

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT: April 20, 2021

### GENERAL

In a landmark acknowledgment of the growing health-care autonomy of Indigenous Peoples, the federal government has given Ongomiizwin, the Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing at UM, responsibility for leading the COVID-19 vaccination project in all 63 Manitoba First Nations. The vaccine rollout is being implemented in partnership with First Nations organizations, the federal government's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Shared Health (Manitoba), the Canadian Armed Forces and the Canadian Red Cross.

The winter edition of [ResearchLIFE magazine is available online](#). This issue highlights the many ways that researchers accelerated the development, testing and implementation of measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and its impacts on people, communities and health systems. *Feature stories are:*

- [Hip to heparin](#) - A UM research team is emerging as a global leader in COVID-19 anticoagulation trials thanks to their innovative, global trial studying different types of heparin, an anticoagulant (blood thinning) and anti-inflammatory drug
- [On the wing](#) - How birds changed their migrations during lockdowns
- [Pandemic fallout](#) - Newcomers and Indigenous people shoulder heavier burden
- [Preventing unintended disaster](#) - A UM team is starting a novel study to see if our cautionary measures are enabling a disaster somewhere else

To honour the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21, workshops were held on the topics of Dismantling Racism; and on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research: What You Need to Know. Staff were invited to be part of the UM Community of Practice Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). At these meetings, EDI best practices were explored, guest speakers were invited for specific topics of interest, and group discussions around difficult issues were facilitated.

The University of Manitoba's 2021 Sustainability Day consisted of a full day virtual program that was open to UM students, staff, faculty and external partners. The theme of the event was Take Action for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and included 16 presentations, 221 participants logged in to join, and an average of 52 participants watching presentations at any given time throughout the day. A full recording of the event will be available through the event webpage for one year. At the same time, the University of Manitoba (UM) has hired Sustainable Solutions Group (SSG) to develop a Climate Action Plan, including carbon emission targets aimed at achieving emissions neutrality by 2050. To date, UM has provided SSG with all necessary data to create a business-as-planned analysis for UM, followed by suggested options to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. Campus-wide engagement will begin as soon as May 1.

The annual Board of Governors alumni representative election runs April 14-May 14. There are eleven candidates running in this election – five nominated by the Alumni Association Board of Directors and six nominated by alumni. Through this process, UM alumni elect fellow graduates to serve on three of the 23 University of Manitoba Board of Governors positions. Alumni elected to serve on the Board of Governors may do so for a maximum of three consecutive three-year terms. One of these term positions is ending.

## ACADEMIC MATTERS

- Francis Amara, biochemistry and medical genetics in the Max Rady College of Medicine, will be honoured with a Certificate of Merit Award from the Canadian Association for Medical Education, recognizing his significant contribution to medical education. Amara is a scholar of teaching and learning whose research looks at curriculum development and teaching methods. He is an advocate for medical education that is firmly grounded in current scientific knowledge.
- Dr. Amine Choukou, occupational therapy, has been awarded the Gerry McDole Professorship. The professorship, funded by AstraZeneca Canada, supports deserving new academic faculty members in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, for research in health service delivery and/or health policy development with the goal to improving the delivery of healthcare services to rural, remote and underserved populations of Manitoba.
- Lisa Diamond-Burchuk, occupational therapy and Jared Bullard, pediatrics/child health and medical microbiology/infectious diseases were honoured with the 2020 CPD Educator of the Year Awards by the Office of Continuing Competency and Assessment in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences. The awards recognize exemplary service in continuing professional development.
- Reagan Croy, student, occupational therapy, was named to the Honour 150 list by Manitoba 150. It recognizes dedicated Manitoba volunteers who were nominated by their communities. Reagan Croy was honoured for her volunteer coaching work with Special Olympics athletes.
- Tressa Alexiuk, student with Joyce Slater, human nutritional sciences has been awarded the Dr. Elizabeth Award for Technical Writing from the Canadian Home Economics Foundation. The award is presented annually to a graduate student from Faculties, Departments or Programs of Home Economics, Family and Consumer Studies/Sciences, Human Ecology, Foods, Dietetics and Nutrition, Clothing and Textiles, and home economics/human ecology/family studies Education.
- Grace Han, alumna, School of Art received an Emerging Artist Award from NCECA (National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts). This is bestowed to six emerging artists in the ceramic field every year and is a highly prestigious international award that includes a presentation and an exhibition at the NCECA conference.
- Jocelyn Gould, alumna, Faculty of Music, was nominated for a JUNO Award for Jazz Album of the Year.
- Lori Blondeau, School of Art was awarded a Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. The Awards funded by the Canada Council for the Arts are given each year to recognize outstanding contribution to the fields of visual and media arts.
- Wouter Deconinck, Physics and Astronomy, is the recipient of the 2021 UM Sustainability Award for Faculty. This award recognizes efforts on campus for, exceptional and continuous integration of sustainability into teaching, research and engagement activities.
- Jayanne English, Physics and Astronomy is the recipient of the 2021 Qilak Award. The Qilak Award for Astronomy Outreach and Communication recognizes individual Canadian residents, or teams of

residents, who have made an outstanding contribution either to the public understanding and appreciation of astronomy in Canada or to informal astronomy education in Canada.

- Dr. English was also awarded a 2nd Place National Radio Astronomy Observatory 2020 Visualization Award for her stunning composite HST-VLA image of the galaxy NGC 5775. In collaboration with composer Nicole Lizee, she produced "Colliding Galaxies: Colours and Tones", a unique integration of astronomy and electronic music. By designing and teaching courses such as "The Art of Scientific Visualization", Dr. English has also trained a next generation of astronomical visualization experts, guaranteeing that her work will have a multiplicative effect on the broader community.
- Anima Sharma, graduate student, Science working with D. Gerald Gwinner, physics & astronomy, won first prize for best student presentation at the annual Canadian Winter Nuclear and Particle Physics Conference.
- Melanie Lalonde, graduate student, working with Jeffrey Marcus, biological sciences, won the 2020 Graduate Student Scholarship award from the Entomological Society of Manitoba. Student recipients of the Entomological Society of Manitoba Graduate Student Scholarship must exhibit superior scholastic ability, high research potential and excellent communication skills.
- Matt Thorstensen, graduate student, working with Ken Jeffries, biological sciences was awarded the International Association for Great Lakes Research (IAGLR) Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded annually to a promising Ph.D. student whose dissertation research is likely to make a significant contribution to the understanding of large lakes.
- Chris Manchur, MSc student in Biological Sciences, was a contest winner of the 2021 Sustainability of Canadian Agriculture Conference Video Competition and also received the People's Choice Award for his video. Chris Manchur is supervised by Dr. Steve Whyard and Dr. Mark Belmonte.
- On March 29th The Decolonizing Lens presents free online screenings of Nappy Hair and an Eagle Feather and Au Fantôme du Père (To the Ghost of the Father). The film screenings will be followed by interviews with filmmakers Adeline Bird and Marie Laurentine Bayala.
- The Decolonizing Lens is a monthly film series co-organized by Jocelyn Thorpe (Women's & Gender Studies) and Kaila Johnston (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation) that brings together Indigenous filmmakers, their films, and their audiences. The series is being sponsored by the Margaret Laurence Endowment Fund, Women's & Gender Studies, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. This month's series is also being supported by the African Movie Festival in Manitoba.
- The Glenlea Research Station team was recognized as producer number three for their excellence, in dairy. Each year, Lactanet, a Canadian network for dairy excellence, recognizes the top 25 dairy producers in the country. Through this process it also identifies the top three dairy producers in each province.

## RESEARCH MATTERS

- At this time, research at the University of Manitoba (UM) is continuing within in the labs as well as remotely to the extent possible in compliance with the provincial Public Health Guidelines. Details on the current COVID-19 guiding principles, processes for requesting access and preventative measures are available in the updated [Researcher FAQs section of the COVID-19 webpage](#).
- On March 3, the Canada Foundation for Innovation announced \$4.7 million in funding to two University of Manitoba projects involving national and international teams supported by Innovation Fund grants. They are:
  - Raymond Frogner received \$2,411,773 for the project: "[NCTR Digital Architecture](#)." This project implements the NCTR's digital architecture. It will enable advanced discovery and access of digital archival records to promote innovative research meaningful to Indigenous communities and Survivors.
  - Drs. Michael Gericke and Juliette Mammei received \$2,336,900 for the project: "[The MOLLER Detector: Expanding our understanding of matter in the universe with a new, precision electron detector](#)." This project will enable experiments that aim to measure the interaction properties between pairs of electrons down to separation distances of zeptometers, which is roughly a million times smaller than the size of the smallest atomic nucleus, to unprecedented accuracy.
- On March 9, Genome Canada announced \$2.1 million in funding to set up the [Canadian Prairie Metabolic Network](#) (CPMN), to ensure the timely and more cost-effective delivery of innovative and relevant genomic testing in the Prairies. The project lead is Distinguished Professor Dr. Cheryl Rockman-Greenberg (Pediatrics and Child Health; Biochemistry and Medical Genetics/Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba) with Petr Kresta, Chief Operating Officer, Diagnostic Services, Shared Health and partners at [Genome Prairie](#) and [Genome Alberta](#). Rockman-Greenberg is an internationally known researcher who has identified the molecular source of some of Manitoba's most devastating inherited diseases.
- Thirty-four research projects led by twelve investigators received a total of \$2,107,815 in grant funding from a variety of sponsors. Those projects receiving more than \$25,000 are:

PI	Sponsor	Title	Awarded
Farenhorst, Annemieke (Soil Science)	SSHRC New Frontiers Research Fund	Renewable feather keratin based advanced functional materials: nano-reinforced, biomimetically modified keratin polymer blends as wound healing material	\$46,634
Jeffrey, Ian (Electrical and Computer Engineering)	Mitacs Accelerate	An integrated software suite for rail condition analysis using machine learning	\$30,000
Jiang, Changmin (Supply Chain Management)	SSHRC Connection Grant	Building resilient logistics and supply chain networks	\$25,000

Koper, Nicola (Natural Resources Institute)	Mitacs Accelerate	Ecology and conservation of grassland songbirds in the Waterton Park front area	\$60,000
Kordi, Behzad (Electrical and Computer Engineering)	Mitacs Accelerate	A novel passive wireless printed circuit board cavity sensor for the measurement of electric and magnetic fields	\$120,000
Ojo, Olanrewaju (Mechanical Engineering)	Research Manitoba	Development of post additive manufacturing treatments to enhance mechanical properties of IN718	\$149,900
Ramjiawan, Bram (Pharmacology and Therapeutics)	Research Manitoba COVID-19	Evaluation of a novel saliva based test for detection of human coronavirus	\$75,000
Rigatto, Claudio (Internal Medicine)	CIHR Project Grant - COVID-19	A pragmatic randomized controlled trial of a CKD specific telemonitoring platform to minimize adverse outcomes in high risk CKD patients	\$562,275
Shalaby, Ahmed (Civil Engineering)	NSERC Alliance Grants	Enhanced characterization of asphalt mix performance to support balanced mix design and climate-resilient sustainable pavement structures	\$141,295
Sivaramakrishnan, Subramanian (Subbu) (Marketing)	Mitacs Business Strategy Internship	Business strategy internship	\$120,000
Urquia, Marcelo (Community Health Sciences)	CIHR Fellowship	Maternal and child health consequences of child removal by Child Protective Services	\$135,000
Woodgate, Roberta (Nursing)	CIHR Project Grant - COVID-19	Making visible the life stories of families of children who are immunocompromised during COVID-19	\$358,594

## ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- Collection bins were distributed to both the Bannatyne and Fort Garry campuses on Monday, March 22 to collect three-ply surgical dust masks, KN95 and N95 masks in addition to other disposable personal protective equipment (PPE). These bins are only for disposable PPE shown on the bin signage and are not intended to collect reusable cloth masks. Materials created from these masks are metal sheeting, composite decking, shipping pallets and other products. The wearing of reusable masks is still recommended to minimize waste.

- An interdisciplinary design charrette will highlight and focus on the Eastern Transportation Corridor multi-use path. The charrette will engage graduate students in designing three seating and wayfinding nodes along the Saunderson Street and Dysart Road pathway segment. The students will receive guidance from a steering committee, along with the Indigenous community at UM, various faculties and critical stakeholders to help them create their design proposals and inform an overall wayfinding and interpretive signage strategy for the corridor.
- The Implementation Committee chaired by the Vice-President (Administration) is responsible for implementation of the 43 recommendations from the Path Forward Report addressing sexual violence, harassment and discrimination at UM.

The recommendations have been organized into 18 different projects in four major subject areas: training, policy and procedure, continuous improvement, and strategic planning.

As of 1 April 2021, 23 of 43 recommendations (53%) have been implemented. Highlights from this year include the creation of the Sexual Violence Resource Centre, and the alignment of the RWLE and Sexual Violence policy and procedures with the report recommendations and the issuance of the report from the Presidential Taskforce on EDI. The Implementation Committee is currently prioritizing the remaining projects for FY2021.

The Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management and the Legal Office are co-chairing the Advisory Committee on Mandatory Referrals, which will explore Recommendation #32 of the Path Forward Report, and will issue recommendations to the Path Forward Implementation Committee, including how to best implement Recommendation #32, and any modifications that may be necessary.

- The Federal Government has launched a consultation on the extension of the term of copyright from 50 years after the death of the creator to 70 years. In particular, the Federal Government has suggested three options that could apply to Libraries, Archives, and Museums to counterbalance the effect of the extension, although comment on other aspects and suggestions for the implementation of the term extension may be submitted. The Federal Government has extended the date for submissions to March 31, 2021.
- The Legal Office has been working closely with the Office of Risk Management to provide advice to the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International), and in particular to the Research Ethics Board (REB), in relation to the resumption of in-person research activities, and re-consenting of research participants. Assistance was provided to draft an informed consent form amendment that can be used by researchers and the REB.
- The Legal Office has also been working closely with the Vice-President (Research and International) and the Vice-Dean (Research) in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences on matters related to the relationship with Shared Health as it pertains to research agreements. A first draft of a new research subsidiary agreement was prepared and recently sent to Shared Health. In addition, February continued to see a substantial increase in the number of research agreements being sent for review, negotiation and approval. In February 2020 the Legal Office received 70 research agreements, whereas 96 research agreements were received for review this February.

- The revised Signing of Agreements policy and procedure were approved by the Board of Governors at the March 23, 2021 meeting. The policy and procedure incorporate best practices from various other U15 universities, along with recommendations from the Audit Services Report on our signing processes. The revised policy and procedure are intended to create efficiencies and support UM's value of accountability.
- UM is in the process of creating a Brief and Temporary Student Absence Policy, which is intended to create a consistent mechanism for students to notify professors and instructors when they will be absent for a brief period of time, to replace the need for medical notes for brief illnesses, to create consistency in the handling of absences across faculties and classes, and to reduce demand on our medical system (by eliminating the need to obtain medical notes for brief ailments). The policy has been provided to the appropriate Unions for review and comment, and feedback is expected by early May.
- UM has been selected as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for 2021. This year's winners were announced on March 2 in a special magazine published in The Globe and Mail in print and online.
- An Information Services and Technology report was presented to the Board of Governors that provided an overview of the Higher Education cybersecurity landscape with particular emphasis on what was happening across Canada, as well as any impactful incidents at UM. Also described were initiatives planned to begin in the next six months or were currently underway to improve cyber security practices with emphasis on three key projects:
  - the roll out of multi-factor authentication for our virtual private network (VPN) service;
  - the continued implementation of Microsoft 365 and its improved security capabilities; and
  - the planned implementation of network segmentation across the internal UM network.

## **EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

- For fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, total funds raised were \$29.7 M exceeding the \$28.6 M target. \$12.6 M of this total was for student support including \$926,511 specifically for pandemic relief.
- Funds were raised via 5,114 donors who included students, staff and faculty, alumni, gifts through estate, corporations and foundations who collectively made 8,969 gifts. These ranged in value from \$5 to \$3,000,000.
- The Spring 2021 Virtual Learning for Life series launches in early May with featured UM researchers and professors as speakers. This will be sponsored by UM affinity partner iA Financial Group.
- Communications from the COVID-19 Steering Committee continue to flow to the UM community – A Vaccination Awareness Campaign is scheduled for rollout in late April.
- President Benarroch continues his outreach to government partners and community. Meetings with Provincial partners included:
  - Tracy Maconachie – Acting Deputy Minister Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration
  - Dr. Jas Atwal – Medical Officer of Health

Meetings with Federal partners included:

- NDP Caucus
- Mitch Davies – National Research Council President

Updates to the community included:

- One year of remote working and learning – Direct message to alumni, donors, students, faculty and staff/UM Today.
  - Fall term reopening- Email communication from President’s office to all students, faculty and staff/UM Today.
  - Vice-President Administration Announcement – UM Today/WAAG/Social Media/News Release.
- Hosted by Chancellor Anne Mahon, the UM Alumni Book Club commenced a fifth book selected by President Michael Benarroch –*Medicine Walk* by Richard Wagamese.
  - The 2021 UM Distinguished Alumni Award nominations launched March 18 and will close on May 17 with final selections scheduled for mid-June.
  - Reader attention was notable for announcements of UM’s new Indigenous leadership as well as the recently awarded funding for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation archives. This engagement was predominantly driven by four UM Today stories contributed by the Marketing and Communications team which were shared across a variety of digital channels. Collectively, the stories received twice as many page views than average for UM Today, and four times as many engagements than average for UM's social media.
  - UM’s Sustainability Day content performed well due to a UM Today story and an event page published by the Office of Sustainability. Marketing and Communications supported the event ensuring promotion across the suite of digital UM channels.
  - During March 2021, there were 3,142 news stories in media mentioning UM: 853 of these related to COVID-19.
  - Major media coverage occurred related to UM included President Benarroch speaking via local media about fall term and future of UM. Professors Martin Scanlon, Rick Holley and Kees Plaizier (Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences) were featured in the Globe and Mail and on CBC Marketplace regarding “buttergate.” Myrle Ballard (Natural Resources Institute) participated in a lengthy radio interview giving an Indigenous scholar’s perspective on land and resource use.