

David T. Barnard, President and Vice Chancellor

Canadians for a New Partnership

Thursday, January 22, 2015 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm (DTB to speak at 4:25 pm)

Investors Group Field, Pinnacle Room

Other speakers:

- Opening prayer, **Elder Dave Courchene**
 - Emcees are **Kyra Wilson**, Social work student and **Naithan Legace**, UMASA President
 - **Nina Wilson**, one of the four founders of Idle No More
 - **Stephen Kakfwi**, CEO and President, Canadians For a New Partnership
 - **The Right Honourable Joe Clark**, Board Member, Canadians For a New Partnership
 - **Phil Fontaine**, Board Member, Canadians For a New Partnership; Owner & President, Ishkonigan Consulting and Mediation
 - **Ovide Mercredi**, Board Member, Canadians For a New Partnership (speaks at 8:45 pm)
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Suggested Speaking Notes:

- Good Afternoon. Welcome.
- Thank you to Canadians For a New Partnership (CFNP), the University of Manitoba Aboriginal Students' Association, and to everyone who helped to organize this opportunity to connect and share ideas.
- As some of you may now, I was at a press conference this morning with Mayor Bowman to address recent news stories drawing our attention to the very sensitive issue of racism and discrimination in our city.
- Today we stand in solidarity with Mayor Bowman, Indigenous leaders, community members and as Winnipeggers.

- Racism is a problem nation-wide and not specific to Winnipeg, and it hurts everyone – Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
- The elimination of racism occurs only by working, listening and communicating with each other.
- The University of Manitoba is committed to tackling this issue of racism by creating a culturally rich and safe learning and work environment for everyone.
- Of course, conversations like the ones we will have today are an important part of the healing process.
- It is an honour to be here with some of the foremost leaders in the journey to partnership and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.
- And it's also an honour to be here with all of you students – our next generation of leaders.
- Indeed, two of the leaders here today (Phil Fontaine and Ovide Mercredi) were once students at UM.
- I thank them both for the profound impact they have had on this University, and on our province and nation.

- I am pleased, along with my fellow members of the Council of Presidents of Universities in Manitoba (COPUM), to be a signatory of CFNP's Declaration of Canadians For a New Partnership – to demonstrate our active support for mutual respect, peaceful co-existence and equality.
- I believe that leadership from our nation's post-secondary institutions is a critical component of establishing a new partnership, and UM is committed to working together to build a better Canada for all of us.
- As a community, we have been - and will continue to be - committed to truth and reconciliation.
- UM was the first Canadian university to issue a Statement of Apology and Reconciliation for failing to recognize or challenge the forced assimilation of Aboriginal peoples.
- We are honoured to serve as the home of the first and only research centre dedicated to the Canadian Residential School System.
- More than 140 UM researchers study issues related to Indigenous peoples and cultures. And, we have one of the highest Indigenous student populations in the country, with more than 250 Indigenous students graduating every year.

- UM believes that one of the greatest opportunities in this province is recognizing the potential of First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth.
- The growth of a skilled and educated Indigenous work force is vital to increased health, social and economic outcomes for individuals, communities and our province.
- Yet there is a huge gap between the employment rate of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Manitobans.
- A key reason for this gap is that our province and our nation are still feeling the impact of poverty and Indian Residential Schools. For many Indigenous people there is still a deep mistrust of the current educational system. Repairing that damage begins with rebuilding trust.
- A skilled and educated Indigenous population remains one of the best hopes for a better future. This begins by collaborating with Indigenous communities and stakeholders to put Indigenous achievement front and centre.
- UM is committed to confronting this challenge.
- And I believe today's dialogue will move us forward as we focus on a new partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.
- Together, we will take a new approach and build a better Canada.