

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: March 23, 2021

GENERAL

The workshop for Our Path to Reconciliation is now open to staff and faculty. Staff and faculty are invited to participate in a new workshop that will explore individual responsibility towards Reconciliation. The interactive workshop and training video, entitled “Our Path to Reconciliation”, have been produced through a partnership between UM Human Resources and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) as a project of the Indigenous Initiatives Fund. The video examines the experiences of racism at UM, followed by education and discussion on creating a safe and respectful environment. The hour-long workshop will allow faculty and staff to gain understanding of the intergenerational impacts of colonization, and to build relationships with one another and commit to truth and with a sense of personal responsibility.

On February 24, 2021, Christine Cyr’s appointment as Associate Vice-President Indigenous – Students, Community and Cultural Integration was announced. In this first Associate Vice-President appointment by Dr. Catherine Cook, Vice-President (Indigenous), Ms. Cyr will develop and implement transformative programs and services across campus and continue to create pathways for Indigenous students. She will also join the Vice-President (Indigenous)’s executive team to work with academic, research and administrative specialists in engagement of Indigenous faculty, staff and students. A Métis woman from Winnipeg, Cyr comes to this new leadership position after being Director of UM’s Indigenous Student Centre (ISC). She has worked at UM for 20 years and is a UM Arts alumna.

On March 10, 2021 the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) and the University of Manitoba announced the appointment of Stephanie Scott as the Executive Director of the NCTR. Under Scott’s leadership, the NCTR will launch groundbreaking digitization and research initiatives. Among these efforts will be Phase two of the Missing Children project, a \$6 million Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) grant to develop a searchable database, and planning for a new archives building. Scott is Anishinaabe from Roseau River First Nation who was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Prior to joining the NCTR team in 2016, she worked with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as the Manager of Statement Gathering.

As part of the University’s commitment to responding to the needs of students most in need of assistance during the uncertain times of the pandemic, a number of financial support programs were made available for students in Winter 2021, outlined below:

- General Bursary Program Enhancement (\$3.1 million) – each student registered in the Winter 2021 term, who received a bursary in December 2020, was allotted a \$750 ‘top-up’.
- Winter 2021 Pandemic Relief Fund (\$887,000) - targeting newly admitted students. 2,800 undergraduate and over 400 graduate students were contacted and encouraged to apply. Awards are valued at \$800 for full-time undergraduate students and \$400 for part-time; and \$1,000 for full-time graduate students and \$500 for part-time.
- Special Appeal/Other Needs (\$100,000) - targeting continuing students who did not apply for the fall bursary program, and are now in need of support.
- UM Student Technology Fund – approximately \$160,000 currently available which should assist approximately 274 students in Winter term. The grant is valued at \$582 per student towards the

purchase of a new computer system. This fund has already helped over 225 students since its inception last fall.

- Food Bank – in partnership with FoodFare Winnipeg, Financial Aid and Awards is running a food hamper program. Students can order a hamper and have same day delivery (no charge & deliveries are to both in-city and out of city locations). Students may request support every three weeks. Each hamper is valued at over \$100 and contains a wide variety of non-perishable food items.
 - Emergency Loans – students are still able to request UM emergency student loan funding at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. These are short-term loans, which are interest and payment free to the student.
- With the start of 2021, President Benarroch has continued his outreach to community and government partners.

Meetings with Provincial partners included:

- Honourable Jeff Wharton – Minister of Crown Services
- Honourable Reg Hewler – Minister of Central Services and the Civil Service Commission
- Honourable Rochelle Squires – Minister of Families and Francophone Affairs
- Honourable Sarah Guillemard – Minister of Conservation and Climate
- Honorable Wayne Ewasko – Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration
- Tracy Maconachie – Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Training
- Colleen Kachulak – Assistant Deputy Minister Advanced Education and Skills
- Brief with Manitoba Caucus

Meetings with Federal partners included:

- Honourable Marco Mendicino – Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
- James Cumming – Alberta Conservative Member of Parliament
- James Bezan – Manitoba Conservative Member of Parliament

As the pandemic continues, the health and safety of our community remains the University of Manitoba's top priority, while still aiming to fulfill our mission of academic and research excellence. The most up-to-date information on COVID-19 cases, safety measures, information and tips is found [here](#).

ACADEMIC MATTERS

- The Faculty of Education recently hosted the second of four Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series virtual events. Cash Ahenakew, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous People's Well-Being and Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia gave the keynote address. The event was attended by over 300 participants from across North America.
- The Faculty of Science recently made a \$1.5 million investment in a state-of-the-art cryo-electron microscope (Cryo-EM) that is currently being installed in the Manitoba Institute for Materials. Given the importance of Cryo-EM in the development of antiviral therapeutics and vaccines, the imaging capability of the new Cryo-EM was recently enhanced with an award from the CFI Exceptional Opportunities Fund - COVID-19 and an investment by the University of Manitoba.
- The Department of Mathematics and the Department of Statistics were rated among the Top 10 Canadian Mathematics Departments according to MacLean's magazine.

- Martin Entz, Plant Science, and the Natural Systems Agriculture Lab were part of the Canadian team selected as a Food Systems Vision Prize finalist for their prairie food vision. It was one of ten out of 1300 submissions from around the world. The Canadian team recently received word they have been named as a Top Visionary, which means they will receive US\$200,000 to help them realize their vision.
- The Glenlea Research Station has recently won several industry awards. Despite the challenges of COVID, the GRS teams have worked hard and are recognized for their efforts. The Dairy team received #7 for Milk Quality in Manitoba from Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and the Swine team was ranked #2 in the west by Topigs Norsvin Canada at their annual awards event.
- Jason Shields, Department of Interior Design received the “Innovative Teaching Idea” from the Interior Design Educator’s Council for the undergraduate Environmental Design 4 studio titled “Media Arts Centre Design.” The University of Manitoba was the only Canadian university to participate. The Interior Design Educator’s Council Innovative Teaching Ideas initiative provides opportunities for educators to find inspiration and integrate new methodologies and content in their teaching.
- *Voices of the Land: Indigenous Design and Planning from the Prairies* is the first publication produced by the Indigenous Design and Planning Students’ Association, Faculty of Architecture. Voices of the Land features sixteen (16) Indigenous students, representing a range of nations across Turtle Island, and spanning all four departments (Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Interior Design, and City Planning), from the Faculty of Architecture.
- Lisa Landrum, Department of Architecture has been elected to Vice-President of the Canadian Architectural Certification Board. Lisa Landrum’s appointment as a Canadian Council of University Schools of Architecture-elected Director to the Canadian Architectural Certification Board is ongoing (2019 to 2022).
- Charles Thomsen (Professor Emeritus) Department of Landscape Architecture, has received an honour from the Province of Manitoba for his community service specifically for the forty years that he has been volunteering and working with the International Peace Garden. HONOUR 150 presented by Canada Life, recognizes 150 people from across the province who stand out for their role in making Manitoba.
- Rachel Nickel, graduate student, who is conducting her research in the Department of Physics and Astronomy was awarded the prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship. The Scholarship is valued at \$50,000 per year for three years during doctoral studies.
- A Schulich Leaders Scholarship was awarded to first year student, Shubhneet Thind who is enrolled in the Faculty of Science. The Schulich Foundation, offers entrance scholarships up to 100 high school graduates each year, enrolling in a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) undergraduate program at 20 partner universities in Canada. Every high school in Canada can submit one Schulich Leader Nominee per academic year based on academic excellence in STEM, entrepreneurial leadership and financial need.
- Camilla Atchison, student, Economics, Econometrics is a recipient of a Bank of Canada Scholarship Award. This award is given to students with disabilities, Indigenous students and students who identify as a woman or as a member of a visible minority or racialized group, or person of colour. Each award combines tuition assistance with the opportunity of a work placement at the Bank. These scholarships

are designed to encourage Canadians from diverse backgrounds to further their education and consider employment in fields related to the work of the Bank

- Soil Science graduate students were recently recognized at the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Manitoba Soil Science Society. Sarah Johnson received the best poster pitch prize; Joanne Thiessen Martens was presented the best general oral presentation prize, and; Jess Nicksy received the second best general oral presentation prize.
- A new UM resource to assist internationally educated health professionals qualify for practice in Manitoba was recently announced. Funding received from the Foreign Credential Recognition Program provided by Employment and Social Development Canada will assist to create the Access Hub for Internationally Educated Health Professionals. It will guide newcomers in pharmacy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, respiratory therapy, speech language pathology and audiology to navigate the requirements to enter the Manitoba workforce.

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](#).
- Three University of Manitoba researchers have received grants through the Partnership Engage (2) and COVID-19 Partnership Engage Grants (1) programs funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to investigate mental health matters specific to overlooked and under-studied populations. These grants provide short-term and timely support for partnered research activities that will inform decision-making at a single partner organization from the public, private or not-for-profit sector. Two grants were less than \$25,000 and one grant is for \$25,000.
- Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) Day was held online on February 19, with more than 40 schools participating in the live SET Talks by researchers Cheryl Glazebrook (Kinesiology and Recreation Management), Kyle Bobiwash (Entomology), Kirstin Brink (Geological Sciences), Deanna Slater (Immunology), Ella Morris (PhD candidate Mechanical Engineering) and Rachel Nickel (PhD candidate Physics and Astronomy). The [SET Talks were recorded and made available online](#), with more than 300 views in the first week.
- Fifty-two research projects led by 29 investigators received a total of \$4,969,195 in grant funding from a variety of sponsors. Those projects receiving more than \$25,000 are:

PI	Sponsor	Title	Awarded
Akcora, Cuneyt (Computer Science)	Mitacs Accelerate	Decentralized services for sharing and searching user generated data	\$90,000

Ashraf, Ahmed (Electrical and Computer Engineering)	CIHR	Artificial intelligence based adaptive and interpretable models for analyzing multi-track epigenomic sequential data	\$298,500
Bassuoni, Mohamed (Civil Engineering)	Mitacs Accelerate	Use of nanoparticles, phase change materials, and antifreeze admixtures for cold weather concreting	\$110,000
Booth, Stephanie (Medical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases)	Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Foundation Inc.	Detection and characterization of rare strains of sporadic Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease using a suite of novel biological and biochemical tools	\$63,270
Cameron, Emily (Psychology)	SSHRC – COVID-19 PEG	Building BRIDGES: Adapting parent wellness supports for families of children with developmental and mental health needs at KIDTHINK Inc.	\$25,000
Collister, David (Internal Medicine)	Seven Oaks General Hospital Foundation	Research program in chronic kidney disease and dialysis focusing on symptoms	\$75,000
Desautels, Danielle (Internal Medicine)	University Medical Group	Predictors and impact of treatment nonadherence in patients receiving adjuvant endocrine therapy for breast cancer in Manitoba	\$42,910
Gerstein, Aleeza (Microbiology)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Vulvovaginal candidiasis pathogen diversity	\$30,000
Gorczyca, Beata (Civil Engineering)	City of Brandon	Full Year Operation of UF/NF Pilot Plant Supplied by High DOC and Hardness Surface Water Source in Brandon, MB	\$78,450
Hitchon, Carol (Internal Medicine)	Research Manitoba - Manitoba COVID-19 Rapid Response Grant	Safety and Immunogenicity of SARS-CoV2 Vaccines	\$84,105
Kidane, Biniam (Surgery)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Organ-preserving endoscopic resection and concurrent radiation/immunology for esophageal cancer (OPERA RADIO): A pilot study	\$30,000
Labouta, Hagar (Pharmacy)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Tracking the accumulation of gold nanoparticles in tumour tissues	\$30,000
Lix, Lisa (Community Health Sciences)	University of Calgary	Unsupervised learning methods to improve patient-reported outcome measures	\$127,182
Louis, Deepak (Pediatrics and Child Health)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Mental health outcomes of parents of children born preterm in Manitoba: A population-based cohort study	\$35,000
Maghoul, Pooneh (Civil Engineering)	Mitacs Inc.	Evaluation of the effects of pipe-soil interaction on the stress based design of buried pipelines using advanced numerical modeling	\$60,000
Mahar, Alyson (Community Health Sciences)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Mental health outcomes of adolescent and young adults with cancer in	\$35,000

		Manitoba: A population-based cohort study	
Mann, Daniel (Biosystems Engineering)	Mitacs Inc.	Effect of harvest time on cattail (Typha) fibers for non-woven applications	\$30,000
Miller, Donald (Pharmacology and Therapeutics)	Research Manitoba	Development and characterization of utRAP technology: A nanoparticle platform for preventing SARS-Cov2 infection in airway and vasculature	\$86,550
O'Neil, Liam (Internal Medicine)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Searching for citrulline: A comprehensive analysis of the citrullinome across the stages of Rheumatoid Arthritis	\$28,500
Ramjiawan, Bram (Pharmacology and Therapeutics)	Research Manitoba - COVID-19 Innovation Proof-of-Concept Grant	Copper infused reusable protective face mask for prevention of SARS-CoV-2 infections	\$100,000
Rigatto, Claudio (Internal Medicine)	Research Manitoba - COVID-19 Innovation Proof-of-Concept Grant	Can virtual lifestyle programming limit collateral health damage from the COVID-19 pandemic: A pilot study	\$99,892
Righolt, Christiaan (Community Health Sciences)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Infant vaccination rates during the COVID-19 pandemic in Manitoba	\$34,000
Slominski, Bogdan (Animal Science)	NSERC university/industry collaborative research and development	Effective use of novel canola feed ingredients	\$299,744
Slominski, Bogdan (Animal Science)	Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission	Effective use of novel canola feed ingredients	\$88,000
Thompson, Shirley (Natural Resources Institute)	Mitacs Accelerate	Red Sucker Lake First Nation traditional land use mapping and youth training	\$240,000
Wang, Feiyue (Environment and Geography, Centre for Earth Observation Science)	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	The MPRI Offshore Burn Experiment	\$2,246,000
Yamamoto, Jennifer (Internal Medicine)	Manitoba Medical Service Foundation	Comparing the effects of long acting versus intermediate acting versus short acting insulins on severe hypoglycemia in type 2 diabetes	\$30,000
Zahradka, Peter (Physiology & Pathophysiology, St Boniface Hospital Albrechtsen Research Centre)	Research Manitoba	Broadening the vascular diagnostic service continuum of Koven Technology Canada through the development and validation of a novel in vitro diagnostic technology to diagnose peripheral arterial disease	\$138,000

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- The Southwood Secondary Plan was approved by City of Winnipeg Council on January 28, 2021. The Development Agreement, Subdivision and Zoning (DASZ) pre-application was submitted to Planning, Property, and Development on February 5, 2021 with a formal submission anticipated in April 2021 and approval in late 2021. Construction of Phase 1 site works and development is planned to start in Spring 2022. UM Properties is planning this first phase of development directly adjacent to the core campus lands, north of Sifton Road to support synergies with the University of Manitoba (UM).
- UM has hired Sustainable Solutions Group (SSG) to develop:
 - a Climate Action Plan including carbon emission targets aimed at achieving emissions neutrality by 2050. The University passed the Sustainability Strategy 2019-2023 in June 2019. Within the strategy, there is a commitment to create a Climate Action Plan, which defines emission reduction targets, action items to achieve these targets, and climate change mitigation and adaptation recommendations.
 - Sustainable Building Guidelines that will guide sustainability considerations across all buildings' projects. The guidelines will outline best practices, technologies, and methods that will contribute to enabling the UM to achieve its emissions reduction goal set out in the Climate Action Plan.
- 30 collection bins have arrived to collect personal protective equipment. These bins will be distributed to areas at both Bannatyne and Fort Garry campuses that have the highest volumes of traffic at this time. This waste will then be collected and sent to Terracycle and turned into pellets that can be molded and extruded to produce new products.
- The 2021/22 Budget was sent to the Province on February 11, 2021.
- The requirement to implement Asset Retirement Obligation (ARO) reporting for March 31, 2021 has now been postponed by the Province of Manitoba. No new date has been set as it is currently being reviewed.
- Purchasing Services is actively engaged with the Province on the new Procurement Initiative.
- T4 and T4A slips have been completed and distributed to the UM.
- Form T2200S have also been provided to staff to assist employees in claiming a deduction for the eligible portion of workspace-in-the-home expenses and related supplies incurred in the course of working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.
- The Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management (OHRM) hired 11 student educators from equity-seeking backgrounds and varied programs across the UM to assist with student outreach and education on the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy, the Sexual Violence Policy, and the Disclosures and Complaints Procedure. This pilot is currently underway and will be completed at the end of April 2021. The Student Presenter Program is eligible to receive 75% of wages through the Government of Canada Magnet Student Work Placement Program.

- The OHRCM, as well as members of the Legal Office, are working with the UM Admissions Office to incorporate the recent findings in *Longuepée v. University of Waterloo* (Ontario Court of Appeal) in UM admissions processes. The key takeaway from the *Longuepée* decision is that a GPA-only admissions process will be deemed discriminatory in situations where all previous academic evaluations are unaccommodated. In situations where no accommodated grades exist, an evaluation of core competencies or bona fide academic requirements needed for admission will have to be undertaken without consideration of grades or GPA.
- The OHRCM and the Legal Office are co-chairing the Advisory Committee on Intimate Relations. The Advisory Committee will explore Recommendations #18-20 of the Path Forward Report and issue recommendations to the Path Forward Implementation Committee. These will include how to best implement the targeted Path Forward Recommendations, including any modifications that may be necessary.
- A four-year deal has been reached with CUPE 3909 for both Unit 1 (Student TAs) and Unit 2 (Sessional Instructors). The revised agreement provides for wage increases of 0%, 0%, 0.75%, 1% over the period of September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2022. Both collective agreements have been largely rewritten to provide clarity and common language where appropriate. The new language will help UM administrators follow proper processes, ensure that UM students receive appropriate employment, and clarify when different rates of pay apply. A Letter of Understanding sets up a joint UM-CUPE committee to review the Distance Ed payment model, and make recommendations for change in the next round of bargaining.
- UM Black Alliance (UMBA) invited all students, faculty, staff, alumni and the community at large to attend the UM's Black History Month Forum on February 18, 2021.
- Information Security and Compliance reported that MFA (Multi Factor Authentication) for working remotely using VPN (Virtual Private Network):
 - IST – 100% (190) complete
 - Distributed IT – 100% (60) complete
 - Faculty and Staff – 41% (1549) complete out of 3744 VPN users
- Five Zoombombing incidents occurred between February 1 and February 10, 2021. Zoombombing is a type of cyberattack when someone hijacks a Zoom videoconferencing session. Meetings have been interrupted by intruders sharing offensive imagery onscreen, including taunting attendees with hate speech and threats. Additional training material has been provided to the UM on how to increase security within the Zoom service.
- Engagement Services extended Service Desk hours (evenings and weekends) and offered to support December online exams (December 13 - 23). The average speed to answer all exam support calls was 29 seconds. A news article regarding extended service can be found at:

https://news.umanitoba.ca/mitigating-exam-stress-a-high-priority-for-the-university/?utm_source=waag&utm_medium=email

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

- Significant gifts made in the current reporting period include:
 - Department of Clinical Health Psychology - \$150,000 - Clinical Health Psychology Trust Fund.
 - Prafulchandra Patel - \$100,000 - Sunil Patel Bursary.
 - Department of Family Medicine - \$3,000,000 - Department of Family Medicine Trust Fund.
 - Heart and Stroke Foundation - \$1,000,000 - Heart and Stroke Foundation/Research Manitoba Chair in Clinical Stroke Research.
 - Manitoba Crop Alliance - \$500,000 - Prairie Crops and Soils Research Facility.
- As the Next Generation Website Experience (NGWE) project progresses, numerous colleges and faculties will be launching refreshed websites in March 2021. The NGWE migrations for external websites are expected to be complete by summer 2021.
- A digital spring issue of UMToday The Magazine, with rich storytelling about our accomplished alumni, will be released before April month end.
- A second Ugly Sweater Trivia Night held on St. Patrick's Day was aimed at recent graduates. UM affinity partner, The Personal, was the title sponsor of this event.
- The inaugural Alumni Council meeting was held on February 22nd. At this first gathering 31 members representing diverse faculties and backgrounds participated in robust preliminary engagement discussions. The next meeting is scheduled for May 2021.
- Donor Relations' year end direct mail and email appeal performed strongly. Solicitations resulted in 1,459 gifts from donors totalling \$430,302.
- UM faculty, staff and retirees contributed the greatest share of \$45,000 raised for the UM Food Bank. This was vital as on-campus food drives could not be held due to pandemic restrictions.
- The student referenda program renewed the agreements for nine faculties and colleges totalling \$2.8 million dollars.
- The Marketing and Communications team continues to offer tangible supports to assist the UM community in brand implementation.
- A new UM Editorial Style Guide has been created as a reference to assist UM writers. The intention is to assist staff in producing work that is professional, credible, and inclusive/respectful of both readers and those we are writing about.
- UM Black History Month content performed very well across our digital channels. This engagement was driven by content that included three UM Today stories and three video interviews as part of the 'Making an Impact: UM Black Alumni' initiative. The story of alumnus David Sowemimo who created a scholarship for Black Law students in particular resonated with readers.

- During February 2021, there were 2,607 news stories in media mentioning UM; 915 of these related to COVID-19. Stories arose from Public Affairs releases to media and reporter inquiries.
- Major media coverage has recently arisen related to several UM stories. These include the tragic accident that killed three Bangladeshi students, the MB government announcement on experiential outcomes, the rollout of an Indigenous COVID-19 app developed by UM researchers, New York Times coverage on Arthur Schafer opinions on “COVID shaming” and news from multiple international outlets regarding Jason Kindrachuk’s warning of a new Ebola outbreak in Congo.