The Asper School of Business is proud of the Warren Centre for Actuarial Studies and Research. The Centre remains the only actuarial program housed in a business school in Canada. As a result, our students receive a world-class education in business and actuarial mathematics.

Armed with this unique strength, we continue to produce the best-prepared actuarial graduates in the world. The most recent Corporate Knight’s Survey (2010) ranked us the #1 actuarial program in Canada, and both the Society of Actuaries and the Canadian Institute of Actuaries have recognized our academic excellence.

This year has been one of growth for our program. Enrolment is climbing. We introduced a new Master of Science in Actuarial Mathematics and established the Guy Carpenter Professorship in Agriculture Risk Management and Insurance. The first of its kind in the world, the professorship is a five-year collaboration with Guy Carpenter, one of the world’s leading reinsurance companies, and the Federal Government. This collaboration will provide exciting new opportunities for our students. It will also enhance the Centre’s links to industry, government and the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences here at the University of Manitoba.

As you can see, there are many great things happening at the Warren Centre. I invite you to read on and see for yourself.

MICHAEL BENARROCH
Dean and CA Manitoba Chair in Business Leadership, Asper School of Business

Dr. Lysa Porth at the ceremony announcing her appointment as the Guy Carpenter Professor

The Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at the University of Manitoba has had a long and distinguished career in agricultural research. Canola, whose oil has become a household staple, is just one outcome of that research.

Of importance also, agricultural risk management and insurance research has been going on in the Faculty for many years, through its Department of Agribusiness and Agricultural Economics. (If there ever was a risky business, it’s agriculture, often weather-related.) Crop insurance development has also been a significant focus for quite some time, particularly in the 1950s-1970s, when crop insurance began to be developed commercially for Canada and other countries. This research continues today, but is relatively new to the Warren Centre. It was introduced less than a decade ago through a variety of interdisciplinary collaborations, such as livestock mortality insurance, undertaken by Milton Boyd, of the Agricultural and Food Sciences Faculty (and also Adjunct Professor in the Centre) and Jeffrey Pai, Warren Centre Director. Jointly, they have supervised a number of students on a variety of risk management topics.

Thanks to the much-appreciated generosity of Guy Carpenter and Company, the Guy Carpenter Professorship in Agriculture Risk Management and Insurance will formalize the
Centre’s involvement in the sector and take it to new heights. It has global potential.

Guy Carpenter and Company, based in New York with a Canadian office in Toronto, is a global leader in providing risk management and reinsurance intermediary services. It has over fifty offices worldwide and has pledged $750,000, over a five-year period, to support the professorship.

In March of 2013, it was announced that Dr. Lysa Porth had been selected the Guy Carpenter Professor. Examining agricultural risk management and insurance from an actuarial perspective is a niche market, and certainly a non-traditional actuarial role. She earned her BComm(Hons) in 2002, majoring in Finance and Actuarial Science, her MBA in 2006, and her PhD (Individual Interdisciplinary Studies) in Actuarial Science and Agricultural Economics in 2011. Her interdisciplinary research and current focus cover a wide range of agricultural topics and products.

She is looking forward to the challenges ahead of her. As she says, “Guy Carpenter’s substantial investment establishes a unique research program that capitalizes on the expertise and partnership between the Warren Centre and the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences. It has the potential of attracting the world’s top agricultural risk management students and researchers. This will strengthen Canada’s international reputation as a leader in agricultural risk management research and education.”

**Master Classes**

Courses leading to a MSc degree in actuarial mathematics were introduced in the fall of 2013. Re-introduced might be a more appropriate term.

There was a Master’s program in actuarial science back in the 1960s. It was offered by what was then the Department of Actuarial Mathematics and Statistics, part of the School of Commerce. While Department members taught the courses, the degree was actually offered through the former Faculty of Arts and Science. (It split into two separate faculties in 1970.) It could either be an Arts or Science degree depending on the student’s career aspirations. The program was discontinued in the 1990s, however, for a variety of reasons, none of which are relevant today. “A major problem with the old program was the high drop-out rate,” states Dr Jeffrey Pai, Warren Professor and Director of the Warren Centre. “The new program is thesis-based instead of course-based. We take less students and each one admitted is supervised by a professor from the beginning to the end.” It is intentionally small so as to offer an intense and close interaction between students and faculty.

The MSc in actuarial mathematics joins six other business specializations available under the Asper School’s MSc in Management program. It is the newest graduate program offering and distinctive from the School’s other graduate programs such as its well-established and well-respected MBA.

It is a program designed to produce graduates who have a more academically in-depth training in their chosen management field than is normally the case with either BComm(Hons) or MBA graduates. In addition, the program seeks to develop strong research skills for the graduates. While this will enhance the Warren Centre’s research capabilities, the program will also meet the needs of employers and better prepare Master’s students for doctoral work. A PhD in actuarial mathematics is planned for the near future.

Currently, there are three students enrolled in the MSc program. **Ruiyun Long** (left), originally from China, has a Bachelor’s degree in Accounting from the Guangdong University of Technology. She also has a year’s work experience, in China, with Pricewaterhouse Coopers Consultant Ltd. **Benjamin Lee**, a native of Seoul, Korea, is a finance major with a Bachelor in Business Administration from the University of Texas, in Austin. **Huijing Li**, originally from Shangdong Province in China, came to Winnipeg in 2009 for undergraduate studies. She now has a BSc(Hons) in Actuarial Mathematics and Statistics.
Welcome to Winnipeg

They came from across Canada and parts of the United States. Some 200 actuarial students came to Winnipeg from January 4 - 6, 2013 to attend the annual Actuarial Students National Convention. It was hosted by the University of Manitoba Actuarial Club (UMAC). Some thirty representatives from industry were also present.

Under the theme “What We Actuarily Do,” a solid, three-day program was organized. In addition to the usual social events, seminars covering a wide variety of topics, and lunches and dinners with prominent speakers, a case competition was introduced.

The competition was divided into preliminary and final rounds. Initially, students had to analyze and submit a formal written report on a case. In the final round, held at the Convention, members of the top three submissions – students from the U of M, Simon Fraser, Waterloo – made presentations. Simon Fraser was selected the winner and received a cash prize of $500.

The Actuarial Students National Association (ASNA) is composed of twelve member universities from across Canada. The purpose of the Association is to inform future Canadian actuaries about the fundamentals of the actuarial field and provide them with the opportunity to build their actuarial network through a variety of events. The University of Waterloo won the bid to host the ASNA 2014 convention which will take place from January 3rd to 5th in Toronto, Ontario.

Director’s Message

As many of you know, or should know, either from first-hand experience or from reading the previous edition of WarrenWords (Volume 3, No. 1), the centennial anniversary of the actuarial program, celebrated in 2012, was a considerable success. It was celebrated in style, both academically and socially, and, an important pause here to thank, most sincerely, everyone involved who helped, in so many ways, to make it happen.

We are now in 2013, and back to reality so to speak. The real world of the Warren Centre, however, is not shy of progress. There is much to report. Our new MSc program in Actuarial Science, for example. Or, the important enhancements to our faculty with new members whose expertise and specialities will be of benefit to our students and help the Centre grow its research activities. Or, our students, who continue to bring much honour to the Centre because of their impressive scholastic achievements. It’s all here, in digest form, in this edition of our annual newsletter.

Let us know what you think. Your comments are always welcome and encouraged. In the meantime, happy reading.

Jeffrey S. Pai
PhD, ASA, PStat, ACIA
Warren Professor and Director,
Warren Centre for Actuarial Studies and Research

NOTE WORTHY

DR. SAM COX, the Warren Centre’s second Warren Chair, retired from the position, having completed his six-year term. After celebrations to mark his contributions, scholarship and all-round Centre presence, Dr. Cox moved to Austin, Texas, with his wife, where he is enjoying retirement.

DR. NEIL HAMILTON, the President and CEO of Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation, joined the Warren Centre as an Adjunct Professor. Initially, he will serve as a thesis supervisor (or co-supervisor) to MSc students providing advice on the choice of thesis topics.

Two Warren Chair Visiting Scholars came to the Centre in March, 2013. DR. HUA CHEN, Assistant Professor in the Department of Risk, Insurance and Healthcare Management, Fox School of Management, Temple University, gave a public presentation at Great-West Life entitled “Developing Equity Release Markets: Risk Analysis for Reverse Mortgages and Home Reversions.”

Later that month, DR. QIHE TANG, of the Department of Statistics & Actuarial Science, University of Iowa, made two presentations at the Centre: “Reducing Risk by Merging Counter-monotonic Risks” and “A Probabilistic Analysis of Chapter 7 and Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.”

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Strong Man

Jeff Strong, BComm(Hons)/03, FCIA, FSA, is not just the corporate actuary for Manitoba Blue Cross, responsible for corporate pricing and managing its underwriting department. Since 2006, he has lectured, on a part-time basis, the undergraduate course on Interest Theory at the Warren Centre. “I had always wanted to teach so when the phone rang in 2006 I was quick to jump aboard. It has been a great experience. Our faculty and students are terrific and the program is top notch.”

As of June of this year, however, he was appointed Executive-in-Residence at the Warren Centre, a sixteen-month term, succeeding the late Mike Byrne.

In this capacity Strong serves as the University’s official liaison with the Canadian Institute of Actuaries – “I am the main point of contact for the CIA University Accreditation Program” – and the Actuarial Mathematics Advisory Board – “where I help raise the profile of the Centre and advocate its actuarial program.”

Finally, there is high school student recruiting, the marketing of the profession and the Centre to graduating students. This is something the Centre has placed much emphasis on in recent years and which was carried out with success by Mike Byrne.

Both on and off his regular job, Strong has full plates. “It’s not always easy,” he says. “There are many long days. I am very fortunate, however, to have a very supportive employer in Manitoba Blue Cross which shares my passion for education and the actuarial program.”

And the winners are

At the 52nd Fish Dinner, held October 17th, several scholarship presentations were made.

- **James C.H. Anderson Memorial Actuarial Aboriginal Scholarship**: Christian Torfason, 3rd-Year Asper
- **The John Calver Woody Scholarship, The Actuarial Foundation**: Maja Bakija, 4th-Year Asper, Co-President, University of Manitoba Actuarial Club
- **Murray Segal Memorial Scholarship in Actuarial Studies**: Samantha Allen, 4th-Year Asper
- **William and Olive Humphrys Scholarship for Actuarial Mathematics**: Bryn Peppler, 4th-Year Asper, Co-President, University of Manitoba Actuarial Club
- **Sun Life Financial Scholarship in Actuarial Mathematics**: Samantha Allen, 4th-Year Asper (Renewal)
- **Manulife Actuarial Scholarship**: Ryan Sharman, 3rd-Year Asper; Andrea Leong, 4th-Year Asper (Renewal)
- **Great-West Life Actuarial Career Scholarship**: Melanie Skiarski, 3rd-Year Asper; Yanying Wu, 3rd-Year Science; David Senensky, 4th-Year Asper (Renewal), Justin Lasker, 4th-Year Asper (Renewal)

Congratulations to all the recipients and a sincere thank you to all the sponsors for their enlightened support and generosity.