

IN-HAS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 30

SUMMER 2025



IN-HAS

Housing and Ancillary Services
Employee Newsletter

Message from Chris Alleyne



Hi, everyone! I'm thrilled to share my second video update—scan the QR code to watch. We've welcomed more exciting changes with Convocation's move downtown, and some new vendors are being featured at our Farmers Market. Enjoy reading and remember to complete the crossword at the end.

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CALENDAR

August 30–September 1	Move-In Days
September 1–6	OWeek
September 4	All campus eateries open
September 4	Classes begin

IN-HAS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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Introducing HAS Values

More Than Just Words on a Wall

Rich Caccamo

Senior Advisor, HAS Strategic Priorities

Housing & Ancillary Services (HAS) is excited to begin a new chapter—one where our shared values take center stage.

Values play an important role in supporting operational performance and long-term growth by aligning a wide range of roles around a common purpose.

In our division, teams span across diverse sectors; from Residence Life, to Hospitality, to Retail and more. Values provide a shared foundation for how we work, make

decisions and interact with one another, which is especially important in our complex, service-oriented environment.

Having one set of values that represent the whole division is an important step in aligning with our mission and vision.

Many HAS leaders contributed to the recent strategic planning exercise completed by Western Operations & Finance. The values crafted as part of the Strategic Plan perfectly underwrite who we are and what drives us.

What are these values and what do they really mean?



Collaboration & Communication

Sharing diverse skills, knowledge, ideas and perspectives to achieve greater and more inclusive results. This is about more than just meetings and memos. It's about building trust, staying informed and working together to create win-win situations.



Pursuit of Excellence

Striving to achieve higher standards of quality, performance and achievement. Excellence isn't about perfection, it's about progress. We aim high, support each other and take pride in delivering our best.



Innovation

Prioritizing creative thinking, experimentation and adaptability in how we solve problems, make decisions and plan for the future. This allows us to challenge the status quo and try new things without fear of failure.



Safety & Inclusion

Intentionally fostering spaces and places where all people feel physically and psychologically safe, valued and included. We're committed to creating a workplace where everyone feels welcome, respected and empowered to show up as their full selves.



Leading with Integrity

Being honest, ethical and consistent in our words and actions, and treating people equitably and with respect. This means doing what we say, saying what we mean and treating each other with respect—no matter the situation.



Sustainability

Striving to meet the needs of our present communities while ensuring the needs of future generations are met. From waste reduction and seeking better alternatives, we're committed to preserving our campus, our community and our planet.

These values can be observed by staff behaviours from every team, in every department and on every shift. We believe these values represent the foundation that underpins the positive culture HAS is known for and will continue to build upon in the years ahead.

Please take some time to reflect on how your intentions, words, behaviours and actions align with these values. In

the coming year, we'll explore how these values show up in our daily work, help us navigate challenging situations and guide strategic decision-making. The best companies in the world are steadfast in their resolve to integrate values in the workplace—they make values actionable, model them consistently and reinforce them through various channels. Our commitment is no different. This is merely a starting point.

Evolving the Graduate Experience

Convocation at a Glance

Alex Corbitt

General Merchandise Buyer, Dellelce Family Bookstore

Rich Caccamo

Senior Advisor, HAS Strategic Priorities

Cliff Fielder

Associate Director, Catering and Conferences

Convocation is a special time each year at Western, though the spring version of this annual celebration looked much different than years past.

This spring, Western brought Convocation off campus and into the heart of the city, transforming downtown London into a vibrant extension of campus.

As graduates crossed the stage inside Canada Life Place, purple pride and university spirit came alive just outside at Dundas Place.



Western paints the town purple

In collaboration with the City of London, the university activated the pedestrian-friendly street with a series of thoughtful touches designed to make downtown feel unmistakably Western. Lamp posts were wrapped in purple banners, picnic and bistro tables were set up for gathering and lawn games added a playful energy to the space.

The large inflatable W and balloon displays offered picture-perfect backdrops for graduates and their families. Volunteers from Housing and Ancillary Services greeted everyone with a smile, as the infectious joy spread throughout the venue.

Frames, gifts and regalia galore

The Dellelce Family Bookstore trailer at Dundas Place allowed guests to pick up frames and gifts outside, while the retail shop set up inside Canada Life Place at King Club allowed graduates and their families an option to purchase items indoors. Both outlets saw massive lines and were able to serve each and every patron with a smile, all week.

The Bookstore also hosted a 'regalia hub', which saw organized chaos as the team helped graduates get gowned, hooded and to the staging area 90 minutes prior to each ceremony. Though it was a time crunch, the staff successfully prepared all graduates for their moment on the stage.





Fueling celebrations with tasty treats

The Catering and Conferences team was also particularly busy launching three new catering initiatives geared towards Convocation festivities. A charcuterie-style selection of eats was available for pre-order in what was introduced as the Convocation Picnic Box. Purchased through the Bookstore's website, this box was suitable for a group of four and perfect to enjoy on or off campus. While uptake was lower than anticipated, feedback from those who did order the boxes was very positive. This suggests there is potential for this offering to grow, perhaps with additional communications directly towards parents.

In between ceremonies, folks traveled back to Somerville House to keep the celebrations going on campus with a terrific meal at the Green Leaf Café. Open for the first time during Convocation week, the Café was sold out on most days and received a positive response from guests, an initiative that is planned to continue for future years.

To support and incentivize faculties and departments hosting celebrations on campus, the team offered Convocation Refreshments, a menu of three delicious refreshment packages for staff to order. Not only did many folks continue celebrating on campus, this initiative also helped the catering side of things in the uncertainty of moving off campus.

“Convocation remained a time of celebration, connection and new opportunities.”

Overall, despite the changes and challenges brought by the shift off campus, Convocation remained a time of celebration, connection and new opportunities. These efforts from our three departments within the HAS division were part of a broader initiative to create a more accessible, inclusive and immersive Convocation experience. By

blending tradition with innovation, Western not only honoured its graduates and their beloved campus, but also strengthened its ties to the downtown community and what it means to be a Western alum—turning a milestone moment into a shared celebration for all. ●



Madisen Essig (pictured center right), former Marketing Assistant with HAS Marketing, celebrates her graduation with her family.



Celebrating Innovation at the StarRez Drive-In Workshop

Melissa Steadman

Associate Director, Off-Campus Housing & Apartments

In February, Housing hosted a successful StarRez Drive-In Workshop to do a deeper dive into the StarRez Housing management platform.

In collaboration with the Ontario Association of College & University Housing Officers (OACUHO), over 18 institutions from across the province were brought together. Despite a snowy drive, the day was filled with collaboration, learning and innovation in housing management and StarRez usage.

The event began with a warm welcome from Western's own Chris Lengyell and Melissa Chaffe, followed by updates from StarRez's Nick Kirrane, who shared exciting new developments on the platform.

Throughout the day, institutions took center stage to showcase creative solutions and best practices using StarRez.

Western kicked off Institutional Spotlights with a streamlined approach to student check-outs. Fleming College followed with a powerful session on implementing the Persons of Concern module, emphasizing student support and safety.

After lunch and engaging roundtable discussions, the spotlight turned to innovations for PortalX, the student portal within StarRez. Guelph University impressed the audience with their accessibility request process, while McMaster University demonstrated agility with their VERY Short Stays solution. Trent University showcased an efficient room transfer process and the University of Toronto highlighted their decentralized operations strategy.

StarRez representatives Nick Bollinger and Martin Sagendorf offered live demos and insights in Customer Success sessions, rounding out a robust day of professional development.

The event concluded with an hour of networking, leaving attendees inspired and better equipped to enhance their housing operations.

The success of this drive-in workshop reflects the strength and creativity of our community—working together to drive student success through innovation. Our gratitude to our colleagues in Hospitality Services for a lovely day of nutrition and sweet treats, and to our wonderful sponsors from StarRez for allowing this event to be free for all attendees. ●

The 2024–25 Experience

Student Behaviour Trends in Residence

Residence Conduct and Safety Team

Behaviour management and safety is a residence-wide responsibility at Western. We take pride in our response to behaviour management, fostering students' personal and social development throughout their time with us. Our impact on making students feel secure in their home-away-from-home is crucial to their success.

We track and measure student behaviour in many ways. One way is the total number of incident reports. This year, 2,332 incident reports were filed. This is the highest number since 2021–22, where we saw a spike in behaviour connected to violations of gathering limits from pandemic restrictions.

Behaviour escalation is evaluated by the recidivism rate. This is a student's re-offense rate once they have been sanctioned. Despite an increase in reports, we achieved the lowest recidivism rate since the pandemic. This is a testament to the priority of education and development through floor meetings and tailored talks throughout the behaviour management process.

Incident severity is tracked by highest-level sanctions, suspension and termination of residence contracts. This year saw pre-pandemic levels, with only four students receiving a termination and one suspension.

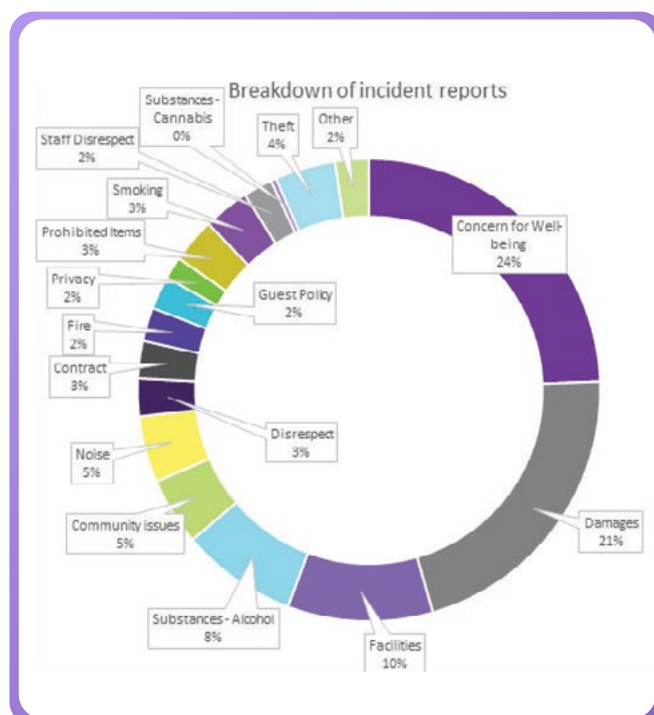
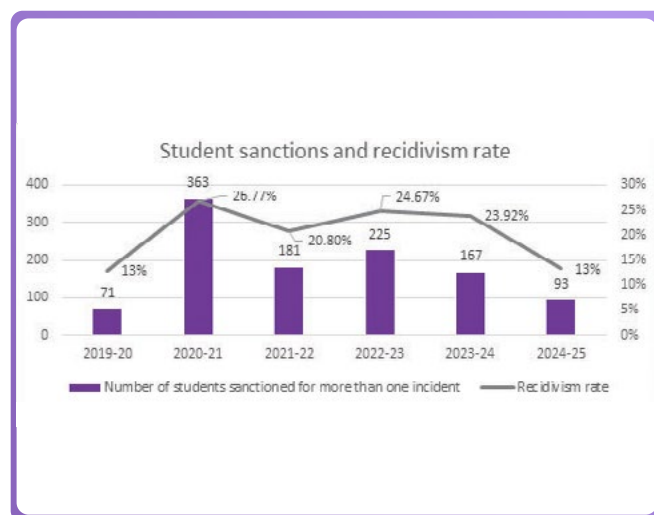
Student behaviour is complex and we track its trends through the incident's nature. For example, did it involve damage to residence property, substance use or a guest-policy violation? It's possible that one incident may involve more than one category.

The top five most common incidents were concern for well-being, damages, facilities, substance use and community issues (i.e., sports in the hall).

Despite damages accounting for one fifth of reports, the total amount of community damages—assigned to a community rather than an individual—was the lowest in over five years at less than \$30,000.

This is a credit to the conduct team's investigative work to determine responsibility and assign restitution to students involved in causing damages.

Students are at the heart of Western's residence, and we sincerely want to thank everyone involved in welcoming students to residence, setting and maintaining expectations and helping course correct mistakes. They will carry these lessons through their Western journey and be better citizens for it. ●



Flavours, Fun and Community

Memorable Events in Residence Dining

Tegwyn Mosher

Registered Dietitian, Hospitality Services

Throughout the past academic year, our residence dining halls came alive with exciting, themed events.

These events offer more than a meal for students—they mark cultural and seasonal celebrations that bring each residence building together for unforgettable experiences and a shared love of food.

During International Week and March Fun Fest, students were taken on a culinary journey around the world through curated menus and immersive atmospheres. Sydenham Hall transformed into a vibrant Turkish market, serving authentic street food. Clare Hall embraced the Hawaiian spirit with traditional luau fare and tropical mocktails. At Delaware Hall, students indulged with Japanese street food, complete with a traditional Torii entryway and themed decor. Essex Hall offered a taste of Italy, filled with the aroma of authentic cuisine and lively Italian music, while Perth Hall's Texas BBQ brought bold Southern flavors paired with hay bales, string lights and hearty classics.

Lunar New Year is a staple when speaking about cultural holidays. Ontario Hall was at the heart of this cultural celebration—they featured traditional cuisine, karaoke and a memorable performance by the Lake Echo Choir. The Year of the Snake was certainly rung in with style.

When dining halls weren't globe-trotting, students were surprised with inspired pop-ups and seasonal traditions. Saugeen-Maitland Hall hosted two standout events that blended flavour with festivity. The Saugeen Sugar Shack celebrated Canada's local maple syrup with tastings and sweet, savoury maple-inspired dishes. Meanwhile, the Bagel Bar featured wood-fired bagels from Old Bagel House, paired with varieties of house-made cream cheese.

On Valentine's Day, Ontario Hall's Treat for Your Sweet offered personalized heart-shape cookies, while Clare Hall delighted students with indulgent Freak Shakes—over-the-top milkshakes in chocolate-rimmed cups and a decadent chocolate fountain. To round out the year, Delaware Hall hosted a nostalgic Movie Night, transforming the dining room into a cozy theatre with themed decor, movie-night uniforms, film-inspired menu options and free popcorn. Elgin Hall also brought the fun with a Mocktail Night offering alcohol-free twists on classic cocktails.

Thanks for a wonderful season of events. We're already counting down the days until our next celebration! •



Rooted in Support:

Residence Counselling and Student Support, A Year in Review

Leanne Ford

Manager, Residence Student Support

David Viitala

Mental Health Counsellor

Skylar Rego

Residence Student Support Specialist

Now in its 18th year, Residence Counselling & Student Support (RCSS) continues to be a cornerstone of wellbeing for students living in residence. Through counselling, case management, consultation, outreach and mental health education, RCSS plays an integral role in fostering a safe, inclusive and thriving campus community.

This year, a pilot initiative with Student Experience strengthened interdepartmental collaboration and offered valuable insights to inform the future evolution of our embedded counselling model.

A key success was the return of a full-time Residence Student Support Specialist, which brought a renewed capacity for proactive, personalized care.

With this role restored, referrals increased, high-impact outreach resumed and complex cases were managed with thoughtful coordination. Students navigating mental health concerns, academic pressure or crisis situations benefited from early, tailored intervention—whether through long-term support or received resources and referrals.

RCSS's long-standing partnership with the CMHA Crisis Response Team remained a cornerstone of 24/7 care, supporting students in moments of acute need and reducing the load on front-line staff. Meanwhile, mental health education efforts flourished through wellness training, collaborative planning and outreach to over 300 incoming students with identified needs through residence accessibility requests.

This work's impact is perhaps best captured in the words of a parent who reached out after receiving service navigation support:

“ I’ve never felt more heard and understood about my daughter, and the challenges that she and I have been facing since the beginning of the school year. No one wants her to be successful more than her dad and I do, and now I have no doubt you, and Western, want her to be as well. Thank you again. ”

This kind of feedback reflects the heart of RCSS's mission: creating a campus environment where students and their families feel supported, seen and cared for.

Looking ahead, RCSS is focused on scaling its impact through expanded staffing, enhanced early-outreach, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonizations & Accessibility (EDIDA) strategies and continued integration within Housing spaces—shaping a student experience where wellbeing is not just supported but embedded and celebrated. ●





100

YEARS IN THE
MAKING, CONTINUED

CU

Dellelce Family Bookstore: Then and Now

Tegan Pfaff

General Merchandise Buyer, Dellelce Family Bookstore

As we gear up for key fall events such as the back-to-school rush and Homecoming, the Bookstore is proud to continue celebrating our 100-year legacy on campus with our Western community.

Every month until 2026, the Bookstore will continue releasing new items inspired by designs from past decades. This helps us honour the past, celebrate how far the Bookstore has come and sell exclusive vintage items that will have the campus abuzz.

We've recently launched a special line of UWO merchandise—our first since the 2012 rebranding from University of Western Ontario to Western University. The collection includes UWO hoodies and sweatpants, as well as crewnecks and keychains featuring the official Coat of Arms.

One of my personal favourite items in this line is a tote bag featuring our original Bookstore logo and Coat of Arms—a perfect blend of heritage and style.

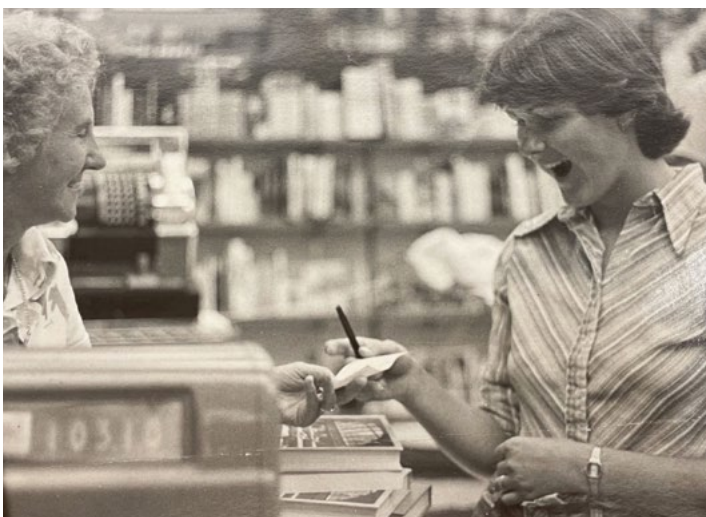
While exploring the Archives for inspiration, it really struck me how much the Bookstore and Western have evolved—yet the joy and energy in our community has remained the same. Photos of staff ringing through textbook purchases, students rallying in their residence gear during OWeek and grads celebrating at Convocation could have been taken yesterday.

We hope you enjoy these archival photos and invite you to stop by the store or visit us online to check out our growing collection of vintage-inspired merch.

Here's to the past, present and future of our bookstore! ●



Archive photos: AFC 399, Western University Archives and Special Collections



Defining Excellence in Service

HAS Division Receives Prestigious Honours

Ryan Wishak

Saugeen-Maitland Hall Unit Manager

Rich Caccamo

Senior Advisor, HAS Strategic Priorities

“

Juan goes out of his way to help his colleagues with whatever task they face and makes everyone feel like part of the team.

”

The Housing and Ancillary Services (HAS) team is multi-faceted and diverse in its skill sets. With strong people in every department, it's no surprise we received two Western Awards of Excellence for the 2024–25 academic year.

Juan Platero, Hospitality Services

A long-time Culinary Support employee, Juan has served Saugeen-Maitland Hall for 37 years with a smile, no matter what he is doing.

Nominator and Saugeen unit manager Ryan Wishak praises Juan's dedication, noting that he is the backbone of the dining hall.

“From receiving products, to washing dishes, cooking and serving food and being the occasional handyman, without Juan at Saugeen, I'm not sure this level of service would be possible,” Wishak says.

With Saugeen being the largest of eight dining halls, Juan has a lot of responsibility, which he shoulders with ease.



“One of Juan's main tasks is receiving nearly all food and product that comes into Saugeen,” Wishak shares. “He organizes and stores it all, while maintaining safe food handling guidelines.”

While a lot of what Juan does is student-facing, some tasks are unseen and thankless—like resetting Saugeen during each refresh between meals. “Juan also maintains the dishwisher. Cleaning up nearly 1500 students' dishes from open to close daily is no easy feat.”

All of the roles Juan holds are second to the impact he has on students and his team members. “He can often be heard interacting with students in a friendly and positive way, offering to help them find what they're looking for,” Wishak mentions.

“Juan goes out of his way to help his colleagues with whatever task they face and makes everyone feel like part of the team.”

Discover more about Juan's work ethic and kindness in [Ryan's Award of Excellence nomination video](#).

**Lisa Dubrick, Jodi Freeman,
Carrie Schnurr & Svitlana Stoiko-Hota,
Work & Learn Program for Ukrainian
Newcomers**

The second award given to HAS was a team award recognizing the Work & Learn Program for Ukrainian Newcomers, championed by outstanding leaders in our department: Lisa Dubrick, Jodi Freeman, Carrie Schnurr and Svitlana Stoiko-Hota.

Rich Caccamo, nominator and Senior Advisor, HAS Strategic Priorities comments on the tenacity of these team members in the face of a global crisis.

"In 2022, when war forced millions of Ukrainians to leave their homes, these individuals saw an opportunity—not just to provide jobs, but to offer dignity, learning and a fresh start," Caccamo shares. "Because of their efforts, dozens of newcomers learned English, secured income, built friendships and found a sense of belonging at Western."

Svitlana, with her expertise in ESL, was a standout recruiter, teacher, translator and mentor to 36 newcomers, becoming a pillar of strength for the Ukrainian community in London.

Carrie, with her cultural competence, ensured each new employee felt welcomed, supported and empowered them through customized onboarding materials, job shadowing and communication aids.

Lisa, a true collaborator, with the support of WELC helped architect an intensive 3-hour per day English proficiency program tied to vocational outcomes for these newcomers.

And Jodi, the glue behind the operation, whose servant leadership, vision and meticulous planning made everything about this program possible.

Learn more about this program and the people behind it by watching [Rich's Award of Excellence nomination video](#).

Whether it's a village of team members with an inspiring idea, or one person who acts as a village all by himself, congratulations to Juan, Lisa, Jodi, Carrie and Svitlana. The difference you've made in your respective areas of expertise has made the HAS Division, and Western, a much better place.

In loving memory of Jodi Freeman, a wonderful colleague and a truly remarkable person. ●



From left to right: President Alan Shepard, Lisa Dubrick, Svitlana Stoiko-Hota, Carrie Schnurr



Books to Look For

The Life That's Waiting

By Brianna Wiest

From the bestselling author of "The Mountain is You" and "101 Essays That Will Change the Way You Think" come Wiest's latest book on how to overcome the barriers preventing you from living your best life. "The Life That's Waiting" is one where you are "not pushed by your fears but moved by your vision... a life that is really yours." Some people will read this all in one go, whereas others will read the chapters they need at the moment. This book can be read either way. Let Wiest take you on that journey of truly claiming your life.

Recommended by Roy Penney, Sales Floor Associate,
Dellelce Family Bookstore

52 Ways to Reconcile

By David A. Robertson

This has been a busy year for Robertson, who started the year with the publication of his bestselling memoir "All the Little Monsters: How I Learned to Live with Anxiety". In his latest book, he provides a guide for those who want to aid with Indigenous reconciliation but might not have an idea where to begin. As a member of the Norway House Cree Nation and author of over 25 books, including children's books and novels, Robertson brings his experiences and writing talents to a book for the non-Indigenous as a bridge to our Indigenous neighbours. As his 52nd recommendation suggests: "Share this book."

Recommended by Roy Penney, Sales Floor Associate,
Dellelce Family Bookstore

Atmosphere

By Taylor Jenkins Reid

Set in the high-stakes world of NASA's 1980s Space Shuttle program, *Atmosphere* follows Joan Goodwin, a reserved physics professor who dares to chase a lifelong dream of becoming an astronaut. As she trains alongside a dynamic crew of fellow candidates, Joan discovers unexpected friendship, ambition, and love—until one mission changes everything. Perfect for fans of historical fiction, space exploration, and character-driven stories about personal transformation.

Recommended by Tegan Pfaff, General Merchandise Buyer,
Dellelce Family Bookstore

The Knight and the Moth

By Rachel Gillig

Sybil Delling is a Diviner—trained to dream of omens and foresee disaster—but all she truly wants is peace and freedom. As her time at the cathedral nears its end, fellow Diviners begin to vanish, forcing Sybil to team up with Rodrick, a defiant and dangerously charming knight who doesn't believe in her visions. Together, they face ancient powers, divine secrets, and a world beyond the cloister's walls. A darkly romantic gothic fantasy perfect for fans of slow-burn tension, mysterious disappearances and gods who don't play fair.

Recommended by Tegan Pfaff, General Merchandise Buyer,
Dellelce Family Bookstore



WESTERN FARMERS MARKET

Wednesdays | 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Kent Drive

Shop Fresh and Support Local
Brought to you by Hospitality Services



Test Your Knowledge & Win!

Think you've read the newsletter cover to cover? Prove it with our Crossword Challenge! All answers are in this issue—solve the puzzle, snap a pic of your completed crossword and email to hasmarketing@uwo.ca by 9 a.m. on Thursday, August 14.

Three winners will be randomly chosen from the correct entries and will each receive a \$20 credit added to their meal plan.

Crossword

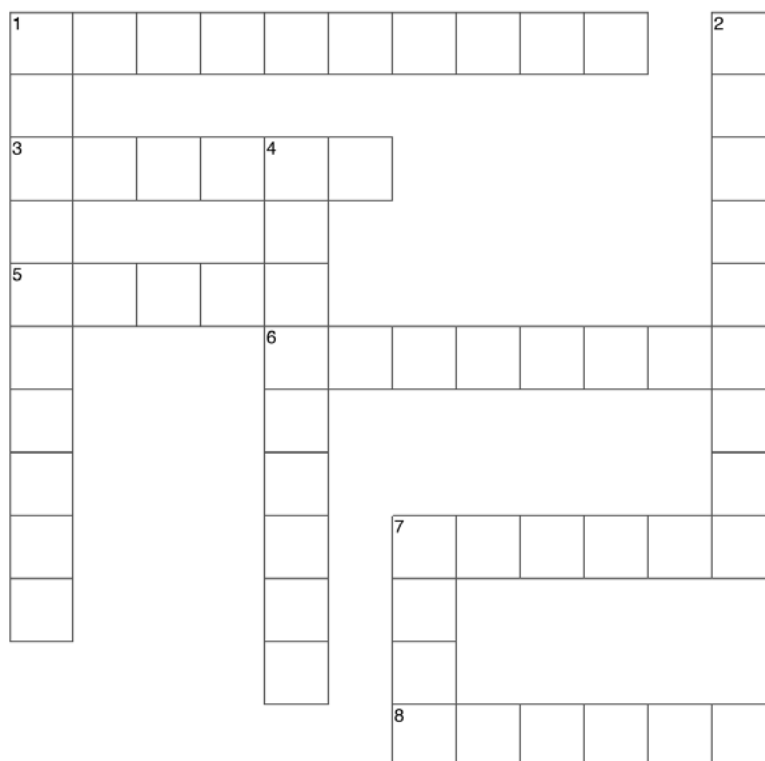
ACROSS

- 1 StarRez is a housing ___ platform
- 3 Catering and Conferences introduced a ___ box for Convocation in 2025
- 5 The number of dining halls in Western's Residence buildings
- 6 How many years the Residence Counselling & Student Support initiative has existed at Western
- 7 Long-lasting impact of the Dellelce Family Bookstore

- 8 Describes the book as this type of connector to our Indigenous neighbours in reconciliation

DOWN

- 1 Saugeen hosted a pop-up event with this type of Canadian flavour
- 2 Term to define damages assigned to a group rather than an individual
- 4 One of the 6 HAS Values is leading with ____
- 7 Chef John's favourite protein to cook with



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