I first enrolled in the University of Manitoba in 1994. At that time, campus initiatives that considered Indigenous peoples or issues were not as numerous as they are now. In April of 2016, I had the pleasure of hosting a symposium event with my colleague Melanie Janzen at the Faculty of Education. It was at this event that highly regarded academic Marie Battiste of the University of Saskatchewan, in sharing her thoughts on how universities may improve in the areas of Indigenous achievement and engagement, said something that has remained with me for some time: “nothing about us without us.”

What does this mean for the U of M? It seems to me that a university that has recognized that it has not always done an adequate job of ministering to the needs of Indigenous peoples may have, in the aftermath of such recognition, a great deal of work to do. The U of M, through a statement of apology and reconciliation that was delivered by University President David Barnard in October of 2011, codified its commitment to Indigenous achievement. In that statement was the commitment “to listening to, acknowledging and affirming Aboriginal voices within the fabric of the university.” This statement of apology and reconciliation, in large part, informs the University’s work toward improving Indigenous engagement and achievement on its campuses.

Currently, the U of M has driven a number of initiatives in order to support Indigenous engagement and achievement. The University has set aside considerable funds to support Indigenous initiatives and research that are available to all University faculty. The University has established ambitious goals for Indigenous student enrolment. The University continues to work toward improved Indigenous student services through student awards, tutoring and mentorship. Most importantly, in response to Battiste’s imperative of nothing about us without us, the University will be recruiting new Indigenous professors. This year, six academic units across campus will be provided support to hire these Indigenous scholars.

My primary focus is are the success of Indigenous students at our University and the advancement of Indigenous scholarship. My hopes for these areas require institutional change that won’t occur overnight, but I am confident that we are on a good path. It’s an exciting time to be an Indigenous academic in Canada, and I am proud to be a part of a university that is committed to Indigenous engagement and achievement and has demonstrated that commitment with action.

Students are our most important resource. They are the future leaders, and the tools, skills and knowledge that our University equips them with will lay the path for generations to come. Providing opportunities for all of our students to learn about Indigenous histories, Treaties, residential schools, and contemporary Indigenous issues will promote greater awareness and reconciliation. It is only by sharing and learning about our collective history and walking together that we can begin to dismantle the impacts of colonization.

It is going to be a productive year as we continue to plan and implement various activities to advance Indigenous Achievement!

Frank Deer
Acting Executive Lead, Indigenous Achievement
Director, Indigenous Initiatives, Faculty of Education
Programming in full swing at Indigenous Student Centre

It’s been a busy and exciting semester at the Indigenous Student Centre! In October, ISC co-organized a speaking event focused on financial literacy: Wealthing Like Rabbits with author Robert Brown. In November, we welcomed Inuit cultural teacher Pita (Peter) Irniq to Migizii Agamik. During the strike, we ramped up services for students, providing Sharing and Talking Circles and hot lunches in addition to all of our usual programming. The following are some more highlights from the fall, so be sure to check the ISC website often on how to get involved!

MONDAYS @ 12:30 p.m. - Science Research Talks
Circle Room, Migizii Agamik
A chance to learn about current research opportunities with U of M scientists and about undergraduate research awards. For the first time ever, a student delivered one of the Science Research Talks. Taylor Morriseau’s presentation looked at access to safe drinking water in First Nations communities from a microbiological perspective. To learn more about Science Research Talks contact Justin Rasmussen at justin.rasmussen@umanitoba.ca

TUESDAYS @ 11:30 a.m. - Fireside Chats
Circle Room, Migizii Agamik
An opportunity to learn from Elders and Cultural Teachers.

WEDNESDAYS @ 7 p.m. - Pow Wow Practice Group
Multipurpose Studio Room 264, Active Living Centre
Brand new this year, Pow Wow Practice Group is put on by the Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management and the Centre! In October, ISC co-organized a Pow Wow Practice Group and the Neechiwaken Indigenous Peer Mentor Program came together for this inaugural joint event. It was a great success, because it allowed units to collaborate in ways they never have before. In October, there was an individual Neechiwaken monthly meeting with pizza and sharing and in November the three mentor groups came together again for Ally Training by Rainbow Pride Mosaic and a games night. The final team meeting was on December 1.

Neechiwaken mentors are doing a great job so far with several matches electing to set two-hour study blocks together, one match joined the Children Rising Mentorship Program (the mentor is the program coordinator), and others do activities together like attend Full Moon Ceremonies or workshops such as the financial literacy events that were organized by the Indigenous Student Centre. The program coordinator, Carla Loewen, is impressed with the quality of mentors this year and looks forward to upcoming events and opportunities for this group.

Indigenous Circle of Empowerment (ICE)
ICE has its largest cohort yet. Read the feature article on what the leadership group has been up to on the next page.

Standing desks
Two standing desks are now available in Migizii Agamik. One is in the student lounge and one is in the foyer.

Mentor training took place in July and August and the first meeting for all mentors and mentees took place on September 15 when three U of M mentor programs held a combined meet and greet and consent culture workshop. More than 250 students from the New Student Peer Mentorship Program, the International Student Mentorship Program and the Neechiwaken Indigenous Peer Mentor Program came together for this inaugural joint event. It was a great success, because it allowed units to collaborate in ways they never have before. In October, there was an individual Neechiwaken monthly meeting with pizza and sharing and in November the three mentor groups came together again for Ally Training by Rainbow Pride Mosaic and a games night. The final team meeting was on December 1.

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Upcoming events:
On Dec. 8, 2016 ISC will host its first ever Neechiwaken AGM. This is guided study with tutors, food, and more! Winter celebrations will take place in Migizii Agamik from Dec. 12-15, 2016. See events page at the end of the newsletter or our website for details. A hearty miigwech to ENGAP, Access and Aboriginal Focus Programs, UMASA, Indigenous Achievement and ISC for making this celebration possible.

MONTHLY - Full Moon Ceremonies
Facilitated by ISC director Christine Cyr, Full Moon Ceremonies are a chance for women to gather, to honour themselves, other women, and their relationship with Grandmother Moon. All girls and women are welcome. For more information and future dates, please visit the ISC website or connect with Christine directly at christine.cyr@umanitoba.ca

Other highlights from the fall semester:
Indigenous Orientation Week
This year ISC expanded Indigenous Orientation from one day to one week! From September 12-16 students familiarized themselves with the programs and services offered by ISC and got to know the Indigenous campus community. School of Art student and University of Manitoba Aboriginal Students’ Association (UMASA) female co-president Kristin Flattery even took over the U of M’s student Instagram account for one of the days. Check out her excellent documentation of it here!

Students try Métis jigging at Indigenous Orientation Week.

Research and Writing Workshops
Hosted by Camille Callison, Indigenous Services Librarian and Monique Dumontet, Academic Learning Centre Instructor, these sessions offered tips and strategies for researching, writing, paraphrasing, citing and referencing.

Neechiwaken
Now in its seventh year, the Neechiwaken Indigenous Peer Mentor Program (formerly PACT) is still going strong! This year 21 mentors and 20 new students signed up for a total of 41 participants! More mentors and new students are being recruited in order to provide this peer mentor opportunity to new Indigenous students starting in January or who didn’t hear about this program until later.
Largest cohort yet for ICE

Submitted by Justin Rasmussen, coordinator for ICE

A total of 14 Indigenous students are part of the Indigenous Circle of Empowerment (ICE) this year. This is the largest cohort since the program’s inception in 2010. Together, the students represent eight communities and the Cree, Anishinaabe, and Métis cultures. The cohort includes students from seven different Faculties at the U of M, including the Faculties of Arts, Engineering, Extended Education, Health Sciences, Science, Social Work, and University 1. They range from the second year of their undergraduate degrees to the second year of their graduate and professional degree programs.

ICE is off to a great start this year. On September 22, 2016, ICE hosted a pickerel dinner with Indigenous leaders here at the U of M, which included Dr. Frank Deer (Executive Lead, Office of Indigenous Achievement), Christine Cyr, (Director, Indigenous Student Centre) and Carl Stone (Elder, Teacher, Student Advisor, Indigenous Student Centre). The students have since participated in professional development workshops including a workshop on LinkedIn with Kate Yee (Career Services), a networking workshop with Sarah Saunders (First Year Centre), a media relations workshop with Ruth Shead (Indigenous Achievement), and two productivity workshops with Justin Rasmussen (Indigenous Student Centre). The students also participated in a meeting with Ms. Sarah Guillemard, MLA, Fort Richmond, to discuss the importance of student services available to Indigenous students at the U of M.

Most importantly, students in ICE have had the opportunity to sit with Elder Norman Meade to learn about Medicine Wheel teachings and to participate in a Sweatlodge Ceremony hosted by Mike Pierre and Christine Cyr.

Before the end of the 2016 Fall term, students in ICE will have the opportunity to participate in a workshop on building great teams with Mark O’Riley (Director, Learning and Organizational Development) as well as have a meet and greet with Ry Moran (Director, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation).

During the winter term, the students will develop their public speaking skills with volunteers from the Anishinaabe Toastmasters, contribute to the University of Manitoba Student Leadership Summit, and work on a community service project among other things. The purpose of the community service project is to find an innovative and sustainable way to create positive change in a community and to provide the students with an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities as leaders.

Last year, ICE created the Bannock and Backpacks donation drive which resulted in over 50 backpacks, filled with essential supplies, being distributed to Winnipeg’s less fortunate at a Got Bannock event organized by Althea Guiboche. This is how Bannock & Backpacks was covered in the media (video): http://news.umanitoba.ca/shaw-bannock-and-backpacks/

ICE is a student leadership development program grounded in culture that empowers Indigenous students with the pride, confidence, and skills they need to be leaders in their communities, in their professional fields, and the world.

This program provides Indigenous students with opportunities and resources to enhance their cultural awareness through traditional teachings; develop their leadership skills through professional development and experiential learning opportunities; and empower them to be drivers of positive social change in the community by working collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team of student leaders. ICE is an approved U of M Co-Curricular Record program.

“ICE is such an incredible opportunity for students who have a passion and desire to lead. It offers us a chance and a space to learn more about what it means to be a leader in our communities, to develop our skills, to put ourselves out there and make connections, and also to simply spend time with others on campus who have similar intentions of making the world a better place. All of this is done while intentionally and respectfully keeping our Indigenous teachings at its core and that really is, for me, a huge reason ICE feels so powerful and safe. I am so grateful this program exists!”

– Charlene Hallett, 2nd year student, Family Social Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences

“ICE is an awesome student group that has enabled me to make more time for community service on campus and beyond, alongside other indigenous students.”

– Rayanna Seymour (Hourie), J.D. candidate, Faculty of Law

“Sitting with the Indigenous Circle of Empowerment I’m learning the fundamental skills employers are looking for in an environment that is uniquely Indigenous.”

– Jeremy McKay, J.D. candidate, Faculty of Law

http://news.umanitoba.ca/shaw-bannock-and-backpacks/

www.umanitoba.ca/indigenous/student/ice

If you are interested in learning more about ICE, please contact Dr. Justin Rasmussen: justin.rasmussen@umanitoba.ca.

Applications for the 2017-2018 academic year will be accepted starting August 1, 2017. The application will be available on the website: www.umanitoba.ca/indigenous/student/ice

ICE with Elder Norman Meade on October 3, 2016.
U of M students win big at Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards

Once again, U of M students have taken centre stage at the Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards! This year, seven students from U of M took top honours:

Both academic awards went to students in the Faculty of Engineering’s Access Program (ENGAP), Kyle Monkman, who is in his fourth year of Electrical Engineering, won in the Senior Academic category. He has a GPA of 4.33 and won the U of M Open Mathematics Competition. He also volunteers his time with programs working to get more Indigenous youth into math and science.

First-year student Emma Gillespie won the Junior Academic category. This is one of many honours Emma has received recently. She also won the Governor General’s Academic Medal for her high school, and she is the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Entrance Scholarship, and she won the Price Industries Entrance Scholarship for Engineering. Emma is also an athlete, coach and volunteer.

Julie Desrochers, is in her final year in the Faculty of Education and is the treasurer of the Metis University Students’ Association. She won in the Cultural (female) category. Julie is Métis from Saint-Boniface and is very active in promoting Métis history and culture. She is the Riel House Coordinator at Louis Riel Institute, a Gen7 Messenger at Motivate Canada, and an Interpreter at Le Musée de Saint-Boniface.

Students from Aboriginal Business Education Partners in the Asper school of business took four categories. Kailey Atkinson won the Senior Business/Entrepreneurship category, Kailey was accepted into the Asper School of Business this fall. She is the Vice-President of Operations with the Association of Aboriginal Commerce Students (AACS), currently works for Indspire, and she was ABEP’s co-emecee at the 2016 ABEP graduation.

April Renée Wilson will be graduating from the Asper School of Business in 2017 with majors in Logistics and Supply Chain Management. She won a MVAIA in the Senior Personal Achievement category. April currently works at Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, she has represented the Asper School of Business at the Alberta Not-for-Profit Case Competition in 2016, and in October she co-encored the 2016 Excellence in Aboriginal Business Leadership Awards Dinner.

Alex Hosfield won the Senior Community/Volunteer category. Alex is in his third year at the Asper School of Business, and at every event ABEP hosts Alex volunteers his time proudly. He was ABEP’s co-emcee at the 2016 ABEP graduation, and he currently is the coordinator for the Metis University Students’ Association.

And last but not least, Christian Toupin received this year’s MAYAA in the Senior Athletic category. Christian is in his third year at the Asper School of Business. He is a super star broomball player! He has attended the National Broomball Championships, has been named first team all-star at nationals, and recently attended the World Broomball Championship where his team placed second.

ABEP honours local Aboriginal business leaders

Aboriginal Business Education Partners (ABEP) celebrated two Indigenous-owned businesses at the Excellence in Aboriginal Business Leadership Awards (EABLA) in October. Voilà par Andréanne received the Excellence in Aboriginal Small and Medium Enterprises Award, and Covert Logistics won the Excellence in Aboriginal Business Leadership Award. Proceeds from the event directly benefit Indigenous students in the Asper School of Business through scholarships and initiatives.

Indigenous student advisor Justin Rasmussen won the Region 6 Excellence in Advising - New Advisor 2017 award from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). The award is given to an individual who has demonstrated qualities associated with outstanding academic advising of students. Justin has a PhD in biological sciences from the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. He also has a BSc in Geography from the University of Winnipeg with a BSc in Geography in 2013, and a BSc in zoology and an MSc in zoology from the University of Manitoba.

New student advisor for Indigenous arts students

Vanessa Lillé is Cree-Métis from Sault Ste. Marie with family from St. Peter’s/Little Peguis along the Red River. She earned a BA in Psychology from the U of M in the spring of 2016. Prior to completing her undergraduate degree, Vanessa spent 11 years working as an Educational Assistant for the Interlake School Division where she supported students academically, provided access to information in the classroom for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students as a computerized notetaker, and provided traditional and cultural opportunities for Indigenous students. Outside of work, Vanessa is heavily involved volunteering with Indigenous organizations, Service Learning organizations like Child Rising Mentorship Program and Community Action Poverty Simulation and research projects like Community Health and Information Partnerships. For her volunteer work and leadership, she received an Emerging Leader Award from Student Life at the U of M in 2016. Vanessa believes in a holistic strength-based model of support where each student finds balance in order to succeed, develop and grow. In her role as Indigenous student advisor for the Faculty of Arts, Vanessa splits her time between the Faculty Arts General Office on the 3rd floor of Fletcher Argue and Migizii Agamik - Bald Eagle Lodge. If you are an Indigenous student either currently enrolled or interested in studying in the Faculty of Arts, contact Vanessa via email for advice, or to book an appointment: Vanessa.Lille@umanitoba.ca

Movers & Shakers

Student advisor wins National Academic Advising Association Award

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At the Edge of Canada returns to the airwaves

If you want to learn about the latest and greatest Indigenous research going on at the U of M and other campuses on Turtle Island, be sure to tune into UMFM 101.5 FM on your radio dial, Monday mornings at 11 a.m. to catch At the Edge of Canada. The show is hosted by Trevor Phillips, Indigenous graduate student success coordinator for the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Indigenous Student Centre.

“Robert Falcon Oulette (MP for Winnipeg Centre) began At the Edge of Canada when he was an employee of the U of M,” says Phillips. “It went dormant when he left to run for mayor. When I came on as the Indigenous graduate student success coordinator I thought it would be a really great idea to re-launch it rather than starting an entirely new show.”

At the Edge of Canada showcases the Indigenous intellectual community, as well as Indigenous graduate students and their research. The show’s format is primarily one-on-one interviews.

“There’s a lot of talk show out there. What’s different about At the Edge of Canada is that it’s specifically about Indigenous students, intellectuals and researchers on campuses today, who are actively participating in the production of Indigenous intellectual knowledge and who are at the vanguard of managing, expressing and formulating principles, theories, attitudes and ideas.”

Guests this fall have included: graduate students Angelina McLeod, Leo Baskatawang, and Chantale Cenerini; Indigenous services librarian Camille Callison; art historian Dr. Carmen Robertson on her book Mythologizing Norvell Morrisseau; and residential school survivor Theodore Fontaine and history professor Dr. Greg Bak on “Archives, Memory & Reconciliation.”

“This is a show that will engage in discourse at a fast pace, it has its finger on the pulse of protests, events, production, research, and more specifically about the climate of what’s at stake for being an Indigenous researcher in an institution today.”

Phillips also wants the use the show to train graduate students and to build community on campus.

“I’m hoping with increased attention and spotlight on the show students will start to see that this is a useful endeavour to spend some time on,” he says. “Hopefully we’ll have graduate students manage, coordinate and organize the entire show and its entire media platform as a way of bolstering their academic and creative production. Anyone who is interested in radio, communications, interviews, or managing talent – I can help with training. Reach out and we’ll get you started.”

Students who want to get involved can email Trevor at: trevor.phillips@umanitoba.ca, tweet @tphillers, or stop by Trevor’s office in Migizi Agamik.

At the Edge of Canada is also available as a podcast.

New resource supports discussions about Residential Schools

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), the U of M, and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) have teamed up to create a new resource for K-12 educators to use when teaching about Residential Schools.

The booklet, called Truth and Reconciliation: What is it about?, includes residential school survivor statements, visuals, and key information from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s reports. It is available in both English and French and is available for $3 per copy through the CTF’s website.

Coming Winter 2017: Critical Conversations on Truth & Reconciliation

The U of M’s Centre for Human Rights Research and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation are organizing a winter 2017 seminar series called Critical Conversation on Truth and Reconciliation, featuring University of Manitoba researchers and others from a range of disciplines. The seminars will explore topics such as: Indian Residential Schools litigation, Indigenous concepts of reconciliation, decolonizing archives, visual and literary representations of the Indian residential school experience, understanding denial of mass atrocities, harm and reparations and UNDRIP as a framework for reconciliation.

Graduate and law students may participate for credit in the course led by Prof. Aimée Craft but the seminars are also open to the public free of charge.

The seminars are usually on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to noon between Jan. 17 and mid-April in Robson Hall, 224 Dysart Rd., on the Fort Garry campus of the University of Manitoba. Join the CHRR mailing list to receive an email reminder before each seminar.

Indigenous Design Principles to guide future land use at U of M

This fall the U of M released its new master plan for development. The plan includes Indigenous Design and Planning Principles that were developed in collaboration with and under the guidance of an Indigenous Advisory Committee and subcommittee, and supported by the U of M’s Indigenous Advisory Circle.

These principles include:

1. Committing to Relationships and Listening
2. Demonstrating Culturally Relevant Design
3. Respecting Mother Earth
4. Fostering a Sense of Belonging and Community
5. Embracing a ‘Seven Generations’ View

Learn more about the U of M’s Indigenous Planning and Design Principles here.
Highlights from the Department of Native Studies

Professor named to UK magazine's influential Canadians list
Dr. Sherry Farrell-Racette, an associate professor with the department is currently at the University of Toronto as the first-ever Distinguished Visiting Indigenous Faculty Fellow. Dr. Farrell-Racette's primary project is an exploration of time, rhythm and pace, and the creation of community spaces of dialogue and resistance. She explains this more completely on the U of T's website: “This project, a book manuscript emphasizing (but not limited to) Métis beadwork, quilwork and clothing, is the culmination of decades of research in archival and museum collections in North America and Europe. The rhythms inherent in historic Métis movement: seasonal change, the swaying of a horse, the rocking of a Red River cart, the sweep of a paddle, fiddle tunes and dancing feet are reflected in the visual. Equally important are radical disruptions and narratives of displacement, and the rhythms of sewing and beading that helped women re-establish order and meaning to daily life. In particular I will explore several concepts related to the movement and transference of Métis women's knowledge and artistic practice across time and place, emphasizing how women created and recreated community, marked visual territory, and contributed to community economies through the commodification of their artwork. My activities at the institute will focus on writing, but I will also be painting, stitching and beading in preparation for a solo exhibition next spring that draws from this research. I will seek opportunities to engage others in the collective spirit of beading together. Get ready to thread some needles!”

Dr. Farrell-Racette's work “My Grandmothers Loved to Trade” was also featured at Regina's Slate Fine Art Gallery this fall, as part of an exhibit called Bead Speak.

Professor named to UK magazine's influential Canadians list
In its November issues, UK-based magazine Monocle included Dr. Niigaan Sinclair, acting head of the department to its list of 20 influential Canadians. Sinclair has been with the department since 2012. He is a regular commentator for various media organizations. He is also the co-editor of Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land and Water. Centering Anishinaabek Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories, and The Winter We Danced: Voices from the Past, the Future and the Idle No More Movement.

Coming soon - new book on Métis history and culture in Manitoba
Dr. Fred Shore has completed his book titled “Threads of the Sash: The Story of the Métis People.” The manuscript has now been submitted to Pemmican Publications. Dr. Shore specializes in Métis history and political issues of the Inuit, First Nations and Métis people. He has been with the department since 1985.

PhD student named a finalist for Trudeau Foundation fellowship
PhD student Leo Baskatawang is a finalist for a Trudeau Foundation fellowship. Every year the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation awards up to five fellowships to scholars who are “recognized for their productivity, their commitment to communicating their findings to the public, and their ability to devise innovative solutions to some of the major issues facing Canada and the world.” Recipients receive a total of $225,000 over three years. Baskatawang’s home community is Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nations. He served five years with the U.S. Army, including two tours of duty in Iraq. He made headlines when he walked from Vancouver to Ottawa, dragging a copy of the Indian Act that was chained to his waist. His PhD research is focussed on the Treaty Right to education.

Masters student wins graduate student fellowship
Masters student Sharon Dainard won the Native Studies graduate student fellowship. Dainard was also recently awarded an Indigenous Scholar-in-Residence Fellowship at the Manitoba Museum.

PhD student publishes article on Indigenous education
PhD student Eduardo Vergolino, who is from Brazil, recently published an article on Indigenous Education.

Native Studies students pen State of the Inner City Report
Under the supervision of Dr. Niigaan Sinclair, Native Studies students Timothy Maton and Margaret Dicks wrote the State of the Inner City Report, which will be released Tuesday, December 13 from 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Thunderbird House.

PhD students secure full-time positions
PhD student Damien Lee has been hired in a tenure-track position at the University of Saskatchewan. Lee, a racially-white man, was adopted as an infant into Fort William First Nation in accordance with Anishinaabe law, and was raised as Anishinaabe by his family. His dissertation explores the concept of dibenjigaazowin - claiming others and owning our associations - through adoption narratives within his community as a means to better understand Anishinaabe citizenship orders. Lee has a BA in Indigenous Studies from Trent University and an MA in Indigenous Governance from the University of Victoria.

PhD student Darren Coughene has been hired in a full-time contract position in the Department of Indigenous Studies at the University of Winnipeg. Coughene is a citizen of Sagkeeng First Nation. He has a diploma in Aboriginal Self-Government from Red River College, a BA with a double major in Aboriginal Governance and Religious Studies from U of W, and a MA in Indigenous Governance from U of W. Coughene recently completed an Ojibwe language project in the U of M Department of Native Studies, developing new Ojibwe words to describe academic research.

Did you know that the Department of Native Studies was named a leader in Indigenous education in the November 3 issue of Maclean’s magazine? Read the article here.

Connect with the Department of Native Studies online:
www.umanoitoba.ca/native_studies
www.facebook.com/1UofMNativeStudiesDept

During her Fall Colloquium presentation, Tasha Spillett called upon attendees to remind the U of M community about where water comes from and its importance. Faculty and students in the department are working on getting the message out!
The Metis University Students’ Association (MUSA) is inviting students to get involved. MUSA was created in 2015 by Brad Boudreau who graduated that same year. There was uncertainty whether MUSA could continue because nobody had stepped up to keep it going. It was important to the Indigenous support staff on campus that Metis students were able to have a student group to celebrate Metis culture and tradition in their own way, so the search for a new leader began. Fast forward to this summer when Carla Loewen, an advisor at the Indigenous Student Centre met Kieran Saindon during interviews for the Neechiwaken Indigenous Peer Mentor Program. Carla mentioned MUSA and the need for a new student leader. “Without hesitation he asked for more information and since then has created a MUSA student base, organized activities and taken on the role as president of MUSA with ease,” says Loewen.

“What Kieran has been able to accomplish so far is inspiring, because he took on MUSA with little direction and has done so with energy, excitement and a careful commitment to the Metis student population. I’m glad he took on the opportunity! It’s great for the students,” says Loewen.

Some of the activities organized by MUSA this fall included:

- A bake sale that raised just over $200
- A get-to-know-each-other potluck for new members in Migizii Agamik
- A Celebration Through Dance - in conjunction with the University of Manitoba Aboriginal Students’ Association (UMASA) where Dean Davis and the Metis Club Traditional Dancers put on a demonstration in University Centre and souvenirs were on sale to fund future events.

Join the Metis University Students’ Association

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A message from Kieran Saindon - MUSA president

I came to U of M absolutely certain that I wanted to go into Asper. I didn’t have the grades to get direct entry, so I worked very diligently my entire first year, not getting involved in any extracurricular activities. I made my way into Asper and am majoring in Accounting. My reasoning for this is because my mom worked as a Reconciliation Analyst for 20 years, but never received her CPA designation, as she had planned to do. I would love to make my family proud and do what my mom wasn’t able to do.

For my second year, I promised myself that I would become more involved, so I signed up to become a Neechiwaken mentor, to help new Indigenous university students settle into their role. While in my interview, Carla told me about an opportunity to become president of MUSA! I’ve worked for the Louis Riel Institute for the past three years and during the time have become very integrated with my Metis culture and heritage. When Carla told me of the opportunity, I was extremely excited to say I was interested, and started planning MUSA’s role immediately for this school year.

My overall plan for MUSA is to increase overall awareness of the Metis culture within the University. Through the University of Manitoba Aboriginal Students’ Association (UMASA) there is some recognition, but the reason MUSA exists is to focus specifically on Metis or Indigenous students the pride for our culture, as we make up over half of the Indigenous population at the University. To do this, we will be hosting events and cultural workshops.

Kieran Saindon, MUSA president

Self-declaration process updated

This fall saw some exciting updates to the self-declaration process. The two most significant changes are that students can now self-declare online through Aurora self-service and students have the option to subscribe to a brand new Indigenous student newsletter.

“We were hearing from students who would say that they couldn’t remember if they self-declared when they applied to university or when they first got here. Now they can go to their personal profile in Aurora and confirm if they have. They can also update their declaration at any time. It gives students more control,” says Christine Cyr, director of the Indigenous Student Centre.

Students are still able to self-declare at point of admission, or they can download the printable PDF of the self-declaration form and return it to the Registrar’s Office.

“As for adding the option to sign up for the newsletter, this is a major improvement. We have never been able to communicate so directly with Indigenous students about the programs, events, awards, supports and everything else that is here for them,” says Cyr. “This is a game changer”

The Indigenous Student Newsletter will be bi-weekly, and will begin next semester.

A number of students took part in a campaign to encourage their peers to self-declare by sharing messages on social media using the hashtag #IdeclareIndigenous.

According to the Office of Institutional Analysis, 2,400 students have self-declared this semester. That is a 10.1% increase from the 2,180 students who self-declared in the Fall Term of 2015. Indigenous students currently make up 8.5% of undergraduate students, 5.6% of graduate students, and 8.0% of the student population overall.
Indigenous alumni celebrated at Homecoming

Between them, U of M alumni Debbie Beach Ducharme (PBEd/96, MEd/09) and Rebecca Chartrand (BEd/97, MEd/16) have decades of experience working in Manitoba schools. Both have devoted their careers to finding ways to improve education for Indigenous students and to bring more Indigenous content and perspectives into classrooms to benefit all students. At Indigenous Homecoming in September, Beach Ducharme and Chartrand spoke about the challenges and successes they’ve experienced in advancing Indigenous education. Chartrand also shared some of the findings of her recent Masters thesis: Redefining Education through Anishinaabe Pedagogy.

The Faculty of Arts held its Arts Celebrating Arts luncheon during Homecoming Week. Every year the Faculty honours two of its most celebrated alumni to accept an award recognizing their achievements. This year Karen Beaudin and Nahanni Fontaine received awards. Beaudin has a BA and BSW from the U of M. A proud Métis, she has spent her lifetime serving her community and increase support, understanding and respect for Indigenous people in the workforce. Fontain, MLA for St. Johns, has a MA in Native Studies, Women’s Studies and Critical Theory from the U of M. She is a nationally recognized advocate for Indigenous women and girls and has represented Indigenous people on numerous boards and committees both locally and nationally.

Faculty of Education supports RISE program

Ryan Quill works with a Grade 11 student who aces every math test but struggles with reading and writing.

“We’ve managed to keep him in school and get him through the assignments as long as I modify it for him,” says Quill, a high-school teacher at Neil Dennis Kematch Memorial, in Sapotaweyak Cree Nation.

Keeping students like this in school is among the reasons why Quill and some 75 other elementary-, middle- and high-school teachers from almost every First Nations school in the province joined the RISE program this month.

For teachers like Quill, the RISE (Resource Inclusive Special Education) program provides tools to help them to assist students with issues such as reading, behavioural and cognition problems by helping teachers to identify and overcome their weaknesses with teaching strategies and ways to modify the curriculum to better meet the needs of students.

The program, supported by the U of M and Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC), started earlier this month with a three-day orientation workshop in Winnipeg. Teachers participating in the program also complete 30 hours of course work throughout the year and, once completed, earn a PBDE. Quill says First Nations are facing a growing need for special- and inclusive-education training — especially when funding for teachers who need resource training is cut after Grade 8. However, the need for support doesn’t end.

“I signed up for this program so that I won’t need a resource department. I’ll be the resource department,” he said. “It will better help me to meet the needs of our students’ learning challenges, and not feel so frustrated.”

In response, MFNERC developed a program similar to RISE in 2003 to train certified resource teachers from First Nations communities with programs and activities with an Indigenous focus. The program resulted in a 70-percent success rate with many students continuing to pursue their master’s degree and now working as educational consultants in schools. Seeing the need, the organization offered the program once again. Initially offering seats for 50 students, demand drove the organization to offer space for 75 students. “They’re from the community, they’re committed to the community and speak the language. It just makes sense,” says Shackel, adding that plans are in place to train clinicians with similar programs, the first of their kind in Canada.

Seventy-five students representing nearly every First Nation in Manitoba participated in the RISE program, which trained teachers to become certified resource teachers who work with students with special needs.
UMASA stands with Standing Rock

The University of Manitoba Aboriginal Students’ Association (UMASA) wanted to show their support for those protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline, so the student group offered to reimburse gas money for up to five vehicles traveling to Standing Rock, North Dakota. Two students who jumped at the opportunity were Amanda Fredlund and Kipling, who drove down with a third student November 4-6.

“Hearing what was going on down south was heartbreaking,” says Kipling. “It was a bit confusing at first,” says Fredlund, who is also majoring in Native Studies. “We tried to get to there from the north and we encountered a police blockade. We were really nervous when we pulled up because in the media the police are kind of vilified. They told us we couldn’t go that way because the bridge was unsafe so to speak. It makes you feel like there’s hope that we can do this here.”

Fredlund also stresses the role of allies in the efforts to protect water rights. “This isn’t just Indigenous people standing up by themselves in this fight. It’s everyone.”

The trio wasn’t sure what to expect when approaching the site. “We were there and we encountered a police blockade. We were really nervous when we pulled up because in the media the police are kind of vilified. They told us we couldn’t go that way because the bridge was unsafe so to speak. It makes you feel like there’s hope that we can do this here.”

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“The entrance from the south took us to Sacred Stone camp, which is one of three camps there, so we parked there and started exploring,” says Fredlund.

“It felt like an emotional rollercoaster,” says Kipling. “Going into Standing Rock, into what is considered a conflict zone, felt more safe to me than crossing an international boarder, which was surprising to me. When we were there I never felt safer. There was so much happiness going on in the camp. Everybody was taking care of everyone.”

The students walked from the Sacred Stone camp to the second camp called Oceti Sakowin and finally onto the Red Warrior camp. There were tents, teepees and RVs set up throughout the site, and several organized kitchen areas where food was made and served for everyone who was there.

“It was almost like going into Treaty grounds where everyone is just circling around the main area. They had a sacred space where they would hold ceremonies. The whole camp was technically sacred space because it was a ceremony in itself just to be there to protect the water,” says Kipling.

They only spent a few days at Standing Rock, but both Fredlund and Kipling gained knowledge that compliments their academic studies and experiences that furthered their motivation to be involved in community activism.

“My dad is not as excited about it as I am,” says Fredlund. “He’s like, ‘Amanda, you can do this, just please don’t break the law don’t go to jail, think of your future.’ At the same time the system that we live in today is flawed. It works against Indigenous people. When you’re trying to fight against a broken system the risks are there, but it’s worth it if you can make a difference and it’s exciting.”

Kipling agrees. “Water is life and water is important. Like what Amanda said, you have to take a strong stance against something even if it is coming with risks,” she says, adding that she is applying to do graduate studies at U of M with a focus on Indigenous water rights.

Along with members of UMASA, Kipling and Fredlund plan on continuing to stand with Standing Rock and show their support through fundraisers, local protests, and to support efforts to fight pipeline projects in Canada.

More UMASA news

UMASA has had an extremely busy fall semester. Highlights include:

• Taking part in the Totem Pole Journey at The Forks. UMASA members joined Indigenous community members and allies for a march to protect water.

• Participating in the Day of Action with the Canadian Federation of Students on November 2. Students gathered at the Manitoba Legislative Building to demand that government make education more affordable for all.

• Organizing a Sweat Lodge with Michael Hart.

• Hosting cultural workshops including: a Star Blanket Workshop with award-winning Start Blanket artist Robert Menow and a Moccasin Making with Justina McKay.

• Female Co-President and Faculty of Fine Arts representative Kristen Flattery led a paint night.

• Bringing students and their families together for a pre-Halloween party.

• Hosting a Lunch with the Librarian with Indigenous Services Librarian Camille Callison where students could gain advice on using the library for research.

• Harvesting UMASA’s Indigenous Garden where squash, sunflowers, tomatoes, corn and potatoes had been planted during the summer.

UMASA Executive members are:

• Kristin Flattery - Female Co-President
• Chance Paupanekis – Male Co-President
• Amanda Fredlund - Female Vice President
• Chance Paupanekis - Male Vice President
• Dane Monkman - Male Vice President
• Ashley Harris - Secretary
• Noah Wilson - Director of Finance

Connect with UMASA online:

Instagram: @umasacouncil
Facebook: UMASA (public group)
Email: umasauncouncil@gmail.com

Signs on the way into Sacred Stone camp, one of three camps at Standing Rock. (Photo by Amanda Fredlund.)

UMASA members held a bake sale to raise money for Standing Rock. (Photo via UMASA Facebook group.)

Floodlights from the construction zone light up the camps at Standing Rock at night. (Photo by Amanda Fredlund.)
Call for Indigenous recipes

If you have an Indigenous recipe you’re willing to share, Brittany Phillips wants to hear from you. Phillips, a second-year U of M student who is planning on applying to the College of Nursing, is putting together an Indigenous cookbook.

“I got inspired to create an Indigenous cookbook from watching my parents cook. My mother was making wild rice and my dad was frying up moose meat in an array of spices,” says Phillips, who is Anishinaabe from Sagkeeng First Nation.

So what makes a recipe Indigenous? “I think an Indigenous recipe would contain ingredients that our people have used as a way of life, such things like rabbits, bison, moose, deer, goose, herbs, berries, etc.,” she says. “I am open to having family recipes as well. I want this cookbook to incorporate the Indigenous community and one thing I believe is that food has always brought Indigenous people together from all walks of life.”

If you want to submit recipe or get more information from Brittany, email philib30@myumanitoba.ca. The deadline for submissions is March 15, 2016. Her goal is to have copies of the cookbook available by next fall.

Upcoming programs and events

Migizii Agamik Study Night
The Indigenous Student Centre is hosting a Migizii Agamik Study Night on Thursday, Dec. 8 from 5 p.m. - 10 p.m. Get research and reference help from Indigenous Services Librarian Camille Callison. Academic Learning Centre Tutors will be available for study and writing help. They’ll also have health and wellness activities, food, door prizes, and more!

You must register in advance and have The Circle Membership to attend. You can register at the Indigenous Student Centre front desk or email carla.loewen@umanitoba.ca

Decolonizing Lens for Kids of All Ages
Kids of all ages are invited to enjoy kid-approved short films at Cinematheque (100 Arthur Street) on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 1-2:30 p.m.

Films include:
- SKATEBOARDING PANTS (Golton Willier) A smart and talented pair of pants seek their owner.
- CRASH SITE (Sonja Ballantyne) After the sudden death of her parents, a young girl learns that superheroes are real and that she can be one.
- THE SPECTACULAR IMAGINATION OF THE POHARA BROTHERS (Todd Karethana) Young Māori brothers give a flying lesson to a young girl.
- HOME TO ME (N’we Jinan Artists) A catchy and inspiring music video brought to you by young people from Grassy Narrows First Nation.
- UTE KANATA (Virginie Michel) An O Canada manifesto for Indigenous languages.
- THE NCTR archives at petrca

Imagining a Canada is a national arts and communications initiative that invites young people to share their thoughts on what the future of Canada will look like through the lens of reconciliation.

Explore: the NCTR archives at petrca
Envision: the country you want us to strive for together
Create: a story, poem, piece of art, short film or essay
Submit: your work no later than January 16, 2017

Grade Level Categories are:
- K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, and Undergraduates at the post-secondary level.

Ten recipients will be selected in each province and territory by a regional selection committee in partnership with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. One recipient from each province or territory will be selected to be honoured at Rideau Hall in Ottawa in June 2017.

Complete guidelines available here.