Visionary Vanier: Grad students awarded scholarships

A civil engineering graduate student, Milligan is developing tools to evaluate and manage transportation systems in the vast Northern Prairie region of Canada. He will measure the performance of northern roads by gathering data on issues such as infrastructure, condition, safety levels, system reliability, user costs, environmental impacts and socioeconomic outcomes. The research will be conducted while working with the U of M Transport Group, an internationally recognized research team.

Lovat is a pharmacology and therapeutics graduate student, examining the naturally occurring pre-diabetic state experienced during pregnancy. Diabetes is caused by the body’s resistance to insulin, and increases various health risks to both mother and fetus which could include obesity, high blood pressure, blindness, and limb loss. This pre-diabetic state may be related to a hormone called Hepatic Insulin Sensitizing Substance (HISS) and Lovat hopes to better understand HISS by studying animal pregnancies.

“The impressive level and scope of this research proves that these students are certainly deserving of this prestigious honour,” said Digvir Jayas, vice-president (research) at the U of M. “They are well on their way to becoming leaders in their fields, and we’re anticipating that even more outstanding work will follow.”

“I congratulate each of the recipients on this significant achievement,” said Brenda Hann, acting dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the U of M. “I am sure these individuals, recognized as the best and brightest, will go on to have an impact on not only Canada but the world.”

Each graduate student will receive $150,000 over the next three years, or $50,000 per year, to fund their research.

Visionary conversations

The University of Manitoba is launching a new speaker series at Homecoming 2011, the series will be hosted by President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. David T. Barnard. At the premier event, “Apocalypse or Utopia?” the university’s leading minds will share their insights on issues affecting our world and how the decisions we make today will shape our future.

Apocalypse or Utopia?
Wednesday, September 14, 2011
Robert B. Schultz Theatre, St. John’s College, Fort Garry Campus
Reception in Galleria 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Panel Discussion 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Featured speakers: David Barber, Rick Holley, Karen Busby, Michael Freund, Diana Brydon and Brenda Elias.

The Visionary Conversations speaker series will continue throughout the 2011-2012 year with the following topics:

October 18: Livable Cities
November 9: Our Aging Society
December 14: Our Changing Climate
February 15, 2012: Managing Our Water Resources for the Future
April 11, 2012: Human Rights and Gender Issues
June 13, 2012: The Food We Eat

BY JANE HARASYMCHUK
For The Bulletin

Graduate students at the University of Manitoba are making a name for themselves by tackling some critical issues with the financial support of Canada’s top research award.

Craig Milligan and Nicole Lovat are among the trailblazing recipients of this year’s Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships (CGS).

Both Milligan and Lovat had their nominations reviewed by multi-disciplinary peer-review committees and a board of Canadian and international experts. They were chosen based on their exceptional leadership skills and high scholarly achievement, with both students boasting a GPA of well over 4.0 in their undergraduate and graduate studies. Among numerous distinctions and awards, Milligan has won a gold medal in civil engineering while Lovat has a patent on file.

Graduate students Craig Milligan and Nicole Lovat smile for the camera after the announcement that they were chosen to receive prestigious Vanier scholarships.

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In the News

Canadian-controlled bread basket: Boon or burden?

July 29, 2011 Winnipeg Free Press

With the clock ticking on the introduction of legislation to end the Canadian Wheat Board’s monopoly over the marketing of wheat and barley, it’s becoming increasingly clear that whatever form a successor organization takes, it will have a tough go of it. In a paper recently released by the Frontier Centre for Public Policy, U of M economist Milton Boyce concludes the end of the CWB would likely produce benefits to farmers and the industry. But the paper actually serves to bolster one of the key arguments Canadian Wheat Board officials have been making about the board’s relative survival in the aftermath of the legislation: a post-monopoly CWB will be hard-pressed to deliver value-added service to Prairie farmers. In his paper, “Removal of the Canadian Wheat Board Monopoly: Future Changes for Farmers and the Grain Industry,” Boyce concludes that a successor entity to the CWB “may face challenges in the long term as a voluntary board, whatever organization form it would take.”

Weatherman, soon to be wrong more often

July 18, 2011 The Globe and Mail

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has designed its next generation of polar-orbiting meteorological satellites to continue the task of watching the weather from above. But the cash-strapped American government is short on funds for the project. Experts say a gap in service between the aging orbiters and the next generation could weaken forecasting of extreme weather, and gaps in coverage could also compromise long-term climate records. Polar orbiting satellites operated by the United States and others produce data that help predict extreme weather, including tornadoes, floods and droughts, three to five days in advance. Ronald Stewart, department head of environment and geography, and an extreme weather expert, describes this meteorological project as technology that will become invaluable as weather patterns become more unpredictable due to climate change. The ability to monitor extreme weather and the conditions that lead up to it become even more important “because standard rules don’t apply any more,” he said.

Anxiety and addiction

August 1, 2011 CKNI International

Many people who experience chronic feelings of anxiety about social situations, work and relationships, or other aspects of everyday life often reach for a beer or a glass of wine to quell their unease. According to a new study published in Archives of General Psychiatry by James Bolton, the lead author and a professor in the departments of psychiatry and psychology, self-medicating with alcohol or drugs can increase the risk of alcoholism and other substance-abuse problems, without addressing the underlying anxiety. “People probably believe that self-medication works,” Bolton said. “What people do not realize is that this quick-fix method actually makes things worse in the long term.” Self-medication for anxiety symptoms is common. In the study, which included a nationally representative sample of 34,653 American adults, 13 per cent of the people who had consumed alcohol or drugs in the previous year said they’d done so to reduce their anxiety, fear or panic about a situation. Self-medication and anxiety proved to be a hazardous combination for some of the study participants. People with diagnosed anxiety disorders who self-medicated at the start of the study were two to five times more likely than those who did not self-medicate to develop a drug or alcohol problem within three years, the study found.

Headlines

“Project encourages the youth vote,” Winnipeg Free Press, July 29, 2011, story about political science professor and students volunteering their time to get more youth to vote in upcoming elections.

“Camps keep kids busy while waiting for flood crisis to pass,” Global TV CJOB, CBC, July 26, 2011, story about how children from flooded communities are getting a chance to play at Mini-U camp at the U of M.
New email and calendar system on the way

By Lindsay Stewart Glor
For The Bulletin

Streamingliner and modernizing all components of all ROSE initiatives, especially those focused on new online tools and systems. Many of these initiatives, like the employee self-service tool and university-wide email systems, will bring the U of M in line with what is happening at other Canadian institutions. Others, like the integrated travel tool, will move the university to the new planet. Beginning in September, many of these tools will begin being implemented across campus. One such tool is the new Microsoft Exchange email and calendar system, which will eventually be used by all employees.

While not every U of M employee uses their assigned email account, for many it is their primary method of workplace communication. And while all employees are given a ccumanitoba.ca address, the desktop application they use to access their email varies widely. As part of the information technology (IT) email and calendar initiative, the university is moving to a single email and calendar system across campus. This will streamline communications and enable easy online scheduling between all university employees, as well as connections with external organizations, like the Government of Manitoba, Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA).

We decided on the Microsoft Exchange system not only because it is a great email system and a great integrated calendar system, but because it brings us to the doorstep of adding other integrated communication tools like messaging and video conferences,” says Marvin Kocay, acting CIO and director of computer and network services.

While Kocay is excited about the future possibilities of the new tool, including improved synchronizing of hand-held devices, he recognizes that its implementation will bring big changes for many users. Those employees who don’t currently use Outlook will be moving to a totally new tool, while those currently using Outlook might see a change in design and functionality by Kocay says they will be migrating current email data, including messages and organizational folders, into the new system and that they are investigating options for dealing with calendar data.

Beginning in September, 240 people will take part in an initial training and pilot rollout, Lessons learned from that pilot will be used to adjust the process before migrating over other user groups, which is expected to begin in early October. The plan, says Kocay is to have all employees transferred over to Microsoft Exchange by the Christmas break. The date for adopting Exchange calendar will depend on the strategy used for the calendar initiative.

Read about all of the ROSE initiatives on the resource optimization website at: > www.umanitoba.ca/admin/rose

ORDER OF MANITOBA recipients

Twelve individuals were inducted into the Order of Manitoba on July 15. Each of whom are University of Manitoba graduates, staff members or are closely connected with the university.

They are: Patrick Choy M.Sc., Ph.D. M.D. FAHA FACS, a distinguished scientist and Professor Emeritus who is an international leader in the study of heart disease; Art DeFehr, BComm/MBA, a businessman, dean, extended education, Robert Ouellette, program director, Aboriginal counselling skills certificate program administrator, Aboriginal focus programs, who also coordinated the ceremony and events. Guest speaker was Don Robinson, respected instructor and friend of the Aboriginal counselling skills certificate students.

Following the ceremony, families and friends who attended, along with the students, enjoyed dinner, catered by the University of Manitoba Catering Services.

ROSE UPDATE

New electronic tools and systems.

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The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), one of Canada’s largest funding agencies, recently announced that the U of M will receive more than $2.5 million to support research activities.

The funding will support grants, scholarships and fellowships for faculty, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

“This funding reflects confidence in the high level of research that the University of Manitoba is known for,” said Diger Jayas, the university’s vice-president (research). “I congratulate all our talented professors, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows whose excellence has been recognized with this new investment.”

From documenting Indigenous art history to teaching the new literacies required to engage productively in the 21st century global world, this investment will help kick-start 23 research projects with combined total funding of $1,485,629, and support 40 master’s, doctoral and postdoctoral scholarships and fellowships with $1,062,500 in funding.

The research grants are provided through SSHRC’s Insight and Connexions programs.

The scholarships and fellowships are awarded to Canadian’s best and brightest researchers in the humanities and social sciences. These funds are awarded to Canadian’s best and brightest graduate students and postdoctoral scholars who are on the cusp of their research careers.

Good news for graduate crop research

Graduate students in the University of Manitoba’s Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences now have another opportunity to access funding for their research thanks to a generous gift of $100,000 from the Western Grains Research Foundation.

The Western Grains Research Foundation Endowment Fund Graduate Scholarship is set up to fund master’s or doctoral students at Prairie universities who are focusing on some aspect of crop research. The scholarships will support and encourage outstanding students to further their studies in crop research, to generate improved technology and productivity for Western crop producers.

Publishing accomplishments for Eskin

Michael Eskin, professor and associate dean in the Faculty of Human Ecology, has been selected as the co-editor of Lipid Technology by Wiley-Blackwell.

Lipid Technology is an international news and review journal presenting the latest developments worldwide in the science, technology, markets and commerce of oils, fats, oils, and related products, such as biotechnology, food, agriculture, nutrition and pharmaceuticals.

Eskin also just published his tenth book, Canola: Chemistry, Production, Processing and Utilization.
The science of compound creation

BY MAUREEN PAISLEY
For The Bulletin

Are naturally-sourced vitamins different from the same vitamin prepared by chemical synthesis in a lab? It’s a question that many people may ask.

The view that organic matter is different from inorganic matter because it possesses a “vital essence” can be traced to ancient Egypt. Up until the early 19th century, even some chemists believed that humans might observe the organic world but could not replicate it, because of this metaphysical “essence.” Today chemists understand this is not true; the two vitamins are the same.

Further, the field of organic chemistry is the study of molecules based on carbon atoms. Including hydrocarbons, the compound benzofuran is a cyclic compound which features benzene rings with oxygen atoms.

These rings are just carbon compounds to treat serious fungal infections, or even deadly tropical diseases like Leishmaniasis, African Sleeping Sickness, or Chagas Disease.

The method devised by Geary and Hultin makes it very straightforward to create many structural variations on the benzofuran core. Once the new benzofuran compounds are created, the next step is to test them for their ability to stop the growth of fungal cells. By testing many related structures the chemists can learn what structural features contribute to effectiveness and which features have a negative effect.

This fundamental work of scientists requires dedication, commitment and time, and the basic research of chemists, like Geary and Hultin, is the starting point of that arduous road to the development of new drugs to fight disease.

U of M bio-med camp inspires future ‘Bill Nyes’

BY ILANA SIMON
For The Bulletin

More than 150 Aboriginal, new Canadian and inner-city students participated in the fifth annual Biomedical Youth Camp, this year in their own backyard.

The free, week-long event, staged by the University of Manitoba’s Faculty of Medicine, is aimed at underserved populations in the inner city, who might not normally have the opportunity to attend science camp. This year, 44 per cent of participants were students from Aboriginal schools and the majority live in the inner city.

Open to youth ages eight to 17, Biomedical Youth Camp is housed at Niji Mahika School, home to the Inner-City Science Centre, developed in 2009 by the Faculty of Medicine in partnership with the Winnipeg School Division and the Winnipeg Foundation. The ICSC exposes young inner-city learners to state-of-the-art science equipment, science experiments and mentoring for science fair projects.

Nine-year-old Autumn Baloghan said science camp was fun and that she particularly liked the hands-on chemistry experiments. “I learned there are good germs and bad germs,” said the first time Biomedical Youth Camp participant, who lives near Niji Mahika.

Dakota Brooks, a 15-year-old student at Gorden Bell High School, also enjoyed Biomedical Youth Camp. “I liked the forensic science best, especially the fingerprinting and solving crimes,” she said, adding that she would like to pursue forensic science under the microscope.

And for neighbourhood kids like Kody Marsden, his smiling face said it all. “Science camp is fun especially the chemical stuff,” said the eight-year-old student at Pinkham School who was attending his first Biomedical Youth Camp. What would he like to be when he grows up? “A science guy,” said a grinning Marsden.

Above, photos from this year’s bio-medical camp.

The science of compound creation

Phil Hultin and Laina Geary.

Benzofuran compounds have many potential applications, but the Hultin group is most interested in their potential as drugs to treat serious fungal infections, or even deadly tropical diseases like Leishmaniasis, African Sleeping Sickness, or Chagas Disease.

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A joint University/UMFA committee has been established to investigate anomalies in base salary rates among UMFA Members. The University/UMFA collective agreement establishes a fund of $100,000 to correct anomalies in base salaries for the 2011-2012 contract year.

A salary anomaly is interpreted to mean a salary that is at significant variance with normal salary ranges of department, faculty/school, or library colleagues having comparable experience, rank, and qualifications. Anomaly adjustments are not intended to deal with general market or retention issues, nor to alter past decisions about denial of satisfactory performance increments, slower progress in promotion than a peer, or merit criteria.

The joint committee will consider applications from individual UMFA Members. The committee will also consider applications sent on behalf of Members by their Dean or Director. The application should state clearly the basis or rationale for a salary adjustment, and set out the Member’s case by reference to relevant available salary data.

The Member’s Dean or Director will be asked to comment on the application, and to provide any further information the committee may require, such as the names of comparable peers, details of any inequity at hiring, or relevant prior experience. The committee will consider this information together with the information on the application form. The committee reserves the right to award adjustments where anomalies are identified through the work of the committee. However, the committee will not be undertaking a comprehensive review of all UMFA salaries.

More information and applications can be found at: www.umanitoba.ca/admin/human_resources/staff_relations/academic/1268.htm

The deadline for receipt of applications is 4:00 p.m., Monday, September 19, 2011. Applications can be sent by hard copy or electronic format to:

Dr. Peter Blunden, Chair, Joint Anomalies Committee
C/o Zindra Vancura, Human Resources, 309 Administration Building vancouver@umanitoba.ca 474-6284

Applicants must provide a copy to their Dean or Director, who will be asked to submit their comments to the committee by October 3, 2011.

Salary data on UMFA Members, including rank, years in rank, department, and other relevant criteria, can be reviewed in the UMFA office between the dates of August 15 and September 16. Please call UMFA at 474-8562 to make an appointment.

umnitoba.ca
Running with the wind
Meet the new executive lead, Indigenous Achievement

BY MARIANNE MAP'S WEBBE
The Bulletin

After Deborah Young's legs severely cramped up at Mile 16 of her first marathon—26 miles in total—she forced herself to continue the next 10 miles, and finished the race. In fact, for U of M's new executive lead, Indigenous Achievement, finishing that marathon was "the most amazing, powerful experience: when you see the finish line, and you know you are going to cross it over it after everything you've been through to get there. "It just changes how you view life," she said.

Another life-changing moment for Young was her role in the planning and coordination of the prime minister's Historic Statement of Apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools, delivered in June of 2008.

Add the births of her two children, and those are some pretty spectacular moments—so far. Next on her list of goals is to work in her new position at the university to promote Indigenous knowledge and education.

Excellence and Indigenous education at the University of Manitoba

The former policy advisor with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs has been recruited by the University of Manitoba to fulfill its goal of making Manitoba a centre of excellence in Indigenous education. Young is a member of the Opaskwayk Cree Nation and just last month she began her duties in the newly created position at the U of M as executive lead, Indigenous Achievement.

In this unique role, Young will work with various departments and faculties across the university to drive existing efforts towards the university's vision of Indigenous achievement. She will work with partners across the province and community partnerships as key to her work. "Students are the backbone of our institution," she said. "It's about working with all students—past, present and future students to promote learning and Indigenous knowledge."

Young would also like to see more community and school partnerships. "I want to plant the seed for the love of learning in our younger generation. I think that is so important. Simple things can make a difference. "If you plant the seed early enough, that seed will stay there, and it will grow. It may take a little while for it to grow and blossom, but I'm convinced it will grow. Even if people say it's not possible, I say it is. And it just needs one person to believe and plant that seed. It can make a difference and give hope."

To hear The Bulletin's interview with Deborah Gail Young in its entirety (including her views on her new role and academic life to First Nations issues. But she knew she wanted to come back to Manitoba. "It's sooner than I thought I would come back," she said. "I thought I would come back as a PhD student in my old age!"

Deborah Young, executive lead, Indigenous Achievement.

Young has happily dedicated her professional life to the cultural and economic development of Aboriginal students. It's about working with all students—past, present and future students to promote learning and Indigenous knowledge."

Young also like to think big. "It's a good time to be here at the University of Manitoba. Meeting with the president after my interview, I see that he is really committed to making this university a good place to be, and committed to indigenous education in particular. "So it was easy to say yes." Community partnerships, promoting a love of learning

She sees serving the students and community partnerships as key to her new role. "Students are the backbone of our institution," she said. "It's about informing all of the students, not only

To ’Like’: New face, new voice, on Facebook

Deborah Young, who joined the University of Manitoba in early July in the role of executive lead for Indigenous Achievement, has created a new Facebook page to highlight local, national and international Indigenous achievements and issues.

Young is a member of Opaskwayk Cree Nation in Manitoba and a graduate of the University of Manitoba with bachelor and master's degrees in social work. She spent six years as a policy advisor at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. She was at the Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat, Privy Council Office, where she worked on the First Nation education component of the Kelowna Accord.

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HOMECOMING 2011: CELEBRATE THE EXPERIENCE

HOMECOMING 2011 is an open invitation to all from alumni to the people who study, teach and work at the University of Manitoba every day. Everyone from these diverse communities who call, or who have called, the U of M home can join the celebration! Alumni, faculty, students, staff and friends of the University of Manitoba, come home and Tornadoes! Let’s create a day that helped define you.”

The week of festivities blends traditional events such as the Reunion Dinner and the Gala Concert with new opportunities for visitors to learn more about what is happening at the U of M.

“Homecoming is a very exciting time at the University of Manitoba because we get the opportunity to reconnect with alumni who are ultimately our best advocates and ambassadors,” said Dr. Barnard, President and Vice-Chancellor of U of M.

“We look forward to seeing old friends, meeting new ones and coming together to celebrate how the University of Manitoba is continuously evolving to meet the needs of a new generation of trailblazers, visionaries and innovators.”

What’s new for Homecoming 2011?

Attendees of Homecoming 2011 will be treated to the launch of an innovative panel discussion featuring some of the university’s global thought leaders. The first of seven Visionary Conversations hosted by President and Vice-Chancellor David Barnard takes place at the Robert B. Schultz Lecture Hall at St. John’s College at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 14.

Entitled “Apocalypse or Utopia,” the first panel discussion features panelists David Barber, Rick Holley, Karen Busby, Michael Freund, Diana Brydon and Brenda Ellis and will focus on how the decisions we make today shape our communities, our provinces and our planet.

Photo, near right: Chancellor Harvey Secter and wife, Sandra, Pankiw [BA/65, BEd/69, MEd/72], center, with daughter Maureen [BComm(Hons)/10] and Kevin Parsons [BComm(Hons)/10; Mary wife, Donna; Scott McCulloch [BComm(Hons)/04], Tori Matichuk Garry Workman; Wayne Sprague [BComm(Hons)/70, CA/72] and the award-winning journal

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Celebrate U of M creativity, explore the Eva Fritsch fonds

In the mid-to late 1970s, an exciting new wave of Canadian and regionalist writing, publishing, teaching and editing swept through the University of Manitoba, and in particular St. John’s College.

At this time, faculty and graduate students included such luminaries as Robert Kroetsch, David Arnason, Dennis Cooley, Ken Hughes, Wayne Tefs, Birg Spruxton, George Amabile, Robert Enright and Arthur Adamson. Important new publishing projects developed, such as the award-winning journal Arts Manitoba (now Border Crossings), the national poetry magazine Contemporary Verse 2 founded by Dorothy Livesay (now CV2) and the highly regarded Turnstone Press, which originally operated out of St. John’s College.

Eva Fritsch, a former University of Manitoba Fine Arts student, recently donated a collection of photographs, sketches and correspondence to Archives & Special Collections that documents this exuberant period of regionalist and Canadian literature. Fritsch, born in Goteborg, Sweden, immigrated to Canada in 1958. At the University of Manitoba, she double-majored in printmaking and painting, studying under William Pura, Arnold Saper and Ivan Eyre. Later, Fritsch worked at Turnstone Press as graphic designer and production manager for Contemporary Verse 2 for its first few years. Fritsch also pursued a career as a visual artist and has shown extensively including at the University of Manitoba’s Gallery One. One opportunity to celebrate with alumni who are fundamental to Canada’s Indigenous people. Learn about the significance of Bald Eagle Lodge, as well as how traditional Indigenous knowledge is part of the learning experience at the University of Manitoba.

Lifelong learning is central to Homecoming 2011 and two other new events, both planned for Friday, Sept. 16, build on this theme. The Grand Opening of the Bruce D. Campbell Farm and Food Discovery Centre at the Glenlea Research Station will take visitors young and old on a journey from the farmer’s wheat field to the kitchen table through a series of interactive visits. Named after alumnus Bruce D. Campbell, the interpretive facility is the first of its kind in Canada to explore the way food is made.

The role played by U of M in the creation of another popular beverage, wine, is also part of Homecoming 2011 through a Banville & Jones Wine Co. wine tasting and education event planned for Friday evening and hosted by U of M alumnus and Banville & Jones co-owner Tina Jones.

One of the biggest annual draws at Homecoming is the Saturday afternoon Bison football game. The 2011 game has the added significance of being the last Homecoming game to be played at the Bison Stadium.

“Remember the Bison victory at Homecoming 2007 because it started them on their path towards an undefeated season and a national championship,” said Jana Thorsteinson, Alumni Association acting executive director. “That’s just one of hundreds of memories that have been made on that field during the University of Manitoba because we get the opportunity to reconnect with alumni who are ultimately our best advocates and ambassadors,” said Dr. Barnard, President and Vice-Chancellor of U of M.

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past four decades. We want to ensure that this year’s game is one no one will forget so we want everyone to join us as we pack the stands and cheer on the Brown and Gold.”

Continuing the weekend celebrations on Saturday night is the Reunion Dinner at the Hotel Fort Garry. Comedian and alumnus Dean Jenkinson is reprising his role as emcee and also returning to the event are the University Singers. The Reunion Dinner will also include the Distinguished Alumni Award celebration; this year’s recipient is two-time U of M graduate and former Manitoba premier Howard Pawley.

For generations, the U of M has attracted the best and brightest creative, humanitarian and thought leaders from within Manitoba and around the world. The contributions made by U of M alumni, faculty, students and staff around the globe are reflected in the terms commonly associated with them: visionaries, pioneers, trailblazers and innovators. Homecoming 2011 celebrates this proud history.

Join us Sept. 14 through 18, 2011.

For Homecoming-related questions, contact the Alumni Association at 1-800-668-4908 or 204-474-9946.

Homecoming week details: > > umanitoba.ca/alumni
Meet Janet Yuen, Let's talk Science coordinator

BY MAUREEN PAISLEY
For The Bulletin

Janet Yuen is a Faculty of Science student in her fourth year of the microbiology major program. When she is not busy with her coursework, or working as a teaching assistant in the first-year chemistry labs, Janet is one of three coordinators for the Let's Talk Science program.

Let's Talk Science (LTS) is a national, award-winning, charitable organization that strives to promote science literacy among children and youth in Canada through fun and exciting hands-on activities. The goal of the program is interest children and youth in science and post-secondary education.

Yuen says that she became involved with the program when she was in University 1. “I hung out with my high school friends, and I really didn’t get to know other university students. After first year, we all went separate ways to know other university students. After volunteering with organizations on campus, she decided to apply for a couple of the coordinating positions that became available in two organizations.

“The LTS process was pretty rigorous with the 10-hour apprenticeship program that David [Tang] developed. The reason for the apprenticeship was so that applicants would have a good idea about what coordinating involved,” says Yuen.

At first she thought she didn’t do very well in LTS interview, but she was very disappointed. When she saw that she had a message from Tang on her phone, she was afraid to call him back; she really didn’t want to deal with more bad news.

Much to her surprise, she was offered a position as an LTS coordinator. “I wanted to expand the program, to continue the momentum that [Tang] had started,” Yuen explains. “I was involved with organizing the first All Science Challenge at the University of Manitoba, and my goal was to build on what we had learned.”

Yuen: ‘There is no substitute for doing something you love, and sharing the activity with others’

LTS. She says, “I wanted LTS to also be a community on campus. I wanted to be there for the volunteers and to make sure they felt valued and appreciated.”

Not a small task given that she and her co-coordinators were now working with over 100 volunteers. What Yuen hadn’t anticipated was how those volunteers would inspire her.

“Volunteers are asked to make a minimum commitment of time to receive recognition for their work with the program. However, I was amazed at how many people went far and beyond this time commitment to work with kids in a wide range of activities—from launching pop-bottle rockets to sewing E. coli, (yes, sewing E. coli, that’s correct)—in both urban and rural communities. These volunteers are truly committed to working with kids and sharing with kids their passion for science,” enthuses Yuen.

Seeing the faces of children working on the activities is both the biggest thrill and the greatest motivator to be there for the volunteers and to make sure they felt valued and appreciated.”

Yuen: ‘There is no substitute for doing something you love, and sharing the activity with others’

The program did expand. In 2010, eight teams of junior high students participated in the All-Science Challenge. In May 2011, they had 32 teams, a huge undertaking for the student volunteers. But Yuen wanted to do more with and for the volunteers and a volunteer, she says. “There is no substitute for doing something you love, and sharing the activity with others.”

It isn’t all easy and there can also be some stressful times, like when one classroom in Beausejour looked like there had been a coronarch im explosion. The kids, says Yuen, loved every minute of it.

As coordinator of LTS, Yuen worked on marketing, public speaking, coordinating large groups of volunteers and working with and making connections with teachers, parents, university professors and administrators. “It’s been a great opportunity. It challenges you, and makes you grow as a person,” says Yuen.

She also has advice for other students. University is a lot more than just going to classes, she says, and “becoming involved with student organizations on campus will bring the most out of your university experience.”

Though it is not always easy, and the transition from high school can be difficult, Yuen says that “the connections you make at university are with people who share your same passions. They can be the most important connections of your life.

“Being involved with LTS was one of the best decisions I have made in my life, so far.”

The Let’s Talk Science coordinators are sponsored by the Faculty of Science. For more information, check out the Let’s Talk Science website at:

> > letstalkscienceumanitoba.com/

WHAT I’M READING

CHRIS RUTKOWSKI: My two favourite books of the summer were quite unexpected. First, Zen and the Art of Writing by Ray Bradbury (1992). It’s a small paperback that is mostly reprints of earlier works, in which Bradbury describes his philosophy and offers practical ways of honing the craft (or art) of writing. He gives some nice advice, and imparts some serious wisdom such as reading voraciously to get ideas, but also to learn what you don’t like, too.

He suggests you make lists of nouns to use as starting points. And “learn from every man, woman and child around us.”

Bradbury suggests it might take 10 or 20 years to find your own voice. Probably the best book about writing that I’ve seen.

My next recommendation is UFO in Her Eyes by Xiaolu Guo (2010). Okay, so it got it for the title, but I was pleasantly surprised that it really has not to do with UFOs at all, but is a sad romance set against the political landscape of rural China. Written as a series of letters and reports to government officials, it’s a delightful book that is highly satirical and critically cynical of bureaucratic. It may become one of my top 10 favourite reads of all time.

Chris Rutkowski is media relations officer in the Marketing Communications Office. He has nine published books, most of them about off-kilter topics such as UFOs.

To contribute, contact: bulletin@umanitoba.ca
Is an orb an orb an orb—and when not? Lexica Latina redefining our scientific past

BY SHAWN JORDAN
For The Bulletin
What exactly is an orb or orbis? It depends.
Like the game “telephone” where you whisper something to someone else’s ear, then they whisper it to someone else’s ear and so on, words can change and take on different meanings very quickly. It’s not too surprising, then, that the dictionary meanings of words evolve over the years as they are translated and revised. Words disappear, and re-appear, and their definitions morph and shift around. Many of the words or roots of words we use now may have meant something different a few hundred years ago.

The meaning of orb, for example, has morphed with having dual meaning of a three-dimensional sphere or a two-dimensional circle to meaning only a flat circle over the course of a little over 250 years. This could be a big problem if you are conducting research into the past and expect a word to mean what it does now. Achieving clarity might be akin to an archeological dig.

The changes in meaning could be a big problem if you are conducting research into the past and expect a word to mean what it does now. Wort’s meaning might be akin to an archeological dig.

Professor Wesley M. Stevens’ project seeks to address such misrepresentations and bring scientific and mathematical meanings back to Latin dictionaries. He has found a large number of Latin terms that have gotten messed up in the dictionaries somewhere along the line. He is seeking to correct these terms in his a project called Lexica Latina.

The project is a collaborative effort between Stevens, Dietrich Lohrmann (Aachen, Germany) and is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities. They employ several research assistants whose work takes them not only to Dafao and St. Paul’s libraries but also overseas. The goal of the project is to prepare a resource, both online and in print, that will supplement and improve the dictionaries of Latin from both classical and medieval periods by incorporating fuller definitions and better understandings of Latin texts in the richness of their cultural contexts.

Words for math, astronomy, botany, and other sciences are abundant in Latin writings and drawings from the classical and medieval periods. The terms may be found in dictionaries, but their scientific usages have often been left out. This neglect has led many scholars and students to make assumptions about various aspects of early Latin cultures which may not be quite right.

The definition of orbis is an intriguing example; in the eighteenth century the term was recognized as meaning both a circle, like a ring, and roundness, like a globe or ball. However, later editions of dictionaries omitted the globe definition, leading to the prevailing assumption that medieval societies, when referring to the orbis terrae (orb of the earth), believed the earth to be not a sphere (as required by texts and contexts).

The meaning of orbis was thought to be flat in the Middle Ages. The word orbis appeared in Latin texts which demonstrate their mathematical and scientific meanings in context. These sorts of mistakes about mathematical, geographical, and astronomical Latin terms have misled very many excellent Latinists who use dictionaries and lexicons for reading texts and thereby fail to understand an important part of the culture that they want to know and interpret.

In developing his new Lexicon of Latin Mathematical and Scientific Terminology, Stevens hopes to rectify the remnants of previous lexicographical processes which carry over to the present time and thus to assist all readers of Virgil, Cicero, Augustine, or the venerable Bede by cleaning up the faulty memories and which may have distorted our understanding of the past.

Wesley Stevens, visiting professor of classics, ponders the transient nature of definitions in his sunny St. Paul’s College office.

Knight program welcomes proposals

BY LINDSAY STEWART GLOR
For The Bulletin
Proposals are now being accepted for this year’s Robert and Elizabeth Knight Distinguished Visitors Program.

Since its inception, the Knight Distinguished Visitors Program has helped enhance the quality of higher education at the University of Manitoba and enrich its academic life. To date, the program has brought 18 scholars and leaders from across the globe to the University of M—astronomers and Nobel laureates among them. The call for proposals for the upcoming 2011/12 academic year is now open, with a submission deadline of September 15, 2011.

In the fall, a committee will review proposals from across the university community to invite scholars from the fields of commerce, finance, economics, political studies, history and literature; leaders in the areas of commerce, industry and government; and others who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of knowledge or to cultural, social and economic development. It is anticipated that two proposals will be accepted.

Past distinguished visitors include Chief Phil Fontaine; Dr. Mark Garneau, Sir Anthony Leggett, and, most recently, Dr. Thomas A. Buczakowski, who delivered a lecture titled, “Why Innovation? Why Engineering? Why Design?” earlier this year.

Besides public lectures, distinguished visitors are encouraged to engage in a variety of activities that allow them to interact with university staff and students, as well as members of the outside community.

The Robert and Elizabeth Knight Distinguished Visitors Program is supported by the R.G. and E.M. Knight Fund, which was established to commemorate the lives and achievements of alumni Robert Greenwell Knight and Elizabeth Moore Knight.

More detailed information on submitting a proposal can be found on the University of Manitoba website at: > > umanitoba.ca/president

Robert and Elizabeth Knight Distinguished Visitors Program

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Submission deadline: September 15, 2011

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For more details on submitting a proposal, visit umanitoba.ca/president.
FACULTY OF MEDICINE & CANCER CARE MANITOBA
Manitoba Institute of Cell Biology (MICB)
Corinne Duguid, Director, Permanent Full Time
Deadline: September 11, 2011
Position number: HT413
For Information: Contact Search Committee Chair, Director, Cell Biology, Human Resources, Cancer Care Manitoba, 675 McDermot Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, email jobs@cancercare.mb.ca or fax (204) 786-0181

FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of History
Position: Full-time tenure-track appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor
Deadline: October 15, 2011
Start Date: July 1, 2012
Position number: 13370
For Information: Professor Mark Gabbit, Chair, Latin American Search Committee, Department of History, 402 Fletcher Argue Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5V5, or email Sandra_Ferguson@umanitoba.ca

FACULTY OF SCIENCE
Department of Computer Science
Position: Up to two full-time tenure-track positions at the rank of Assistant Professor
Deadline: October 1, 2011
Start Date: January 1, 2012
Position number: 13073
For Information: Search Committee Chair, Department of Computer Science, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg MB R3T 2N2 or phone (204) 474-8313, email search@cs.umanitoba.ca

FACULTY OF MEDICINE
School of Medical Rehabilitation, Department of Physical Therapy
Position: Full time probationary Instructor II position
Deadline: September 6, 2011
Start Date: November 1, 2011
Position number: 13256
For Information: Dr. Emily Etcheverry, Chair, Physical Therapy Search Committee, School of Medical Rehabilitation, University of Manitoba, 472 McDermot Avenue, Winnipeg MB R3E 0T6, email etcheverry@cc.umanitoba.ca, tel. (204) 789-3418, fax (204) 789-3927

I.H. ASPER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Department of Business Administration
Entrepreneurship/Strategy
Position: Tenure-track position in Business Policy/Strategic Management in the I.H. Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba. The appointment is open rank (i.e., Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor).
Deadline: September 15, 2011
Start Date: July 1, 2012
Position number: 13256
For Information: Dr. Nick Turner, Associate Dean, Chair, Business Policy/Strategic Management Search Committee, I.H. Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba, 472 McDermot Ave, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 5V4 tel. (204) 474-9482, fax (204) 474-9727

CLINICAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY COLLOQUIUM
Friday, Sept. 9 | 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The Department of Clinical Health Psychology invites you to attend a colloquium on “The role of psychology in collaborative health care” with Karen Dyck, Shelley Ryhno and Julie Beaulac in the PsychHealth Theatre

A full listing of employment opportunities at the University of Manitoba can be found at www.umanitoba.ca. U of M encourages applications from qualified women and men, including members of visible minority groups, Aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities. 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.
In brief

ResearchLIFE

The summer 2011 issue of ResearchLIFE is now available. The sixth issue includes features on satellite technologies, the new Indigenous Governance Community Based Research Space and bringing agricultural research full circle.

Also in this issue: CFI president and CEO Gilles Patry provides insights on innovation and investing in people. Look for the new issue in your mailbox or stands around campus.

2011 Creative Works Grant program recipients:

Elizabeth Roy ($2,500.00)
School of Art
Smashing Dishes

Lancelot Coar ($2,500.00)
Faculty of Architecture
The design and creation of a modelling system to study phase-changing structures made from fibreglass, fabric, and wax.

Steven Nunoda ($2,500.00)
School of Art
Ghostown: Tarpack Shacks

David McMillan ($2,500.00)
School of Art
Photographing in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone

Eduardo Aquino ($2,500.00)
Faculty of Architecture
Steve-specific installation at RAW Gallery on Architecture and Design (ongoing research on “beachscape”)

Lisa Landrum ($2,500.00)
Faculty of Architecture
Retrospective exhibition of “group costumes,” fabricated and performed in civic parades (1997-2011)

BY MELNI GHATTORA

It’s hard to imagine that one red glazed brick will soon create an impact in public space. Like a piece to a very large puzzle, the structural brick will join 24 thousand other bricks in 66 different colours to create pixel-like patterns based on images taken in the neighbourhood and from the Big on Bloor festival in Toronto, Ontario. We don’t want to attach an artwork into the lobby or the windows of the station, instead the entire structure is the artwork,” says Eduardo Aquino of Something Happens Here, a public art project for the Dufferin station, a subway station that is currently undergoing upgrades and modernization under the Toronto Transit Commission’s Station Modernization program.

Aquino, an associate professor in the Faculty of Architecture, and colleagues Karen Shanski and Ralph Glor, won the national competition, beating out public artists from across Canada. The three stage process required the trio to submit their qualifications, from there they were shortlisted, and then asked to produce models and drawings and submit a concept.

While the single brick that sits on Aquino’s shelf will become public art within the fiber of the urban community in Toronto, Winnipeggers also have something to look forward to.

Former public art consultant for the Winnipeg Arts Council (WAC) Public Art Program, Aquino was invited by the organization to compete in a local competition, beating out public artists from across Canada. The three stage process required the trio to submit their qualifications, from there they were shortlisted, and then asked to produce models and drawings and submit a concept.

The rehabilitation project, expected to wrap in October 2012, will “provide a bridge that truly fits with the two very distinct neighbourhoods on the north and south side of the Assiniboine River. Special handrails with accent lighting together with a patterned sidewalk on the bridge will celebrate local neighbourhood history, locations, events, and other local heritage elements,” according to the City of Winnipeg, Public Works web site.

Later this fall, Aquino is set to launch an exhibit at the RAW gallery thanks to a University of Manitoba Creative Works Grant from the office of the vice-president (research). Beachscape, a research project that started 12 years ago and the subject of his PhD project at the University of São Paulo, is inspired by the experiences of Copacabana, a popular beach in Rio de Janiero, Brazil.

“Beachscape is the centre concept of the project. What happens with our practice is that we fully integrate the projects into our research process,” explains Aquino. “Typically in our practice a research project will generate other projects and for us Beachscape has informed many of our projects right now.”

Through his research Aquino explores what constitutes a really good public space. “That is why we always have the [beach] picture there,” says Aquino, as he points to an enlarged aerial shot of Copacabana, taken from a Brazilian magazine that dates back to the ‘70s. “It’s very compartmentalized, but what we understand about the complexity of the beach itself, is that there is an order, and within that order you have a complexity of programs, people, activities and perceptions of space, so you tend to sit a lot closer to the beach, or you tend to orient yourself differently in that space,” explains Shanski.

Adding “our research is about abstracting away from the sand, and analyze the principals of what sets up a very good complex public space within the city. The RAW project will be a very interesting one for us as we’ve never done Beachscape in a gallery space.”

For Aquino, creating art in public space “is a different way of working as an artist. It’s not like I can do a sculpture in a studio and then I can just show it in a gallery. There are many constituencies of public space that have an implication in the process. We are always communicating with people, explaining the work, communicating our creative process.”

He feels being a contemporary artist is a condition: “Whatever you do in public space you raise questions, you provoke people in different ways, so we have to be ready to engage the people and to respond all the time.”

To learn more about the work of spmb, visit www.spmb.ca.
New Farm and Food Discovery Centre to open at Homecoming 2011

On September 16, during Homecoming 2011, the University of Manitoba will officially open the new Bruce D. Campbell Farm and Food Discovery Centre, located at the U of M’s Glenlea Research Station.

The 8,300 square foot interpretive centre features hands-on displays and activities designed to showcase the science and technology of food production from the field to the consumer’s plate. The centre tells the story of modern farming and food production, including the role of leading-edge research in increasing food production and advancing environmental stewardship, animal welfare, nutrition and food safety.

“Many of the world-class innovations that are used on farms each and every day are developed, tested and perfected by outstanding researchers at the University of Manitoba,” said President and Vice-Chancellor David Barnard. “The Bruce D. Campbell Farm and Food Discovery Centre will tell that important story while providing a hands-on learning environment focused on how the food we eat is grown and produced.”

The centre’s mandate is to enhance public awareness and understanding of modern, sustainable food production, with emphasis on crops and livestock, and the effects of agricultural practices on the environment, with emphasis on soil, water and air. The centre is funded federally and by several farm-associated businesses and organizations such as Manitoba Pork Council, Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and the Manitoba Egg Farmers.

David Wiens, the chair of Dairy Farmers of Manitoba, noted that over the years, with the percentage of farmers within the general population having become so small, people have become further removed from agriculture. He believes it is important to strengthen the relationship between people and their food.

“The public is interested in their food and where it comes from. I think this has become increasingly important to people,” said Wiens.

“That’s the information that can be provided to people through a facility like this. It gives people an opportunity to actually come out and see first-hand what agriculture is about.”

The Bruce D. Campbell Farm and Food Discovery Centre is intended to be a fun and exciting destination with exhibits, public programs and events that explore modern farming and food production, as well as the science and technology that provides healthy, sustainable food for Manitoba and the world.

Visitors learn about every aspect of food production, from farming practices to retail sales. The Discovery Centre also highlights ongoing research at the National Centre for Livestock and the Environment.

The Discovery Centre features interactive hands-on displays about every aspect of food production, from farming to the marketing, retailing and eating of food. Programming is aimed at middle-years students, families and the general public. It also showcases the research conducted by the University of Manitoba that advances agri-food sector.

Executive Director of Agriculture in the Classroom Manitoba Johanne Ross expects the new Farm and Food Discovery Centre to play a key role in integrating agriculture into Manitoba’s educational curriculum.

Ross said, “We need consumers to understand the contribution that agriculture makes every day which is why it is important to have education about it.” She hopes a spin-off is that students will look to agriculture as a career option. With files from Bruce Cochrane