The Bulletin
University of Manitoba

One university.
Many futures.

Poster competition
Student researchers and thinkers go head-to-head

Work: What makes it better?
The Outstanding Workplace Initiative kicks off

President & deans’ commentary on PhD graduate

Mission accomplished

The UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA’S EVENING OF EXCELLENCE took place on the evening of Thursday, October 28. The annual event is geared towards high-achieving grade 11 and grade 12 students who excel academically, as top athletes, or as leaders in their schools and/or communities.

Over 50 booths and displays were featured, highlighting faculties, departments, service providers and student achievements from around the U of M.

The event offers attendees the chance to learn more about the university and about the programs and degree options offered. Sessions throughout the evening also presented information about financial aid and award options, career planning and placement services and student life at the U of M. This year’s Evening of Excellence was held in the Engineering and Information Technology Complex Atrium. Over 600 students and parents attended.

Evening of Excellence draws crowds

Commentary: President Barnard on PhD graduate

A message from President David Barnard, University of Manitoba, to alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends of the University of Manitoba community.

I am taking this opportunity to speak directly about a matter involving a University of Manitoba doctoral student that is garnering a great deal of public attention. I know many of you have been following developments regarding this case in the media and likely have many questions.

I first want to state my unequivocal support for the student involved in this matter. It is my understanding that this student is an exceptional student who has achieved outstanding success and is fully deserving of the PhD conferred by the University of Manitoba.

Unfortunately, a lot of misinformation about this case has been widely broadcast, most notably in the mass media, and it has all too easily and readily been accepted by some as fact. This rush to rash conclusions and finger-pointing can do serious harm to the reputation of all those involved in the case.

It is incumbent upon all of us to wait for the case to work its way through the process before drawing conclusions; to presume innocence, not guilt; to understand that there are at least two sides to a story, and that if we have heard only one, we have nowhere near enough information to condemn our colleagues or fellow alumni.

Having received permission from the student involved in this matter to release limited information, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean of Science have prepared a statement. I encourage you also to read their message found in this issue of The Bulletin and online at umanitoba.ca.

continued on page 2
In the News

Facemail

CBC’s The National

November 14, 2010

Rob Warren from the Centre for Entrepreneurship spoke to the news agency about plans the social-networking website Facebook has for launching an e-mail service. “Basically what Facebook is trying to do is become sort of a one-stop shop,” Warren said. “Essentially Facebook is doing this for a really simple reason, that Google is that proverbial 800-pound gorilla in the computer world and Facebook wants to take all the goodwill and those users they’ve built up and take that to the next level... They want to be able to offer you a whole bunch of services, a whole bunch of options because if they do that, then they’re even more attractive to marketers.”

More understanding of H1N1

The Ottawa Citizen, Winnipeg Free Press, Star Phoenix, Edmonton Journal, CBC.ca

November 14, 2010

A U of M study recently noted that Aboriginal people are able to ward off the H1N1 flu virus as well as or better than the rest of the population — a finding that contradicts the theory that put aboriginals at the head of the line for the vaccine last year. “The results point out that aboriginals are not deficient in their immune response to H1N1,” said Ethernet Rubinstein, the lead researcher and a member of the U of M’s infectious diseases section. The study tested the immune response of 120 aboriginal people from Manitoba. The subjects were from large population centres, like Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie; none of them were from the northern reserves which experienced severe flu outbreaks in the past year. “The results show they reacted beautifully to the vaccine,” Rubinstein said. “If another wave comes, one vaccine would be sufficient.” Aboriginal people were given priority for the H1N1 vaccine in 2009 and were required to get two dosages instead of the single shot other Canadians received.

Passage to India

The Times of India

November 10, 2010

The Times of India reports that President David Barnard of announced a new partnership with Indian Institute of Crop Processing Technology and the ministry of food processing industries. Both the sides will contribute $100,000 each to train six scientists and offer scholarships. The article explains that eight Canadian universities announced a series of scholarships worth four million Canadian dollars for Indian students. The investments include the new Globalink Canada-India Graduate Fellowship. Six memoranda of understanding were also signed between Canadian and Indian educational institutes.

No LOL Matter

CBC.ca

November 9, 2010

U of M researchers found that sending simple text messages by cellphone to HIV patients in Kenya increased the likelihood that they would stay healthy. The messages were sent once a week, asking “Mambo?” or “How are you?” in Kishwahili. Study participants were more likely to follow their medication regimen, 62 per cent, compared with 50 per cent among those who didn’t get the texts, researchers from the University of British Columbia and the University of Washington reported in Tuesday’s online issue of The Lancet. Those who were randomly assigned to receive the messages were also more likely to have an undetectable level of HIV a year after starting treatment, the researchers found.

HEADLINES

* Ottawa scientists land $100,000 Gates Foundation grant to develop contraceptive that prevents STD transmission, “Ottawa Citizen, Nov 9, 2010, article reviews book by Vaclav Smil, professor of environment and geography.*

President’s comment cont’d.

I also want to take this opportunity to emphasize that the University of Manitoba encourages informed debate on issues related to academic policy, such as those in the case before us. Where it is possible to do so, we will learn from this experience, and it is our intention to do so as a responsible and responsive academic community.

Discussion of these matters will involve students, faculty, staff and experts in these fields and will take place through the university Senate, our academic governing body, in the spirit of our institutional commitment to continuous improvement. The University of Manitoba will learn from this experience, and it is our intention to do so as a responsible and responsive academic community.

President Barnard and the administration and Senate have already commenced discussions relating to the accommodation of students with disabilities, including a review of:

- how to balance the University’s legal obligation to offer reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities while protecting academic standards;
- what types of accommodations may be provided, without compromising academic standards;
- who should decide on whether accommodations should be offered, and if so, what type;
- what types of evidence of disabilities should the decision-maker require;
- with whom is the decision-maker expected to consult;
- how to ensure timely decisions on accommodation are made, so that a student’s academic progress is not compromised; and,
- how to protect the privacy of students while assessing a case and implementing accommodations.

Choy appointed as special advisor

Patrick Choy, M.Sc., PhD MD, FAHA, FIACS, has been appointed as special advisor to President Barnard and the dean of Medicine. Choy will assist John Kearsey, vice president (external) in engaging international interest in the University of Manitoba.

Choy’s passion for scientific discovery and pursuit of international partnerships will enhance the University of Manitoba’s global opportunities and help fulfill our mission,” said Dr. Barnard.

Choy’s appointment as special advisor is effective from November 1, 2010 to June 30, 2012. A distinguished scientist who is an international leader in the study of heart disease, Choy is committed to building research and academic collaborations between the University of Manitoba and universities in China. To date, Choy has negotiated numerous agreements allowing students and researchers to participate in valuable exchanges with Shanghai Medical University, Jilin University and Shantou University.

Choy has also led the U of M’s participation in the East-West Alliance, a network of 10 prestigious universities from around the world that is committed to the development of medical research and educational projects with a global impact.

“Dr. Choy’s dedication to the Faculty of Medicine, to the University of Manitoba and to the scientific and research community is highly regarded and will benefit all of us as he assumes this new role as Special Advisor. We welcome him to the University community,” said Brian Postl, dean, Faculty of Medicine.

Choy joined the University of Manitoba in 1979 as a researcher and professor in the department of biochemistry and medical genetics. He served as head of the department from 1992 to 1999 and as associate dean of research in the Faculty of Medicine from 1999 to 2009. Choy then served as president of development in the Faculty of Medicine.
of rankings and priorities

IN ITS NOVEMBER 22, 2010 ISSUE, Maclean's magazine published its annual rankings of Canadian universities, an event which consistently generates many questions among members of our community and from the public at large.

As I noted in my message to our community prior to the release of this year’s issue, the Maclean’s rankings are just one of many national and international university rankings published by various bodies each year. Each use different methods of data collection and provide their own perspective on the University of Manitoba as it compares to other institutions. Some are more relevant and useful than others. Like some others, the University of Manitoba has long challenged the methodology of the Maclean’s ranking in particular, and though there have been improvements, the university’s overall position in this regard has not changed.

Over the years, our attitude toward these various rankings has shifted. They do provide us with food for thought and a yardstick by which we might measure ourselves against other universities across the country, but they do so from the perspective of a very wide-angle lens. Up close and on the ground, the view is much different, much clearer. With all due respect to these rankings, we feel it’s more important for the University of Manitoba administration and community to focus on our goals that are set within our Strategic Planning Framework, rather than allow those priorities to be set by those outside the institution. As a community, we know what we need to do and what we need to accomplish to make an important and transformational impact on our students, our community and the world.

One way in which we maintain focus on our priorities is through regular communication with members of our community. For example, every fall and winter term I host a town hall meeting which gives me a chance to connect directly with you and to update you on issues of importance to the university. It also provides an opportunity for you to ask questions of me and members of the executive team. At the November 4, 2010 President’s Town Hall, for example, I spoke of the university’s continued commitment to the priorities established in our Strategic Planning Framework and provided an update on progress thus far. As you will recall, the framework identifies four general priorities that will guide our decisions and direct our actions in the coming months and years: Academic Enhancement, Aboriginal Achievement, Becoming an Outstanding Environment and Enhancing the Student Experience.

Targeted funds have been set aside in two successive budgets to provide for growth and progress on these priorities, and a broad range of initiatives at all levels of the university are being undertaken to reach our goals. Some of these programs have been funded, our research capacity has been increased through externally funded chairs and competitive research projects, and we are underway at numerous sites on both campuses, and we’re working toward a strategic vision for improving programs, services and outcomes for Aboriginal students. We also are working on increasing support for the community on specific projects and initiatives, and putting in place targeted strategies designed to support our goals of providing an exceptional student experience and being an employer of first choice.

This effort is all targeted at our overall goal: for the University of Manitoba to be nationally and internationally recognized for its teaching, research and creative excellence, sought after by students and faculty alike as their preferred site of study. We have said we will work with partners to make Winnipeg the national centre of excellence in Aboriginal education and allow Aboriginal students to be prepared to achieve academic success in the full range of academic programs we offer. We will be an employer of first choice; offering market- and expecting respect for all staff and faculty providing opportunities for leadership, growth and development, and recognizing the contributions of staff at all levels. And the University of Manitoba will be a student-focused research university from the moment we recruit new students. We want the University of Manitoba to be a life-long academic home where students are free and encouraged to contribute to a diversity of ideas and experiences.

When we achieve these objectives, external rankings of the university will likely improve. However, we won’t need them to tell us we’ve succeeded. We will know by the accomplishments of our students and faculty that we have reached our goals. I am excited by the work that already is underway, and I look forward to working with each of you to make our institution an exceptional place to discover, and to learn and to excel.

> More information on our Strategic Planning Framework and the progress we’re making can be found at unmanitoba.ca/administrator estratégico and unmanitoba.ca/about/media/townhallnotes_nov2.pdf

** Reprinted in part from a message to the University of Manitoba, November 9, 2010.

Additional commentary on recent PhD graduate issue from deans of Science and Graduate Studies

This is a joint message from Dr. Jay Doering, dean of Graduate Studies, and Dr. Mark Whitmore, dean of Science, University of Manitoba.

Many of you undoubtedly were following the media reports involving a graduate of the University of Manitoba. Much of the media attention has focused on the fact that this doctoral student was provided with an accommodation by the University of Manitoba to complete their degree based on consideration of this student’s disability.

While the need to respect and protect the privacy of the student involved is critical, it is also important that the University community and beyond be provided with a more fully formed picture of this case and the facts that surround it. To that end, the University has secured additional information from those involved with the student and with those involved with the student and provided with a more fully formed picture of this case and the facts that surround it.

In this case, the disability was real, and the grave anxiety each year, and while the vast majority receives support to cope with such stress, there are a few cases which progress to a clinically diagnosed disability. In this case, the diagnosis and its implication made by certain individuals that the student is not being genuine is both incorrect and irresponsible.

Under the Manitoba Human Rights Code, the University was obligated to accommodate this proven, professionally-diagnosed disability. The graduate studies committee of the Department of Graduate Studies consulted extensively with those involved with the student and discussed options for accommodation. The graduate studies committee of the department of mathematics recommended a written alternative. Disability Services recommended the student be accommodated with an oral format. The graduate studies committee indicated its preference for a waiver of the exam as opposed to an oral exam in this unique situation.

Following broad consultation in which a variety of options were considered, the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies concurred with the student that the need not retake the third comprehensive exam in order to obtain the unanimous “A” grade.

Any previous suggestions made that the Dean of Graduate Studies made a unilateral decision, without consultation, are simply false and irresponsible.

The Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies reviewed the student’s academic performance. It was such that they had received an “A” grade in all of their course work and had published more papers in refereed journals than would be typical of a student at this stage of study. The student’s work had received funding and awards by external bodies.

In further reassurance of the rigour of those statements, the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies subsequently confirmed that the external examiner was distinguished scholar (i.e., a full professor, impressive laurels, who had significant experience with graduate student examinations). All of the examiners have both internal and external to the University — put this student’s thesis into category 1, the highest category of quality. In short, this student’s work is considered exemplary.

Usually, when the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies considers the recommendation and/or preference of a head of a department or graduate committee chairperson, the matter is deemed to be resolved. In this case, however, a faculty member, Dr. Lukacs, has chosen to challenge an accommodation decision which was arrived at after extensive consultations with academics, administrators, and experts, and seeks to have the student’s degree revoked. The matter is now before the courts, and no further comment will be offered except to state that Dr. Lukacs has never taught this student, he was not the student’s advisor, he was not on the student’s advisory committee, and he was not a member of the Mathematics Graduate Studies Committee, at the time the relevant decisions were made.

Both the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Science remain committed to the principles of academic integrity and excellence. Our dedication to the highest levels of academic rigour ensures that our graduates enjoy tremendous success in their chosen professions and their degree from this university is widely respected and valued.

It’s now time to move forward. President David Barnard has outlined a way forward. Today, we want to take this opportunity to be unequivocally clear: our confidence in the work and future of the student, now graduate, involved in this matter. It is time for us all to applaud the student’s success and allow the student the opportunity to enjoy the professional and personal satisfaction that all our graduates should experience for their achievements.
Health sciences careers discovered here!

BY ILANNA SIMON  
For The Bulletin

On Friday, November 5, high school students from the Winnipeg area spent their day sampling career options at the TD Discovery Day in Health Sciences. The tenth annual interactive event was hosted by the University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine and organized by The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.

The day kicked off with the greetings from Minister of Health Theresa Oswald, introductions of 2011 Hall of Fame inductee Allan Ronald and 2001 Hall of Fame inductee Henry Friesen, and a keynote lecture “Disaster Victim Identification: Haiti 2010” by Sgt. Paul Brisson. Students attended two workshops from a choice of 27. They visited research labs and teaching/surgical rooms on the university campus and in other affiliated sites. Workshops included “A Day in the Life of a Family Doctor,” in which students had a chance to experience the varied activities of a family physician; simulations and models to receive basic training in the varied activities of a family physician using teaching/surgical rooms on the university campus and from a choice of 27. They visited research labs and of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine and organized by The Bulletin at the TD Discovery Day in Health Sciences. The tenth

Evidence for vulnerable newborns program

BY JACK RACH  
For The Bulletin

The Healthy Baby Program started in 2003, led by Healthy Child Manitoba to help low-income mothers and their newborns. It’s designed to improve the health of Manitoba’s most vulnerable babies before they’re born and during infancy. New research from the Faculty of Medicine shows evidence that the program appears to work. Dr. Marni Brownell is the lead researcher of the study; her area of interest is child health. “When we started this evaluation, we weren’t sure whether we’d find any impact of the Healthy Baby Program — some of the outcomes we were looking at are difficult to change for vulnerable populations,” she says. “We were surprised by the results.”

Researchers at the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy looked at both parts of the Healthy Baby Program. The first is an income supplement with a maximum of $81.41 per month starting in the second trimester of a woman’s pregnancy. The second part consists of community support programs, offering information on things like nutrition, which are available during pregnancy until the babies’ first birthday. Babies born prematurely or with low birth weight have higher risks of sickness and death. The study found that the prenatal income supplement was associated with a reduction in low birth weight babies and a reduction in premature births.

The most dramatic results were found in the area of breastfeeding, where women who participated in both parts of the Healthy Baby Program were more likely to breastfeed their newborns. Previous research shows breastfeeding has a positive impact on the short- and long-term health of infants. Roughly one-third of women giving birth during the time period of the study received the prenatal benefit. The program helped almost three-quarters of women on income assistance, meaning the prenatal income supplement reached a reasonable portion of the population for which it was designed.

“The program isn’t necessarily reaching everyone it should,” says Brownell. “Since both parts of the Healthy Baby Program appear to be associated with better prenatal and birth outcomes, efforts should be made to ensure all eligible, low-income women use the program to help improve the health of their newborn children.”

Survey says: It’s your workplace

BY ROSALYN HOWARD  
For The Bulletin

One of the priorities in the University of Manitoba Strategic Framework is to be an outstanding employer: a workplace offering and expecting respect for all staff and faculty, providing opportunities for leadership, growth and development, and recognizing the contributions made at all levels of the organization. We want to celebrate the U of M as a great place to work. Sponsored by the president and supported by a guiding team, this initiative is starting in November 2010. It will build on the many strengths of the U of M workplace. We want to ensure that as we move into the future, supports offered are the ones you value and your workplace works for you and your colleagues.

Outstanding workplace/employer initiatives focus on people. They assess current practices to make sure the bases are covered in things like compensation, pension, benefits, workplace, health and safety, IT infrastructure and other tools. As well, attention is paid to how much organizational goals are clear and shared, how meaningful people identify their work to be, and how people describe their workplace culture and leadership. Attention to recognition, learning, challenge, and career development are also important.

We will be reaching out to our U of M community to learn about workplace experiences, both the great and the not-so-great. We’ll be sharing what we learn with you. That information will inform a framework to identify what matters most to U of M faculty and staff and what supports to keep, start, and stop. That framework will guide an action plan. Please join in as we extend invitations to meetings and forums and web-based input. What is your story?

Initiative updates will be posted on the website. The Outstanding Workplace Initiative guiding team consists of Rosalyn Howard, chair, director, LDS; Stan Amaladas, learning and change consultant, LDS; John Danaks, director, public affairs, Emily Etcheway, director, School of Medical Rehabilitation, Karen Grant, vice provost (academic affairs), Norm Halden, dean, Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources; Brian Macpherson, senior scholar, department of statistics, Faculty of Science; Pat Martens, director, Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, Kerry McQuarrie Smith, executive assistant to the president, Richard Sigurdson, dean, Faculty of Arts; Pat Reid, director, ancillary services; Janice Ristock, associate vice president (research) and Terry Voss, executive director, human resources.

Please share some quick workplace impressions by answering two questions at this link to the online survey.
**Battle of the brains: poster wars**

**BY KATIE CHALMERS-BROOKS**

**For The Bulletin**

Dozens of budding researchers showed off their work at the *Undergraduate Student Research Poster Competition*. Fifty-eight students went head-to-head in a handful of categories at the fifth annual competition on November 5 at University Centre. The categories included applied sciences, health sciences, natural sciences, social sciences/humanities, and — new this year — creative works. Research topics ran the gamut from the benefits of yoga on cancer patients to the antioxidant properties of hempseed.

The aim of the poster competition is not just to reward students based on the scholarly, scientific or creative success of their content, but also on the visual display, the clarity of their conclusions and objectives and how well the students were able to provide jargon-free explanations to their audience. Posters were judged by university faculty members, staff and individuals from topic-related government departments.

First and second-place cash prizes of $500 and $250 respectively were awarded to the top two entrants in each category.

**The winners**

- **First Place**
  - Amy Nadeau, Applied Sciences
  - Michael Harder, Natural Sciences
  - Jacqueline Richelle, Health Sciences

- **Second Place**
  - George Deng, Applied Sciences
  - Sima Chavooshi, Creative Works

- **Other winners**
  - Margaret Temple, Social Sciences and Humanities
  - Lindsay Andronak, Natural Sciences
  - Kailyn Jiang, Health Sciences
  - Darren Neufeld, Social Sciences and Humanities
  - Kelly Jo Dorvaut, Creative Works

**University of Manitoba President David Barnard hosted a Town Hall meeting today to provide the campus community with an update on the strategic plan for the university.**

Speaking at the Frederic Gaspard Theatre on the Bannatyne campus with a live video link for attendees at the Fort Garry campus, Dr. Barnard outlined the four priorities of the university's strategic planning framework. He noted the university is focused on academic enhancements, Aboriginal achievement, providing an exceptional learning experience and becoming an outstanding employer of choice in the community.

During the discussion, Dr. Barnard outlined some of the steps already taken to achieve these goals and discussed future initiatives slated to ensure success. Dr. Barnard also touched on the Resource Optimization and Service Enhancement (ROSE) and Optimizing Academic Resources (OARS) projects which are currently underway at the university to improve services and efficiencies.

**President’s Town Hall report**

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Susan Gothel, the new vice-provost (students), also took the podium to discuss goals and opportunities in working towards providing an outstanding student experience for everyone who studies at the University of Manitoba.

Dr. Barnard and Gothel were joined by Joanne Keselman, vice-president (academic) and provost, Digvir Jayas, vice-president (research), Debbie McCallum, vice-president (administration), and John Kearsley, vice-president (external), at the event.

Before taking questions, Dr. Barnard thanked the university community for their ongoing dedication and noted that their commitment and creativity make him proud to work with them each day.

The event attracted numerous staff and students from both campuses.

**To view the pdf presentation from fall 2010 Town Hall, go to: umanitoba.ca/about/media/townhallnotes_nov2.pdf**
Short in stature, long on talent

BY CHRIS REID
The Bulletin

The University of Manitoba Bison men’s basketball team is hitting new heights this year, and much credit goes to a player who is a mere 5’8”.

Eric Garcia, an Academic All-Canadian with a 4.0 GPA at the University of Manitoba, has shown great leadership to the men’s basketball season so far, taking the team to a 3-and-0 start after the season’s first three games.

Garcia, who completed his high school career with a MHSSA “AAAA” Provincial Championship with the Sisler Spartans, has always had a love for basketball.

During the 2006 championship run, Garcia earned the Most Valuable Player Award and was named as Winnipeg High School Athlete of the Week for March 21/06. In the 2005-06 season, he was ranked as the number three basketball player in the province, named MVP of 2006 Winnipeg Invitational Tournament (WIT) and top defensive player in 2005 WIT, an All-Star in Tier 1 Conference Finals, top defensive player of 2006 Luther Invitational Tournament in Regina, 2006 Graduating All-Star and a 2005 Wesmen Classic Tournament All-Star. Quite the accomplishment, says Bison basketball head coach Kirby Schepp.

“He has a great story to tell,” said Schepp about Garcia. “When you look at him physically, you don’t see a basketball player, being only 5’8”. But when he gets out on the court, he’s a fantastic force to be reckoned with.”

Garcia has also had success in the Men’s Open Lipenos Basketball League (Filipino). In 2006, he was selected as the Most Valuable Player and was the scoring champion. In 2005, he was named rookie of the year and had the most three-pointers in the season.

“He is a true leader in the community, very active in the Filipino community at their Folklorama pavilion and other events. He is a soft-spoken guy with a real drive for basketball,” said Schepp.

Garcia has also been a member of the Lipenos Juvenile Basketball Team, which represented Winnipeg at the North American Basketball Association Tournament in Chicago 2005 and in Toronto (2006).

Hockey stars rewarded

BY CHRIS REID
The Bulletin

Mike Hellyer puts out an incredible effort on the Bison Men’s hockey team. He was recently honored for his efforts both by being named one of the recipients of the 2010 $1,000 R.A. (Sam) Fabro Scholarships, awarded annually by the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame.

Fabro presented Hellyer with his award on November 12 prior to the game between the Bisons and Calgary.

Hellyer is in his fourth season with the Bisons and led in scoring last season.

“Last season Mike played an integral role in the Bisons run to the CIS championships final four,” Bisons men’s hockey coach Mike Sirant said. “He served as assistant captain and played on our top line and power play unit as well as killing penalties.”

Hellyer also was selected to the Canada West all-star team that won silver medals in the World University Games in China. Hellyer, a kinesiology student at the U of M, was an Academic All-Canadian in 2008-09.

Chantal DeSpiegelaere of the Bison women’s hockey team will be honored with the same scholarship on November 19 when she and her teammates play UBC at Max Bell.

DeSpiegelaere is a fourth-year kinesiology student who has spent four seasons on the Bisons defense. She also serves as the women’s hockey team representative on the U of M athletes’ council.

BISON BEAT

Meet Bison Athletes at Behind the Brown & Gold

Happy National Philanthropy Day!

November 15th is National Philanthropy Day – the day when donors and volunteers everywhere are recognized for the philanthropic work they do to make our communities better.

Our campus is a community – one that educates future generations of Canadians, one that helps us understand our world better, and one that brings benefits to the rest of the world.

The University of Manitoba is enriched every day by the support our faculty and staff show to our institution. Quite simply, we wouldn’t exist without you.

Thank you for all that you do to make our community better on a daily basis, and a special thank you to everyone who contributes with a charitable gift.

Join your colleagues in supporting your university.
Visitumanitoba.ca/giving to find out where your donation can make a difference.
All work, all play, all day

On November 3 grade 9 students from across the province spent a day at the University of Manitoba shadowing a parent, relative, friend or volunteer host for Take Our Kids to Work Day. This event is designed to help students understand the importance of staying in school, to help them gain an appreciation of the working world, and to demonstrate the connection between education and the future.

As an active supporter of the Take Our Kids to Work program, the U of M developed a day-long program for the students. The day included exposure to a variety of occupations, as well as activities and one-hour workshops highlighting the diverse work happening on the university campus. Among the many activities, students were able to choose to join in a forensics lab to analyze a mock crime scene, or to be introduced to a variety of reptiles, or learn some interesting facts about bubbles and foams in food.

Better than milk & cookies

A team of students from the University of Manitoba competed in the American Association of Cereal Chemists International (AACC) product development competition held in Savannah, Georgia on October 25. The product Blue Fruit Bar won second place and a substantial monetary reward for Joel Lamoureux, a Food Science student, and Tara Ayotte, a Human Nutritional Sciences student. Lamoureux and Ayotte developed the prototype as part of a team with Feifei Xu and Susan Chen in the FOOD4510 / HNSC4280 Food Product Development course during the 2010 winter term, and then went on to put the finishing touches to their popular product. The product was a bi-layered (apple and blueberry) gluten-free, naturally sweetened, oat glucan bar with dried fruits. The University of Manitoba team was the only Canadian team, and place first or second in each of the last four AACC competitions.

Could you make a book by hand? Could you learn to read blindfolded? Some students found out at the U of M Archives, home to an impressive collection of old, rare, and valuable books. Professors David Watt and Vanessa Warne shared some of the Archive’s most interesting treasures. Students looked at rare medieval manuscripts and learned how to make a manuscript of our own. They also looked at a fragile inkless book made for blind readers and used their fingers to try to break its unfamiliar code.

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Toll free: 1-800-506-0005
www.mcvoirgroup.com
karen.mcvoir@nbpcd.com

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Member-Canadian Investor Protection Fund

We be chillin’

Fifty-five costumed Asper School of Business students raised money for the charitable organization The United Way by jumping into an ice-cold pool on November 3. The event, dubbed “Chillin’ for Charity,” is tied to the JDC West business competition, which is being held in Saskatoon this year. The U of M team — Team Toba — has raised $2 per cent, $8,203, of the set goal of $10,000; they hope to raise over $20,000 in total.

For more information call 474-6839

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Coffee With a Co-Worker

The Bulletin plays 10 or 20 questions with Bill Stefura

Coffee or tea? Orange Pekoe tea, one sugar, one cream.

Medical research tech Bill Stefura’s secret weapon? A lucky lawn chair. He calls it “old school” because it’s one of those antique aluminum frame ones with colourful nylon strands strung for the seat and back. It belonged to his dad, and he took it with him when he goes to watch his two sons play football. One is 17, the other 19.

When he started work at the Bannatyne Campus in 1982 as a research technician in genetics, he was right across the street from the building where he was born. Over the years he has seen the campus and hospital complex grow, and has since moved to the department of immunology’s lab, run by Dr. Kent HayGlass. It is the base for a national research study called CHILD (Canadian Healthy Infants Longitudinal Development). Stefura says that they are part of “a national team of researchers across Canada involved in a study of 5,000 families, and that will follow Canadian children from before birth to five years of age to investigate the factors in the development of allergic diseases.”

He’s always had an interest in science. He likes the methodology of it, the need to do things right. Though, he laughs, “no [scientific experiment] result is a waste.”

The people who are part of the lab are like a team or a family he says, one that he’s proud to be part of. “It’s also very satisfying to see past students and post-doc fellows that our lab has mentored to successfully move on to other research institutions and establish their own productive research labs.”

What is your childhood hero? I remember that I did admire the astronauts who flew the Apollo space missions, because I always thought it was amazing that people could walk on the moon. I imagined that being a spaceship hero? I’m not sure which order I admired those who did the work? Sometimes I can be heard starting a sentence with “scientifically speaking” or asking, “Where is the scientific logic?”

Who was your childhood hero? I remember that I did admire the astronomers who flew the Apollo space missions, because I always thought it was amazing that people could walk on the moon. I imagined that being a spaceship hero? I’m not sure which order I admired those who did the work? Sometimes I can be heard starting a sentence with “scientifically speaking” or asking, “Where is the scientific logic?”

What do you value in friends? Honesty.

Something you think is underestimated: The timeline for good scientific research. For example, I have heard some people say that we can land a vehicle on Mars, but they still can’t cure cancer after all these years. I think that working in research is adding a small piece to a very complicated and large puzzle. Sometimes that’s not understood well is each small piece can take years or decades before it can be added.

Name one thing not too many people know about you. I love the mountains, even though I have always lived in Winnipeg. I enjoy downhill skiing.

As a kid, I imagined that flying in a spaceship had to be the neatest thing.

In your free time: I spend as much time with my two sons as possible. I also like to go for walks or hikes on trails.

A favourite childhood memory? Loved spending summers at the lake with my family, cousins and friends.

Water-skiing, fishing and campfires under patio lanterns.

Place you’d like to visit: Chamonix in France to ski the longest ski run in the world, at 22 km long.

What you appreciate in another person: A different kind of thought or ideology than mine.

Your motto is: Things could be better, but they could also be worse.

An unusual experience at work? Stuck on the elevator in the BMSB, with no cell phone. I asked security to please call my wife to inform her that she was only there about 60 minutes before maintance freed me. My wife was eventually convinced it was no hoax.

Your favourite record/CD of all time: If I had to pick only one, Peter Frampton, “Frampton Comes Alive.”

Anything else you’d like people to know about you? I enjoy Manitoba summers hiking and camping — in a tent. And cheering on my two sons at their football games. Go Rifles, go Lancers! And I actually still enjoy snowelling in the winter.

U of M student perspectives

Students blog about university experience

Student blogger: Barret Hildebrandt

Faculty: 3rd year, Education
PROGRAM: Physical Education
COMPLETED: Bachelor of Kinesiology
Pursuing: Bachelor of Education

Barret Hildebrandt has a simple message he wants to share: being active and physically fit is important to overall health and well-being. It’s a message that he is so passionate about sharing, he changed his career path to do so.

Several years ago, Barret had designs on being a computer programmer, earning an 18-month Information Technology diploma and cutting his teeth at a desk job. But it wasn’t long before he was cooking up new plans.

“I got hooked on the sport of running. My desk job as a computer programmer became boring and I desired a career that aligned with my passion for being physically active.”

So Barret went back to school, enrolling as a mature student at the University of Manitoba and getting a physical education degree in Kinesiology. Today, he is working on his Education degree with the goal of becoming a high school phys-ed teacher.

Although coming to the U of M as a mature student has its share of challenges, Barret says it didn’t take long for him to adapt.

“Learning to study and balance academics with other life priorities was challenging. Once I figured out how to balance everything I felt more comfortable. Now I feel very glad to have gone back to school to change careers.”

The bottom line is that “hard work pays off and you are never too old to go back to school,” he says.

One of the rewards for returning to school was getting involved in Bison Sports, something Barret cites as a highlight of his time at university.

Barret also points to the U of M’s diversity of faculties, programs and activities as a boon not only to himself, but to all students on campus.

“The U of M offers so many extracurricular activities and things to get involved with. My one piece of advice however would be that you should spend your time and money here wisely and have a career oriented mindset if you are going to the long haul and complete a degree.”

Water-skiing, fishing and campfires under patio lanterns.

Place you’d like to visit: Chamonix in France to ski the longest ski run in the world, at 22 km long.

What you appreciate in another person: A different kind of thought or ideology than mine.

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From the archives

The University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections has recently acquired a new addition to the Elizabeth Thornton (Mary George) fonds (A-10-62). Bestselling local author Mary George (pen name Elizabeth Thornton) was an avid reader and author of historical romance novels. Having moved to Winnipeg with her family from Aberdeen, Scotland in 1969, George worked first as an elementary school teacher, then as a Pastoral Assistant at First Presbyterian Church. George discovered romance novels seemingly by accident and fell in love with the genre. After publishing her first book, The Bluemont Bride, in 1983 to widespread popular success, George began writing full-time. She authored two novellas and 27 historical romance novels, the last of which will be published in November 2010.

The collection held by the archives contains notebooks full of research materials and notes made by George during the writing process, as well as two complete manuscripts and other materials relating to her novels The Marriage Trap (2005), and The Bachelor Trap (2006). The collection is such that it allows interested researchers an inside look at George’s method of writing. Notebooks full of outlines, timelines, historical research, detailed character sketches, correspondence with her editors, and notations of all shapes and sizes will attract fans of George’s work as well as anyone curious about the writing process and novels published for the popular market.

Andrea Martin, archival studies student and intern at Archives & Special Collections
All abuzz in the counting room
Mirror symmetry experiment poised to discover ‘new physics’

A team of researchers from the University of Manitoba is working around the clock at world-renowned subatomic physics research centre Jefferson Laboratory (JLab) in Newport News, Virginia, on a new experiment that may shed light on the most fundamental structure of matter.

“...This is a very exciting time for us” says Shelley Page, University of Manitoba physicist. “We have been designing and building this new experiment for almost 10 years, and are now finally beginning to take data.

The clock is ticking; we only have 18 months to get a result because we are only scheduled to have priority for beam time until May 2012.”

The experiment uses a high energy electron beam to measure the ‘weak charge’ of the proton – a fundamental property, distinct from but analogous to its more familiar electric charge – hence, the experiment's acronym: ‘Qweak.’

Page, a spokesperson for the research team, explains: “Many of these systems have never been tested before, since we only had access to the beam after our experiment was installed this summer. Everything is custom-made, state of the art – pushing the envelope.”

The potential payoff is huge, as Qweak is uniquely sensitive to what experts call “physics beyond the Standard Model.” A successful result could reveal the existence of a new fundamental force in nature that physicists have so far only dreamed of, and would be complementary to searches at the highest energy scales such as the Large Hadron Collider project in Geneva, Switzerland.

Page explains that the trick to detecting the proton’s weak charge is to zoom in on the weak interaction’s unique property of mirror-symmetry violation, which means that two identical experiments, reflected in a mirror, yield results that differ in a tiny but reproducible way. No other force in nature does this.

The Qweak experiment uses JLab’s very high quality polarized electron beams to achieve the desired sensitivity. When the beam is reflected in a mirror by reversing its polarization, changes to its other properties are vanishingly small — its position changes by only a few nanometers, a few times the diameter of a large atom. Achieving such incredible beam stability is not just luck, but rather the culmination of many years of development work by the lab’s polarized electron source group, the best in the world.

Since the Qweak experiment was conceived in 2001, University of Manitoba physicists have been a driving force in designing and building it, through a collaboration that has been steadily growing and now stands at 111 researchers from the U.S., Canada and overseas. Page and James Birchall, also from the Faculty of Science at the University of Manitoba, are currently on sabbatical at JLab in Newport News, helping to get the long-awaited measurements underway. Graduate student Scott MacEwan and postdoc Rob Mahurin are based at JLab. Faculty members Michael Gerick and Wimien van Oers are working full-time, together with Ph.D. students Ji Jie and Peiqing Wang and research associates Larry Lee, Des Ramsay, Vladas Tuvski and others.

The Canadian team, which also includes researchers from the Universities of Winnipeg, Northern British Columbia, and TRIUMF, Canada’s National Laboratory for Particle and Nuclear Physics, is the largest external group in the international collaboration. It plays a key role in developing virtually all of the major subsystems of the Qweak experiment. This includes the enormous magnetic spectrometer ‘QTOR’ which deflects the scattered electron beam onto the main quartz Cerenkov detectors, designed and modeled by Willie Falk and built with support from NSERC and TRIUMF; the main detectors themselves, a sensitive diagnostic scanning detector, and a novel set of position sensitive diamond strip detectors that are installed in the new polarimeter which will be used to confirm that the electron beam is tuned up for maximum sensitivity. Canada has also provided the lion’s share of the sensitive readout electronics, designed and built at the TRIUMF Lab in Vancouver.

The Canadian contributions have been funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), with infrastructure support from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and TRIUMF; other elements have been funded by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation.

How is it going so far? “There’s a buzz of excitement in the counting room, where we gather the data,” says Page. “It runs 24/7. We had to limit the number of people so that the shift workers would have room to think. This is the ‘commissioning’ part of the experiment where we turn things on, find a problem, fix it, move on to the next one. We are learning new things every day about the experiment, refining our systems and approaches, solving problems, acquiring and analyzing test data and pushing ahead.”

>> For more information, go to: http://www.jlab.org/qweak

Above, from left: Michael Gerick, Shelley Page, Jim Birchall.

Doctor recognized for HIV/AIDS work in India

BY MARIANNE MAYS WIEBE
The Bulletin
University of Manitoba professor at Community Health Sciences
Shiva Halli has been honoured with the Rajyotsava Award for his contribution towards fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic in India.

The award from the government of Karnataka, an Indian state with a population of 60 million, is similar to an Order of India state for their contribution and achievement in their respective fields.

Along with Stephen Moses and Jamie Blanchard of the Faculty of Medicine, Halli has been working in India for the past nine years. He spends around six months of the year there.

The award includes 100,000 rupees ($2500), a gold medal and a citation. It was handed out on November 1, 2010.

>> For more information go to: humanecology website at: umanitoba.ca/faculties/humanecology/centennial/index.html

Shiva Halli.
events

University of Manitoba

FORT GARRY + BANNATYNE CAMPUSES

LECTURES, SYMPOSIA, SEMINARS

PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY COLLOQUIUM
Friday, November 19 | 3:30 p.m.
“3D Simulations of Morphological and Spectral Evolution of Supernova Remnants Undergoing Particle Acceleration” by Gillesville, Physics and Astronomy, 330 Allen Bldg.

CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS SERIES
Pathways to Justice
Monday, Nov 22 | 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.
“Indian Residential Schools Litigation” by Donna Miller, U of M Duff Robin Chair, Law and Political Studies & ADM federal justice; “Social and psychological bases of responses to historical injustices” by Katherine Stazyk, Psychology, in Sister Boardroom, Law Library (4th floor Law School), U of M.

HEALTH, LEISURE AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE SEMINAR SERIES
Monday, November 22 | 2:00 p.m.

NURSING RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES
Wednesday, November 24 | 12:00 p.m.
“Repositioning Tobacco Use as a Social Justice Issue” by Berita Cohen. In 370 Helen Glass Centre for Nursing, For MBTelehealth call 477-8080 or e-mail research.nursing@umanitoba.ca

CLINICAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY Toward Healthy Workplaces
Thursday, Nov 25 | 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
“Identifying and Dealing with Bullying and Mistreatment” by Karen Harlos, associate professor and inaugural chair, Business & Administration, University of Winnipeg. In Theatre B, Basic Med. Sc. Bldg., 745 Bannatyne. For MBTelehealth call 787-3876 or e-mail abruyere@exchange.hsc.mb.ca

PERFORMANCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE MICH RESEARCH ROUNDS
Thursday, November 25 | 12:00 p.m.
“Emerging Roles of Transcription Factor, Methyl CpG Binding Protein 2 (MECP2) in Myelination of Brain” by Parveen Vora, PhD candidate, Faculty of Pharmacy. In 500 John Buhler Research Centre.

CENTRE FOR PROFESSIONAL & APPLIED ETHICS LECTURE
Friday, November 26 | 12:30-1:30 p.m.
“Feminism, Democracy and Multiculturalism: The Ethics of Face Veils” by Margaret Ogrodnick, U of M, Politics. In 409 Tier.

MEDICAL MICROBIOLOGY SPECIAL SEMINAR SERIES
Tuesday, Dec 7, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Symposium on Cerebrospinal fluid and Associated Diseases. Guest speaker presentations by Thomas Louie, Medicine and Microbiology & Infectious Diseases, U of Calgary; Michael Muyzer, Medical Microbiology & Internal Medicine, U of M, Chief, Antimicrobial Resistance and Nosocomial Infections, National Microbiology Laboratory; John Embil, Medical Microbiology & Internal Medicine, U of M, Director, Infection Prevention and Control Unit, Health Sciences Centre and Michelle Allia, Medical Microbiology U of M, Clinical Microbiologist, Diagnostic Services of Manitoba, Medical Director, Microbiology Discipline, Diagnostic Services of Manitoba. In Lecture Theatre 071, Apotex Centre, 750 McPherson Avenue.

O U R  B E S T  S A L E  O F  T H E  Y E A R

November 15 to December 22
University of Manitoba Book Store
Fort Garry & Bannatyne Campus

UPCOMING MUSIC EVENTS
All music events take place in Eva Clare Hall unless otherwise indicated

Academic Job Opportunities
A full listing of employment opportunities at the University of Manitoba can be found at humanitoba.ca. If you wish to apply for openings at the university, please include the position number when applying. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. Please include the position number when applying for opening at the university.

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FOR INFORMATION: e-mail: bulletin@umanitoba.ca

The Bulletin publishes events involving the university community at no cost.

The deadline for the December 2 Bulletin is November 24 at 4:30 p.m.

E-mail events to bulletin@umanitoba.ca
November 18, 2010

Bringing Research to LIFE

In brief

Twice a Winner

Gerarda Cronin, professor and associate head in the Dept. of Pediatrics and Child Health in the Faculty of Medicine, and director of Quality and Decision Support for the Child Health Program at the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, has received the 2010 Canadian Association of Paediatric Health Centres (CAPHC) Contribution to Child Health Award.

Presented during the 2010 CAPHC Annual Conference, held in Winnipeg from Oct. 17 to 20, the award recognizes Cronin’s work in children’s health in the areas of research, teaching, safety leadership and quality.

Cronin, along with colleagues David Horne, John Lee, Mike Maas, Reeni Somi, Murray Kesselman, Tanya Drews, Stasa Veroukis, and B J Hancock, won best poster in the category of Innovation in Clinical Practice for their work “Paediatric rescue extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation, without work ‘Paediatric rescue extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation, without work”.

Innovation in Clinical Practice for their work “Paediatric rescue extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation, without work’” has grown into one of the premier events at the annual meeting.

Poster and exhibit fair, showcasing abstract submissions for consideration as poster presentations invites abstract submissions for consideration as poster presentations.

Upcoming event

Café Scientifique
Keeping Your Skeleton Healthy

Monday, Nov. 29, 2010, 7 p.m.
McNally Robinson, Grant Park 1120 Grant Ave.

Café Scientifiques bring together experts with non-researchers (like you, me, neighbours, friends) in a relaxed atmosphere to talk about important health questions. Please join us for a lively discussion, debate, and refreshments.

FREE ADMISSION EVERYONE WELCOME

For more information: http://www.umanitoba.ca/research/ cafe_scientifique.html

Seating is limited. Please RSVP to research_communications@umanitoba.ca or (204) 474-9020

Upcoming public presentation.

Water Woes

U of M researcher investigates Manitoba’s water supply

BY KATIE CHALMERS-BROOKS

Trish Stadnyk will never forget the poverty-stricken moms she met in Chile, women who had only filthy water to offer their newborn babies or to drink themselves. Too dehydrated to produce their own breast milk, they were forced to give their infants milk produced by contaminated goats and cows. The animals quenched their thirst at a nearby river tainted by arsenic and soon the local infants were showing signs of poisoning.

It’s a difficult scenario for Canadians to grasp, Stadnyk points out, given most of us have access to a clean glass of water with the turn of the tap. The civil engineering and water resources researcher has travelled the world exploring water-related issues—from the Alps in Europe to New Zealand—and has seen first-hand the reality of the planet’s water crisis. A big part of the problem is that the global distribution of fresh water is uneven.

“I think in Canada water is viewed as a right, that everyone has a right to it. But in other parts of the world it’s viewed as a privilege. If you don’t have the money, you don’t have the access and it’s a basic human survival need,” says Stadnyk.

“Canada, for instance, has a very small population but has the majority of the fresh water resource and an area among the highest population, but with probably the least amount of fresh water supply is Africa.”

Despite Canada’s apparent abundance of water, scientists don’t yet have a clear picture of what the future holds. Stadnyk is investigating the water supply across Canada and zeroing in on Manitoba specifically as she tries to figure out whether there is enough to meet demand down the road. Stadnyk will share her research findings with the public at an upcoming presentation on Dec. 1 at the Fort Garry campus.

Even though there is considerable flooding on the Prairies, this excess water is not conserved. Any water flowing into the province ultimately ends up in the Arctic Ocean. In recent years river levels have risen, which wreaks havoc on basements and city infrastructure, disrupting the natural cycle.

“We have to be a lot more conscious of where water is coming from and where we’re taking our supply from,” she says.

Over the next decade, Stadnyk will use models to try and predict water supply in the future, as far down the road as 2080. The models are fine-tuned by testing them in real-life weather events. For example, she’ll compare a model of what happens in a river following a rain storm with what actually does occur and gauge the accuracy. So far, she has discovered that certain parts of the province are becoming wetter while others are getting dryer.

If Canada one day experiences a water shortage, it would rear its head first on the Prairies, Stadnyk believes. Farmers use up a lot of water to grow crops and raise animals for butchering, products which are ultimately shipped elsewhere.

“Day manufacture water but Stadnyk questions whether that can be done affordably.”

Manitobans can do their part to protect the water supply here and elsewhere in the world through conservation, says Stadnyk, who won’t shower for longer than five minutes. “There is a finite supply on the Earth so the more we use here, in essence, the more we’re taking away from the global supply.”

She also encourages consumers to buy locally when possible. Often the imported fruits, vegetables, wines and coffee beans we put in our grocery carts are grown in regions where water is scarce and it takes a lot of water to cultivate these products. “We’re harvesting the water away from people who can’t afford it,” she notes.

Stadnyk also suggests watering lawns less during a dry summer. Not only is it more important to reserve water for drinking or agricultural use but it’s actually better for the grass to go dormant during a drought, she says.

“It’s possible that scientists will one day manufacture water but Stadnyk questions whether that can be done affordably.”

Stadnyk will discuss her research at the Robert B. Schultz Lecture Theatre in St. John’s College as part of the Bringing Research to Life Speaker Series.

Published by Research Communications and Marketing Office of the Vice-President (Research)
Comments, submissions and event listings to: research_communications@umanitoba.ca
Phone (204) 474-7300 Fax (204) 261-0325

upcoming public presentation.

BY KATIE CHALMERS-BROOKS

Trish Stadnyk from the Faculty of Engineering will share her research findings at an upcoming public presentation.

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Meet the dean

BY MARIANNE MAYS-WIEBE
The Bulletin

Acting dean of the Faculty of Engineering Douglas Buchanan defies anyone to go through 20 minutes of their day without using something designed or implemented by an engineer. It’s pretty much impossible to avoid engineering in everyday life, he says, but most people don’t realize it. Engineers are typically “ubiquitous and invisible.”

That is changing, however. According to Buchanan, “More and more, engineers are working with people in other areas to solve the problems that we have in the world. They are stepping out from behind the scenes to work collaboratively with other professionals, and in more public capacities. To be there from the decision-making onward.”

In today’s increasingly multi-disciplinary and diverse environment, he says, “engineers need to be able to work with others; they need to have a broader perspective.”

Historically engineers have worked largely as facilitators: solving very specific problems, often working behind the scenes or responding to decisions made by others. And accordingly, says Buchanan, engineering education has tended towards a regimented, requirements-based approach with a limited scope of specialization and training.

The Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba, which currently has approximately 1200 undergraduates and 400 graduate students, offers four separate streams — biosystems engineering, civil, mechanical and electrical & computer engineering. Each of the program areas is very specialized.

That’s not unusual. “Engineering education generally tends to be quite focused,” he notes. “You need the courses in calculus, thermodynamics, etc. These are very concentrated programs.”

From his own educational and work history, however, he knows that an expanded, multidisciplinary perspective can pay off. It did for him. Buchanan has worked, studied and researched with the top people in his chosen field of micro-electronics and nano-technology. He’s rubbed shoulders with Nobel Prize winners and worked with Bob Dennard, the inventor of DRAM, whom he calls “one of the brightest, hardest-working people I have ever met.”

‘Being away for a while was the best thing. It broadened my view.’

Global perspective: embracing change

He started as a student at the U of M, first in Architecture (at the time called Environmental Design) and then chose instead to follow his father’s path and to become an electrical engineer.

He continued on to doctoral research at Durham University (UK) on the advice of a U of M professor whom he credits as a mentor and friend, the late Howard Card. For three of the four years there he was also teaching.

While his work ethic still drives him, it’s now “decades rather than years,” he says. “That is a much saner pace.”

But he worked hard, “twice as hard, if necessary.” And Card told him, “There may always be someone smarter in the room, but if you work hard, you can be among the best.”

“I have been lucky enough to do research in one of the best places in the world. So coming back here the new thing for me wasn’t the research side of things so much, but the teaching side of things,” he says.

He believes himself to be lucky in other ways too: his partner Annie keeps him going in the things,” he says.

One of the best places in the world. So coming back here the new thing for me wasn’t the research side of things so much, but the teaching side of things,” he says.

He believes himself to be lucky in other ways too: his partner Annie keeps him going in the things,” he says.

“Being away for a while was the best thing. It broadened my view.”

He has a different take on things than a lot of people because of where he’s been, having done both intensive academic research and work in a fast-paced business sector.

For one, he says, he is used to change. He likes it, in fact, and is a great believer in change. And it’s just as well, given the dynamic and increasingly globalized learning environment of today’s world.

Work hard, give back

Until he met the late U of M professor Howard Card, the acting dean had no thoughts of doing graduate work. He says he was an “okay” student — not one of those students sitting in the first three rows.

But he worked hard, “twice as hard, if necessary.” And Card told him, “There may always be someone smarter in the room, but if you work hard, you can be among the best.”

“The idea of what’s important in education within engineering is changing to some degree,” he says. And just how to teach and train engineers at the U of M is “in a bit of a state of flux right now.”

Currently program areas within the faculty secure accreditation from CEAB (the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board, part of Engineering Canada); the CEAB sets the requirements within each program area.

The emphasis is largely on the teaching and program requirements — the “inputs.” But most businesses, says Buchanan, “don’t work on inputs, they work on outputs: what you are delivering.”

Considering an outputs-based educational model rather than one built on inputs alone is part of a shift occurring within engineering education.

Outputs-based education also encourages active learners who participate in the learning process — perhaps part of the overall move towards more collaborative approaches.

Buchanan cites the new joint degree as another example of the shift in approach: Biomedical Engineering has recently been introduced as an official graduate program in engineering. (The specialty had been offered for some time in a non-official capacity.)

The degree is a mix of science, medicine, science and engineering, and it’s where the future of engineering education is going, believes Buchanan.

“The bio-med is probably the best example, but there are others. People doing materials work interact with designers of airplanes in Aerospace, for example,” he says.

“So there are all kinds of interesting ways of working together, of collaborating. Of making engineering and engineers more visible.”

Undergrad Business Plan Competition

To be eligible for the Wes Nicol Entrepreneurial Award, submit a business plan for your existing business or business idea. Open to all U of M undergraduate students.

PRIZES

1st Prize: $5000
2nd Prize: $3000
3rd Prize: $1000
Runner-up: $500
Runner-up: $500

Application Due Date: Friday, December 3, 2010
Competition Date: January 4
For more information contact the Sta Clark Centre.

Starting a business? Don’t know where to turn?

Get free information* from the L. Kerry Vickar Business Law Clinic at the Faculty of Law The clinic is designed for entrepreneurs who require information* regarding new business organizations: incorporation, partnership, sole proprietorship and non-profit.

Call 474-9949

*Students do not give legal advice