

MARCH 12, 2021

Volume 28, Issue 7

FRONT-LINE HEALTH CARE

Current and former University of Saskatchewan (USask) faculty, staff and students have been front and centre in the fight against COVID-19, serving the community in a variety of health care roles during the ongoing pandemic. In this edition of *On Campus News*, we feature one of the special USask alumni, intensive care unit nurse Kathy Pickerl, who was the first nurse in Saskatoon to be vaccinated. Pickerl is one of a number of USask alumni members spotlighted in this edition of OCN, which also takes a look at some of this year's top Alumni Achievement Awards recipients. *(Photo courtesy of Matt Smith/Saskatoon StarPhoenix)*

SEE PAGES 4-5



— 2 —

RECONCILIATION FORUM

— 8-9 —

EDWARDS EXPERIENCE

— 14-15 —

HUSKIE ATHLETICS

On Campus News is published 12 times per year by University of Saskatchewan Marketing and Communications. It is distributed to all USask faculty, staff, graduate students and members of governing bodies, as well as to others in the university community, related organizations, some Saskatchewan government officials and news media.

Subscriptions are available for \$24 per year. Story and photo ideas are welcome. Advertising rates are available online or on request.

On Campus News aims to provide a forum for the sharing of timely news, information and feature stories about people and events of interest to the USask community.

We acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nation and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

EDITOR

James Shewaga

WRITERS

Jacquie Berg, Jenna Fraser, Lana Haight, Natasha Katchuk, Kristen McEwen, Inalie Portades, Leslie-Ann Schlosser, James Shewaga, Ishika Shukla.

DESIGNER

Pierre Wilkinson

ISSN: 1195-7654

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40065156

Return undeliverable addresses to:

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
G16 THORVALDSON BUILDING
110 SCIENCE PLACE
SASKATOON, SK S7N 5C9

Email: news@usask.ca

FOURTH ANNUAL

māmowī āsohētētān Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum

OVPIE COMMUNICATIONS

The Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement will be facilitating the University of Saskatchewan's (USask) 4th Annual *māmowī āsohētētān* Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum for members of the USask community on March 26, 2021.

This year marks five years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released the final report and 94 Calls to Action, and six years since USask hosted the first national reconciliation forum at USask and at Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

USask's first Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum was held in 2017, bringing faculty, staff, students, and community together to listen, learn, and engage in dialogue with local and national leaders on all topics related to reconciliation.

COVID-19 restrictions have led to this year's internal forum moving to a virtual platform and organizers are optimistic about this new opportunity. A virtual event will allow for greater participation, while still offering breakout sessions



Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann (PhD), vice-provost Indigenous Engagement, at USask.

for smaller group dialogue. The 2021 agenda is centered on the theories, principles and practices of anti-racism and anti-oppression, and

presents further opportunities for focused conversations.

USask's Dr. Verna St. Denis (PhD), a highly accomplished scholar with extensive expertise on anti-racism and anti-oppressive education, will serve as this year's keynote speaker. St. Denis is Cree and Métis and a member of Beardy's and Okemasis' Cree Nation. She received her PhD in the anthropology of education from Stanford University, and now specializes in anti-racist and anti-oppressive education in the Department of Educational Foundations within the College of Education.

"Knowledge is key to understanding and potentially challenging the effects and processes of reconciliation that have historically, legally, and politically divided us," said St. Denis. "Alliances can be made within and across diversity within Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. It is important that we address the anti-racism and anti-oppression, both in our educational institutions and in our communities."

SEE FORUM, PAGE 13



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

A lot happens at the USask during the weeks when *On Campus News* isn't published. Here are a few of the top stories from news.usask.ca:

Support for VIDO

The Government of Saskatchewan has committed \$15 million to support USask's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization's (VIDO) position as a Centre for Pandemic Research. The support will contribute to upgrading and expanding VIDO's containment infrastructure and support its role in Canada's response to emerging infectious diseases. Scientific training will also be a fundamental aspect of the centre. The funding is in addition to the \$250,000 committed by the City of Saskatoon. VIDO is also constructing a pilot-scale vaccine manufacturing facility.

Immunization clinic

The USask campus will soon become a major provincial pandemic hub for COVID-19 vaccination. The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) is establishing a mass immunization clinic in USask's state-of-the-art Merlis Belsher Place facility. The immunization clinic will operate by appointment only for Phase One priority populations, with the facility remaining closed to the general public at this time. As vaccine supply increases, the SHA hopes to ramp up to immunizing as many as 6,000 individuals per day in Saskatoon, including up to 1,400 per day at the Merlis Belsher Place site.

Early water warning

A USask research team has been awarded \$137,392 from the Public Health Agency of Canada to conduct a six-month COVID-19 wastewater surveillance project in Saskatoon and five Saskatchewan First Nations communities to provide early warning of outbreaks, an important tool to combat COVID-19. The data will help researchers estimate community infection rates and determine trends. The team will sample water at the Saskatoon Wastewater Treatment Plant for 27 weeks. For First Nations partners, samples will be assessed for 27 weeks as a pilot program for wastewater lagoon systems.

Social media study

USask researchers are measuring how social media hatred directed at the Asian community has risen dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic. USask linguistics researcher Zhi Li, partnered with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, has been awarded almost \$25,000 by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to investigate the causes of online hate on Twitter directed at Asian people. Li and USask sociologist Hongming Cheng will lead a team that will track 80 million tweets sent in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic, since October 2019.

FOR MORE UP-TO-THE-MINUTE NEWS, VISIT: news.usask.ca @usask



Dr. Megan O'Connell (PhD) is a psychology professor at USask, dedicated to supporting older adults across the province.

Supporting older adults: USask researcher virtually connecting at-risk isolated seniors during pandemic

 JAMES SHEWAGA

Watching her grandfather suffer through the effects of dementia changed everything for Dr. Megan O'Connell (PhD).

O'Connell was an undergraduate student in the early 1990s at the University of Saskatchewan (USask), when she witnessed first-hand how devastating the syndrome can be.

"I used to drive my bike from the university to his long-term care facility and help feed him lunch because it was very hard to get him to eat anything and family members took shifts to help encourage him," said O'Connell, now a psychology professor at USask, specializing in neuropsychology.

"I didn't quite put the pieces together at the time, but he had a hard time being diagnosed because he would do really well on the screening tests, but those who knew him best knew he had challenges. He was actually not even diagnosed until about three months before he

finally passed away. So, challenges in getting a diagnosis, and supporting those living with dementia, has always been where a lot of my work has been focused over the years."

The pandemic has presented a new set of challenges for older adults suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's, many who are isolated from family in long-term care facilities due to COVID-19 health and safety precautions. O'Connell said patients' increasing cognitive decline, exacerbated by isolation during the pandemic, is a growing concern.

"We have a couple of papers that we are just submitting, one is a review of how COVID-19 has impacted people living with dementia, and its profound impacts," she said. "You see descriptions of accelerated decline in people with dementia because they no longer have enough stimulation and socialization. Clearly, the pandemic has impacted all of us, and every-

one's mental health is impacted, but it's not even close to the impacts that I am seeing on people who have cognitive decline or cognitive impairment and those who are most vulnerable."

The effects of isolation from family are documented in another recent study by O'Connell's research team, studying social media posts of frustrated family members.

"One of our projects is an analysis of tweets from February to September (in 2020), describing people's experience with dementia," she said. "There are some really poignant examples of this long-term care phenomenon, of people with lived experience with dementia who may not necessarily understand the COVID context and why family members can't visit and how they are expressing despair and feelings of abandonment. It is hard enough to be separated from your loved ones, but now imagine you don't

understand why it is happening."

With isolation affecting the mental health of a huge segment of the population—not only those living with dementia—O'Connell has helped start initiatives including virtual socialization hubs for older adults, building on previous success in connecting with dementia patients through the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic. O'Connell's teams has partnered with the Saskatoon Council on Aging and the Alzheimer's Society of Saskatchewan to initiate provincial online support groups, a pilot project that is now extending to British Columbia.

"Most of our energies focus on trying to virtually connect with existing groups and communities," said O'Connell, who has also volunteered her time during the pandemic to provide free counseling support for front-line health care providers. "We discovered that getting groups of strangers together

is not all that appealing to a lot of people, so the socialization hubs are a bit more about encouraging and supporting people to get together and to maintain their community and social connections virtually. And one of my long-term goals is to create a space for people living with dementia to also feel safe to join in."

O'Connell's team is also initiating a system of remotely monitoring the mental health of aging adults via phone. With all projects like these, O'Connell said the key to success is to collaborate with community health groups and funding organizations, in order to ensure the initiative continues after initial project funding expires.

"One of the things that I learned early on is that if you don't work with communities, nothing is sustainable and the research you do just dies when the research grant ends," she said. "So one of the things about working with communities and partners and agencies is you are more likely to have it fit their needs, and more importantly have it sustainable and embedded in their processes and procedures. Funding agencies and governments need to see value for their dollars and need to see impact, and research is a great way to do that."

As O'Connell looks to the future, the health needs of older adults will continue to require increasing resources as that percentage of the population continues to grow.

"Definitely, that demographic shift that we are at the beginning of, is huge and drives a lot of us who do this kind of work," said O'Connell. "The first paragraphs that we write for any paper are about the demographics and what future projections are. Even when I am training clinical psychology students, I tell them that older adults are a big part of the population and have different needs with their psychological stage in life. So, I think training in issues related to older adults is critical. They are going to need more help as time goes on, particularly health care." ♥

USask's 2021 Alumni Achievement Award winners

 LESLIE-ANN SCHLOSSER

This year's University of Saskatchewan (USask) Alumni Achievement Awards recipients are a remarkably dynamic and influential group of changemakers whose varied careers have had a profound impact not only in their local communities, but also on a global scale.

They include an influential artist, a human rights advocate, a trail-blazing titan of tech, a well-known business leader and philanthropist, a Rhodes Scholar, a fearless pharmacist, and a lifelong volunteer champion.

Nominated by their peers from a group of more than 161,000 alumni, recipients of the USask Alumni Achievement Awards represent alumni who are changing the world one idea or action at a time. Congratulations to this year's recipients:



WAYNE BROWNLEE (BSC'75, MBA'77)
ALUMNI LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

During his professional tenure with Potash-Corp (now Nutrien), Brownlee led several transformational and highly successful changes within the company. He recently retired as executive vice-president and chief financial officer. His philanthropic efforts have been equally impactful. Throughout his life he has volunteered on several boards for various Saskatchewan charities. Brownlee's family foundation recently made a \$10 million-donation to the Saskatoon Public Schools Foundation literacy program, an initiative Brownlee is extremely passionate about and holds near and dear to his heart.



RUTH CUTHAND (BFA'83, MFA'92)
ALUMNI LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Cuthand is a mixed media artist of Plains Cree and Scottish ancestry who is acknowledged as one of Canada's preeminent contemporary artists. She is well known for her intricate beadwork portraying microscopic images of viruses. Cuthand has played an influential role in highlighting Indigenous art in Saskatchewan. In 2013, she was awarded a Saskatchewan Lieutenant Governor's Arts Award. In 2020, she was named one of the winners of the prestigious Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts.



HEATHER KUTTAI (BA'94, MSC'09)
ALUMNI LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Kuttai is a human rights activist who encourages disability to be a positive part of one's identity. During her time as a USask employee, she created supports for students with disabilities that ensured all students have equal opportunities to achieve success. She has achieved immense success herself in many areas throughout her life, including being a Paralympic medalist, a coach and mentor, author and more. She has dedicated her life to creating equality and equity for students and the community.



DR. JENNIFER WELSH (BA'87)
ALUMNI LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

While working with the United Nations, Welsh focused her efforts on responsibly protecting people in vulnerable global situations. She's educated others as a Fellow for many institutions, has taught across Canada and Europe, and authored several books and articles. In March 2018, she was named Canada 150 Research Chair in Global Governance, and currently serves as the director of the Centre for International Peace and Security Studies. She is also a Rhodes Scholar, the first female in Saskatchewan to achieve this prestigious designation.



DR. STEVEN WOODS (BSC'87)
ALUMNI LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Woods has found success in every step of his remarkable journey. The computer science alumnus has made significant advancements in the technological sector and in households around the world. Woods co-founded Quackware, the world's first interactive voice portal, which was acquired by America Online/Time Warner in 2000. In 2008, Woods joined Google Canada as senior engineering director, a role he holds to this day and continues to make influential changes as a sought-after leader in the tech world.



DR. TONY HARRAS (BE'61, MSC'62, PHD'68)
BUZ VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER

Harras has been a lifelong inspirational leader in his community. He is a founding member of the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages, and the Multilingual Association of Regina. He has worked hard to ensure that heritage language programs continue to enrich the lives of many. He has also volunteered with many organizations, including his current role with Saskatchewan Centennial Planning Society. Harras is a retired professional engineer, who specialized in long-term planning in electric power and natural gas areas.



AMY LAMB (BSP'12)
"ONE TO WATCH" ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER

Lamb is a young pharmacist who is igniting positive change in her industry. Lamb owns and operates a consulting business for patients looking for evidence-based medicine and personalized health plans. She's passionate about finding the root cause of health issues, and fights for fair access to health care for her patients and Indigenous communities. Lamb has received numerous awards in her career, has been a member of several pharmaceutical boards and is highly regarded for her innovation, research and holistic approach to health care.

On March 14, join USask virtually for a weeklong celebration to recognize these seven extraordinary alumni for contributions to their communities, professions, and university. Visit alumni.usask.ca/achieve to learn more. 

Leslie-Ann Schlosser is a communications specialist and editor in University Relations.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Every month in *On Campus News*, we highlight an exceptional graduate of the University of Saskatchewan (USask) in our Alumni Spotlight series. In this issue, we profile registered nurse Kathy Pickerl. A year after the pandemic started, she can still remember the week that everything changed.

University of Saskatchewan College of Nursing alumna Kathy Pickerl (BSN'01) was the first nurse in Saskatoon to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.



SASKATCHEWAN HEALTH AUTHORITY

USask alumna first Saskatoon nurse to receive COVID-19 vaccine

LESLIE-ANN SCHLOSSER

It's March 25, 2020. Exhausted nurse Kathy Pickerl (BSN'01) strips off her soiled scrubs in her garage after a tough shift in the intensive care unit (ICU). She darts directly to her shower to wash off the day, ignoring the outstretched arms of her family along the way, in order to keep them safe. Her scrubs lie in a heap on the floor and need to be thoroughly washed and sanitized before she heads back to the ICU tomorrow, to do it all over again.

It's a challenging routine, but she will do whatever is necessary to save herself and her family from the relatively unknown COVID-19 virus that was just starting to sweep the nation.

"We were all very concerned and very stressed," Pickerl recalled. "We're all still quite scared, but initially, it was terrifying."

It's been nearly one year since Pickerl and her team at Saskatoon's St. Paul's Hospital was gearing up for the unknown. She recalls those early days with almost a tremor in her voice. The uncertainty of the virus was a lot to take in for someone who has committed her life to caring for sick people.

The USask nursing grad has

“ We shouldn't be shaming people, but educating people and asking them to think of everyone else.

— Kathy Pickerl (BSN'01)

spent the last 17 years of her career in a critical care setting. Most of her patients in the ICU are intubated, ventilated and on life support and it's up to her and her team to provide care and some bedside medical procedures to ensure quality of life.

"I never really looked back after I went into critical care. It was sort of my niche. I really like giving individualized care to patients and having the time to give the care that I feel everybody deserves," said Pickerl.

"IT'S BEEN A WHIRLWIND"

Since last March, Pickerl's ICU unit has expanded the number of nurses on their ward. They installed negative-pressure rooms to ensure COVID-19 positive patients are isolated properly. Sweeping renovations were done to maintain safety measures and protocols. An infec-

tious disease doctor was available to provide daily updates and guidance.

No matter how prepared they were, when it comes to the day-to-day operation of an ICU during a pandemic, Pickerl said there's no sugar-coating the fact that it's exhausting.

"It was terrifying when we got our first COVID-19 patient," said Pickerl.

The physical demands of caring for COVID-19 patients, coupled with communicating with family members who are limited in their ability to visit the hospital, has taken its toll on her team. She describes her COVID-19 patients as "some of the sweetest people you will ever meet." Pickerl notes the high mortality rate of COVID-19 patients in the ICU has been the toughest part of the pandemic.

"It's heartbreaking. We've had some success where patients have survived, but unfortunately a lot of people succumb to the illness. It's shattering," she said.

Despite the unprecedented challenges, Pickerl still talks about moments of joy and hope throughout her day, which speaks to her encouraging ability to keep

fighting. Her team and her manager have dubbed themselves "battle buddies" preparing themselves every day to go into battle and motivating each other to keep going.

"There (have) been a lot of tears and a lot of exhaustion. It hasn't affected how we're caring for our patients. ... It's even more important that the work family is there for one another," said Pickerl.

UNEXPECTED CHRISTMAS GIFT

It was only by chance that Pickerl received some of the most exciting news she's ever had in her life. Due to her schedule, and since she had the next day off, her boss approached her in December to see if she'd like to be vaccinated for COVID-19. An exhausted Pickerl gave an enthusiastic "YES" and took one of her precious days off to receive her dose.

With a rolled-up sleeve and a smile brimming brightly behind her mask, Pickerl was the first nurse in Saskatoon to be vaccinated against the disease. She said the vaccine gives the province a bit of hope to getting back to normal one day. She encourages everyone to educate themselves about vaccinations.

"We shouldn't be shaming

people, but educating people and asking them to think of everyone else," she said. "It's a privilege to be healthy and to be afforded a vaccination."

KEEP FIGHTING

Like many people grappling with the pandemic, Pickerl has experienced her fair share of burnout and COVID fatigue, probably more so because she literally cannot escape it. Yet, she still encourages everyone to remain vigilant to the end.

"I haven't properly seen my parents other than with a mask on, shovelling their walk or dropping something off and leaving quickly," she noted. "We're just constantly hit by so much information you become almost desensitized, almost complacent, but it's still a very deadly virus and it's so important to maintain your physical distance, to wear your masks, to wash your hands, to be vigilant. All the time. Everyone's tired but we just have to keep at it. Everyone can be a hero. Just take care of the people you love." ♥

Leslie-Ann Schlosser is a communications specialist and editor in University Relations.



USask unites to support students in crisis

Thanks to the Nasser Family Emergency Student Trust, and the many donors who support students in need, USask students can continue pursuing their educational dreams even when they experience a personal, medical or family crisis.

 INALIE PORTADES

Since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared a year ago, alumni, staff and faculty have donated more than \$689,000 for University of Saskatchewan (USask) students who needed emergency financial support.

In March of 2020, events were postponed, gatherings were limited and buildings were closed to protect the community, including our university campus. Amongst the changes were in-person classes transitioning to online learning, leaving USask hallways and classrooms quiet.

While USask students adjusted quickly to the changes, they also experienced challenges along the way. Many of them lost their internships or part-time employment, experienced isolation, and had to move back home.

As a result, the need for student emergency financial assistance increased. Some students have struggled to pay for groceries and make ends meet. Some need extra help with personal academic tools for online learning, from textbooks and laptops to internet connections. In addition, support for wellness and mental health have also been

critical to students more than ever.

“When COVID-19 hit the province, I was let go from my part-time job and felt short on my finances. I also couldn’t access essential resources, such as food banks, since they were closed for safety measures. At that point, it felt like I lost everything,” said one USask international student, who has received crisis funding during the pandemic and wanted to share their story anonymously.

With no other options to consider, the student reached out to USask’s central student support team and received financial assistance through the Nasser Family Emergency Student Trust. Thanks to the generosity of 996 donors, including many university staff who reallocated their professional devel-

If you would like to make a gift to the Nasser Family Emergency Student Trust, and support students in crisis, visit

donate.usask.ca/crisis

opment funds to assist students in need, and a \$100,000 contribution from Professor Emeritus Dr. Kay (PhD) Nasser and Mrs. Dora Nasser, there was funding available to help this student immediately through this crisis.

“The help I received made it possible for me to get groceries and ... continue studying here. Without it, I would have had to abandon everything I’ve worked hard for with my studies and go back home,” the student said.

The student is beyond thankful to all donors and those in the campus community who have stepped forward to help hundreds of students in these difficult times. Flexible emergency funding available to USask students makes a real difference and helps them both with their studies and personal well-being.

“I am thankful for donors and for who they are because they give students a light during dark times. The fund has saved my life and allowed me to pursue my academic goals.” ♥

Inalie Portades is a communications co-ordinator in University Relations.



GENERAL ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY (GAA) MEETING

President Peter Stoicheff, chair of the GAA, invites you to attend the virtual GAA meeting, where he will give his annual report on the state of the university:

The Post-Pandemic University the World Needs

All faculty, staff and students are encouraged to view the virtual address.

Wednesday, April 8, noon

Members of the GAA include the president as chair, members of faculty, elected students, deans, executive directors of schools, vice-presidents, the university secretary and the registrar.

VISIT:

governance.usask.ca/ for more information.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

STM researcher assessing bystander intervention

JACQUIE BERG

St. Thomas More College (STM) shares University of Saskatchewan's (USask) commitment to ensuring a safe environment for all students, faculty, and staff, including freedom from sexual violence.

In a dedicated section of the USask student support web pages, sexual violence is defined as an “umbrella term that includes sexual harassment, sexual abuse and sexual assault affecting people of all ages, genders, and sexual orientations.”

Dr. Carie Buchanan (PhD), assistant professor in psychology at STM, received a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Development Grant for her project, *Evaluating Prosocial Bystander Intervention Training with Undergraduate Students in Preventing Sexual Assaults*. She is working with co-principal investigator Dr. Karen Lawson (PhD) of USask, collaborator Dr. Donald McCreary (PhD) of Brock University, and supported by several graduate students.

“Bystander intervention training (BIT) provides skills to enable people to safely and confidently intervene in situations that may be violent or have potential to end in violence,” said Buchanan.

“Through our research we want to determine if this training results in a measurable difference in students’ ability to properly assess their situation and the risk factors, to in turn prevent sexual violence and/or intervene to impact the situation positively. Equipping

students with knowledge and skills in recognizing and safely intervening in situations wherein sexual violence is occurring or may occur, will help make campus safer.”

Stats Canada’s fall 2020 survey on *Individual Safety in the Post-secondary Student Population*, reflects that a majority of students at Canadian post-secondary schools witnessed or experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours in a post-secondary setting in 2019.

Marta Burczycka, reporting for the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, noted that “most students chose not to intervene, seek help or take other action when they witnessed unwanted sexualized behaviours because they felt uncomfortable, because they feared negative consequences, or because they feared for their safety.”

Buchanan’s research will assess those who are able to recognize a bad situation and know the appropriate manner to safely intervene to impact a situation positively—prosocial bystanders. This ability is key for sexual violence prevention.

Dr. Carie Buchanan (PhD) is an assistant professor in psychology in St. Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan.

USask Peer Health mentors started in-person BIT workshops in 2017 until COVID-19 restrictions forced a halt. Online bystander intervention training modules are now available, open to students, faculty and staff from USask and other campuses.

As a developmental researcher, Buchanan has always been interested in ways to foster healthy relationships. So, while providing the tools is important, she felt the need for evidence-based research to address and assess the effectiveness of this campus program. Lawson, an applied social psychologist, serves as an expert in program evaluation on the team. Through metrics, including workshop participant pre-testing and post-testing, they will evaluate the short and long-term impact of BIT training.

“Research results will be then used to inform changes made to the bystander intervention training offered to students, to improve efficacy and promote positive change in students’ social norms that may support sexual violence,” Buchanan said.

Buchanan believes that “grounding this evaluation research in theory will better impact BIT because foundational knowledge regarding consent, for example, would foster a better understanding of the risk. If you don’t recognize risk, you don’t realize that you should intervene.”

“Athletes hold social capital on campuses in North America,” Buchanan added. “If they agree to participate in these preventative workshops, others might agree. USask coaches and students

expressed interest in this initiative and we are excited to be in discussion to begin testing the effectiveness of the sexual violence prevention modules with the Huskies athletes.”

If proven effective through evidence-based research, BIT training may become a common prerequisite on campuses across the country, before students integrate into campus life.

While few universities offer this preventative training, USask officials are confident in the merit of this unique leading initiative for the campus community.

“The goal of this research is to ensure prevention on campus versus only intervention,” Buchanan said. “I am confident that we can create a safer environment for all through education.”

Contact student.outreach@usask.ca to request a workshop and for further information, or visit: students.usask.ca/essentials/safety/sexual-assault.php#Bystanderintervention

Jacquie Berg is the director of communications, marketing and student recruitment at St. Thomas More College at USask.

COVID-19 economic recovery series

USask Edwards School of Business
Mitacs interns support local businesses



Delbaere

NATASHA KATCHUK AND JOELENA LEADER

University of Saskatchewan (USask) business students are receiving real-world experience in a global economy dramatically affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The Edwards School of Business (Edwards) partnered with Mitacs—a national not-for-profit organization that supports research and training programs across Canada—to deliver the Mitacs Business Strategy Internship (BSI) program over the summer

and fall of 2020.

As one of the first business schools nationwide to take on the Mitacs BSI initiative, Edwards supported Canadian businesses in adapting to the new economic realities through internships focused

on applied research and business skills, problem solving, and innovative thinking to make a difference in business operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Guided by faculty members, the interns and partner organizations

have also benefited from the latest developments in Edwards faculty research fields.

Drawing on their business knowledge and guidance from Edwards faculty supervisors, three USask students shared their experiences on developing strategies, enhancing business capacity, and finding creative solutions with their partner organizations.

DIGITIZING MARKETING FOR AUTOMOTIVE RETAIL COMPANY

Olivia Sekulic is a second-year Edwards student majoring in finance. She completed an internship with Key Auto Group where she researched the evolution and impact of digital marketing on the automotive retail industry and how the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated it.

“Key Auto Group was seeking new ways to generate leads and communicate with consumers,” said Sekulic. “They manage a handful of dealerships and franchises within Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and COVID-19 had reduced them to primarily digital communication.”

Although Sekulic’s goal is to work in agricultural finance, she used her marketing and social media management experience to deep dive into digital marketing and its practical applications within the automotive industry. Her farming background was also an asset in the initial stages of the project when she learned about the Toyota way of vehicle maintenance and the inner workings of their locations.

According to Sekulic’s research findings, conventional marketing methods are dated and inefficient.

“The automotive retail industry has not evolved to meet the demands of the modern-day consumer,” said Sekulic. “After the analysis, I worked with their team to implement new techniques and technologies to enhance social media and digital technology.”

As an undergraduate student, Sekulic said her Mitacs BSI experience reinforced that relevant work experience and networking is highly valuable going into the workforce.

SEE REAL-WORLD, PAGE 9

Real-world experience pays off for Edwards business students

FROM PAGE 8

“It was a cool experience performing independent research,” said Sekulic. “My final presentation on the findings of my research paper was a professional achievement. I was able to give informational and concise answers to important questions that addresses research I had spent four months labouring over.”

ENHANCING THE EXPERIENCE FOR OWNERS AND TENANTS

Madison Guran is a third-year Edwards student majoring in finance. She has been interning with Real Property Management Professionals Inc. (RPM), researching how to create a socially distanced, touchless process for new tenants—never more important than now during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic—and in finding solutions for tenants undergoing financial challenges to help them move into property they can afford.

Guran is also involved in the creation and implementation of a resident benefit package for clients, which is an additional service that follows the tenant’s rental journey from beginning, middle to end.

“RPM understands that renting may not be the end game for tenants, and they want to be the first-choice solution for tenants when they begin thinking about buying a property,” explained Guran. “The goal of the resident benefit package was to establish it in the Saskatoon and area market and then implement it across the different RPM offices in Canada.”

According to Guran, RPM strives to be an industry leader, and the resident benefit package differentiates them from other property management companies.

“RPM has now established an optimal value proposition by providing a service that is a value to tenants, owners and RPM,” said

Guran. “The process aims to create intimate and meaningful relationships with clients.”

Guran shared that the internship also provided her the opportunity to learn more about marketing and marketing services and to apply the research and analysis skills she gained in her position to other work-placement opportunities. Moreover, as a result of this internship, RPM has offered to hire Guran in a marketing role post-internship.

FINDING ALTERNATIVES FOR LOCAL WOMEN’S CHARITY

Jenna Kachur is a recent Bachelor of Commerce graduate at USask who is passionate about media and strengthening connections in the community. She has been interning with Dress for Success Saskatoon (DFSS), researching donor management programs, creating a marketing plan and developing a follow-up survey for clients.

Kachur is also leading a client-needs project that would provide continual support and meet the longer-term needs of DFSS clients.

“The pandemic has disproportionately affected women in many ways, especially their employment,” said Kachur. “The efforts of DFSS and organizations in the city provide a helping hand to women in our community by getting them back on their feet and navigating these unprecedented times.”

Through her Mitacs internship, Kachur consulted clients, volunteers, and referral agencies to take part in interviews and questionnaires for their insights into client needs, the results of which showed DFSS’s services could be enhanced.

“DFSS is run solely by volunteers, and it can be difficult to achieve larger goals and initiatives due to resources and time constraints,” said Kachur. “I am

moving into the analysis phase of the research project. The analysis of which will inform various alternatives for programs that DFSS could create and operate that are feasible for the volunteers and resources available post-internship.”

One of DFSS’s overarching goals is to provide a continuous network of support to clients beyond their clothing needs, and Kachur’s internship has been instrumental in moving these efforts forward for the organization.

“The internship and its outcomes have allowed for DFSS to further contribute to these positive changes and strengthen its relationships in the community,” said Kachur.

Sekulic, Guran and Kachur are three of the 28 business students (current and recent graduates) who were part of the Edwards Mitacs BSI pilot project. The pilot has since paved the way for a second round of recruitment for employer partners and students from across the USask campus.

“The Research Excellence and Innovation (REI) office has been a strong support moving the program forward and spearheading the next phase of the Mitacs BSI program at the institutional level,” said Dr. Marjorie Delbaere (PhD), Edwards’ associate dean, research and faculty relations. “The program is great for building connections among our students, industry partners and our faculty. Organizations can employ post-secondary students to tackle current organizational needs and students can apply business concepts and theories in real-world settings.”

Joelena Leader is a research facilitator and Natasha Katchuk is the senior communications officer in the Edwards School of Business.

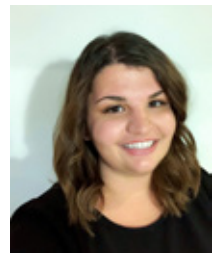
“ The automotive retail industry has not evolved to meet the demands of the modern-day consumer. After the analysis, I worked with their team to implement new techniques and technologies to enhance social media and digital technology.

— Olivia Sekulic



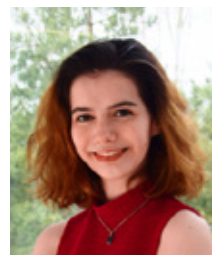
“ RPM has now established an optimal value proposition by providing a service that is a value to tenants, owners and RPM. The process aims to create intimate and meaningful relationships with clients.

— Madison Guran



“ The efforts of DFSS and organizations in the city provide a helping hand to women in our community by getting them back on their feet and navigating these unprecedented times.

— Jenna Kachur



Texas student weathers winter research conditions

LANA HAIGHT

Feeding cattle in the winter is a much different experience in Saskatchewan than it is in Texas. It may seem obvious but it's still full of surprises for a University of Saskatchewan (USask) graduate student.

"I'm continually impressed with how innovative you Canadians are and how you manage winter," said Rachel Carey, a PhD provisional candidate who is co-supervised by USask animal scientist Dr. Greg Penner (PhD) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada researcher Dr. Tim McAllister (PhD).

Carey was surprised when she learned about a potential research project that she is now running. She is monitoring the body condition of pregnant cows, including their weight gain and fat cover, as the cows graze in fields in the fall and winter for as long as conditions are suitable for the cattle, and that includes fields even when there is snow on the ground.

"This is my first winter grazing

study ever! I thought Canadians were crazy when I first heard about winter grazing. I had no idea this was even happening."

Carey, who grew up in a small city in Texas, has taken a long and winding road to Saskatoon. After teaching high school in Texas for five years, she went back to school to pursue veterinary college but after taking a course in ruminant nutrition at New Mexico State University, she switched gears and enrolled in a master's program in animal science instead.

From there, she worked three years with a feedlot consulting company based in Calgary. When she decided to return to school for a PhD, she knew she wanted to be at USask and supervised by Penner,

having read research papers by him when she was a master's student.

Grazing bred cows in fields during the winter is not new in Western Canada, but no research has been conducted on how well animals fare when they graze on corn residue—the leaves, stalks, husks, cobs, everything that's left in the field after the high-moisture corn kernels have been harvested.

"Profit margins for farmers and cattle feeders are extremely tight. Anything they can do to decrease the cost of feeding animals while maintaining (growth) performance is important. We are looking at the possible economic benefits of using these alternative corn products."

Carey's research is addressing the old adage "waste not, want not"

with her whole-systems study.

In the spring of 2020, 200 acres of corn was seeded at the university's Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence, south of Clavet, Sask. The corn was harvested as three different products: as snaplage, the term used to describe a method where the ear of the corn is harvested or what would be snapped off the corn stalk, as high-moisture corn and as corn silage. In all three cases, the feed was fermented and, starting in February, the corn has been fed to two groups of cattle at the centre's feedlot and in its metabolism barn.

Carey is tracking the animals' weight gain and evaluating how well the animals are digesting the corn feed.

She started the bred cow component of her research on Nov. 25 when 30 cows began feeding on the high-moisture corn residue left in windrows. Another 30 were in a control group, feeding on barley that was swathed at the hard dough stage.

"These are good Canadian cattle. They know what they are looking for. They have figured it out," said Carey. "Once you have the cows trained to look for the swaths and nose around in the snow, they find the feed. I was amazed at how fast they found the swaths. They knew exactly where they were."

Carey wasn't able to feed cows using the snaplage residue because a winter storm in early November covered the snaplage residue with snow too deep for the cattle to find the feed.

Carey's project took another hit with freezing rain and heavy, wet snow in early January. She and Penner made the difficult decision to move all the bred cows off the fields and to the centre's Forage and Cow-Calf Research and Teaching Unit where they are continuing to be fed.

As disappointed as she is, Carey realizes that she is conducting real-world research with real-world conditions, the same unpredictable weather conditions cattle farmers in Western Canada face every year.

"It's hard to compete with Mother Nature," said Carey with a laugh.

The research is funded by Saskatchewan Cattleman's Association and Beef Cattle Research Council and the seed is provided by Pioneer Hi-Bred. Carey's research will continue until the summer of 2022. ♥

Lana Haight is the outreach and engagement specialist with USask's Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence.

USask PhD student Rachel Carey in front of the pen with bred cows at the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence near Clavet.

LANA HAIGHT

Dentistry trainees earn major national awards

 JENNA FRASER

Two trainees in the College of Dentistry have been honoured with a pair of prestigious national research awards for their work at the University of Saskatchewan (USask).

Katie Hu and Dr. Dina Moussa (DDS, PhD) have received Canadian Association of Dental Research (CADR)-Network for Canadian Oral Health Research (NCOHR) Student Research Presentation Awards. In receiving the awards, both will be invited to present their research at the upcoming International Association for Dental Research (IADR)/American Dental Association for Dental Research (AADR)/Canadian Association for Dental Research (CADR) General Session in Boston, Mass., in July.

Hu, a third-year Doctor of Dental Medicine (DDM) student who is completing her Bachelor of Science in Dentistry, received the junior researcher award for her project entitled “Access to oral healthcare for children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder” which examines the parental/caregiver perceptions on access to oral health care for children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

“Receiving this award is a great honour for me as it recognizes the effort that I have put forth for this project,” said Hu. “I hope that my research can increase awareness about patients with FASD and the barriers they face in accessing oral health care. I would also like to express my gratitude for the incredible support and mentorship of my supervisor, Dr. Keith Da Silva (DDS).”

The number of Canadians affected by FASD is estimated to be higher than all other developmental

disabilities combined. Children living with FASD face a variety of physical and societal barriers that can impede oral health care. By speaking with the parents/caregivers for children with FASD, Hu’s research aims to better understand the individual challenges children with FASD face and the parental/caregiver perceptions surrounding oral health care.

“Individuals with FASD experience many challenges throughout their lives, and Katie’s research is the first to document that accessing timely dental is also an area of concern. Her findings will be impactful and can be used to help improve community-based programs directed towards this group,” said Da Silva, the assistant professor who oversaw Hu’s research. “Katie is a member the Bachelor of Science in Dentistry inaugural class, and this prestigious national award is not only a testament to her hard work over the last two years, but also to the quality the program.”

In addition to Hu’s success, Moussa, a post-doctoral fellow in Dr. Walter Siqueira’s (DDM) research group, received the award in the senior researcher category for her project entitled “Bioinspired Caries Preventative Strategy via Customizable Pellicles of Saliva-Derived Protein/Peptide Constructs.”

Dental caries, the most widespread chronic disease, starts in the tooth enamel. As enamel is a unique tissue that cannot be healed or regrown, prevention remains the best treatment for dental caries. In her research, Moussa investigates newly bioengineered salivary protein/peptides. Her data opens avenues for the development of a

precision-guided remedy by creating bioinspired customizable “skin or coating” on the tooth, that prevent dental caries.

“The novel approach of my research is translationally valuable as a bioinspired precision-guided prevention remedy for a widespread disease affecting more than 80 per cent of the world population,” said Moussa. “It has been a big responsibility to maintain this level of cutting-edge research and this award—being selected in such a huge competition across Canada—means a lot to me.”

“We warmly congratulate this year’s winners Katie and Dina,” said Dr. Petros Papagerakis (DDS, PhD), associate dean, research. “I am pleased to see this recognition now extends to our undergraduate students. These nationally recognized research awards earned by our students for four consecutive years are further evidence of the growing reputation the College of Dentistry is building for innovative research.

“Graduate and post-doctoral students working in our college have won over 70 local, national and international awards and several very competitive scholarships and fellowships in the last four years, awarding over \$500,000 to oral health research at USask. We are immensely proud of the work that our students are doing promoting our college and our university nationally and internationally, while enhancing Precision Oral and Systemic Health Research.”

Jenna Fraser is the communications officer in the College of Dentistry, and the School of Public Health at USask.



Katie Hu is an award-winning third-year Doctor of Dental Medicine (DDM) student in USask’s College of Dentistry.

“ I hope that my research can increase awareness about patients with FASD and the barriers they face in accessing oral health care. I would also like to express my gratitude for the incredible support and mentorship of my supervisor, Dr. Keith Da Silva (DDS).

— Katie Hu



Dr. Dina Moussa (DDS, PhD) is an award-winning post-doctoral fellow in Dr. Walter Siqueira’s (DDM) research group.

“ The novel approach of my research is translationally valuable as a bioinspired precision-guided prevention remedy for a widespread disease affecting more than 80 per cent of the world population. It has been a big responsibility to maintain this level of cutting-edge research and this award—being selected in such a huge competition across Canada—means a lot to me.

—Dina Moussa

How does it [early gut microbiome] get established in the first place? The early events in life that affect the process: is it possible that they have long-term effects on the health of a baby and then [as] a child and then even [as] an adult?” said Dr. Janet Hill (PhD), a professor and researcher in the Western College of Veterinary Medicine’s Department of

Can delivery mode affect babies’ early gut microbiome?

ISHIKA SHUKLA

A team of University of Saskatchewan (USask) researchers is studying how the mode of delivery influences a baby’s early gut microbiome—the huge community of bacteria and fungi that lives inside our gastrointestinal tracts.

“How does it [early gut microbiome] get established in the first place? The early events in life that affect the process: is it possible that they have long-term effects on the health of a baby and then [as] a child and then even [as] an adult?” said Dr. Janet Hill (PhD), a professor and researcher in the Western College of Veterinary Medicine’s Department of Veterinary Microbiology.

Her team’s work is part of the Maternal Microbiome Legacy Project, a larger research collaboration with the University of British Columbia that’s led by gynecology and microbiology professor Dr. Deborah Money (MD).

Babies are especially vulnerable during the first three months of their lives. One factor that could potentially alter their immunity is whether they’ve been exposed to their mothers’ vaginal microbiome during delivery. While most babies are delivered vaginally, more than 25 per cent of pregnant women in Canada have caesarean (C-section) deliveries. There is evidence that their infants are more prone to certain diseases such as asthma, celiac disease and allergies.

Hill and her team aren’t the first scientists to look at birth mode and its impact on establishing the infant microbiome, “but one of the things that we added to our study that is different from others is that we aren’t considering all caesarean sections to be the same,” said Hill.

“We actually have divided our question into looking at a population of women who have elective

C-sections and a population of women who have emergency C-sections where they might have planned to have a vaginal birth but for whatever reason, the decision was made to deliver the infant instead by caesarean section.”

One distinguishing factor between the two modes is that an emergency C-section delivery often leads to rupture of membranes (the amniotic sac), which means the infant is exposed to the mother’s vaginal microbiome.

The number of women participating in the study is also larger than in previous studies, adding to the project’s reliability and the significance level of findings. The team plans to follow up with 920 B.C.-based women and their babies for a three-month period following their deliveries. All of the collected samples come from three B.C. hospitals in Vancouver, Surrey and

Prince George.

“We will definitely contribute to understanding whether or not there is a difference [in early gut microbiome development],” said Hill. “Even if there is a difference early—like within the first few days of life—does it last?”

Breastfeeding may also be an influential factor in determining early gut microbiome development in infants. Studies have shown that exclusively breastfed caesarean babies had more of an abundance of healthy bacteria in their gut than found in mixed-fed caesarean infants.

In addition, the bacterial abundance of breastfed caesarean babies more closely resembled that of vaginally delivered breastfed children in comparison to the bacterial flora of mixed-fed caesarean children.

“We recognized that there was

a need for more information about those earliest events in establishing a baby’s microbiome—and that really starts at birth,” said Hill.

Findings from this study will help to inform and educate women in the community and could potentially lead to better birth management practices in health care centres across Canada and around the world.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research is providing financial support for this research study. ■

Ishika Shukla, originally from Delhi, India, is a third-year biology student in USask’s College of Arts and Science. In 2020, she worked as a WCVm summer research student with financial support from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Council of Canada and the USask Undergraduate Student Research Assistant program.



Dr. Janet Hill (PhD) is a professor and researcher in the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at USask.

SUBMITTED

Xiao's disease prevention research focused on fats

 KRISTEN MCEWEN

A new University of Saskatchewan (USask) College of Medicine faculty member is aiming to build basic science research that could lead to advancements in treating heart disease, stroke, obesity and diabetes.

As an assistant professor in the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology (APP), Dr. Changting Xiao (PhD) has dedicated his research to investigating how the body processes sugar and fats, or lipids.

“My research is to look more closely into how fats are handled by the body, to understand the general physiology, to find out what is wrong in disease conditions, and to develop potential strategies to mitigate that,” Xiao said.

People with diabetes do not only have high levels of blood sugar, but also often have blood lipid problems. Blood lipid problems also occur in many people who are obese or overweight, and to those with metabolic syndrome. As a result, these individuals also have an increased risk of micro- and macro-vascular diseases, such as atherosclerosis, heart attack and stroke.

According to Statistics Canada, 63 per cent of adults were classified as overweight or obese as of 2018. Treating these diseases comes at heavy a cost to the health-care system, Xiao said. As of 2019, diabetes treatment alone cost nearly \$30 billion nationally per year.

Xiao is specifically focusing on cells in the gut—the gastrointestinal system—by using animal models to better understand how gut cells process fats. He intends to identify critical molecules involved in the process. Fats are sent out by the gut as lipid particles and are distributed

to various organs in the body (like the heart, kidneys and liver) that contribute to cardiovascular disease.

“We could target these molecules to slow down the process or change the direction of the process, so that not as many bad lipid particles are made in the gut,” he said. “Fats in the gut cells could be used for something else, like to be burned for energy, instead of being sent to other parts of the body.”

Xiao has been interested in the metabolic processes in the body for the entirety of his career. He specializes in physiology, metabolism and nutrition. Prior to arriving at USask, Xiao held post-doctoral fellowships from the Canadian Diabetes Association and the Banting and Best Diabetes Centre, before becoming a research associate and a senior scientific associate at the Univer-

sity of Toronto and the University Health Network.

Working at one of the best centres in the world for diabetes research, Xiao took the opportunity to understand how diabetes occurs and how complications arise from the disease.

He accepted the USask position of assistant professor in APP in the fall of 2020.

While moving to a new province is challenging at the best of times, Xiao found the transition from Ontario to Saskatchewan to be welcoming, despite the pandemic. Although the USask campus is currently closed to most in-person learning, Xiao said he looked forward to moving to a university setting.

“I like the energy on campus and enjoy interacting with students



Dr. Changting Xiao (PhD) is an assistant professor in the College of Medicine's Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology.

 SUBMITTED

in the lab and in classroom,” he said. “Mentoring the next generation of scientists and researchers is rewarding.”

“I think USask values research excellence a lot and provides a very strong and supportive environment—from the facilities to the

supportive programs to the leaderships at the College of Medicine and the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology.”

Kristen McEwen is a communications co-ordinator in the College of Medicine.

Forum spotlights anti-racism, anti-oppression

FROM PAGE 2

More recently, St. Denis was appointed as Special Advisor to the President on Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression. She is also chair of USask's Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Committee and will support the evolution of its mandate, along with creating an anti-racism and anti-oppressive educational program for senior leadership.

The internal forums have grown in complexity and capacity. The 3rd Annual *māmowī āsohētētān* Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum drew a lot of interest, and the room capacity of 250 people was easily reached. A theme that

emerged from the event was the need to address racism and oppression on campus, in order for meaningful Indigenization and reconciliation can be experienced.

“This year's theme, which focuses on anti-racism and anti-oppression, emerged from the table facilitator and notetakers' interpretations of the table conversations, the post-it notes to the broad questions that were asked, pre- and post-survey results, and the general comments that we received from the 2020 event,” explained Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann (PhD), vice-provost Indigenous Engagement at USask.

“This topic matters to our community, as does making structural and systemic changes that support equity, and an anti-racist/anti-oppressive, accepting and welcoming institutional culture and climate. By engaging in difficult but respectful conversations based on truth, we can dig deep and create real and sustainable change that will benefit us all. I'm hopeful.”

USask's 4th Annual Internal *māmowī āsohētētān* Truth and

Reconciliation Forum is one of many Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliACTION initiatives underway on campus. As with the University Plan 2025, Indigenous wisdoms, knowledges, cultures, traditions, histories, lived experiences and stories continue to inform our collective future. This important work has us embrace *manachitowin* (respecting one another), communicate actively, and engage constructively.

**For more information, visit:
indigenous.usask.ca/about/Internal-Forum.php**



Stanley Cup champion to coach Huskie men's hockey

Former Stanley Cup champion and two-time Olympic gold-medal winning coach Mike Babcock.

REBECCA COOK/REUTERS

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Stanley Cup champion and two-time Olympic gold medal-winning coach Mike Babcock is the new head coach of the University of Saskatchewan (USask) Huskies men's hockey team.

Huskie Athletics Chief Athletics Officer Dave Hardy announced Feb. 20 that the long-time NHL and Canadian national team head coach would lead the Huskies on a full-time volunteer basis for up to two seasons, while working with a new associate coach who will then take over full-time coaching duties. A former Huskie hockey player from

Saskatoon, Babcock replaces Dave Adolph, who announced his retirement on Dec. 7, 2020, after 27 years coaching Huskie hockey.

"This is an exciting and historic day for Huskie Athletics, and we are thrilled that Mike wants to come back home to lead our men's hockey program," said Hardy. "We are extremely fortunate that the timing lined up perfectly to create this opportunity. Mike's track record of success speaks for itself, and he will be a great addition to Huskie Athletics, to the men's hockey

program, and to the local hockey community."

Babcock joins the Huskies after spending the past 17 seasons in the NHL, including guiding the Detroit Red Wings to the Stanley Cup championship in 2008 and coaching Canada to back-to-back Olympic gold medals in 2010 and 2014.

"I am excited to work with Huskie athletes, back in my hometown, at the university where I had the opportunity to play under legendary coach Dave King," said Babcock, who played for the

“Saskatchewan has provided me many opportunities in my life and my career, and I am truly excited about the opportunity to give back.

— Mike Babcock

Huskies in 1981-82 before going back to the Western Hockey League (WHL). He later attended McGill University where he earned an education degree.

"This is a special place for me, and I look forward to having the chance to help develop these young men," Babcock added. "Saskatchewan has provided me many opportunities in my life and my career, and I am truly excited about the opportunity to give back."

Babcock is the only coach in hockey history to have won the Stanley Cup, Olympic gold, the World Cup, the world hockey championship and the world junior championship.

"We are all extremely excited. I know we were all surprised and did not expect to have a coach with that kind of resume come in and coach the Huskies," said second-year defenceman Evan Fiala, a former captain of the WHL's Saskatoon Blades from Clavet who was named an Academic All-Canadian with the Huskies last year for his academic achievement in USask's College of Education.

"We had a meeting with him and we are all looking forward to getting started with him as coach. As athletes playing at a high calibre who love to win and who are all students of the game, no one is more excited than us to have someone with that kind of experience and drive to learn from and to see what we can achieve."

Babcock previously coached collegiate hockey at Red Deer College from 1988-1991 and one season in 1993-94 when he led the University of Lethbridge to the national championship, which he refers to as his "best work." He spent eight years coaching in the WHL before moving on to the professional ranks, including serving as head coach of the Anaheim Mighty Ducks, Detroit

Red Wings, and Toronto Maple Leafs. He has since worked as a hockey analyst with NBC Sports and a volunteer hockey advisor with the University of Vermont.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Mike Babcock, one of the most decorated hockey coaches in Canadian history, to USask and to Huskie Athletics as the new head coach of the men's hockey team," said USask President Peter Stoicheff. "Volunteering his time, Mike Babcock will build on the proud and successful tradition of the Huskie hockey program, with the ultimate goal of winning the national championship. We are honoured and grateful that he has chosen to return home and rejoin the Huskies to offer his services to help take our program to a new level."

Babcock begins his new role with the Huskies in May, as Adolph retires as the winningest coach in Canadian university men's hockey history. The Huskies captured the Canada West championship in 2020 prior to heading to nationals for the eighth time in nine years. After the 2020-21 season was cancelled due to the pandemic, the Huskies look to return a veteran-laden team in 2021-22.

"Mike Babcock is an outstanding addition to the USask team and will accelerate the development of the dedicated student-athletes in the Huskie hockey program," said King, a former Huskie coach and USask alumnus, and member of the selection committee. "I have known Mike for more than 40 years and there is no coach in the game who has accomplished as much as he has. There is no doubt that he is the right guy for the job and will have a tremendous impact on the success of the Huskie men's hockey program."

Babcock was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws by USask in 2016, and made a member of the Order of Hockey in Canada in 2018.

CFI invests in cutting-edge research at USask

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) has been awarded \$10.3 million by the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) to fund three new research projects.

USask received \$6.76 million from the CFI to help conserve bison and other threatened animal species and address challenges facing the beef cattle industry, including antimicrobial resistance that poses a global threat to animals and humans. The research,

made possible through the CFI Innovation Fund, includes working with Indigenous communities to develop the world's first bison genome biobank at the university's Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence.

The CFI will also invest \$3.2 million in a unique biomanufacturing facility at USask that will use "engineering biology" technologies to accelerate agri-food innovation and address food security needs.

USask researchers will also take part in a CFI-funded program to improve health outcomes for women and babies across the country. The Canadian Mother-Child Cohort Active Surveillance Initiative received \$1.2 million from the CFI, and \$1.79 million from partner organizations, to consolidate data from patients in Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan on medication use during pregnancy. ■

Huskies captain ready for life after hockey

✍️ JAMES SHEWAGA

Precisely one year ago—on March 12, 2020—captain Tanner Lishchynsky and the Huskie men's hockey team played in the quarter-finals of the U Sports national championship, just hours before the entire tournament was shut down as the pandemic spread.

It was the last time that a Huskie Athletics team played in an official game. Lishchynsky never imagined that it would also prove to be last time he would don a Huskie hockey jersey for the University of Saskatchewan (USask).

"I never would have thought that would have been the end of it," said Lishchynsky, who had planned to play his fifth and final season of eligibility in 2020/21, before the season was cancelled due to the ongoing global health crisis. "I thought I would have one more year left, but it just goes to show you that you can't take anything for granted in life. It was disappointing, but you have no control over it, and there are

obviously a lot worse things going on in the world than not being able to play hockey. So you have to be grateful for what you can still do, for the people in your life, and for the opportunities that you still have."

When the Huskies do finally return to action, Lishchynsky will be cheering them on with the other fans in the stands, rather than wearing the captain's 'C' on the ice, as he prepares to graduate this spring with a Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness.

"(2020/21) was going to be my last year of hockey no matter what, because I will be done school this spring and moving on to starting my career," said the 26-year-old defenceman from Saskatoon. "That's the good thing about this Ag degree is that you can go in different ways and go into different industries, so there's lots of possibilities."

While remote learning has proven to be more of a challenge as he completes his final year of studies

online, Lishchynsky's academic average has remained in the same 75-80 per cent range that earned him Huskie All-Academic Team honours in each of his four seasons as a Huskie student-athlete. Always as dedicated in the classroom as he was on the ice, Lishchynsky takes pride in his academic achievements over the years and is looking forward to celebrating completing his USask degree.

"A lot of student-athletes have that dedication to put in the work, but it's nice to get that (All-Academic Team) recognition," he said. "It's an accomplishment that you are definitely proud of."

Lishchynsky is also honoured to have had the opportunity to compete in the U Sports championship every year of his Huskie career, highlighted by clinching his fourth trip to nationals when the Huskies won the 2020 Canada West conference title on home ice in front of a standing-room-only crowd at Merlis Belsher Place.



Captain Tanner Lishchynsky of Saskatoon played four seasons with the USask Huskie men's hockey team.

GETMYPHOTO.CA

"That was pretty memorable," said Lishchynsky. "I had a great four years and I am really grateful for the opportunities that I have had and all of the people that I have met and how much the university and Huskie Athletics has set me up for life after hockey. I have a lot to be grateful for and a lot of great memories."

While his Huskies career comes to a close, Lishchynsky plans to remain involved in hockey. A former Huskie KidSport ambassador,

Lishchynsky has been a long-time volunteer in the community, coaching youngsters in the Kinsmen Inner City Hockey League.

"I am going to try to keep involved in hockey, whether it is playing senior hockey or coaching and helping kids, I will be staying in the game for sure," said Lishchynsky. "I try to do as much as I can to give back to the community because I know how much hockey has given to me." 🍷



The USask Huskie men's hockey team celebrates after clinching the Canada West championship title at Merlis Belsher Place on Feb. 29, 2020.

GETMYPHOTO.CA



USASK HOME TO DIEFENBAKER'S FINAL RESTING PLACE

 JAMES SHEWAGA

It required special approval from the provincial government and the Board of Governors of the University of Saskatchewan (USask) to grant John G. Diefenbaker one last request.

On Aug. 22, 1979, six days after his passing in Ottawa, the beloved 13th Prime Minister of Canada returned to his alma mater to lie forever at rest on campus along the banks of the South Saskatchewan River, in a truly unique burial site handpicked by Diefenbaker himself.

“While most prime ministers are buried in cemeteries or family plots, Diefenbaker stands out through his request to be buried on a university campus,” said Helanna Gessner, the curatorial, collections, and exhibits manager of the Diefenbaker Canada Centre at USask. “By choosing to be buried next to the Diefenbaker Canada Centre, he ensured his continued influence on how people interact with, and build upon, his legacy.”


The only prime minister buried on a Canadian campus, Diefenbaker planned most of the details of his funeral, from the train journey that brought his and his wife Olive’s caskets from Ottawa back to Saskatoon to the university that meant so much to him. The journey home to his final resting place was an event in itself as thousands lined the tracks in cities and towns across the Prairies as the funeral train rolled through.

Thousands more packed the railway station stop in Prince Albert—the federal riding he represented for 26 years—to pay their respects to the only person from Saskatchewan to be elected prime minister. After arriving in Saskatoon, an estimated 8,000

mourners attended his funeral, with Diefenbaker lying in state in the university’s Convocation Hall prior to being carried to his final resting place across campus by RCMP pallbearers. Among the many dignitaries attending the funeral were Saskatchewan Premier Allan Blakeney and Prime Minister Joe Clark, who began his eulogy by stating “John Diefenbaker is home.”

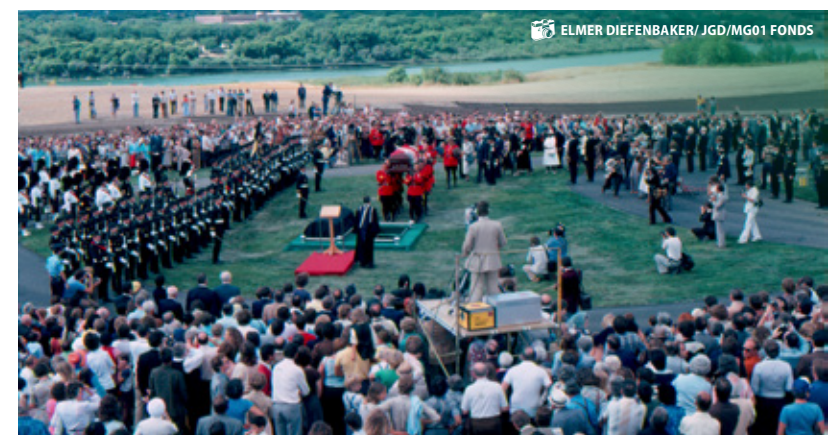
“While there were only three scheduled stops, tens of thousands of people across the Prairies lined the railway to pay their respects to Diefenbaker as the funeral train passed,” said Gessner. “And when Diefenbaker and wife were finally being laid to rest, the crowd was so large that people stood on the top of the Diefenbaker Canada Centre so they could witness this historic event.”

Entering university in 1912, Diefenbaker became the most celebrated member of the first generation of USask students, and the first to earn three degrees—bachelor’s, master’s and law degrees—and later proudly serving as the seventh chancellor. In passing, Diefenbaker donated his estate to the university, helping contribute to the building of the Diefenbaker Canada Centre that houses his papers, library, and personal items.

Currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the centre’s online exhibits can be viewed at diefenbaker.usask.ca. 



The final resting place of John George Diefenbaker and his wife Olive, beside the Diefenbaker Canada Centre on the University of Saskatchewan campus.



A look at the crowd on the University of Saskatchewan campus gathered to pay their respects to former Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker during the burial ceremony in 1979.