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Dean Jennifer Tupper was the invited keynote for the McDowell Foundation 25th Anniversary Gala, held February 3, 2017. Speaking from her own experiences as a McDowell Researcher, Tupper emphasized that in the current political, social, and economic climate, the work of the McDowell Foundation in supporting teacher-led inquiry and research is more important than ever. (Photo courtesy of Jens Nielsen, STF)

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## From the Dean's Desk



Dean Jennifer Tupper

Photo Credit: Shuana Niessen

It is with very mixed emotions that I write my final message as Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina. In light of my imminent move to the University of Alberta, I have been reflecting on my 13 years at the U of R, six of which have been in service to the Faculty and University as Associate Dean and now Dean. It has been an incredibly rich and rewarding time, during which I have grown as a researcher, scholar, teacher educator, administrator, and leader. The growth I have experienced is largely due to the people—faculty, staff, students, and education partners—with and for whom I have had the privilege of working. It is here that I have come to understand and think more deeply about treaties, the treaty relationship, and what it means to be a treaty person. It is here that I have been able to live my commitment to anti-oppressive education alongside so many amazing students and colleagues.

When I first arrived in Regina in 2004, even though I had been a social studies teacher for several years prior, I knew nothing about the numbered treaties despite their foundational importance to the history of this country. I had no understanding of their contemporary relevance, nor was I able to consider their significance for the future. It was former dean Dr. Michael Tymchak who invited me to participate in a research project exploring best practices in treaty education. His generous invitation to me as a beginning scholar was life changing and continues

to shape the path on which I walk. Over the past 13 years, I have valued the efforts of this Faculty to take seriously treaty education, ensuring that our students, the current and future teachers in Saskatchewan and beyond, are positioned to actualize treaty education in their own classrooms.

My own daughters, who attend the public school system in Regina, have benefitted from this commitment and they are better people for it. Recently, my 15-year-old participated in Treaty 4 the Next Generation, which was organized by Regina Public teachers and attended by numerous high school students. Two of our colleagues, Dr. Mike Cappello and Dr. Anna-Leah King, gave the opening address. My daughter spoke later about how profoundly affected she and her peers were by Mike and Anna-Leah's invitation to think and do differently as treaty people, and especially to engage in deep, meaningful, and authentic forms of reconciliation.

You will see evidence of this invitation, this commitment, to anti-oppressive education highlighted in this issue of *Education News*. Stories of faculty's and students' decolonizing work abound, from the second annual #TreatyEdCamp to the inaugural Gender and Sexual Diversity Ed Camp and from place-based learning in Lebret to the volunteer work of students in ELNG 200.

At the UR Educators event we welcomed first year students to the Faculty; all in attendance pledged their commitment "to embrace the obligations associated with the teaching profession...mindful of the responsibility to a disciplined pursuit of knowledge and skills, steadfast in the commitment to unlearn oppressive and racist beliefs and values of society, dedicated to creating a safe place for all students and co-educators...to emulate the qualities that support a socially just, equitable, and sustainable society...to inspiring and transforming education for all learners."

I am so deeply proud to have been part of this extraordinary Faculty. I offer my gratitude to each one of you for inspiring me to be a better teacher, scholar, leader, and person.

Jumper Lunner

# UR EDUCATORS EVENT

# - for

# **NEW STUDENTS**

An inaugural UR Educators Event was held on September 29, 2016 to officially welcome new Education students to the teacher profession. New students heard inspirational talks

from Dean Jennifer Tupper, U of R President and Vice-Chancellor Vianne Timmons, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Senior Staff Administrator Rob Lehne, and Regina Public Schools Deputy Director Mike Walters. The speakers deliberated on all that one can become with a teaching degree, the difference one can make as a teacher, and the responsibility one has as a teacher and role model for youth. New students received a professional pin and pledge card from Dean Jennifer Tupper and Associate Dean of Student Services and Undergraduate Programs, Valerie Mulholland. The students then signed the poster to signify their willingness to take on

all that the teaching profession entails. The poster was framed and exhibited on the wall near the Dean's office. After a group photo, the new students read aloud in unison from their pledge cards and then enjoyed some refreshments.

The organizing committee included Dean Jennifer Tupper, Associate Dean Val Mulholland, Student Program Centre Manager Nicole Glas, Communications Officer/Publications Manager, Shuana Niessen, and the Associate Dean's Assistant, Wanneta Martin.

#### UR Educators

This pin signifies my entrance into the teaching profession. As a preservice educator in the Faculty of Education, University of Regina, I embrace the obligations associated with the teaching profession. I am mindful of the responsibility to a disciplined pursuit of knowledge and skills, steadfast in my commitment to unlearn the oppressive and racist beliefs and values of my society, and dedicated to creating a safe place for all students and co-educators. I seek to emulate the qualities that support a socially just, equitable, and sustainable society. I am committed to inspiring and transforming education for all learners.

2016

UR Educators pine As a Faculty, we are committed to anti-colonial education. This commitment is reflected in our pin design, which includes Indigenous elements, The pin is circular. The circle is embraced by Indigenous peoples because it symbolizes and mirrors the cycles in the natural world. In some communities it is a symbol of equality. The textured segments of the pints outer circle incorporate hnut art (top right), beadwork (bottom right), Métis sush (bottom left), and prairie wheat (top left). Our Faculty values our partnerships with indigenous Teacher Education Programs. The inner circle represents the cultural concept of the Medicine Wheel and a holistic approach to education. The butterfly in the center emerges from the Faculty of Education logo and our mottor.

\*\*Imparing and Transforming Education.\*\*

The UR Educators pin was designed by Nicole Glas and Shuana Niessen

Above: Pledge (card front) and Pin (card back)



# DECOLONIZATION

The Faculty of Education has been involved in decolonizing activities throughout the 2016-2017 academic year. In late August, at the Fall Faculty Seminar, faculty and staff participated in the **Kairos Blanket Exercise** led by Dr. Michael Cappello and Dr. Shauneen Pete. Faculty and staff, then, engaged in an Indigenous Expressive Art Therapy activity led by Dr. JoLee Sasakamoose, which resulted in the Shared Responsibility Tree: Branches of Reconciliation. Our Faculty welcomed Eldersin-Residence Alma Poitras and Noel Starblanket, who have guided faculty in indigenizing pedagogy, research, and practices.

The Faculty of Education participated in the **Treaty 4 Gathering on September 12**, hosting a discussion, led by Dr. Michael Cappello, Dr. Shauneen Pete, and Dr. Brenda Anderson (Luther) on redressing the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and the empowerment of women. It was a moving evening of stories, tears, challenges, and brainstorming.

Education students in several programs visited the site of the former Lebret/ Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School, to remember and commemorate those who attended residential schools. Arts Education students participated in the Treaty 4 Gathering activities with Grade 8 Bert Fox Community High School students.

On October 1, over 300 teachers and preservice teachers gathered on a Saturday for #TreatyEdCamp 2.0. Regina hip-hop artist and journalist Brad Bellegard brought the keynote presentation, "Rap as the New Buffalo: The Role of Hip Hop in Indigenous Education," following a lunch of soup and bannock (provided by Scott Collegiate). View Brad's keynote at <a href="http://www2.uregina.ca/education/news/treatyedcamp-keynote-brad-bellegarde/">http://www2.uregina.ca/education/news/treatyedcamp-keynote-brad-bellegarde/</a>

UR S.T.A.R.S. Katia Hildebrandt, Meagan Dobson, and Raquel Bellefleur co-organized the second annual #treatyedcamp with the help of many volunteers and with financial support from the Faculty of Education and the Aboriginal Student Centre (View online photo album by clicking here).

On October 21, Métis author <u>Chelsea Vowel</u> (<u>Indigenous Writes</u>) presented a keynote on "Reconciliation in the Time of Pipelines" at the <u>Social Justice and Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppressive Forum on Education (SAFE) Conference 2016</u> for faculty and students. Dr. Val Mulholland, Dr. Michael Cappello, and Wanneta Martin participated in planning this jointly sponsored event.

Education students learned about decolonizing education in their classes: Dr. Gale Russell's math students crafted some Indigenous games of chance; Dr. Twyla Salm's students studied ways of decolonizing Health Education and examined White privilege; Dr. Anna-Leah King's students heard from Alanis King, an Odawa playwright, director and educator originally from the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, and the first Aboriginal woman to graduate from the National Theatre School of Canada; and drama education students explored the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, supported by Elder-in-Residence Alma Poitras and Elder Brenda Dubois, in Dr. Sara Schroeter's drama education course.









In late December 2016, Dr. Gale Russell was invited by the Student Achievement Support Unit within the Manitoba Ministry of Education to join their second Mamtowisiwin session that was focused on supporting the achievement of Aboriginal students in the area of numeracy. By the end of her first conversation with the Ministry representatives, the invitation had extended from presenting on the first day of the two-day event, to offering a two-day workshop.

Gale accepted the invitation, and on February 8 and 9, 2017 joined with over 140 school division directors, mathematics consultants/superintendents, Aboriginal consultants/superintendents, Manitoba Ministry of Education personnel, principals, vice-principals, teachers, and preservice teachers. Russell says, "It was a great two days, filled with lots of exploration and discussion of diverse, yet interconnected topics including: mathematics—what it is, what it could be, and what it should be; the Traditional Western and an Indigenous worldview, supporting Aboriginal students in mathematics, supporting all students in mathematics, and how to 'deal with' systemic factors beyond their control (such as standardized testing and grading policies.) I enjoyed two days of seriousness, laughter, and even tears. And, everyone did their homeworkboth reading articles and counting squares. It was also a great pleasure to meet and work with the invited Elder Florence Paynter, a retired educator and scholar, who shared many stories and much wisdom with the group."

Since the workshop, Russell has been regularly receiving emails from attendees with specific and general questions; as well, she received an invitation to join with the Manitoba Association of Mathematics Teachers on their PD day in October. 2017. Gale happily accepted this invitation, and looks forward to yet another experience of deep insights, thought-provoking discussions, and lessons to be learned, challenged, and unlearned.

The Teaching Preparation Centre's coordinator, Keith Adolph, arranged to have Photo Journalist Daniella Zalcman, author of Signs of Your Identity, present on Friday, January 27 about her project in which Saskatchewan Indian residential school survivors are portrayed through multiple exposure portraits. This work was the recipient of the 2016 FotoEvidence Book Award. On January 30, Danielle returned to moderate a panel discussion with five residential school survivors (Rosalie Sewap, Audrey Eyahpase, Janet Dufour, Selina Brittain, and Leona Wolf) about the effects of residential schooling on their lives. The stories of survivors were moving and inspirational. The survivors challenged participants to assist in finding solutions to the ongoing removal of Indigenous children from their families.

Dr. Fatima Pirbhai-Illich and Dr. Shauneen Pete (Faculty of Education) coedited a book with Dr. Fran Martin from University of Exeter entitled Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Working Towards Decolonization, Indigeneity and Interculturalism. This book was launched March 10 at University of Exeter as part of the Decolonizing Teacher Education seminar.

A Michif 100 language course is now being offered to Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) Regina students. SUNTEP Regina Coordinator Janice Thompson says, "What makes our program unique and distinct is that we are the first post-secondary institution to offer [the Michif] language course to our students." (See page 10)





# SUNTEP FIRST POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION TO OFFER MICHIF 100



A MICHIF 100 LANGUAGE COURSE IS NOW BEING OFFERED TO SASKATCHEWAN URBAN NATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM (SUNTEP) REGINA STUDENTS. SUNTEP REGINA COORDINATOR JANICE THOMPSON SAYS, "WHAT MAKES OUR PROGRAM UNIQUE AND DISTINCT IS THAT WE ARE THE FIRST POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION TO OFFER [THE MICHIF] LANGUAGE COURSE."

Michif is the indigenous language of many Métis. However, "the Michif language which was once common in Métis communities is now considered an endangered language as there are fewer that 1000 people who speak it." (Louis Riel Institute)

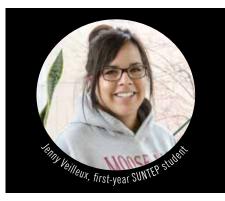
Thompson says, "Offering the Michif 100 course continues to reaffirm our commitment to Métis people alongside our mission statement: to promote the renewal and development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collection and distribution of those materials and the design, development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services." The introduction of the new Michif course was celebrated at the Student Success Celebration, held March 7, 2017.

Gabriel Dumont Institute—SUNTEP, in partnerships with the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan, has been offering elementary teacher training for over 35 years and currently boasts 1206

graduates from Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert programs.

First year SUNTEP Regina student Jenny Veilleux says she feels "fortunate to be one of the first students in Canada to take a Michif class, which is the first one to be offered anywhere ever. Michif is a dying language, with few fluent speakers; it needs to be saved so it can flourish once again. My family was enfranchised in the 1950's, which unfortunately means they assimilated into the European culture.

Ultimately, they lost most of the languages that they were born to speak during the process. My grandparents spoke between 5-7Indigenous languages and Michif was one. I only grew up hearing phrases or words, never being fully immersed in the language. To be learning Michif now at my age, as an adult, is exciting, but also very difficult. Learning the language of my people is very important to me as it enhances more of what I'm learning about my traditions and culture. This is necessary for many people in Canada, to prevent it from being completely lost."



"To be learning Michif now at my age, as an adult, is exciting, but also very difficult. Learning the language of my people is very important to me as it enhances what I'm learning about my traditions and culture."

# EXCHANGE STUDENTS FROM COSTA RICA

"It has changed my life," says Veronica Segura Picado of San Jose, Costa Rica. Luis Bolanos Gomez, of the Province of Alajuela, Costa Rica agrees, "It was just amazing." Veronica and Luis are summing up their time here as exchange students from the University of Costa Rica.

The two students arrived in Regina in the frigid temperature of late December. "We didn't know anything about Saskatchewan and we were counting the days to come here," says Luis. "We were expecting a big city, but no... We were not expecting the flat land," says Luis, with his hands outlining the horizon.

Veronica adds, "Our first reaction when we got out of the plane was, 'Snow!' We were super excited." Luis adds, "We don't have snow in Costa Rica!"

After spending a winter semester at the University of Regina, however, Veronica admits there were times she didn't like the cold weather. "Twice, I froze my feet and I was at the point of wanting to cry, 'Why am I here?" Luis, however, maintains that, "winter was amazing."

At the University of Costa Rica, Veronica is in her 4th year of a Bachelor's degree in Teaching English (as a second language), with only one semester left to finish. Luis is finished his Bachelor's degree in Teaching English and will convocate in August. Competency in the English language is important in Costa Rica. Luis says, "It is a *must* to speak English if you want to get a good job." Veronica adds, "International companies are coming to Costa Rica and you have to know English to get a job." Their aim in becoming exchange students was to improve their English: "We wanted to go to a country where they speak English. We wanted to come and practice and learn." When their exchange coordinator told them about Canada, they said, "Yah!"

While at the University of Regina, Veronica took Linguistics and Diversity, English as a Second Language, and Introduction to Dance Education. Luis took English as a Second Language, Self and Other, and Acting Theory and Practice. When asked about the highlight of their time here, Veronica

responded, "Everything! It has changed my life." Before she came here, Veronica says, "I didn't really like children." But volunteer work with ESL and ELL students gave her a new perspective. She says, "Oh, it changed my life working with children from Syria, Africa, China, Korea; for me it was just amazing. I also did work teaching Spanish, being the teacher of Spanish with 29 kids-all of them speak English—it was amazing because they got super engaged with the classes." When the class was over. Veronica was touched when her students said, "We [will] miss you a lot...will you eventually come back to teach us Spanish again?" Veronica says, "Now I love children."

For Luis, "the most amazing experience here is the multicultural environment, like knowing people from all over the world, knowing differences about culture, everything about those experiences that make people, people." Veronica agrees, "Here in a multicultural environment, I have met people from 34 different nationalities and that is really of value to me. I learned to be super tolerant of differences because here you have different cultures and you know how to live with that, like being patient."

For instance, Luis says, "We know a guy from Japan who is so on time for everything, but for us we are, so very relaxed. Same, for example, with hugs and kisses, we are used to that; everytime we see somebody and say goodbye to somebody, we hug and kiss, but here, with most of the countries, they are like 'no, just bye.' Being tolerant and understanding that there is a completely different world from our culture and the world we know to be there—it opens your mind."

As for difficulties, Veronica and Luis agreed that stereotypes were a negative aspect of their experience here. They offer this advice: "If you don't know where someone is from, just ask, don't make assumptions based on appearance." Costa Rica is not the same as Puerto Rico, and is not in Mexico or Africa. "At the beginning it was kind of fun, but when a bunch of people don't know anything about your country... it feels better if you ask, just ask."



Other learning included becoming more confident, and more independent. Veronica says, "every day you have to cook for yourself; you learn how to live by yourself; you have to be independent. This experience has been the experience in my life!" Luis adds, "It was just amazing. Here you learn to have more confidence. The first week here, the university was closed, and we had to start meeting people. We had to find and get to know people. It was a great experience...really helpful. One of the best experiences of my life."

Both Luis and Veronica stayed in the residence, which they found added to their experience. Veronica says, "Residence is so good: the activities they prepare for you, and exposure with other people are really good." Luis adds, "Exchange students are super close. There are students from Brazil, Italy,...we speak English when we are together." Luis values, "all the friends that we made, people that we will never forget, who will stay in our memories forever." Veronica agrees and adds, "People from Canada, you are so amazing—I love Canadians. You are so kind and you are willing to help people, no matter what, you are always willing to help people. It's amazing."

Veronica plans to return. She says, "if everything goes well, I will be here in May next year to, eventually, take my Master's here. I love Regina." As for Luis, he plans "to go all over the world, visit all my friends, and eventually come back to Canada. Why not!"

By Shuana Niessen

# STUDENTS VOLUNTEER IN LANGUAGE PROGRAM FOR NEW CANADIAN WOMEN

ELNG 200 students volunteered in a community-based language program for new Canadian women with infants and preschool-aged children. The program was developed by the Faculty of Education's Dr. Fatima Pirbhai-Illich and Professor Emeritus Dr. Meredith Cherland in partnership with the Saskatchewan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC).



















ELNG 200, a second-year Faculty of Education course, prepares future teachers to support students learning to speak, read, and write the English language. As part of the course, students are required to be involved in 8 -10 hours of critical service volunteering. However, with approximately 30 students per course looking to fulfil their volunteer requirements in teaching English as an additional language (EAL), this requirement can pose a difficulty. Dr. Fatima Pirbhai-Illich, who teaches the course, says, "Sometimes students are left scrambling." For this reason, she began looking for new venues where her students could volunteer.

Dr. Pirbhai-Illich approached a colleague, Professor Emeritus Dr. Meredith Cherland, about the needs of her students. It so happened that due to her position as chair of the Welcoming the Newcomer Committee for her church, Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Regina, Meredith had become aware of a gap in English language classes. She had met 18-year-old Finda Sam and her husband Amos Kamato, and their baby boy at church.

Meredith says, "The couple had spent many years of their young lives in a refugee camp in Guinea, although they were born in Sierra Leone." Finda had approached Meredith, asking if she could help her to learn to speak English better, and to learn to read and write English. Finda was in a position of having to wait for a childcare opening before she could begin English classes at the Open Door Society. "The classes at Open Door and the Library have a limited number of spaces and there are wait lists," says Meredith.

With Finda's situation in mind, Meredith and Fatima started thinking about the many new Canadian women in Regina who could not attend EAL classes because they had babies or preschoolers to care for. They determined to set up a community-based language program for newcomers to Canada, specifically for those women with young children who are on waiting lists for language classes through the Open Door Society, the Regina Public Library, and the Regina Immigrant Women's Centre.

Continued on next page

Fatima with her extensive EAL background was willing to teach a language and literacy class. This would also provide ELNG 200 students with new opportunities for volunteering.

Thus resolved, Fatima and Meredith began looking for a space, and were at first discouraged because they had no budget. Meredith, then, applied to the Saskatchewan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) for funding. The ELCIC awarded them \$1,100. Central Lutheran Church offered them space without charge. "This is the most important part," says Fatima, "It's amazing, and we wouldn't have been able to offer the program without it." The funding, then, went towards refreshments for the students and their children as well as the services of coordinator Cynthia Schultz, a University of Regina master's student in the Faculty of Education.

With a space, a teacher, a coordinator and volunteers in place, it was time to find students. They advertised the course, with the first class offered on October 4. After five classes, "11 women [had] attended with nine attending regularly, and about nine children under the age of five attending," reported Schultz.

Others from the Faculty were also involved. Dr. Christine Massing helped with the children on Tuesdays. The students from ELNG 200 and students from Fatima's master's classes donated items such as diapers and clothing for the EAL students to take home. Yan Yang, a PhD student, tutored each week. Some women from the Lutheran Church also volunteered, helping with set up and bringing homemade halal snacks once per week. Bernice Casper, a volunteer from Our Savior's Lutheran Church, says, "I think this is so wonderful for new Canadians to have this opportunity to learn English one-on-one—it's one-on-one—that's what I want to emphasize about this program. I also love the interactions between the U of R students and the English students."

EAL student Rasha who attended the program said she liked it and had found new friends through the program. University of Regina student Jenna Magnusson worked with Rasha as her EAL tutor. Jenna said the program was "a good experience." She had gained "insights about people learning English." One of her strategies was to use her Google translator to look up Arabic words when her student got stuck on a word.

EAL student Finda Sam worked with U of R student Jonah Norman-Gray. Finda came to the program because she wanted "to learn to read, to read and write." What did volunteering teach Jonah? "Awkwardness [when teaching EAL] is not a problem. Situations where you are not sure what to say are normal. Awkwardness just means you care about the situation." Working as a volunteer in this program was important to Jonah because, he says, "I will be using this [experience] in the future—I think it is very important work." Jonah adds, "It is good to see this kind of program show up in a grass-roots scenario. This is beautiful—it is the goodness of people."

Miriam, a mother of four, found the program helpful, with everyone helping her to learn English. She has also found new friendships through the program. U of R students Taylor Raby and Darian Kaszas worked together with Miriam using a picture dictionary. Speaking to the value of this tutoring experience for her as a future educator, Darian says "We are bound to have students who don't speak English," and Taylor adds, "or students who are trying to learn another language." Taylor says she has learned that when teaching EAL, "it really helps if you go slowly and repeat a lot."

Coordinator Cynthia Schultz focuses on the value this program has for the women who attended: They were no longer at isolated at home with their young children. They came for four hours per week, and had the chance to socialize with other women as well as to learn a variety of English language and literacy skills. She found it wonderful to see their language skills improving.

By Shuana Niessen

"I will be using this [experience] in the future—I think it is very important work...It is good to see this kind of program show up in a grass-roots scenario. This is beautiful—it is the goodness of people." ~Jonah Norman-Gray







Inaugural Gender and Sexual Diversity
Ed Camp 2017 #GSDcamp held March 7,
2017 at the University of Regina



Jack Saddleback presented "There are No Closets in Tipis," amphasizing the importance of family and community support of diversity.





Jack's keynote was followed by two sessions (with six concurrent presentations in each) from Camp fYrefly, UR Pride, TransUmbrella, PFLAG Canada, Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), a Two-Spirit Panel discussion, and a family story.





Suzy Yim (Lower Left) and Kyla Christianson (Lower Right) coordinators for fYrefly in Schools. Above: Dr. Michael Cappello (UR S.T.A.R.S.) and Jack Saddleback. Far Right: Meagan Dobson (UR S.T.A.R.S.) with GSA presenter Jason Howse.



Click to view more photos online

# GENDER AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY ED CAMP 2017

On March 4, 2017, the UR S.T.A.R.S., UR Pride Centre, Camp fYrefly, and fYrefly in Schools co-hosted the first Gender and Sexual Diversity Ed Camp (#GSDcamp on Twitter) at the University of Regina. The professional development event (using the edcamp model of PD by teachers for teachers) started off with keynote speaker Jack Saddleback. "Jack is a Cree two-spirit transgender gay man from the Samson Cree Nation in Maskwacis, Alberta." (University of Saskatchewan, Aboriginal Initiatives)

In his keynote entitled, "There are no Closets in Tipis," Jack spoke about the importance of family and community support of diversity for the wellness of diverse individuals. As a genderqueer child, Jack, who was born female, increasingly felt the pressure to fit into the feminine spectrum, but felt at odds with this social expectation. At puberty, when Jack decided to embrace the feminine, he began to suffer from severe depression and isolation and eventually tried to take his own life. But something inside him called out "No," so he instead, began looking for help.

When Jack finally decided to tell his family that he was a man, he felt terrified. He feared they would no longer

love him, but he needed them to know who he was. Their response was supportive, "We don't know anyone else like you in our family. But we want to help you in any way we can." They suggested Jack meet with a medicine man who was coming to their community. Jack agreed to this. The medicine man diagnosed him as having two spirits. Jack said, "I'm not just gay, Cree or trans. It's the inseparability of all those things that I was experiencing." After the medicine man tried to exercise him, Jack knew he needed to tell his story so that this type of experience wouldn't happen to others. (See documentary sexspiritstrength.ca)

Jack said, "If it wasn't for my family and community support, I wouldn't be here. Ask yourselves how can I be a good ancestor to those little ones."

Jack's keynote was followed by two sessions (with six concurrent presentations in each) presented by Camp fYrefly, fYrefly in Schools, UR Pride, TransUmbrella, PFLAG Canada, GSA, and a Two-Spirit Panel discussion.

# CHRISTINE SELINGER | WHERE HAS YOUR B.ED. TAKEN YOU?



Alumna Christine Selinger

Alumna Christine Selinger (B.Ed./B. Sc. 2011) has been in the news for a variety of reasons over the years. In 2006, while a second-year Education student at the U of R, Christine was injured in a rappelling incident that fractured her vertebrae in her lower back. Just three years later, she won her first international medal at the 2009 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships, and in total won 10 International Medals, including the first-ever 2010 Women's ParaCanoe V1 World Championship. Also in 2010, she was the first person living with a paraplegic condition to go on an expedition through the Nookta Trail, which is an especially challenging back-country 35 kilometer hike. At her convocation in 2011, Christine graduated with Distinction and was the recipient of the President's Medal. Christine has recently received worldwide recognition for her work on sex and disability.

The following is an interview with Christine to find out where her B.Ed. has taken her:

## What are you currently doing professionally?

I am now the Educator for Spinal Cord Injury Ontario in Toronto. I sustained a spinal cord injury in December 2006, which was during my second year at the U of R, and that has helped to lead me here. I create learning opportunities for people with spinal cord injuries, their

loved ones, healthcare professionals and essentially anyone who wants information about spinal injuries. In my current role I create online, blended, and in-person learning opportunities—meaning, that I provide educational opportunities through several different mediums. I manage learning projects and make those learning opportunities available across the province, country or world (depending on the project and its scope). I host and develop webcasts and online meetings. I design, develop, and implement training opportunities through the use of the authoring tools Adobe Captivate and Camtasia Studio.

I also still privately tutor Mathematics and English in the evenings (after work). I love working with students and found that I really missed that interaction in my everyday work. In 2013, I was the Lead Instructor for a Math tutoring agency called Mathnasium, but now I privately tutor students.

# How did you come to live and work in Ontario? What obstacles did you find in becoming employed? How did you overcome? What support did you receive?

I moved to Toronto just after graduation with my partner, Jerrod Smith. He was headed here to pursue his Master's and Ph.D. in Mathematics, and I didn't want to live across the country from him, so I picked up and moved too!

I had a really, really tough time finding a job here, which was quite heartbreaking. I spent about four months applying to pretty much everything I could—everything from teaching positions to retail positions. One of the biggest obstacles I came across was that Toronto isn't as accessible as I (objectively) think it should be, given that it is the largest city in Canada (and has the largest population of people with disabilities). I was offered several interviews, only to discover that the employers either didn't have barrier-free access or didn't have a wheelchairaccessible washroom. It was a really disheartening experience.

My mom once told me that every time I talked to her I sounded more and more sad. It's hard to tell you how I overcame it—I don't really know. My family and friends (though far away) were a huge support. Jerrod and I really learned how to lean on each other in those days as well. He needed my support to survive the grueling days of his Master's, and I needed his support in maintaining my own self-confidence.

## What are you passionate about in your current work?

The reason I got involved in Education in the first place was a desire to help make the world a better place. I really feel that teachers are in the best position to do that. You can ask anyone to name their favourite teachers and it doesn't seem to matter how much time has passed since that person was in school—they will be able to name at least one teacher, and it will usually be accompanied by stories of how that teacher helped shape them into who they are.

That drive to help make the world a better place is what I work for. In the case of my current position, I get to do that by helping people with disabilities see the opportunities in the world and helping the world see the opportunities in people with disabilities. I feel that I can help create a more inclusive and accessible world for all of us.

I also love learning, so having the opportunity to learn about new educational technologies and techniques as I grow is a huge benefit as well.

#### Do you have a story of a great experience in your current work and what was meaningful about this experience for you?

I was given the opportunity to create resources related to sex and disability early in 2015. It's a topic that many people are not comfortable discussing or see as taboo, but it is incredibly important for people to talk about. Sex is a part of everyday life for everyone, including individuals with disabilities,

Continued on next page

but it is often overlooked or ignored because it can be uncomfortable to discuss.

I'm comfortable speaking about sex, so it seemed natural that I would help to lead these discussions. We released a panel discussion on sex after a spinal cord injury as well as an eLearning module about sexuality and adapting sex toys for people with disabilities. It was all completed as a form of online sex education for people with disabilities.

These projects have garnered worldwide recognition. I was interviewed as a part of a piece on Broadly (a Vice Channel) titled "How People with Disabilities Have Sex," a quote from that article landed on the podcast "Stuff Mom Never Told You" (out of the United States), and I have received notes asking for help and resources from people far and wide, including a professor in Denmark and a website out of Mumbai. I've also delivered conference presentations on the subject—including speaking at the Toronto Collaborative Neuroscience Symposium.

I took a course at the U of R about gender and sexual identity in schools from Dr. James McNinch and that course really prepared me for this project. I thought of it often as I prepared.

# Did any U of R professors make an impact on you and your professional journey?

I'm not sure that I could name all of the professors that had an impact on me and my professional journey. The lessons (either of subject matter or life) that I learned from them are with me every day. From Douglas Farenick (now Dean of Science, congrats Doug!) and Remus Floricel in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics, to Susan Johnston and Diana Lundine in the English Department, to Rick Seaman and James McNinch in Education and many, many more.

# What was your experience like at the U of R? What was a highlight for you here?

I absolutely loved my education at the U of R. I'm not sure I can pinpoint a specific highlight. I absolutely loved my internship experience at Winston Knoll Collegiate with my co-op teacher Maria Canham and I reflect on that often. I also loved meeting Jerrod—we met in Modern Algebra. There were only six of us in the class and I knew four of the other students before we even started. I think that's one of the things I really appreciated about the U of R: It is big enough that you can still get the classes and education you are looking for and yet it's still small enough that you have a lot of contact with your peers and your professors.

# How did your injury impact your studies, your athletic dreams, and any other dreams? How did your life change?

My spinal cord injury impacted pretty much everything in my life. It's really hard to explain. Often when I talk about my experience with my injury, people assume a sort-of "poor you" mentality and that's something I would like to debunk a little. Yes, the first few years after my injury were really tough. I had to learn how to do everything again—from getting dressed and moving around, to even figuring out how I fit in socially. But my life isn't worse now than it was beforehand. In fact, it's probably much richer than it was beforehand. I've had really amazing opportunities offered to me, and I've been in situations where I could jump at those opportunities and really explore them.

The most immediate change in my future goals related to my studies. I had an image—as many do—of finishing my B. Ed. in 4 years and getting a job as a teacher. After my SCI, I took a semester off to complete my physical rehabilitation, and returned as a part-time student before getting back to school full time. This meant that I was not going to finish in four year's time, so I decided to tack on a little extra time and finished my B.Sc. concurrently with my B.Ed. I'm

really glad that I chose that direction for many reasons: I was able to grow in my profession, gaining a much better understanding of Mathematics as well as meet a lot of amazing individuals I would not have had the chance to meet without the additional classes, including the man that is now my husband!

I had never been into sports much at all before my injury, and certainly not organized sport. After my injury, however, I found that sport was a really great way for me to connect with other people who had sustained spinal injuries, and that by spending time with other people who had spinal cord injuries I could learn a ton about how to adapt. So I kept going, and I've been able to try a wide variety of sports and many different levels. I had always loved water sports, so I really connected with paddling (canoe and kayak) and was given the incredible opportunity to represent Canada at 4 ICF World Championships—and won 10 International Medals, including the first-ever Women's ParaCanoe V1 World Championship in 2010. I have now retired from paddling, at least for the time being, so that I can focus on other things, but I'm sure that I'll be back someday.

# How did you overcome the obstacles to finishing your degree and from where did you receive support?

I am a tremendously fortunate person, and my SCI really highlighted that for me. I have a wonderful family and amazing friends; I really can't thank them enough for everything that they did for me immediately after my injury. That being said, I think they may have done even more for me before my injury—they helped to shape me into the person I needed to be to face all of the challenges life would throw at me, my injury included. During my recovery I focused on each day individually and, with the knowledge that I could not turn back time to "undo" what had happened, I rebuilt myself by choosing to focus on where I was going rather than where I had been. I could not have done that without the support of my family and friends,

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and their knowledge that I needed to feel like myself. They didn't treat me differently; they didn't make me feel fragile. When I was with them, I was just Christine.

# What are your future goals professionally/personally?

I feel like I'm at a spot where I'm just taking life as it comes. My husband will be finishing his Ph.D. in Mathematics in the upcoming year, so we're looking at the possibility of moving, though neither of us is sure of where that might take us. I want to live somewhere where I have more access to wilderness than I do right now—and to continue creating adventures around the world.

Someday I would like to write a book, though I'm not sure what form that would take.

I want to continue working with kids and young adults. I love the curiosity and enthusiasm of youth and that is such a fun energy to be around.

Someday I hope to get back into teaching in a classroom setting, in some way. I would also like to further my education, through the completion of a Master's and possibly a Ph.D. Ultimately, I just want to be happy.

## What advice do you have for others graduating from our program?

Don't limit your horizons. A degree in Education, and the lessons you learn through your time at the U of R will take you many places and give you the tools to do more than you think. Take opportunities as they come, and create your own opportunities whenever you can.





# LISTENING LAB ARTIST REFLECTIONS



I had the delight to spend time this November with Dr. Kathryn Ricketts in the Listening Lab where we worked together with students, connecting ways the body opens up language, voice, writing, dance, and insights. This research continued in the collaborative work with Kathryn, co-writing the connections between place and embodiment. It was also a delight to share my work on reclaiming <a href="Armenian identity through poetry and dance">Armenian identity through poetry and dance</a> in the <a href="Theory and Method Seminar">Theory and Method Seminar</a>. I am thankful for the wonderful work being opened by Dr. Ricketts and the receptivity of the warm community at U of R. Dr. Celeste Snowber, Simon Fraser University



My time with Dr. Kathryn Ricketts at the Listening Lab from March 6-9, 2017 was rich and engaging. We shared our current art-making processes and discussed different dance practice methodologies. We shared ideas on moving with objects, on narrative inquiry, on notions of space, and we discussed ideas on a somatic approach to movement. I also had the opportunity to share my research on "Embodied Geographies" at a Theory and Method Seminar and a narrative inquiry class. Thank you for this engaging experience. The Listening Lab not only supports artists and educators to come together to test ideas, but it allows us to share in discourse and develop a language around movement. Learning how to communicate about our lived experiences is invaluable, educational, and meaningful. Donna Redlick, Moving Arts and Somatic Studies, Vancouver, BC

# noto Credit: Shuana Niessen

# COMMEMORATING THE ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAM



Artist and second-year Arts Education student Molly Johnson was commissioned to produce the commemorative piece pictured above that will be installed in the Faculty of Education to celebrate the Arts Education program's 34 successful years in the Faculty of Education and the Fall 2016 introduction of the new 4-year Arts Ed program.

Visual Education Chair, Dr. Valerie Triggs says, "The Faculty of Education decided to invite proposals for a work of commemorative art to celebrate the years that the Arts Education program has been in the Faculty and also the transition to the new program. We received many excellent proposals. The selection committee decided to award the commission for this commemorative work of art to Molly Johnson."

The Faculty also approached the MAP (Media, Arts, and Performance) Faculty, requesting an artistmentor to work alongside Molly. Dr. Triggs says, "We had the privilege of connecting with a graduate student from MAP, Jennifer Shelly Keturakis."

On her role as mentor, Jennifer says it was an honour to work with Molly; she is "self-directed, motivated, intelligent and articulate...l had one set of expectations of what my input would be because I made some assumptions based on her being a second year [student], based on my own experience as a second year, but I quickly had to pick a different role."

Molly's artwork was exhibited and celebrated on March 7, 2017 at the Student Success Celebration.

# STUDENT EXPERIENCES



#### LONG SERVICE AWARDS



Photo (Left - Right): Rechel Leonard (10 years), Marc Spooner (10 years) with Dean Jennifer Tupper. Missing from photo: Fatima Pirbhai-Illich (10 years), Rochelle Fenwick (15 years), Marilyn Miller (15 years), Kathy Nolan (15 years), James McNinch (20 years), and Valerie Mulholland (20 years). Photo Courtesy of UR Photography

The Long Service Recognition Program gives tribute to those who have given many years of service to the University of Regina. The program provides for the recognition of service milestones of 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, and 45 years. A reception was held on April 5, 2017 to honour those who reached a service milestone in 2016.

#### PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IN CANADA SERIES



The research team for the study includes: Dr. Pamela Osmond-Johnson, Assistant Professor, University of Regina, Saskatchewan; Dr. Brenton Faubert, Assistant Professor, Western University, Ontario; and Dr. Kenneth Zeichner, Boeing Professor of Teacher Education, University of Washington, Seattle. Audrey Hobbs Johnson, Learning Forward senior consultant and former staff member with the provincial government of British Columbia serves as project coordinator. (Photo courtesy of OISE)

A study done by a team of researchers (see photo above), has recently been published in a series of books that, according to Hargreaves, "points to the importance of both professional learning and professional development as ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning." Dr. Pamela Osmond-Johnson is one of the researches. Pamela is second author on *The State of Educators' Professional Learning in Canada* and first author of *The State of Educators' Professional Learning in Alberta*.

### ORANGE SHIRT DAY COMMEMMORATING RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS, SEPT. 30







# RETIREMENT



Dr. James McNinch

Photos Credit: Shuana Niessen

Dr. McNinch received applause from colleagues for his work in the Faculty

Dr. James McNinch began his 20-year career at the University of Regina in 1995, when he was hired to kick-start the Teaching Development Centre (TDC). In 1996, he was appointed Director of the TDC, with a crossappointment in the Department of English and the Faculty of Education. In 2005, McNinch became a fulltime faculty member with the Faculty of Education, where he taught core studies and adult education. He was the Director of the Field Placement Office, then Associate Dean, and then Dean for six years, stepping down in 2014 while remaining Director of the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unity (SIDRU) until his retirement in December 2016.

# What was the highlight/memorable moment of your career here at the U of R?

There have been many memorable moments. As a teacher, I have many memories of students working hard and being grateful for the feed-back I gave them. This is particularly true of the first 10 years when I regularly taught English 100. Helping students improve their reading, writing, and comprehension, and to expand their world view was extremely rewarding. As a writer and editor, I found great satisfaction in working closely with 3 colleagues, Mary Cronin, Carol Schick, and Marc Spooner as the co-editor of 3 collections of articles and in seeing the impact these books had on subsequent teaching and scholarship.

As a university administrator, I was told many times over the years that people admired me for being straightforward, standing up for what I believed, and supporting faculty, staff, and students as best I could.

# What significance does the work we do at the U of R, Faculty of Education have, in your estimation?

Teacher education, including preservice, in-service, and graduate work is critical pedagogical work because we are critiquing, influencing, and shaping the kind of society we live in. It means encouraging teachers to help students to become engaged citizens able to advocate for themselves and for others and to strive for a civil, just society where everyone is treated with the respect and dignity we all deserve. I know it sounds like a cliché, but trying to make the world a better place is a big job that never ends. I have seen tremendous advances in Indigenous education in this province and I know this Faculty will continue to be a leader in that regard.

#### What are your retirement plans?

Now that I am retired, I feel as if I am as engaged as ever but on my own terms. No more alarm clocks sounding angry at 6:00 in the morning during the dark days of January! I am currently writing a chapter about social justice and gender and sexual minorities for a text-book used in Human Justice courses. I am still

directing Camp fYrefly and fYrefly in Schools as community-based projects that make a difference in people's lives. We just hired a new co-ordinator to be based in Saskatoon so we have increased capacity to meet demand. This week I was working with a school division and the STF to make plans for a teacher who is transitioning from female to male and sorting out the implications this will have for students, staff and the community. If someone had told me at the beginning of my career 40 years ago that I would be involved in such work I would not have believed them. I have a new three week old grand-daughter. It takes my breath away to see how helpless and vulnerable she is and how much she is loved and cared for. And it is spring, so time to transplant the tomato seedlings that I germinated.

#### Do you have any words of advice/ wisdom to offer the faculty/staff or field of education?

My Dad, with whom I had a conflicted relationship, did always say "Don't be afraid to ask or propose something if you believe in it. The worst someone can say is NO and you can try again."

I am not very good with my hands but "righty tighty and left is loosey" has been helpful over the years. Trans performance artist and writer, Ivan Coyote, quotes Dolly Parton saying "Find out who you are and do it on purpose." In hindsight I think I have lived like that.

# SUCCESSFUL DEFENCE

Congratulations to Dr. Heather Phipps on successfully defending her PhD at McGill University on November 23, 2016.

Dr. Phipp's dissertation is entitled, "Children Speaking with Children: Visualizing Engagement Through Contemporary Canadian Picture Books in French Classrooms." This

is an ethnographic study situated in a public primary school in urban Montreal. It documents young children's responses to Canadian children's literature in Grades 1 and 2 French classrooms. Her study highlights the ways in which children engage and respond to both the words and images in diverse Canadian literature, and how they reflect on their own lived experiences in relation to the picture books. Dr. Teresa Strong-Wilson and Dr. Claudia Mitchell supervised. Dissertation committee members included Dr. Anne Burke (Memorial University), Dr. Mary Maguire (McGill), and Dr. Mela Sarkar (McGill). The external examiner was Dr. Rahat Naqvi (University of Calgary).



Congratulations to Dr. Sara Schroeter who successfully defended her PhD dissertation at the University of British Columbia on April 3, 2017.

Dr. Schroeter's dissertation is entitled, "Difference at Play: An Ethnography of Discourse and Drama in Multiracial Classrooms in a Francophone Minority Language Schools." Her study explores

the discourses of difference (Foucault, Hall) that students used in and out of class and how they emerged during drama aqctivities in a minority language school in Canada. Specifically, the project examined the liminal spaces created by drama and other activities and how they provided momentary access to the students' infomral discourses of race and ethnicity. The study raises questions about the possibilities of applied drama for unpacking discourses of difference when the focus is on the social studies curriculum, rather than the aesthetic art form that informed the drama pedagogy. Dr. Annette Henry and Dr. Lisa Loutzenheiser served as Sara's doctoral supervisors, and her external examiner was Dr. Nombuso Dlamini.

# RESEARCH FUNDING AND AWARDS

#### SSHRC KNOWLEDGE SYNTHESIS GRANTS

\$24,000.00

Levac, L. (PI), Co-applicants: **Cindy Hanson**, Steinstra, D. McKay M. Baikie, G. & Mucina, D. Two eyed seeing and Intersectionality: Reconciling research approaches \$24,000.00

Andrea Sterzuk, with colleagues from McGill University and graduate students Bill Cook & Dennis Runns
"Ethical relationality, Canadian applied linguistics and Indigenous language revitalization"

#### REGINA REGION LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

**Christine Massing** (Faculty of Education), Daniel Kikulwe & Donalda Halabuzu (Faculty of Social Work), & Crystal Geisbrecht (PATHS)

"Barriers to Newcomer Adaptation and Settlement" \$19,963.80

#### PHI DELTA KAPPA DOCTORAL DISSERTATION AWARD

**Christine Massing** "An Ethnographic Study of Immigrant and Refugee Women's Knowledge Construction in an Early Childhood Teacher Education Program" \$1000.00

# PRAIRIEACTION FOUNDATION (PAF) YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

fYrefly in Schools (Suzy Yim & Kyla Christiansen) Two GSA mini-conferences in Saskatoon and Regina Up to \$3000.00

## CIHR INDIGENOUS APPROACHES TO WELLNESS RESEARCH GRANT

#### **Angela Snowshoe**

"(Re)Connecting Animal-Human Relationships as a Doorway to Indigenous Wellness" \$138,056.00

#### SIDRU RESEARCH GRANTS

#### Andrea Sterzuk & Russell Fayant

"A comparative study of graduate thesis language policy in Canadian universities" \$5000.00

#### Barbara McNeil

"Saskatchewan African Canadian Heritage Museum (Part Two): Re-branding the Logo - A Museum Responds to Decolonization and Indigenization" \$2500.00

#### Paul Clarke & Keith Walker (U of S)

"Youth, School Leadership and Radicalization: What Can We Learn from Student Voices and Perspectives?" \$2500.00

#### **Christine Massing & Fatima Pirbhai-Illich**

"Constructing cross-curricular critical service learning experiences alongside early childhood teacher education candidates and newcomers to Canada" \$2500.00

#### Jenn de Lugt

"Beyond Understanding: Enhancing Pre-Service Teacher Empathy...is it Possible?" \$2500.00

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