INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) continues to move forward in its Indigenization and reconciliation efforts, a commitment carefully woven throughout the entire new university plan to be The University the World Needs. In this edition, we feature Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann (PhD), the university’s first vice-provost of Indigenous Engagement, and discuss the annual faculty and staff Indigenous Gathering with Elizabeth Duret, USask’s inclusion and diversity consultant. Also in this issue, we explore the significance and history of the university’s land acknowledgement greeting, and take a closer look at the development of new apps and a web-based database to help USask educators revive Indigenous languages.

SEE PAGES 3, 7, 8, 9
With a background in veterinary medicine and pharmaceutical sciences, Dr. Jane Alcorn (PhD) brings a unique combination of education and experience as the new dean of the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition.

A faculty member of the college since 2001 at the University of Saskatchewan (USask), Alcorn officially began her five-year term as dean on July 1, 2019.

“After an extensive and comprehensive search, Dr. Alcorn stood out as the top candidate during the search process,” said Dr. Tony Vannelli (PhD), provost and vice-president academic.

Alcorn saw the opportunity to become dean as a new challenge and a chance to help facilitate ongoing changes to the college’s programs and with faculty and staff development. While Alcorn is neither a pharmacist nor a dietitian, she has worked extensively with both divisions.

“I plan to help create a place where all faculty, staff and students are proud to be a part of and proud to contribute to,” said Alcorn. “It’s important to me to ensure supports and programs are in place to produce high-quality results at the undergraduate and graduate levels.”

Alcorn is well-qualified for her new role after serving as associate dean, research and graduate affairs, in the college since 2016. During that time, Alcorn played a key role in helping establish the Cannabinoid Research Initiative of Saskatchewan (CRIS), an interdisciplinary research team exploring the application of cannabinoids and derivatives with humans and animals for health, disease and disorders. CRIS features researchers from across campus, as well as other Canadian and international research institutions.

Alcorn has also worked to enhance the college’s graduate programs to increase student engagement, and to introduce self-assessment of competencies and more rigor to the programs. In 2016, she was awarded the university’s Distinguished Graduate Supervisor Award.

Previous to her time as associate dean, Alcorn served as university veterinarian from 2011 to 2016. That role helped her prepare for her deanship as she developed relationships across the university, as well as with government officials and news media.

Alcorn accepts new challenge in Pharmacy and Nutrition

KIERAN KOBITZ

A University of Saskatchewan professor has been named one of three recipients of a 2019-20 David Suzuki Fellowship. Dr. Priscilla Settee (PhD), a professor in the Department of Indigenous Studies in the College of Arts and Science, is the new Indigenous Knowledge and Climate Change Fellow. She said she was “thrilled” to have her work and research recognized by being awarded a fellowship valued at $45,000. Settee’s northern trapping research will focus on sharing Indigenous knowledge to support climate change monitoring and the development of local solutions and opportunities within and across Indigenous territories.

Eight USask researchers received $1.3 million in funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation for equipment to support new projects. Funded were: microbiologist Dr. Linda Chemico (PhD) for treating HIV; geochemist Dr. Matt Lindsay (PhD) to restore the environment; biologist Dr. Philip McLoughlin (PhD) to conserve wildlife; biologist Dr. James Benson (PhD) to improve cryopreservation; biologist Dr. Byung-Kook Ham (PhD) to enhance global food security; gerontologist Dr. Alexander Crizzle (PhD) to make roads safer; toxicologist Dr. Markus Brinkmann (PhD) to manage toxicological risks; and engineer Dr. Li Chen (PhD) to improve computer chips.

As of the first day of classes on September 4, enrolment at USask for the 2019/2020 academic year was up by 1.6 per cent and on track to be the university’s highest enrolment ever. “I’m pleased to report we expect a fifth straight year of a planned increase in enrolment,” said Alison Pickrell, assistant vice-provost of strategic enrolment management.

By the end of the academic year in April 2020, student enrolment is projected to exceed 26,000—an increase of between one and two per cent—making it the highest in USask history. As of the first day of classes, international student enrolment was up 5.5 per cent, and Indigenous enrolment increased 6.1 per cent.

A USask legal education program to increase the number of practicing lawyers in Nunavut will receive $341,000 through the Justice Partnership and Innovation Program over the next two years. The federal investment enables USask students to engage in experiential learning opportunities in legal advocacy and establish a legal clinic in Iqaluit to gain hands-on law practice experience. The program will provide guest lecturers on Arctic, Inuit and Circumpolar issues, and hold programming on cultural skills, Inuitut legal terminology, and traditional law lectures. The program is a partnership between USask’s College of Law and Nunavut Arctic College.

Record enrolment

Law initiative

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When Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann (PhD) first learned of the University of Saskatchewan’s (USask) new plan to shape the institution through to the year 2025, she couldn’t wait to get started.

Ottmann was hired on Oct. 1, 2017 to serve as the university’s first vice-provost of Indigenous Engagement, supporting the key pillar of Indigenization that has been woven throughout the entire new strategic plan unveiled in 2018 to be *The University the World Needs*. It was that level of commitment in the new university plan—gifted by Elders the Indigenous names *nīkānītān manācihitowinihk* (Cree) and *ni manachīhitoonaan* (Michif) for “Let us lead with respect”—that helps drive Ottmann’s passion to support students and move the university forward.

“I was really excited about the university plan from the very outset,” said Ottmann. “What I was witnessing and being engaged with was actually something that I had been looking forward to at some point in my career. I looked at Indigenous strategies and university plans for the last 13 years and I think the difference here is the university plan does incorporate concepts of Indigenization and reconciliation, decolonization, and Indigenous languages. The University Plan 2025 is a foundational document, which is again really exciting. It’s not a separate Indigenous strategy. These concepts are embedded right into the backbone of our document.”

The new university plan has built on the foundation of USask’s commitment to Indigenization and reconciliation. USask hosted the first national forum in 2015 in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s final report. That forum—*Building Reconciliation: Universities Answering the TRC’s Calls to Action*—was the first of what has become an annual gathering for Canadian university leadership teams working together with First Nations and Métis leaders, Indigenous scholars and student leaders.

“The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action have sparked change for universities across the nation and some are related to education,” said Ottmann. “One goal within the university plan is embracing *manachīhitoonaan*. This goal invites us to developing respectful, reciprocal relationships, so we’re all renewed and restored.”

Ottmann said the university has an opportunity and an obligation to learn and respectfully share Indigenous stories and histories to develop deeper understandings of concepts like manacihitowin.

“Indigenous stories, teachings and songs will inspire and strengthen our campus community and people beyond our boundaries,” she said. “It’s important to meet Indigenous peoples where they are at, and to be open to being led by Indigenous peoples when it comes to Indigenization and manacihitowin.”

“The wisdom of Indigenous knowledges really does flow right from the Mission, Vision, Values principles, all the way through the aspirations,” she added. “Indigenization has to be felt within the entire fabric of the university, from procurement to teaching, learning and research, experienced by our students, staff and faculty. Each day, we all need to consider how decolonization, reconciliation and Indigenization will unfold in our spaces, interactions and work.”
That’s USask’s message to its family of graduates—now numbering more than 155,000 worldwide—for the annual Alumni Weekend on Sept. 20-21. “Alumni Weekend is a great time for alumni and friends to come back to campus and connect with their roots,” said Trevor Nerdahl, USask’s manager of Alumni Engagement. “It gives our alumni a chance to see how the institution has grown and see where it is headed.”

A number of fun and interesting events are scheduled for this year’s return to campus.

Starting Friday night (Sept. 20), the Prairie Lily has been booked for a USask alumni dinner cruise and will ferry passengers up and down the picturesque South Saskatchewan River to take in the changing colour of the leaves while enjoying the fellowship of fellow graduates. Registration is $52, with limited seating capacity available by booking online.

If you can’t go on the Prairie Lily boat tour, be sure to get up early Saturday (Sept. 21) and attend the breakfast ($10) and USask talk being held at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites. Scheduled from 9-11 am, guests will have the opportunity to listen to Dr. Volker Gerdts (DVM), the director and CEO of the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-International Vaccine Centre (VIDO-InterVac) at USask, as well as Kylee Drever, a Master of Science student. Gerdts will deliver a presentation on emerging diseases and the need to prepare vaccines, while Drever will talk about her research on tuberculosis.

“This is a great chance to learn about the world-class research that is happening on campus,” said Nerdahl. “We are extremely fortunate that Volker Gerdts will be able to shed some light on what intriguing work is happening at VIDO-InterVac. There are many people unaware of some of the interesting world-class research taking place in our own city.”

A new event planned for the weekend is the USask FestiBowl, which is open to all alumni and friends. It will feature campus partners, local businesses, cultural presentations and more. Local food trucks will be out in full force, a bouncy castle will be on site, along with face painting, balloon animals and Howler, the USask mascot, prowling around the Bowl.

In celebration of the United Nations declaration of 2019 being the International Year of Indigenous Languages, FestiBowl will also feature cultural performances by College of Education alumni from the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program and the Indian Teacher Education Program.

One of the highlights of Alumni Weekend is the Golden Grads ceremony taking place Sept. 21 at 2 pm in Convocation Hall, celebrating alumni who graduated more than 50 years ago. They will be encouraged to walk across the stage once again and receive a special Golden Grad pin.

There is also an Alumni Weekend reception scheduled for Sept. 21 at 4 pm in the Holiday Inn Express and Suites, wrapping up a wonderful opportunity for alumni members to return to their university roots and catch up with old friends.

For more information, visit alumni.usask.ca/alumniweekend

John Grainger is a communications specialist and editor in Alumni Relations.
Daniel Olver brought his love of wrestling to the University of Saskatchewan (USask) when he joined the Huskies in 2006. He also brought his determination to win and to be the best student-athlete he could be.

His first year as a university student-athlete was a bit of a shock, as he learned how to manage his time on the mat as well as in the classroom.

“I suffered a few blows with the marks my first year, but got it back up in my second, third, fourth and fifth years when I was an All-Academic with the Huskies. But first year, I wasn’t. That was a knock against me (and) I had to learn and grow from that,” said Olver, who had tremendous support from his then-girlfriend, now-wife Lindsay.

“When you get exposed to how you actually are compared to what you think you are, you have to really figure out how you’re going to evolve and be better.”

Olver, who is from Saskatoon, not only went on to be a Canadian Interuniversity Sport Academic All-Canadian with the Huskies, but was also featured in a Top 10 Moment in Huskie Athletics history after winning five straight Canada West championships and earning five medals at nationals: two gold, two silver and one bronze.

Winner of Most Outstanding Wrestler honours in Canada West, Olver also won three major awards with the Huskies. As for the academic side, Olver graduated with great distinction and was the top of his class in the Indigenous Studies department.

“I did a lot of good things in wrestling, but at the end of my degree I really wanted to try to be the best at everything. So, with Indigenous Studies, although it’s a smaller department, I put in the work and I wanted to have great marks there, so that was a cool feather in the cap,” said Olver.

After graduating, Olver continued wrestling as a senior athlete and served as the Aboriginal sport co-ordinator with the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan where he worked to increase the number of trained Indigenous coaches in the province.

Olver, who is Métis, went on to take over as the interim head coach of the Huskies wrestling team in 2013 and officially assumed the permanent role in 2015.

Over his seven years with the team, Olver has been working hard to help his wrestlers win a U Sports team title, win an Olympic medal, secure a permanent facility to practice in, and create pride on campus for Huskie Athletics. He has also helped train local Indigenous athletes in the Youth Leadership Through Sports Program, a partnership between the College of Kinesiology, Huskie Athletics and the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

And his efforts have not gone unnoticed. He’s been named coach of the year three times in the Canada West conference, and this year was also selected as coach of the year in U Sports wrestling, as well as coach of the year for Huskie Athletics.

“When I was an athlete I wanted those golds. That’s all I was after,” said Olver, who is quick to share credit for his accolades with his assistant coaches and support staff. “Second wasn’t good enough and so as a coach that competitive nature hasn’t changed, it just looks different.

“So (when) my athletes win, you’re a part of something bigger than yourself, but you still want those little things along the way.”
“It’s exciting to represent our country and it gives me a huge sense of pride.”
— Shelby Newkirk

Education student on pace for Paralympics

It’s been a remarkable last few years for Shelby Newkirk, but 2020 promises to be the best yet.

The 23-year-old fourth-year student in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) has set her sights on competing for Canada in the 2020 Paralympics, as she continues to make waves internationally in para-swimming. This month, Newkirk is representing the country overseas and looking to make a splash again internationally as she races in her first world championships in London, England.

“I am a proud Canadian and I have always watched our athletes on TV wearing the red and white, and with our swim caps having the maple leaf and our name on it, it’s just incredible,” said Newkirk, who went into the world championships holding a whopping 12 Canadian swimming records and one world record. “It’s exciting to represent our country and it gives me a huge sense of pride.”

Newkirk has had plenty of support from fellow students and professors in her college as she continues to make her mark in the pool, while also serving as an advocate for accessibility on campus. Selected as Sask Sport’s Female Athlete of the Year in March, Newkirk was also named Swimming Canada’s Female Para-swimmer of the Year in each of the past two years, and is the current world record holder in the 50-metre backstroke in the S7 category (one of 10 classifications for physical impairment).

“I have a really good group of friends in education who are in a lot of the same classes as me and they always follow along with how I am doing and follow my journey and cheer me on, and some of the professors too,” said Newkirk. “It’s just really nice to have that home base and encouragement for what I am doing.”

Newkirk has also received plenty of support from the university’s Access and Equity Services (AES) department, which has helped her address mobility challenges on campus.

“I use a wheelchair pretty much full-time on campus and I have other mobility aids that I can use for short distances,” said Newkirk, whose father Dr. Rex Newkirk (PhD) is an associate professor in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources. “There are some older parts of campus that are not always completely accessible, so I have worked with AES and they have helped me navigate them. They do classroom changes for you and they take care of any accommodations to make sure that everybody can attend classes, which is great.”

A multi-sport athlete growing up, Newkirk started para-swimming seven years ago after being diagnosed with dystonia, a rare neurological disorder that affects mobility in her lower limbs. The pool proved to be the perfect place to continue competing, as she dived right into the sport of para-swimming. Not only has she quickly become one of Canada’s most promising young future Paralympians in the water, but she has also excelled in the classroom, posting an 86 per cent average in her 2018/19 education studies.

“It’s definitely a lot of work to keep up with everything, but I really thrive on being busy,” said Newkirk, who also helps coach young swimmers in her Saskatoon Lasers Swim Club. “I swim five or six days a week plus a couple additional days in the gym, and meeting with nutritionists and trainers, while taking education classes. And I started my own online business on the side, too, so it’s a lot of time management. But it’s been a great year. I definitely have been working really hard in the pool and it’s nice to see all the hard work paying off.”

Newkirk has already met the race time standard required to compete in next year’s Paralympics—Aug. 25 to Sept. 6 in Tokyo following the Summer Olympics—but will need to repeat the performance at next spring’s national team trials. However, with a dozen national records and a world record already to her credit, Newkirk appears well on her way to becoming a Paralympian.

She is also on pace to finish her classes and final exams next April, and will just need to complete her practicums to earn her degree. While the Paralympics are her primary focus at the moment, Newkirk is also looking forward to working with children in the future.

“I’ve always wanted to help kids, especially in the school system,” she said. “I don’t know if I will work full-time in a classroom, or if I will do more consulting and try to get schools to increase accessibility, especially with phys-ed programs and increasing parasport awareness. I want to find ways to make schools a little bit more accessible for kids, and provide kids with the help they need.”

USask College of Education student Shelby Newkirk is a world-record-setting swimmer.
Indigenous Gathering fosters inclusivity and diversity

When Elizabeth (Liz) Duret came to the University of Saskatchewan (USask) four years ago, her focus was to create an inclusive and diverse campus community.

The goals included providing education and training, increasing the diversity of USask’s workforce through recruitment, and enhancing hiring practices with a strategic focus on Indigenous people.

Now, as her role and the needs of the campus community have evolved, Duret focuses on educating and empowering employees—both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

“I’m so proud of the work that we’ve done at USask and of the incredible Indigenous community we have on campus,” said Duret, USask’s inclusion and diversity consultant. “In my role I feel very connected to my community but certainly not to everyone, as the campus is so big it is hard to connect. I know at times that many Indigenous employees feel alone and isolated.”

It was with this in mind that Duret began to organize the Indigenous Gathering, an event celebrating the diversity, strength, resilience and rich cultural history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. Now in its third year, the Indigenous Gathering brings together staff and faculty from across units and colleges.

“As the university’s commitment to reconciliation and Indigenization continues to grow, Duret said it’s critical that Indigenous employees are supported. Indigenous employees provide unique support across campus for co-workers and students while enhancing USask’s commitment to reconciliation and Indigenization.”

“Indigenous Peoples are on their own unique path to reconciliation, and for some, the Indigenous Gathering is their first step to understanding their ancestry,” she said.

While exploring ancestry is a distinctly personal journey, USask employees are in a unique position when it comes to reconciliation and Indigenization.

“A lot of times Indigenous employees are looked to as experts in Indigeneity,” said Duret. “We are faced with questions and conversations that can be really difficult, especially depending on where you’re at in your journey. Even for myself, as inclusion and diversity consultant, I’m on my own journey. Growing up and into early adulthood, I wasn’t always proud to be Métis.”

“It’s my hope that this event not only brings together the Indigenous community on campus, but highlights all of the incredible work that’s being done,” she added.

“USask has so much to be proud of. We’re building the university the world needs, and for me that starts right here with our own community. When we create connections and work together, the benefits of the good work we’re doing can only spread faster and wider.”

The theme for 2019’s Indigenous Gathering on Oct. 17 is Honouring our Voices and will feature keynote speaker Candy Palmater, a broadcaster, comic and motivational speaker who focuses on Indigenous rights, diversity and the power of language.

All Indigenous faculty and staff are invited to attend, with registration available online later this month.

Ashley Dopko is a communications specialist in University Relations.

Faculty and staff who would like to self-declare their Indigenous ancestry can go to the employee tab in PAWS and click on Indigenous/Aboriginal Employee Self-Declaration.
Four years ago, the University of Saskatchewan (USask) officially introduced a new Indigenous land acknowledgement to open public speaking engagements, events and meetings.

The greeting was formalized after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s final report was released, urging governments, institutions and organizations to engage in the process of redressing the legacy of residential schools by responding to the TRC’s 94 Calls to Action. At USask, the land acknowledgement quickly became one small but meaningful way to begin that process.

“As we gather here today, we acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.”

Ottmann  
Wasacase-Lafferty  
Calvez

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“Acknowledging the land, and all the life within it, in various ways is something that First Nations, Inuit and Métis people have done for generations,” said Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann (PhD), the vice-provost of Indigenous Engagement at USask. “Expressions of gratitude and respect for the land, was practiced long before European settlers arrived on Turtle Island (North America). Indigenous people have had an intimate relationship and knowledge of these places and spaces.

“Land acknowledgement pays respect to those from our past and also to those who will experience our territories in generations to come. Land acknowledgments should be respectful, be reverent to the Creator, recognize the need for the right relationship, be communicated with humility and gratitude.”

USask’s land acknowledgement statement was officially approved at University Council on June 18, 2015, presented by project leaders including Candace Wasacase-Lafferty, senior director, Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement.

“It was important to everyone that we emphasize that the land acknowledgements be delivered in a respectful and insightful manner,” said Wasacase-Lafferty. “This statement was certainly a good way to begin.”

University officials engaged in extensive consultation with Elders, Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, students, staff, and community members, on the language and intention behind the statement. The intent was that the message be respectful and acknowledge the land itself, and the ancestral lands of the people who have resided in the territory for centuries.

“It is more than just about the land that we belong to, it is also about our relationship to the land and sky, to the plants and animals, to this place that has made us who we are today,” said Dr. Stryker Calvez (PhD), manager of Indigenous Education Initiatives at the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning at USask. “It is our spiritual connection to a place that has nurtured and shaped our languages, stories, beliefs and ways of knowing. Land acknowledgements don’t just recognize the past and the people who lived here before now, these statements recognize the spirit of the place and our relationship to it, like the relationships we have with our parents and families.

“It is also about the treaties we signed and scrip that we were offered. The oral stories describing the treaty and scrip processes provide our account of the agreement to share our and resources, but not to absolute surrender the land.”

Today, a new emphasis is being placed on the importance of treaty, and land- and place-based education across Canada. Ottmann said this presents an opportunity for the sharing of knowledge and experience of treaties by Indigenous Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers and other experts.

“Land acknowledgement is a step in the right direction, and the next step is educating non-Indigenous and Indigenous people of its significance and some of the work that has already happened in this area,” she said. 👆

Shannon Cossette is the communications officer in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement.
When it comes to language revitalization, Dr. Marguerite Koole (PhD) says it takes a village. “If we are going to work to revitalize Indigenous languages, we need to engage the community and we need to make this knowledge as open and accessible as possible.”

That’s why Koole, an assistant professor of curriculum studies in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan (USask), is working with a team of teachers, researchers and programmers from across campus in order to launch a web-based database to help educators revive Indigenous languages.

The database, named wîcêhtowin, contains information and links to websites, video/audio repositories, and apps designed to improve language knowledge. Koole said the project began in 2016 when a team of USask researchers conducted a scan of online learning tools for Indigenous languages in Canada. “We wanted to see what was out there, and as we were searching for apps and publications, it began to pile up,” said Koole. “And we thought that it would be useful if this information was all in a central database that everyone could access.”

The database includes teaching methods as well as information on Indigenous companies that can be hired to develop language technologies and apps. With so many communities turning to technology to help preserve their language, it’s vitally important to share these methods freely, Koole said. “The name wîcêhtowin means ‘fellowship’ in Cree, which is what we are hoping this project accomplishes,” said Koole. “We want to encourage people around the world to contribute to it and be a part of helping it grow.”

While the discovery of so many language revitalization resources is encouraging to Koole, it has also motivated her to continue her campus collaboration further. With the initial research turning up mostly dictionary apps and resources for beginners and advanced learners, she is hoping to create technology that’s also suitable for those who are at the intermediate level in their language studies. With $100,000 in funding from the Canadian Internet Registry Association, Koole is pulling together scholars from across USask to develop an app on campus that will help people learn how to form sentences and words in Cree. Working with Indigenous language expert Kevin Lewis of curriculum studies, the app will be built on the tech side by students of Dr. Julita Vassileva (PhD) and Dr. Ralph Deters (PhD) in the Department of Computer Science. 

“Because we’ve done the research to find out what’s out there with the database, we know that we are looking to develop an app to help people to form sentences and words in Cree,” said Koole, who is optimistic that this will be the first of a series of apps, and hopes that they will also be able to tackle other Indigenous languages such as Michif, Dene, Nakota and Dakota—other languages that she said are equally important to teach and preserve.

Ultimately, the aim is to model and share the design and architecture of this collaborative app. “It’s important when working on projects with an Indigenous focus that there is a lot of input and communication between a lot of people. I’m honoured to be working with this group, and so far, this project has turned out fabulously.”

Dr. Marguerite Koole (PhD) is an assistant professor of curriculum studies in the College of Education.
moore begins dream job as art galleries director

The new director of the University of Saskatchewan (USask) Art Galleries is excited to return to the Prairies and live and work on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis.

“This is a remarkable opportunity in an active and welcoming environment,” said jake moore, whose first and last names are spelled using lowercase letters. “I am, at heart, a Prairie person; I was born on Treaty 1 Territory in St. Boniface, Manitoba. My early artistic works all addressed that land and its articulation—its occupation, its use and its incredible beauty.” moore recently moved to Saskatoon from Montreal, where she had been pursuing a PhD in art history and communications at McGill University. A respected artist with more than 25 years of experience as a cultural worker, moore was previously employed as the director of the Faculty of Fine Arts Gallery at Concordia University from 2009-2014.

In her new role at USask, moore will oversee the operation and administration of the four art galleries on campus—the Kenderdine Art Gallery, the Gordon Snelgrove Gallery and College Art Galleries 1 and 2—as well as the university’s 6,000-piece permanent collection. She will also serve as a faculty member in the College of Arts and Science’s Department of Art and Art History.

“It is my dream job to develop pedagogy and programming within exhibition, collection and display practices,” said moore. “Through its project of Galleries Reimagined, USask has arrived at many of the same conclusions and defined goals as I have had as a creative professional working within university systems.”

The Galleries Reimagined project, led by arts consultant Jeremy Morgan, linked together USask’s art galleries and its permanent collection in an administrative network housed in the College of Arts and Science. One of the recommendations of Morgan’s Galleries Reimagined review was to hire a new faculty member, appointed to the Department of Art and Art History, to lead the network.

Indigenous representation and engagement are also cornerstones of the reimagined approach to visual arts on campus, with the new Indigenous artist-in-residence program exemplifying this. Under her leadership, moore said the galleries will consciously act upon the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 94 calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

“I will facilitate the realization of the Galleries Reimagined project through building the capacity of the galleries and collection to be responsive and responsible, to be more porous, to be very active in our engagement of multiple constituent communities,” she said.

moore described galleries and art collections as “sites of publication and making public that need to be engaged critically,” noting that “to engage critically should not be a destructive process of exclusion but a constant curiosity.” She said galleries and collections have an important role to “not only reflect cultures, but to responsibly accept their role in shaping them.”

“This idea frames the galleries and collection as sites of knowledge production in parallel with the University of Saskatchewan’s other labs and research centres,” she said.

moore said she has great respect for Morgan, who served as interim managing director of the USask galleries while the search for a new director was underway.

When asked about her vision for her new role, moore described it as “more a kind of listening.” Her method of evaluation and goal-setting is based on the concepts of relevancy, reciprocity and resonance.

Relevancy, she said, means that the galleries can “answer back” for the decisions that are made, while reciprocity suggests there is an exchange between the galleries and constituent communities to “tear down colonial ideas of knowledge delivery systems and actually look at being proudly aware of what we do not know, recognizing what it is we have to offer and then asking what is desired.”

Resonance, meanwhile, comes from that exchange, and is achieved when the galleries have the necessary materials, time and space, she said.

“I think this is (a) useful (method of evaluation) for any kind of project that is supposed to engage the public,” said moore.

Shannon Boklaschuk is a communications officer in the College of Arts and Science.
A flatbed truck drives onto a newly built truss bridge that spans an imposing gorge with steep, rocky sides.

But the truck doesn’t get far before disaster strikes. The poorly designed bridge can’t support the weight of the truck and its load. A second after the road surface buckles, both it and the truck are plummeting toward the ground. A huge cloud of black smoke erupts after impact. It’s a true engineering disaster—or it would be if it had happened in real life.

But thankfully, this accident was a virtual one. The bridge that failed was designed in virtual reality (VR) by a first-year engineering student learning the intricacies of truss design. Within a minute, a new, better bridge is constructed and another virtual flatbed is driving across without incident.

During the last school year, students in the University of Saskatchewan College of Engineering did this build/crash/rebuild scenario thousands of times, thanks to new software dubbed Truss VR, developed by the college in partnership with a local tech company, Sprockety, and the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning.

Their work was backed by alumni Ron and Jane Graham, whose donation supported the creation of the software and the Virtual Reality Teaching and Cloud-Based Learning (ViRTCL) Lab in the Engineering Building.

“VR has the potential to be a transformative technology to improve learning,” said Associate Professor Dr. Sean Maw (PhD), the Gerry G. Huff Chair in Innovative Teaching, who is based in the college’s Graham School of Professional Development.

Maw, a professional engineer, spearheaded the project after seeing a presentation about VR by Sprockety at the Gwenna Moss Centre. Ryan Banow, an educational development specialist from the centre, also worked on the project.

Truss VR is designed to help engineering students learn about trusses, a common topic in their first-year statics course. Last year, it was used as a lab and a pilot study was done to evaluate its effectiveness as a learning tool. Truss problems are not difficult to do on paper, but students can spend up to half an hour solving one loading scenario for a simple truss.

“As a result, few students are not difficult to do on paper, but students can spend up to half an hour solving one loading scenario for a simple truss.

“When students apply virtual loads to the trusses, they are shown via colour coding which parts of the truss are in tension, or compression, or are experiencing no force.

“By hiding the mathematics, the students can focus on what loads do to the truss and how the truss reacts,” the paper states.

Before VR was available, students used specialized construction kits to build models of trusses and bridges in a lab class.

Engineering master’s student Shaunti Bergen learned about trusses the traditional way, but after she tried out Truss VR, she was sold on its educational benefits and the fun factor.

“It shows us what we visualize, but can’t actually test,” she said. “With VR, students can confidently use what they’ve learned without wrecking a whole bunch of stuff.”

After evaluating the pilot project, Maw and Banow found significant evidence showing higher rates of recall and recognition for truss types after having gone through Truss VR. That evidence was inconclusive as to whether students who used Truss VR had higher skill with trusses, although they did have the highest scores on nine of 15 measures testing their overall knowledge and retention.

“As such, one could cautiously conclude that Truss VR had positive effects on learning,” they wrote.

Maw and Banow are continuing to analyze data and plan to refine their methods when they begin another data collection this fall.

Donella Hoffman is a communications officer in the College of Engineering.
USask Rec: A new look for campus recreation

Throughout the years, recreation and fitness services at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) have gone through many notable changes.

Following on the heels of last fall’s opening of the magnificent Merlis Belsher Place multi-sport complex and refurbishing in the expansive Physical Activity Complex (PAC), the department also has a fresh new look, rebranded as USask Rec.

“There was really nothing wrong with our old name (Recreation Services), but we felt it was time for us to incorporate the university name, refocus and provide a clear identity for the products and services offered through the college and the university,” said Paul Rogal, director of USask Rec. “We wanted to provide a single visual that will become very recognizable.”

The university welcomes thousands of members to its recreation and fitness facilities every month to help people stay active. With many of the patrons coming from the off-campus community, Rogal said it was important to incorporate USask into the formal name of the recreation and fitness department, while creating a look that was unified and recognizable.

Centred in the College of Kinesiology, Rogal said USask Rec is committed to being a leader in physical activity, sport and recreation programming on campus, and strives to provide the highest quality service and instruction.

“USask Rec is a critical part of what the College of Kinesiology delivers in that we are able to connect the teaching and research with the delivery of recreation opportunities in ways that lead and inspire movement, health and performance,” said Dr. Chad London (PhD), dean of the College of Kinesiology.

The rebrand began with a communications audit that identified key findings that led to the new visual identity for the department. In that audit, it was clear there was a lack of consistency, with too many logos, colour palettes and social media channels, as well as an outdated website.

“We previously had a variety of logos for individual recreational program offerings that were quite dated and disconnected,” said London. “The opportunity to refresh our brand with a modern look in line with university branding was critical. The new logo and name are a compelling representation of the mandate of USask Rec to provide recreational opportunities to students, staff and faculty, as well as members of the broader Saskatoon community.”

The opportunity to refresh our brand with a modern look in line with university branding was critical.

— Paul Rogal

Reaching out to that off-campus community is a renewed focus for USask Rec. Many are unaware that the PAC and education buildings offer two swimming pools, a triple gymnasium, four racquetball/squash courts, a 13,500 square-foot Fitness Centre, a 210-metre indoor jogging/walking track, a 40-foot climbing wall, a gymnastics multi-purpose room and a dance studio, along with six outdoor tennis courts and three grass fields that are also open for community use, with a membership.

Students who participate in USask Rec programming also have access to the Griffiths Stadium football facility, four more grass fields, and Merlis Belsher Place.

No other membership in Saskatoon offers that full spectrum of facilities and Rogal said the new USask Rec brand will also help promote all of the certified recreation and fitness programs that the university has to offer.

Along with the USask Rec brand rollout, a new website was launched in June, aligning closely with the university template to help users more easily access information and services. Registration is now open for fall/winter programming. For more information, contact USask Rec at 306-966-1001 or visit rec.usask.ca.

Paul Rogal is the director of USask Rec.

Alyssa Wiebe is the communications and Alumni Relations Officer in the College of Kinesiology.
Hardy has high hopes for Huskies Athletics

As a former national champion head coach, Dave Hardy knows a thing or two about leadership and legacies.

The new chief athletics officer for Huskie Athletics at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) is relishing the challenge of taking the athletic program to a whole new level.

“I am interested in working for organizations that want to get better and here they want to be No.1 in U Sports, so that excites me,” said Hardy, who started at USask on Aug. 12.

“Huskie Athletics has a great tradition and history and I am proud to be part of the program.”

A USask alum and former member of the Huskie men’s basketball team, Hardy went on to coach the Saskatoon Hilltops to two national junior football championships over 10 years, earning induction into both the Saskatoon and Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame. Hardy also served as superintendent in the Saskatoon Catholic School Board and as president of Vancouver College, overseeing an athletic facility fundraising campaign that topped the $20-million mark.

“My whole life has been spent in athletics and education, and management and administration, so it’s a great fit,” said Hardy. Hardy knows the heart of the program are the student-athletes and coaches, and is determined to improve support systems for the teams and enhance the game-day experience for Huskie fans.

“We want to do all we can to support our student-athletes and that is our No.1 priority,” said Hardy. “We also want to put as many resources as we can into the hands of our coaches. And from a business perspective, we want to create a great game-day experience, and one of the real challenges here is to try to more fully engage the student body.”

With football at Griffiths Stadium and hockey at Merlis Belsher Place drawing solid crowds, Hardy would like to turn the PAC into a hot-bed for Huskie Athletics as well.

“We’ve got revenue-generating sports in football and hockey and I think in the near future we have to build our court sports,” he said. “There is a long and storied tradition of success with all four of our court sport programs, that includes 25 Canada West titles between them. I think we have to spend a little more energy in promoting our basketball and volleyball, and we have to look at improving the atmosphere in the venue to enhance the game-day experience.

“Our long-term goal is to increase promotion and support for all of our sports, as all 400 of our student-athletes deserve the support of our student body and of our community. We would love to hang the sold-out sign at all Huskie events.”

Hardy would also like to reinvest in recruitment, helping Huskie coaches land the top student-athletes in the country.

“Recruiting is probably more of a challenge today in U Sports than it has ever been,” he said. “What we want to do in Huskie Athletics is put together a recruiting package that will help the coaches, that promotes this great province of Saskatchewan, this great city of Saskatoon, and this great University of Saskatchewan. We have a great history with Huskie Athletics and we want to continue to build that legacy.”

Last, but certainly not least, Hardy is determined to bolster corporate sponsorship and community support for the Huskies.

“Any publicly funded institution today requires the support of the private sector, and part of my responsibility is to get out in the community with the message that we want to be No.1 and we want the community to be a big part of it,” he said. “There’s no question that resources are needed, and I’m comfortable telling that story. And there is a great story to be told with Huskie Athletics.”

HUSKIE HIGHLIGHTS:

Sean McKay took over as the new head coach of USask’s men’s volleyball team on Aug. 9, replacing Nathan Bennett, who moved on to the University of Fraser Valley. McKay led the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Trojans to a 51-21 record over three seasons, guiding the Trojans to the Alberta college championship in 2018. “I am extremely excited to immerse myself in a volleyball and sports community as strong as that of the university and province of Saskatchewan. I look forward to learning from those involved in the Huskies’ storied history,” said McKay, whose Huskies open the season Oct. 18 in Calgary versus the Dinos . . . Hunter Lee of the Huskies men’s wrestling team won a bronze medal at the junior world championships in Estonia on Aug. 14. Lee is a 19-year-old student in the College of Education.
For centuries, people have been hoodwinked by clever counterfeits.

The ancient Romans knew how to enhance gemstones by soaking them in honey, while Victorian artists figured out how to create fake antiquities to fool the untrained eye. While mass-produced, low-quality fakes find their way into people’s homes, high-quality fakes have also been found in museums around the world. Counterfeiting consumer goods is the world’s fastest-growing crime. In Canada alone, the cost of counterfeiting is estimated at $22 billion annually.

On display at the Diefenbaker Canada Centre on the University of Saskatchewan campus until October 18, Fakes and Forgeries: Yesterday and Today, takes visitors on an exploration of the history of forging and its impact on society. On loan from the Royal Ontario Museum, the exhibit brings awareness of all the ways people can be taken advantage of through the forging and selling of antiques, modern knock-offs, and counterfeit currency.

The exhibit consists of seven cases that feature items from the Royal Ontario Museum’s natural history and world culture collections; two cases displaying modern knock-offs; a sponsored case on counterfeit computer software from Microsoft Canada; and a case provided by the Bank of Canada displaying real and counterfeit Canadian currency.

In the display case Mysteries and Mexico, visitors are presented with four pre-Columbian Zapotec urns—two real artifacts and two crafted by skilled forgers using ancient techniques and high-quality materials. The well-crafted forgeries require the use of a scientific process, called thermos-luminescence, to measure a time range in which they were fired in a kiln.

Modern products, such as Team Canada jerseys or Chanel handbags, surge in popularity throughout the years. Forgers take advantage of this demand by making inexpensive and inferior counterfeit products to bring in a substantial profit. The Really Good Deal and Counterfeits Equal Theft display cases exemplify that buying and selling knock-offs is not a victimless crime.

Fraudulent companies will use cheaper materials at the expense of the consumer and often pay adults and children in developing countries to produce the counterfeit items. Through either the accidental or intentional purchase of knock-off goods, consumers support the unethical practices of these companies.

In response to the growth of counterfeiting, the RCMP and Canadian Standards Association sought to create tips on how to protect consumers from fraudulent products. Their advice: if a product has a price that is too good to be true, it probably is; always buy brand-name items from a reputable retailer that has clearly defined return or exchange policies; look at the quality of packaging; and always be cautious when buying online.

Can you tell the true object from the fake? Visit 101 Diefenbaker Place to guess which artifacts and objects are real and which are fake, and learn how to protect yourself from purchasing forgeries.

Helanna Gessner is the interim curatorial, exhibits and collections manager in the Diefenbaker Canada Centre at USask.

One of these Greek figurines is real and one is fake. Can you spot the difference? (Answer: The figurine on the left is a replica of the authentic Greek statue on the right).

Experience guides Alcorn

FROM PAGE 2

are best for the institution as a whole,” Alcorn said. “It’s important to let your experience guide you, but not blind you.”

Alcorn serves as a board member for the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation and previously was a director with the Canadian Society for Pharmaceutical Sciences. As part of her new responsibilities as dean, she serves on the Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan board, as an observer on the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals council, and will work to increase engagement with the Saskatchewan Dietitians Association and Dietitians of Canada.

Alcorn replaces Dr. Kishor Wasan (PhD), who concluded his five-year term as dean in June.

Kieran Kobitz is a communications and Alumni Relations specialist in the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition.
COMING EVENTS

SEMINARS / LECTURES

Department of Psychology’s monthly colloquium series
Members of the university community and the general public are welcome to attend. For more information, contact Peter Grant at 306-966-6675 or e-mail peter.grant@usask.ca.
Oct. 24, 3–4 pm, Arts 153. Olav Krigolson, associate director, Centre for Biomedical Research, and associate professor, Theoretical and Applied Neuroscience Laboratory, University of Victoria, will present "Destination Mars: Using Mobile Electroencephalography (EEG) Technology to Support NASA’s Mission to the Red Planet." NASA has a set goal of sending astronauts to Mars in the foreseeable future. As part of the work-up to that mission, the Krigolson Laboratory is developing mobile EEG (brain wave) technology to monitor astronaut brain health and function during the Mars mission. Dr. Krigolson will discuss his work with the Hawaii Space Exploration Analog and Simulation (HI-SEAS) project and in support of the Mars mission. Dr. Krigolson will also discuss what is leading up to the next HI-SEAS mission and his laboratory’s use of mobile EEG technology to study learning, decision-making, and cognitive fatigue.

Philosophy in the Community
7-9 pm, The Refinery, Emmanuel Anglican Church Basement. 609 Dufferin Ave. This community lecture and discussion series is organized by the Department of Philosophy to share the rewards and pleasures of philosophical reflection. Free and open to the public. For more information, visit: usask.ca/philosophy/community

COURSES / WORKSHOPS

College of Education Students’ Society Professional Development Workshops
These events are tailored to education students, but are open to everyone. For more information, visit education.usask.ca/ess. Register at: educationstudentssociety.eventbrite.com
- Sept. 20, 10 am–12 pm. What is it to be a professional teacher? This session will address the professional conduct expectations of teachers and teacher candidates, including appropriate appearance, communication, and behaviour. Participants can take part in a question-and-answer session in which scenarios will be discussed and resolved in an appropriate and ethical way.
- Oct. 4, 10 am–12 pm. Mental Health Day. Supporting teachers who are educating their students on the protective factors necessary for mental health, including healthy relationships, coping strategies, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills.

Multilingual Conversational Classes
Starting Sept. 16, RJD Williams Building, 221 Cumberland Avenue North. Classes every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Learn, Improve, Maintain and Master your speaking, listening and grammar skills in French, Spanish, Cree, German, Italian, Portuguese and Japanese. For more information, contact Gisele Piche at 306-966-4355 or email gisele.piche@usask.ca

THE ARTS

Literature Matters
7:30 pm, Grace-Westminster United Church social hall, 505 10 St. E. Reading, studying and talking about literary works helps us make sense of the world. In this series of community talks, members of the Department of English explore diverse literary topics.
- Sept. 18, Joseph Conrad’s Russia in Under Western Eyes

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MISCELLANY

Gandhi Film Festival at the University of Saskatchewan
7 pm, Nestby-Timlin Theatre, Arts 241. The Mahatma Gandhi 150th anniversary events are presented by the College of Arts and Science and the University of Saskatchewan Shastri Indo-Canadian Committee. Free and open to the public.
- Sept. 19, Film screening: Gandhi, My Father directed by Feroz Abbas Khan
- Sept. 26, Film screening: Lage Raho Munna Bha directed by Rajkumar Hirani

Poultry Science Building and Seed Barn planning session
Sept. 17, 2–5 pm, University Services Building, 110 Maintenance Road. You are invited to attend a planning session regarding the future of the Poultry Science Building and Seed Barn. The objective of the session is to provide information on the condition of the buildings and seek input on the decision for the future of these facilities.

USask Against Racism Concert
Sept. 18, 7–7 pm, Louis’. Join members of the USask community to rock against racism for this all-ages concert, which is organized by the College of Arts and Science in collaboration with Rock Against Racism Saskatoon and in partnership with the USU. Free admission.

Alumni Weekend
Sept. 20-21. This year’s annual event includes lectures, breakfast event, a Golden Grads ceremony and high tea, as well as the new USask FestiBowl. The weekend wraps up with a reception at the University Club. To register, visit: alumni.usask.ca/alumni-weekend/weekend-schedule.php

Orange Shirt Day
Sept. 30. Orange Shirt Day is an opportunity to work toward rebuilding relationships and to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come. The movement grew out of Phyllis Webstad’s personal experience of having her bright new orange shirt taken away on her first day in the Canadian residential school system. The annual event is an opportunity to acknowledge all aspects of residential schools while remembering survivors and their families. Come together in the spirit of reconciliation, work towards rebuilding relationships, and move forward in a good way by sharing the truth of the residential school system. For more information, visit orangeshirtday.org

Recharge
Oct. 17, 6–9 pm, Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre. Featuring Candy Palmater, international Indigenous speaker and comedian, followed by a panel discussion. Sponsored by the President’s Office, Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, Vice-Provost Health, College of Arts and Science, College of Education, College of Dentistry, College of Medicine, and School of Public Health. For more information, visit indigenous.usask.ca.

NEXT OCN: October 11
DEADLINE: September 27

CORRECTION:
In a story on Page 14 of the August 9 edition of On Campus News, the names attached to the photos of Dr. Stéphanie Madill (PhD) and Dr. Megan Clark (MD) were inadvertently switched. OCN apologizes for the error.

Planning to buy a meal plan?

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NEWS.USASK.CA 15
But the day he first held Dr. Henry Taube’s (PhD) Nobel Prize medal in his hands in 2011 was unlike any other.

“That was special,” said Hayes, USask’s archives technician in the University Archives and Special Collections department. “I remember when I was unpacking the box when the shipment arrived and I took it out to the reading room and I was showing everybody and nobody that I showed it to that first day had ever seen one. We have a lot of unique things, one-of-a-kind things, but that one was beyond any of the other ones that we have.”

Taube’s Nobel Prize medal for chemistry was awarded in 1983 when he became the first USask graduate to receive the Nobel Prize and only the second laureate associated with the university, joining former physics professor Gerhard Herzberg. Taube, who was born in Neudorf, Sask., earned bachelor’s (1935) and master’s (1937) degrees at USask and studied under Herzberg before going on to become one of the world’s leading chemistry researchers.

Taube passed away in 2005, with his wife Mary donating his collection to the university, an array of awe-inspiring awards and prized possessions including photographs, plaques and pins, as well as Taube’s National Medal of Science and Priestly Medal from the American Chemical Society. But it’s the Nobel Prize medal that holds the most mystique and lustre, and not just its solid gold hue. It’s the magnitude and weight of the accomplishment—only 26 Canadians have been awarded the Nobel Prize—that Hayes holds in reverence.

“I think it’s not just the rarity of it, but it’s how much you have to achieve to get one, what a major contribution to the knowledge of the world that you have to contribute,” said Hayes. “Everyone who gets it has had some kind of a major breakthrough and (Taube) is certainly one of the stars of 20th century science.”

“He was a local boy, he got his first two degrees here and went on to fame and fortune, and he was always very generous with his time with the university throughout his career,” added Hayes. “We’ve only had two people who have received Nobel Prizes that are associated with the university and he is one of those two, so it is pretty special.”

Over 35 years at the University of Saskatchewan (USask), Patrick Hayes has had the distinct pleasure of personally perusing a plethora of memorable manuscripts, historic heirlooms and cherished collections.

Dr. Henry Taube (PhD) receives his Nobel Prize medal from King Carl XVI Gustaf (right) of Sweden.