills in every student — preparing compassionate, globally minded leaders for tomorrow.”

— PRINCIPAL SAM MCKINNEY



While it was important for Lang to branch out, he was far from done with his alma mater.

“The 200th anniversary of UCC came up, with the idea of building this structure to connect the Prep and Upper School,” says Lang. This, of course, got him thinking. “I said, ‘Well, could you leave some space in there for a leadership facility?’”

Vice-Principal of Advancement Brendan Dellandrea ’01 was the right person to ask. Like Lang, Dellandrea has always believed in the promise of UCC to be home to the “best students regardless of financial ability” with a “commitment to engaging with the wider world,” learning in purpose-built spaces that inspire students to think of their own potential to create positive change.

Dellandrea said yes. Better still, he had a name for the future space: the Lang Leadership Lab. “Stu loves alliteration — who doesn’t!” says Dellandrea. “But most importantly, the lab is where you try, test, learn and grow. The best leaders understand they are a perennial work in progress.”

Stu Lang was in. So, he and Kim gave another transformational gift to UCC, making them the most generous cumulative donors to an independent school in Canadian history.





THE NATIONAL VISION

While Fiona Marshall herself would never say it, everyone else seems to agree that hiring her as the inaugural Lang Leadership Lab director was a big deal.

“It marks a really exciting moment in our journey because of the experience she brings and her commitment to youth leadership,” says Dr. Kinnear.

Marshall’s experience includes a recent three-year stint at Havergal, where she served as the director of student leadership, creating a framework for an expansion of the school’s leadership programming. Before that, Marshall spent 12 years at UCC, four years of that as assistant head of the Upper School,

helping lay the foundation for values-driven leadership now at the heart of the program she leads.

Yet, what’s most striking about Marshall isn’t her experience — it’s her dedication. “To be young today is uniquely challenging, and I think a lot of people focus on what’s going wrong for kids,” she says. “But what is so inspiring for me, as someone fortunate enough to share my days with young people, is that they are more than capable of meeting this challenge. I think we underestimate them. To know them is to know their passion for making an impact, their creativity, their empathy. They really just need great role models and help with the mindsets and tools to be like them.”

From Our Cover

Our featured student leaders on the meaning of leadership

I think a leader should be a courageous, strong and caring person who isn’t afraid to take significant setbacks head-on and figure out a decisive solution without procrastination.

A leader should not look down on people who aren’t as accomplished or as powerful as them, and should lead with respect and humility. They ought to be humble and funny, but serious when needed.

I think a leader should have a growth mindset and believe that they themselves should always learn and continuously improve.



— Walker Babe, Class of 2032
UCC activities include cross-country running, choir, community service club and gardening club mentor

There are moments every single day to lead. Leadership is about consistently using your knowledge, your voice and your experience to help others — it’s not about how many people you impact.

Leaders are diverse. Some lead from the front through example, while others push their community forward with motivation. There’s really no set archetype for leadership.

Good leaders rarely reflect on what they’ve done; rather, they look forward to what is still to be achieved.

Leadership is setting an example. Some of the best leaders are educators, constantly modelling morals and behaviours to students.

— Chris Jagdeo
Head Steward for the Class of 2026



quiping students with those tools is what the Lang Leadership Lab is designed to do. But Marshall’s first order of business as director is to actually define what leadership means to UCC — an extensive consultation process with students, faculty and staff, and alumni.

“In order to build a program, you need to have something you’re building around,” she says. “We need to give something for young people to work towards, to learn.”

Next up for Marshall to tackle is the Lang Leadership Lab Summer Institute, an intensive two-week live-in program open to all students in Canada entering Grade 11 or 12, launching 2026. The curriculum includes everything from case studies on ethical and effective leadership to teamwork sessions at the Norval Outdoor School. And if students are unable to afford tuition, Stu Lang has ensured they’ll still be able to attend — one of many reasons Marshall calls him “just a remarkable human being.”

But Lang and Marshall’s plans for the Lang Leadership Lab don’t stop there. There’s the physical lab itself, which, once complete, will be the hub of all things leadership-related at UCC. Plus, Marshall is keen to use the newly built lab for research.

“There’s lots of leadership research done on adults, but very little on the age we’re focused on,” she says. “So, I’m really interested in partnering with some universities and using that space to do some good research that helps us understand how students learn leadership, what they respond to and how they come to their own understanding of their purpose as leaders.”

Within UCC, the Lang Leadership Lab will eventually reach every student, including the new junior kindergarteners. Self-understanding, self-management, courage, empathy — these are all essential parts of great leadership, Marshall explains. And by teaching children in kindergarten to roll with the punches if they’re unable to sit with their friend during snack time or to recognize how a classmate is feeling, UCC isn’t just developing future leaders — they’re shaping great people.

A LEGACY

Back when he was coaching, Stu Lang always encouraged his players to find their North Star. “How are you going to live your life?” he says. “What would you sacrifice or die for?”

As a self-described “man of faith,” Lang’s North Star is service. “I often jokingly refer to myself as God’s banker,” he says. “God’s given and blessed me with so much, so I better make sure I do the right thing with what He’s given me.”

In Lang’s case, the right thing has meant not just multiple gifts to UCC, but major donations to the University of Guelph, Queen’s University, Lakehead University, Guelph Humane Society and others. Just this past summer, Stu and Kim Lang made a major donation to Campfire Circle, a charity that delivers year-round play-based programs to children with life-threatening illness.

While Lang is happy to talk about philanthropy, he’s less inclined to talk about his legacy. Instead, he’d rather talk about UCC’s.

“I’d like UCC to be known as the centre of excellence for leadership training at the youth level,” he says. “Not just the Lang Scholars — although, of course, that’s big — but all these amazing boys and girls across Canada who would never, ever dream of coming to the best school to learn about leadership. That would be a great legacy for me.”