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we never doubted we could  
change the world.”

Grant Strate  
*Distinguished Alumni Award recipient*



WHILE MANY CHILDHOOD DREAMS OF BECOMING a ballerina, firefighter, or underwater explorer are never realized, this was not the case for **JOSEPH B MARTIN**, who knew at a young age that he wanted to be a doctor. Not only did he achieve this dream, but the boy from small-town Alberta who used to ride his tractor to school also went on to be the Dean of Harvard Medicine for ten years—a position he held until stepping down recently. Growing up on a dairy farm in Duchess, Dr Martin learned valuable life skills such as milking cows, but it wasn't until he attended the University of Alberta that he learned how to study and work.

“Without the University of Alberta experience—if I had gone to a fancy college—I probably would not have had the time to prepare for the work I needed to do,” says Martin, who received the Distinguished Alumni Award.

It was at school in Edmonton that he got his start in the medical field, first doing first his pre-med and then his Medicine degree at the University. Martin became interested in neurology purely out of curiosity and began studying the breakdown of the brain's functions with aging.

Now that he's finished his post with Harvard, Martin will continue to teach there and further his research with the school.

“I will continue on as a professor in the medical school and focus my work on clinical research with those diseases of the brain that are associated with aging—mostly like Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease,” Martin explains.

While Martin has earned accolades and acknowledgment throughout his career, he states that his proudest achievements are always in the successes of others.

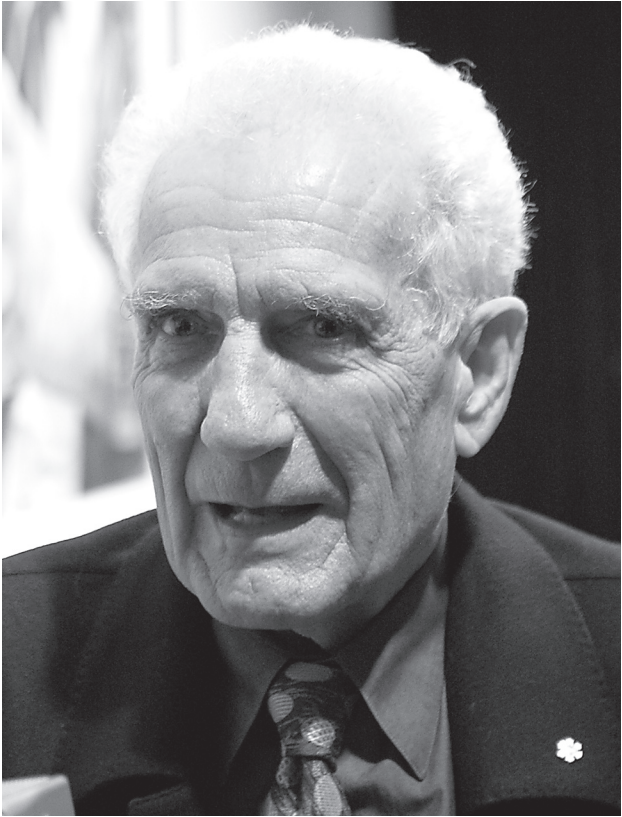
“For me, the real joy of everything that's been done is watching other people make their mark, be they students, faculty, department heads, or even deans I have worked with,” he says.

“I would say [my greatest achievement] is encouraging people to find ways to make the most of what they do by working closely with other people, in other words collaboration and working together.”

Due to his time spent here and the University's role in shaping his future, the Alumni Recognition award is one that holds very special meaning for Martin.

“I look back on the University of Alberta as an incredible moment in my life. I have very good memories of it, and I always enjoy coming back,” he said.

—Liz Durden



ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE FOR **GRANT STRATE**. A lawyer by trade and dancer by nature, State, often referred to as “Canada's Dance Statesman,” was recognized with the Distinguished Alumni Award for his achievements as a pioneering dance educator.

Strate graduated from the University of Alberta in 1949 with a Bachelor of Arts degree, and went on to obtain his Bachelor of Law degree in 1950. Throughout his post-secondary experience, Strate demonstrated a proficiency in the performing arts that would lead him to become a charter member of the National Ballet of Canada and founder of Canada's first degree-granting dance program at York University.

“I always had an interest in the arts,” Strate explains. “While I was at [the] U of A, I was in drama; I was in plays; I was in debating club.”

After being admitted to the Bar, Strate was approached by the newly incorporated National Ballet of Canada to perform as a ballet artist. He remained with the company for 20 years as a performer, resident choreographer, and later, assistant to the artistic director.

He maintains that a career in dance wasn't his original plan.

“[Ballet] was very far from my mind. At the time I was asked,

I didn't even like dancing,” Strate recalls with a chuckle.

For that reason, Strate still emphasizes the importance of a university degree.

“First of all, I went to dancing, and I was making \$25 per week, and I knew I didn't have to do that,” Strate says. “But I also had an education and life experience from a very interesting time.”

He is now a Member of the Order of Canada and has received numerous awards, including the Governor General's Performing Arts Award and a Lifetime Achievement Award from CORPS de Ballet International. He was founding chair of the Dance in Canada Association and recently served as President of the Americas in the World Dance Alliance.

Despite legs that can't move like they used to, Strate maintains strong connections to the world of dance and academics. He attributes much of his success to his days at the U of A.

“At that time, it was a very different place,” he notes. “When I came here, and it was just after the war, there was this spirit of optimism.”

“You know, the thing with us was that we never doubted we could change the world.”

—Jen Huygen



BORN ON 23 MAY, 1952, **JAN REIMER**—RECIPIENT of the Alumni Award of Excellence—grew up in a house focused on politics: perhaps foreshadowing her later political career, her father, Neil Reimer, was the founder of the Alberta New Democratic Party.

Like thousands of others, she attended the U of A, graduating in 1973 after studying urban sociology and political science—an experience she credits with heavily influencing her political career.

“I had a course in urban sociology, which really sparked my interest in what was happening in the city and community development and that kind of thing,” she remembers.

With the spark ignited, Reimer entered Edmonton municipal politics, first serving as alderman from 1980–1989, at which point she became the first (and only) female mayor in Edmonton's history. After serving two terms, she was defeated in 1995 by Bill Smith.

Although she hasn't been mayor for over a decade, her legacy still lives on, most notably in how the city deals with its waste. In an time when the environment wasn't on every Canadian's mind and global warming wasn't a phrase heard in every news broadcast, Reimer made Edmonton a world

leader in recycling and composting, a title that the city can still boast today.

Actively involved in the local community before she ever hit City Hall, Reimer was no different in her life after office, working as a consultant for the Alberta Council for the Aging. However, a position soon opened up at the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS), and Reimer jumped at the chance to work in an environment that deals with another the issues she tackled as mayor: family violence.

As a result, she's been working as Provincial Coordinator for ACWS since 2002, where she has received numerous awards for her work, including the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case in recognition of her work protecting abused women, children, and seniors.

Reminiscent of the work that she has done since her graduation from the U of A, Reimer's advice to current students is to make use of the education they're receiving.

“Always remember your values, and look at how you can make things better for everyone,” she says. “There's no value in having an education unless you're building a better world with it.”

—Tom Wagner