Fostering Reconciliation, Building Partnerships and Sharing Indigenous Knowledge

Since the last Indigenous Connect Newsletter, several important university-wide initiatives have gotten underway. In November 2015 the University signed a Memorandum of Understanding of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM). The MOU will enhance learning experiences for students, staff, and faculty on Treaties and Treaty related matters. The MOU activities will help advance reconciliation on our campus as well as respond to a number of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action.

One key outcome of the MOU is the development of a Summer Institute on How to Integrate Treaty and Indigenous Perspectives into the Curriculum. The Summer Institute is being developed in partnership with my office, the TRCM, the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, and the Manitoba Metis Federation. More details will be posted on Indigenous Connect in the coming weeks!

On December 18, 2015, history was made when presidents of Manitoba’s six universities, three colleges, and the Manitoba School Boards Association signed an Indigenous Education Blueprint. The Blueprint identifies 10 broad commitments to support and advance Indigenous success and reconciliation in all secondary and post-secondary education sectors. This new collaboration will celebrate Indigenous success and achievements through innovation, partnership building, and creating more pathways for Indigenous students of all ages to thrive and succeed.

In January 2016, Indigenous Awareness Week looked at different approaches on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge into the learning environment. The week-long event brought in a series of experts, panel discussions, and presentations to explore some of the questions, challenges, and opportunities that come with developing a respectful approach to Indigenizing our learning spaces and curricula.

On a final note, in our five-year strategic plan – Taking Our Place – we have made a commitment that every student who graduates from the University of Manitoba must have a basic understanding of the importance and contributions of Indigenous peoples of Manitoba and Canada. To support this goal, we are designing and implementing a number of Indigenous-based initiatives that target students, faculty and staff.

My office has also partnered with the University of Manitoba Aboriginal Student Association to host a series of Student Sharing Circles to seek student input into graduating with Indigenous Awareness. Students who are unable to attend a session can confidentially submit their written responses. Please encourage your students to voice their opinions because their views and perspectives are important!

Deborah G. Young
Executive Lead, Indigenous Achievement
U of M signs Indigenous education blueprint and Treaty MOU

History was made when the presidents of our province’s post secondary schools and the Manitoba School Boards Association came together on December 18, 2015 to sign the Manitoba Collaborative Education Blueprint. Through this partnership, the U of M and nine other signatories will work to make Manitoba a global centre of excellence for Indigenous education, research, language and cultures.

“Collaboration and knowledge sharing among educational institutions in Manitoba are critical to our province’s future. Working together we can make significant contributions to the cultural, social and economic well-being of Manitobans. In particular, we can make significant strides in advancing Indigenous education and reconciliation.” - Dr. David Barnard, President and Vice-Chancellor of U of M.

The Blueprint is a first step in acting on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s recommendations that will advance reconciliation and enhance the lives of all Manitobans. A five-year implementation plan is under development.

Watch video of the event.

Buildings Partnerships

Graduation Pow Wow is coming soon

Save the date! The 27th annual Graduation Pow Wow will be held Saturday, May 7, 2016. This is a community celebration to honour the success of Indigenous graduates of the U of M. It is a free event and everyone is welcome.

Information for Graduates
If you are graduating, make sure you register by April 29, 2016. To be eligible as a 2016 Indigenous graduate, you must be graduating or have already graduated in October 2015, or in February, May or October 2016.

We ask that you are available for the first Grand Entry that begins at 12:00 Noon (Graduates) and (if possible) the second Grand Entry at 7:00 p.m.

Sign up to Volunteer
Volunteers are needed to make this event a success. If you are interested in helping out, please contact the Indigenous Student Centre at 204-474-8850.

Crafters are Welcome
Cost is $50 for a table. Please note: No illegal items, no sacred items, and no blow up toys or balloons to be sold. Selling any merchandise is only permitted at pre-purchased craft tables, there is no selling allowed in the stands. Registration opens at 9:00 am. (Payment must be paid prior to setup, cash only)

Migizii Award Nominations Open
Nominations for the Migizii Award are being accepted. The Migizii Award is to acknowledge a university staff member who went above and beyond for you and/or other Indigenous students on campus. Has someone helped you on your academic journey and you would like to have them honoured at the Traditional Graduation Pow Wow? This award is available to all staff members of the University of Manitoba, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous who made a difference. Fill out the nomination form here. Deadline for nominations is April 29, 2016.

Enhancing Treaty Education at U of M

A number of exciting initiatives are in development, as part of an official partnership between the U of M and Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba.

On December 10, 2015, Treaty Commissioner James Wilson and U of M President David Barnard signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance Treaty education at the U of M. Since then a student-led Treaty Alliance has been established, a number of seminars on Treaty issues have taken place, and dates for a five-day summer institute on how to integrate Treaty awareness and research into curriculum are being finalized.

The Manitoba Collaborative Indigenous Education Blueprint was signed in three languages (English, French and Ojibway) by the presidents of Assiniboine Community College, Brandon University, Canadian Mennonite University, Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology, Manitoba School Boards Association, Red River College, University College of the North, Université St. Boniface, University of Manitoba, and University of Winnipeg.

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Read the Blueprint.

Schedule
10:00 a.m. - Pipe Ceremony
Noon - Grand Entry (Graduates)
2:00 p.m. - Honouring of the Graduates
5:00 p.m. - Feast (MPR, 2nd Floor University Centre)
7:00 p.m. - 2nd Grand Entry

For more information contact: Indigenous Student Centre at 204-474-8850 or isc@umanitoba.ca
Second Annual Indigenous Awareness Week a success

The U of M’s second annual Indigenous Awareness Week took place January 25-29, 2016, exploring the theme: Integrating Indigenous Knowledge Into the Learning Environment.

Day one featured Elder Harry Bone, Sharon Parenteau (Louis Riel Institute), and residential school Survivor and lawyer Ken Young, who discussed Integrating Treaty Perspectives Into the Curriculum.

On day two, Leona Star (Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs) and Dr. Michael Hart (Faculty of Social Work) talked about Respecting and Protecting Indigenous Knowledge.

Lisa Boivin, a bioethics specialist and interdisciplinary artist from the University of Toronto, led a workshop called “Surviving the Colonized Classroom” on Wednesday.

A much anticipated panel discussion on the pros and cons of an Indigenous Course/Credit Requirement (ICR) took place on Thursday. Panelists Ashley Richard (student, Asper School of Business), Sadie-Phoenix Lavoie (student, University of Winnipeg), Niigaan Sinclair (acting head, department of Native Studies), and James Wilson (Treaty Commissioner of Manitoba) discussed the benefits, challenges and logistics of post-secondary institutions introducing an ICR.

Finally, on Friday residential school Survivors Ted Fontaine and Mary Courchene, day school Survivor John McKay, Adam Muller (department of Sociology/embodying empathy project), and Aimée Craft (Faculty of Law, director of research at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation) talked about Bringing Residential School Survivors’ perspectives and knowledge into the curriculum.

A huge thank you to all of the presenters for sharing their knowledge, experiences and research with us. And thank you to everyone who came out to the presentations to listen, ask questions and learn. We are already looking forward to next year’s Indigenous Awareness Week!

New space on campus for Indigenous students

The Active Living Center at the University of Manitoba Fort Garry campus is pleased to announce that a new multi-purpose space, MPS 274, will be available to Indigenous students, staff and community members to use free-of-charge. This is a new initiative and we anticipate that ongoing improvements will be necessary in order to create a safe and welcoming space to Indigenous students, staff and community members.

MPS 274 was designed for physical activity and healthy living programming. Individuals and groups interested in booking the space are encouraged to contact Heather McRae to receive a copy of the MPS 274 scheduling form and guidelines and to discuss their activity and space needs.

Please Note: MPS 274 is not suitable for classroom lectures or crafts.

To learn more about the space, please contact:
Heather McRae
Community Scholar for Indigenous Achievement
Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management
Room 121B Frank Kennedy Centre
heather.mcrae@umanitoba.ca
Finding a home away from home on campus

One of the most familiar faces at Migizii Agamik – Bald Eagle Lodge is Justina (Tina) McKay. She’s usually found working at the reception desk, cooking up delicious bannock and fry bread, buried in a pile of books, or on her way to the gym. Tina also frequently shares her gifts as a hand drum singer at university events. We asked her to tell us a little bit more about herself.

Where are you from?
I’m from Cote First Nation in Saskatchewan. It’s about two hours west of Swan River, Manitoba and about an hour east of Yorkton, Saskatchewan, sort of in a valley.

When did you start U of M?
I started U of M in September 2011 in the Faculty of Science. Now I’m in the Faculty of Arts.

Why did you choose U of M?
I chose U of M because originally I was going to be a doctor. I wanted to learn more about the plants and the more environmental courses I took, the more I was interested in the environment, so I transferred into the Faculty of Arts last year. Now my major is Native Studies and my minor is Environmental Studies.

Why did you decide to come to university as a mature student?
Many people cannot fathom being alone. Knowing I had to do something that would carry me forward for many years made me think I needed to get a degree. I feel you are never too old to get your degree, but in light of my age, I would so love our younger generation to see that attainment sooner rather than later.

I felt that a degree would benefit what I want to attain for our generation to seek that attainment sooner rather than later. Many people cannot fathom being alone. Knowing I had to do something that would carry me forward for many years made me think I needed to get a degree. I feel you are never too old to get your degree, but in light of my age, I would so love our younger generation to see that attainment sooner rather than later.

What advice do you have for other students at the U of M?
My advice would be to contact all of the resources as soon as you can because the more supports you have, the more successful you will be. I think my last two years here are going to be my best years because (at first) I didn’t know where to go, I didn’t know what to do, I didn’t know who to talk to. I think that all of the resources available for Indigenous students help us succeed.

I’m part of the Access program at Migizii Agamik. I have a personal counsellor and an academic counsellor. I also applied online for Career Connect and I work part time for the university. I (also) seek the Elders at Migizii Agamik; there are Elders that are available for us to talk to.

And I think the most important thing is work on your studies EVERY day. That’s what I’ve learned. Do your homework!

What are you doing when you’re not in class or studying?
I want to know more about what affects us, and how we can attain a living planet to sustain our children and grandchildren. At the same time, I want to learn about my peoples’ past to reflect on what I want for the future.

I can see embracing other communities and learning from their Elders. Each of our communities holds vast knowledge of teachings, of living on the land, of surviving, and of how the values in families are still strong, need to be maintained, and how they collaborate with each other as a living belief.

What are your plans after graduation?
As my graduation date looms ever closer, I am amazed that I am still here in university. As an Indigenous student, I would like to open up the eyes of the First Nations people that we are the stewards of the land. I am hoping to find a workplace that acknowledges the need to embrace those at grassroots level, that has the capacity for retaining and maintaining our teachings of plants, traditional teachings and ceremony, and that respects the Elders’ insistence that the Seven Sacred Teachings be encompassed in everything that we do and should do for the environment on a daily basis.

When are you graduating?
I’m pushing to an advanced degree in arts so I’ll be here another summer and another year.

Anything else?
I’m an older student and being an older student is really hard for me sometimes because I find being younger you have more room in your brains for learning. It takes me a lot of work. That’s why I love the supports that are available at the university. I love the University of Manitoba. It’s a great university.
Applications are now being accepted for the U of M’s brand new Master of Social Work based in Indigenous Knowledges (MSW-IK) program. The program recognizes the need for social workers to explore Indigenous forms of caring that are applicable to the unique circumstances of Indigenous clients and communities.

Courses in the MSW-IK include:
• Grounding Our Foundation in Indigenous Knowledges and Social Work
• Remembering Our Histories – Setting our Knowledges
• Critical Theory and Indigenous Peoples
• Indigenous Research Methodologies and Knowledge Development
• Indigenous People, Identity and Social Work
• Indigeneity, Power, Privilege and Social Work
• Social Challenges and Indigenous Helping Practices
• Social Work, Social Challenges and Indigenous Peoples
• Indigeneity
• Anti-Colonial Social Work

The MSW-IK was launched with a reception at Circle of Life Thunderbird House on February 25, 2016. Eighteen students will be admitted to the program each year, with the inaugural class beginning fall, 2016. Application deadline is April 11, 2016.

For More information, please contact:
204-474-8548
mswik@umanitoba.ca

Faculty of Social Work introduces Masters program based in Indigenous Knowledges

New Book: A Knock on the Door

A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is now available through University of Manitoba Press.

In his forward to A Knock on the Door, Survivor and former National Chief Phil Fontaine writes: “This book presents the history of the Residential School system in a way that makes it accessible to all Canadians.”

Published in collaboration with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), the book gathers material from the TRC’s extensive reports to present the essential history and legacy of Residential Schools. It covers the history of the system, the school experience, the legacy and reconciliation. The TRC’s 94 calls to action are also included. An afterward introduces the holdings and opportunities of the NCTR, home to the archive of recordings and documents collected by the TRC.

Celebrated Inuk Artist delivers Marjorie Ward Lecture

Tanya Tagaq is best known for her mesmerizing throat signing. Her album Animism won the Polaris Music Prize, a Juno, a Canadian Folk Music Award, and three Western Canadian Music Awards. She is also a visual artist and activist, who is committed to exposing Canadians and the rest of the world to life in the North.

On January 25, 2016, Tagaq delivered a talk called “Arctic Origins: Perspective through Art” to a full house at St. John’s College’s Marjorie Ward Lecture.

2016 Elders Gathering focuses on land and language

On March 23 and 24, 2016, the Indigenous Student Centre will be hosting an Elders Gathering. This two-day event is open to the public. Métis, Cree, Anishnaabe and Dakota Elders will share their stories, knowledge and experiences with regard to the sacredness of the land and language.

The Elders Gathering is being organized by U of M students Chance Paupanakis, Justina McKay and Robert Caribou. It is being sponsored by the Indigenous Student Centre, with tobacco donations from the Arboc Smoke Shop and Gas Bar.

A light breakfast and lunch (from Elsie Bear’s Kitchen) will be served.

Volunteer opportunities:
The organizers are looking for 10-15 volunteers to help out with food handling, Oshkabe positions, greeters, etc. Women volunteers will be expected to wear traditional skirts, which can be borrowed from the Indigenous Student Centre if needed.
Celebrating Louis Riel

Congratulations to the Métis University Students Association (MUSA) for organizing an excellent second-annual U of M Louis Riel Day celebration. On February 12, 2016, the Métis flag was flown outside of University Centre.

Festivities also included an adorning of the sash ceremony of Louis Riel’s statue, live fiddle music by Al Desjarlais & Oliver Boullette, a soup and bannock lunch, and guest speakers.

Be sure to visit the U of M’s Facebook page to see Brad Boudreau, president of the MUSA, give a lesson on how to tie a traditional Métis sash.

Verna J. Kirkness Science and Engineering Program returning to U of M

The Verna J. Kirkness Science and Engineering Program will be back at the U of M, May 9-13, 2016. The program aims to increase the number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students graduating from science and engineering programs in Canada. During their week at the U of M, the students are exposed to a variety of activities that reflect what life on campus is like for a first-year university student. They also take part in research activities, and are mentored by U of M faculty members, staff, and students.

• Read about Amanda Kocis-Lehman’s experience in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management.

• Watch students explain in their own words what participating in the Verna J. Kirkness Program is like.

Last year a total of 114 volunteers from the U of M worked on this program: 36 faculty, 16 staff, 56 students and 6 post docs.

Honouring the Voices project coming to Fort Garry Campus

The Manitoba First Nations Centre for Aboriginal Health Research is bringing its Honouring the Voices exhibit to Fort Garry Campus March 7-11, 2016. The exhibit looks back on the last 40 years of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Indigenous health research in Manitoba. More than 50 people working in this field were interviewed about their research, and what they envision for the future of health research in Manitoba. The exhibit initially launched at Bannatyne Campus in the fall of 2015.

Schedule

March 7, 2016
Multi-Purpose Room - 2nd floor University Centre
12:00-1:00 – Doors Open | Exhibit open to the public
1:00-1:30 – Opening greetings from Monica Cyr, Human Nutritional Sciences student; Marlene Atleo, Faculty of Education; Josée Lavoie, Centre for Aboriginal Health Research; and Elder Marlene Kayseas
1:30-2:30 – Why Indigenous Research Matters: Thoughts, Insights and Reflections from Leading Scholars at the U of M. Plenary Round-Table Discussion with Marlene Atleo (Education); Frank Deer (Education); Brenda Gunn (Law); and Emma LaRoque (Native Studies)
2:30-3:00 – Screening of the Honouring the Voices documentary (Free Snacks, Tea and Coffee)
3:00-4:00 – Coffee and Conversation- Join us as we think about what Indigenous research in Manitoba can look like, when thinking about healthy communities, people and environments.

March 8-9, 2016
Multi-Purpose Room - 2nd floor University Centre
8:30-5:00 – Exhibit open to the public
March 10: Migizii Agamik

March 10, 2016
Migizii Agamik (Bald Eagle Lodge)
8:30-5:00 – Exhibit open to the public
11:30-1:00 – Free hot lunch and open conversations about First Nations, Inuit and Métis health and research

The stories featured in Honouring the Voices were collected in partnership between MFN CAHR, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Manitoba Inuit Association.
Rising Up: A Graduate Student Conference on International Compact, Knowledge, and Research in Indigenous Graduate Studies

Hosted by U of M’s Native Studies Graduate Students’ Association, Rising Up brings graduate students across all disciplines together to rise up, and present their knowledge on international compact: the colonial edifice.

Friday, March 4 - Saturday, March 5, 2016
Senate Chamber, Engineering Building (EITC 3 - Room 262) Conference agenda now available.

Honoring the Voices
The Manitoba First Nations Centre for Aboriginal Health Research (MFN CAHR) is celebrating 40 years of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Indigenous health research in Manitoba.

Monday, March 7 - Wednesday, March 9, 2016
U of M Fort Garry Campus, MPR (2nd floor University Centre) Thursday, March 10 - Friday, March 11, 2016
U of M Fort Garry Campus, Migizii Agamik - Bald Eagle Lodge

Manitoba First Nations Science Fair
Hundreds of students from Grades 4 to 12 will be at the Max Bell Centre March 8 & 9 for the Manitoba First Nations Science Fair. The Manitoba First Nations Science Fair is designed to provide extended opportunities for students of First Nations schools to become engaged, and to excel, in science. this year’s theme is STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Elese Washines

Tuesday, March 8, 2016
1 p.m. - 4 p.m. - Senior High Mini Science Symposium & Poster Session, Pre-viewing/Preliminary Round judging of Grade 7-12 projects, Displays and Student Science Activities 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Opening Ceremony

Wednesday, March 9, 2016
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. - Judging of Projects in Field House 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. - Closing/Awards Ceremony

27th Annual Graduation Pow Wow
The 27th annual Graduation Pow Wow will take place Saturday, May 7, 2016. This is a community celebration to honour the success of Indigenous graduates of the U of M. It is a free event and everyone is welcome.

Saturday, May 7, 2016
10:00 a.m. - Pipe Ceremony Noon - Grand Entry (Graduates) 2:00 p.m. - Honouring of the Graduates 5:00 p.m. - Feast (MPR, 2nd Floor University Centre) 7:00 p.m. - 2nd Grand Entry

For more information please contact: Ruby Subedar rudysubedar@gmail.com or Rosely Booth: roselyb@mfnerc.com 204-594-1290 x 2128

Elders Gathering
Hosted by the Indigenous Student Centre, please join us to learn from Metis, Cree, Anishnaabe and Dakota Elders who will be sharing their stories, knowledge and experiences with regard to the sacredness of the land and language.

Wednesday, March 23 & Thursday, March 24, 2016
Migizii Agamik - Bald Eagle Lodge

Wednesday, March 23, 2016
10 a.m. - Prayer and introduction Noon - Lunch break 1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Keynote Address: Michael Hart & Youth Address: Chance Paupanakis 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Elders

Thursday, March 24, 2016
9:30 a.m. - Introduction 10 a.m. - Keynote Address: Justice Murray Sinclair Noon - Lunch break 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Elders

For more stories, events and program information be sure to check out our website frequently: www.umanitoba.ca/indigenous

For Indigenous Achievement news visit: http://news.umanitoba.ca/network/indigenous/