

Degrees

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The University of Regina Magazine



Erin Wasson MSW'15
Canada's only full-time
veterinary social worker

University
of Regina





Honorary degree recipient Chief Tammy Cook-Searson (left) of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band poses at sunrise with her family for a very special Christmas card photo. The photo, taken in December 2015, offered up once-in-a-lifetime conditions on a frozen Lac La Ronge. With Cook-Searson are (left to right) daughter Aileen, daughter Vanessa, granddaughter Ciara, son Pesim and husband Jim Searson.

Photo by Kandis Riese.

Welcome to the spring 2016 issue of *Degrees* magazine. We've got what we know are an exciting lineup of stories in this edition.

A recent survey of U.S. veterinarians determined that they are more likely to suffer from psychiatric disorders, experience bouts of depression and have suicidal thoughts compared with the rest of the U.S. adult population. The data suggested that nearly one in 10 U.S. veterinarians experience serious psychological distress, and more than one in six have contemplated suicide since graduation. Why do I bring this up? Because our cover story this spring is on alumnae Erin Wasson, a graduate of the University of Regina's Faculty of Social Work program and the only full-time veterinary social worker in Canada. She works for the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan

and she's helping students, faculty members, veterinarians and animal owners deal with the stresses that come in the animal care field. You'll find the story starting on page 16.

We also have stories about the trio of individuals who are set to receive honorary degrees at the University of Regina's Spring Convocation. For the first time in the history of the University, siblings will receive our highest honour. Brothers Gavin and Jack Semple are both receiving honorary degrees on June 1. Gavin is a Regina businessman and philanthropist and the chairman of Brandt Industries and the Brandt Group of Companies. He has built Brandt Tractor into the largest John Deere dealership in the world. The Brandt Group of Companies is the largest privately-held company in Saskatchewan with sales of more than one billion dollars annually. Jack Semple is one of

Canada's top guitarists. He first came to national prominence by winning the MuchMusic Guitar Wars competition in 1992. He also appeared in the title role in 1994's *Guitarman*, a television movie. Jack has twice been nominated for Gemini Awards for his soundtrack work on the television series *Incredible Story Studio*. He won a Juno award in 1991 for best roots recording. The Semple story begins on page 24.

The third person to receive an honorary degree this spring is Tammy Cook-Searson, the long-time chief of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, one of the largest First Nations in Canada. She is the only woman to hold the position and was first elected at the age of 33. You can find Cook-Searson's story starting on page 28.

That's just some of what you will find in this issue of *Degrees*. You'll also find our regular wrap up of campus

news, alumni updates and so much more. Remember, you can also find *Degrees* posted on our website. If you would prefer to view *Degrees* online rather than receive it by mail, please contact us at URalumni@uregina.ca or call us at 306-585-4112 or toll-free at 877-779-4723.

Please keep your emails and letters coming. Send us your story ideas or just drop us a note and tell us what you've been up to lately. You'll find all our contact information on the facing page. We look forward to hearing from you and trust you will enjoy reading this issue of *Degrees*.

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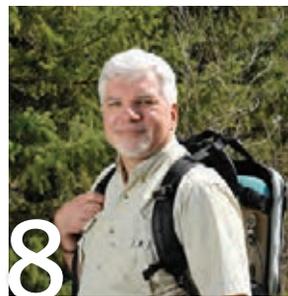
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On the cover: Veterinary medicine social worker Erin Wasson MSW'15 and her horse Gunner.
 Photo by Trevor Hopkin.



Features

Last winter ... one hot topic 8

The past winter was an El Niño year, characterized by warmer-than-usual temperatures in the Pacific Ocean near the equator. What did El Niño mean for the Canadian prairie? Joe Piwowar, associate professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, explains the periodic climatic event's effect on a winter that never was.

Rebrand puts Media, Art, and Performance on the MAP 12

In February, the Faculty of Fine Arts was rebranded as the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance, or MAP. Rae Staseson, once a University of Regina art student, led the charge for change – this time in her capacity as dean.

Veterinary visionary 16

Erin Wasson MSW'15 is at the forefront of a critical new vocation that is proving to be visionary. She's Canada's only veterinary medicine social worker.

All in the family 24

Brothers Gavin and Jack Semple are the first siblings to receive honorary degrees from the University of Regina. And they'll get them at the very same ceremony during the 2016 spring convocation.

Born to lead 28

Chief Tammy Cook-Searson of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, the largest First Nation in Saskatchewan, is one of this spring's recipients of the University of Regina's highest tribute – an honorary degree.

departments

Feed Back	2
President's Note	4
Around Campus	5
Focal Point	20
Spot Light	31
Alumni President Message	32
Class Notes	34
360 Degrees	36

President's Note

June 21 marks the 20th anniversary of National Aboriginal Day, a day to celebrate the unique cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada. There are a multitude of reasons why National Aboriginal Day is an important day at the University of Regina, but first and foremost is our commitment to become the most Indigenized campus in Canada.

The University of Regina has always been at the forefront of Indigenizing the country's post-secondary institutions. The roots of the Indigenization of our campus date back exactly 40 years to when the University and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations came together to found the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC) in 1976. Over the intervening four decades, SIFC has evolved into First Nations University of Canada, our federated partner and a unique Canadian institution that specializes in providing post-secondary education for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students within a culturally supportive environment.

The University of Regina's commitment to Indigenization was outlined formally in our 2009-2014 strategic plan, entitled *māmawohkamâtowin: Our Work, Our People, Our Communities*. The Cree word *māmawohkamâtowin* was chosen for the title because it means "co-operation; working together towards common goals." The Indigenization goals

set out in that plan have been further articulated in our most recent strategic plan, *peyak aski kikawinaw*, Cree for "we are one with Mother Earth."

There is good reason for this. First Nations University of Canada faculty member Dr. Blair Stonechild wrote a 2010 book entitled *The New Buffalo: The Struggle for Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in Canada*. Dr. Stonechild's treatise is that while the buffalo once provided First Nations peoples with much of what they needed to thrive in traditional culture, access to education has replaced it in modern times.

We must always remember that the University's campuses are located on traditional Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 lands. I believe we have a moral obligation to do all we can to ensure that the First Nations descendants of the treaty signatories can fully and equally experience and benefit from the "new buffalo."

Despite the obstacles she has faced throughout her life, one of the people who has been able to realize the potential of the "new buffalo" is Cherish Jean-Baptiste. Cherish is from Carry the Kettle Nakoda Nation near Fort Qu'Appelle. Carry the Kettle has faced many of the same economic challenges as other First Nations communities – unequal access to education, stifling poverty and a community torn apart by the enduring effects of the residential school system.

In spite of those disadvantages, Cherish didn't fail, and notwithstanding

the challenges of being a single mother, she didn't give up. She works now as a business consultant for Crown Investments Corporation and serves as president of the First Nations and Métis Fund and First Nations Business Development Program. Last year she was recognized as our outstanding young alumna at the University's Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards.

In accepting her Outstanding Young Alumni Award, Cherish noted a fundamental change at the University since she graduated a decade ago. She judged the Aboriginal student support systems at the University of Regina to be the best in all of Canada. In recent years we have implemented many initiatives designed to help Aboriginal learners thrive. The evidence suggests we're succeeding. Since 2010, the University has seen a 63 per cent increase in the enrolment of Aboriginal students. Today, self-declared Aboriginal students make up almost 12 per cent of the student body.

While I believe there is a moral imperative to put into place the mechanisms to help ensure that a growing number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students such as Cherish have every opportunity to succeed, there's also a compelling economic argument as well.

According to a report by Eric Howe, a professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Saskatoon, closing the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal

peoples would increase gross domestic product in Saskatchewan by \$19.1 billion over the next 20 years. Howe writes in the report that this would result in the first ever made-in-Saskatchewan boom.

Economics aside, as we move forward with Indigenization at our University, we must remind ourselves that it's not simply about attracting more Aboriginal students or engaging in more Indigenous research that will allow us to reach our Indigenization goals. Perhaps most importantly, it is about ensuring that First Nations and Métis knowledge and practices are reflected in all aspects of campus life – everything from curriculum development to campus design to incorporating Aboriginal ceremonies at convocations. In that way, Indigenization of the University helps ensure that all our students are prepared to live in a Saskatchewan where First Nations and Métis cultures are celebrated and achieve their rightful place in society.

With that in mind, I invite you to take part in National Aboriginal Day and celebrate how far we have come together in recognizing the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada.

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor



Left: Business Administration Dean Andrew Gaudes.

Centre: Carrie Bourassa, professor of Indigenous Health Studies in the Department of Indigenous Education, Health and Social Work at First Nations University of Canada.

Right: Gordon Huang, a professor of Environmental Systems Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science.



Comings and goings

Andrew Gaudes has accepted a reappointment term as dean of Business Administration. Since his appointment as dean in 2012, Gaudes has strengthened ties with business, government and other business schools worldwide. His term runs until June 30, 2022.

Harvey King has accepted reappointment as director of the Centre for Continuing Education. He joined the University of Regina in 1987 following a three-year term appointment at York University. King was associate dean (undergraduate) of Arts from July 2000 to the end of 2006 and was appointed the director of the Centre for Continuing Education in January 2007. His term runs until June 30, 2022.

Douglas Farenick BSc'84, a professor of mathematics and head of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, has been appointed acting dean of the Faculty of Science for one year. Farenick received his PhD from the University of Toronto and held a two-year post-doctoral fellowship at Université de Montréal before coming to the University of Regina in 1992. His research in operator algebra theory has been supported by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada since 1993, and to date he has authored or co-authored 48 refereed journal articles and one book. He served the

Faculty of Science as assistant dean (Research) from 2000 to 2002 and was acting associate dean (Research) in the 2009-10 academic year.

Brett Waytuck has been appointed University Librarian for a five-year term. Waytuck holds an undergraduate degree in music from the University of Calgary and a master's degree in library science from the University of Toronto. He began his career with Calgary Public Library and has also held positions with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, Saskatchewan Health, and Bracken Health Sciences Library at Queen's University. Waytuck joined the Provincial Library and Literacy Office in 2007. As provincial librarian, he supported the development of the National Network for Equitable Library Service, Sask History Online, northern summer literacy camps, and Student First.

Brien Maguire, a long-time member of the Faculty of Science and one of the faculty's former deans, retired on December 31, 2015. Maguire joined the Computer Science Department of the University of Saskatchewan – Regina Campus in July 1972 and rose through the ranks to become a full professor in 1983. He also held numerous administrative positions including department head and associate dean (Academic) of the Faculty of Science. **Maguire** loved being in the classroom and,

from the start of his career, was entrusted with teaching introductory computer science classes that had as many as 500 students.

Research

Carrie Bourassa BA Hons'95, MA'99, PHD'o8 a professor of Indigenous Health Studies in the Department of Indigenous Education, Health and Social Work at the First Nations University of Canada is receiving \$205,178 from the Canada Foundation for Innovation. The funding will cover close to half the cost of developing a world-class Cultural Safety Evaluation, Training and Research Lab. Cultural safety addresses inequities in the health-care system that put Indigenous people in situations where they don't feel comfortable.

Garth Huber BSc Hons'84, BSc'84, PHD'88, a physics professor, is receiving \$49,980 from the Canada Foundation for Innovation to build a prototype Cherenkov detector – a detector for studying the interactions of subatomic particles. The technology could help provide a better understanding of the inner workings of particle interactions, which may help improve imaging technologies and advance big science in Canada.

Gordon Huang, a professor of Environmental Systems Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, and executive director

of the Institute for Energy, Environment and Sustainable Communities has received a Strategic Project Grant of \$579,000 from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. Huang will use the funding to look at ways to help government and industry make sound environmental policy decisions that benefit all Canadians. The research team will include a number of other University researchers, post-doctoral fellows and students.

Briefly

The **University of Regina** and the **George Reed Foundation** have signed a Memorandum of Agreement that will see research and other initiatives continue at the George Reed Centre for Accessible Visual Communications in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies. The Memorandum of Agreement will provide \$250,000 for the Centre, which was originally established in 2014 through a gift of \$150,000 by the George Reed Foundation. The George Reed Centre for Accessible Visual Communications serves as the focal point for pictogram research provincially, nationally and internationally. The mission of the Centre is to foster, coordinate and promote research activities in accessible, visual and inclusive communications when conventional communication is not possible due to disability, language barriers, literacy challenges or health issues. Pictograms, a

symbolic language system, are sometimes used by individuals who do not use conventional communication.

A study by **Economic Development Regina Inc.** on the economic impact of the University was released recently. The study found that the University's total gross domestic product is estimated to be \$408 million for Regina and \$542 million for the province. In 2014-15, the University, directly and indirectly, contributed approximately \$82 million to federal government revenues and \$69 million to provincial government revenues through personal and corporate income taxes, taxes on unincorporated business profits, and sales and excise taxes. These revenues exceed what the University receives in total combined funding from the federal and provincial governments.

An anonymous donation of **\$1 million** will be used to support four brain research projects that were selected through a proposal process held last year. The donation will allow University researchers to engage in research that has the potential to significantly improve the lives of countless people suffering from injuries and diseases affecting the brain.

The University has launched its first **Strategic Plan for Sustainability**. Over the next five years, the plan will help the campus become a leader in environmental responsibility. Five areas of focus are outlined in the plan: leadership, waste, energy, transportation, and communication and engagement. Also provided are steps individuals can take toward sustainability, such as expanding the University's recycling programs and working with the City of Regina to improve transit service.

The University of Regina has signed a partnership agreement that establishes collaborations with Mexico City's **Instituto Panamericano de Alta Dirección de Empresa** (IPADE Business School), ranked among the most prestigious business schools in the world by influential publications *The Financial Times*, *Forbes* and *Expansion*. Among other initiatives, the partnership will include exchanges between University of Regina graduate students and their Mexican peers.

The University's popular **EYES** program (Educating Youth in Engineering and Science) will receive \$120,000 of funding over the next three years from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. Since the first EYES summer camp was held in 1995, the program has reached thousands of young people from the Regina area, providing them with an informative and fun science education. Its in-school workshop program is highly regarded by teachers and students and reaches more than 750 classrooms annually. All told, EYES reached nearly 18,000 youth in southern Saskatchewan in 2015.

The official launch of the **Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance**, formerly the Faculty of Fine Arts, was celebrated and the faculty's new visual identity and website were publicly revealed at a news conference March 10. (See story on page 12.) The new name was developed through extensive meetings and consultations and was unanimously supported by the faculty and approved by the University's Senate.

The University of Regina has signed a collaboration agreement with Scotland's **University of Edinburgh**, paving the way for international research into carbon

capture and storage (CCS). A Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions, signed at an international academic summit in Scotland, establishes up to three annual \$10,000 scholarships with funding support from SaskPower. The company's commercial-scale Boundary Dam Integrated Carbon Capture and Storage Demonstration Project was the world's first coal-powered CCS project to begin operation. Students who successfully compete for the award are accepted as visiting students at the University of Regina. To qualify, students must have completed two semesters at the University of Edinburgh's master's program in CCS.

Accolades

University President and Vice-Chancellor **Vianne Timmons** received the 2016 Leadership Award by District VIII of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. The award was presented in Calgary, Alta.

For the second year in a row, the **University of Regina** has received a United Way Regina Spirit Award. The University was presented with an Employee Campaign Team Award. The award is presented to individuals and teams who have shown creativity, energy and drive to co-ordinate a well-organized campaign. The University raised more than \$102,000, a new record that keeps the University among the top 10 United Way campaigns in the city.

The **University of Regina** is one of four Canadian universities to be listed in the *Times Higher Education* 2016 top 150 universities under 50 years old in the world. This is the first year the University of Regina has been included in this category

since *Times Higher Education* started a separate ranking for universities under 50 years of age in 2012.

Donald Kent, professor emeritus in the Department of Geology, received the 2015 R.J.W. Douglas Medal, the highest honour from the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists. It was presented at a special ceremony held at the Saskatchewan Geological Society's Annual General Meeting in Regina in February. The medal is awarded annually to an individual for outstanding contributions to the understanding of sedimentary geology in Canada.

The University received five awards from the **Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development** at their annual awards recognition event, held in early May at the Treaty Four Governance Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle. The award was for a number of sustainability initiatives the University has undertaken.

Shanthi Johnson, a professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies, is the recipient of the 2016 Award of Innovation. The award is sponsored by Innovation Place and is given each year as part of the Regina Chamber of Commerce's Paragon Awards, which celebrate the city's outstanding businesses. The award recognizes original research that has the potential to create substantive societal benefits. Johnson, in collaboration with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, launched "Saskatchewan Advantage: Improving Functional Capacity and Preventing Falls Among Rural and Urban Seniors." The project delivers an exercise program to seniors who live on their own.

University of Regina computer science student **Trevor Tomesh** has been named a member of



Texas Instruments engineer-to-engineer MVPs (most valuable persons) program. He is one of 39 people from 26 countries to receive the designation. Tomesh is praised by the company for providing “invaluable participation and related community efforts in working to build a stronger Texas Instruments community.” Texas Instruments is one of the world’s largest suppliers of computer chips and semi-conductors.

Cindy Hanson, associate professor of Adult Education in the Faculty of Education, is the recipient of a Global Citizen Award given annually by the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation. The award recognizes Saskatchewan people who make significant contributions to international development, cooperation, peace and justice. In the 1980s, Hanson was involved in Latin American solidarity work and feminism. Her activism has extended into Indigenous rights. Hanson has taught Native Studies and worked at the House of Commons and several women’s organizations. She’s taught at post-secondary institutions and contributed to dozens of international development projects, primarily as a gender, training and education advisor. Her work spans four continents and 20 countries.

Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science students
Sam Dietrich, Joshua Friedrich



BASc'16, Dean Kertai and Caleb Friedrich BASc'16 picked up the first place prize money of \$50,000 US at the 2016 agBOT Challenge held at Gerrish Farms near Rockville, Ind. The agBOT Challenge featured 11 competitive teams demonstrating their innovative robotics for farming. The University of Regina was the only Canadian university in the competition alongside six U.S. universities. The event also attracted some major players in the agricultural world including Monsanto, John Deere, AGCO and Yamaha. In a tie for third place was alumnus **Nathan Muchowski BASc'12**, a graduate of the Electronic Systems Engineering program, who was representing Muchowski Farms, his family’s farming operation in Odessa, Sask.

The University of Regina was best represented at the Regina **YWCA Women of Distinction Awards**, with **A. Raynell Andreychuk, Tanya Dahms and Roz Kelsey BPAS'98, BEd'00, MSc'05** receiving awards. Raynell Andreychuk received the Lifetime Achievement award. She served as University chancellor from 1977 to 1983, and has also been a lawyer, judge, diplomat and senator. Tanya Dahms, who teaches chemistry and biochemistry, was the winner of the Science, Technology and Environment award. Roz Kelsey, an instructor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies, received the award in the category of Education and Mentorship.

Kelsey is chair of the Man Up Against Violence movement. The YWCA Regina’s Women of Distinction Awards, first held in 1981, recognize women whose outstanding achievements contribute to the health and future of the community and are an inspiration to others.

Three students in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science have received national recognition for their work. **Ryan Schmidt BASc'16, Tanner Thomsen BASc'16 and Martee Wasnik BASc'16** received the 2016 Minerva Canada James Ham Safe Design Award for designing a portable fall protection system for flatbed trailers. The award, which includes a \$3,500 prize, was presented at a conference in Mississauga, Ont., attended by about 1,500 people representing industry, government, academia and health and safety associations.

Jessie Guraliuck, a first-year student in the Baccalauréat en éducation française (Le Bac) program in the Faculty of Education, is one of five students across the country to be awarded a \$1,000 bursary for a two-minute video she submitted. The competition was sponsored by the Canadian Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue and the Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne, a network of 20 francophone or bilingual post-secondary institutions outside of Québec.

Left: Cindy Hanson, associate professor of Adult Education in the Faculty of Education at the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation’s Global Citizen Awards.

Right: The winning team of the agBOT Challenge poses with their automated seeder. Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science students (left to right) Dean Kertai, Caleb Friedrich, Sam Dietrich and Joshua Friedrich. Photo courtesy of Dave Charrlin.

A team from the University’s **Department of Physics** collaborated with physicists from around the world to win the prestigious Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics. They will get a small share of the \$3 million US prize, donated by Yuri Milner from Russia, one of the prize founders and funders. The Breakthrough Prize celebrates the men and women who are driving the world’s most significant scientific advances, and inspiring the next generation of scientists. The awards ceremony was held at the NASA Ames Centre in California and broadcast live on National Geographic Channel in the U.S. The University of Regina contributors were Mauricio Barbi, Ted Mathie, Roman Tacik, Nick Hastings, Caio Licciardi, Spencer Giffin and Anezka Kolaceke.

The Faculty of Fine Arts Theatre Department presented **Trenna Keating BFA'00** with its Distinguished Alumni Award. Keating played the snarky but lovable Doc Yewll on the Syfy channel’s *Defiance* for three seasons. Some of her other film and TV roles include appearances in *A Dog Named Christmas*, *Combat Hospital*, *Corner Gas*, *Just Friends* and *Renegade Press*. After graduation, Keating got her start in the industry in Saskatchewan, working behind the scenes in a variety of roles. Originally from Weyburn, Keating lives in Toronto with her husband Alden Adair, who is also an actor and alumnus of the University’s Theatre Department.



Last winter ... one **hot** topic

With significantly warmer temperatures and little snow accumulation, most of us came to relish the winter of 2015-16. What accounts for the gentler winter and what does it have to do with Peruvian anchovies and melting ice on the Arctic Ocean? Hint: It's not global warming.

By Judy Bird

Photos by Trevor Hopkin,
University of Regina Photography Department

The answer, simply stated, is El Niño, a periodic climatic event characterized by warmer than usual temperatures in the Pacific Ocean near the equator.

"The Peruvian fishers are the ones who coined the name El Niño – "The Christ Child" – because the unusually warm waters typically arrive around Christmas time. They have observed that when the ocean warms up in December and January, fish in their coastal waters virtually vanish. The anchovy fishery is destroyed during an El Niño year," says Joe Piwowar, associate professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. He is interested in studying how this climate phenomenon affects different environments around the world.

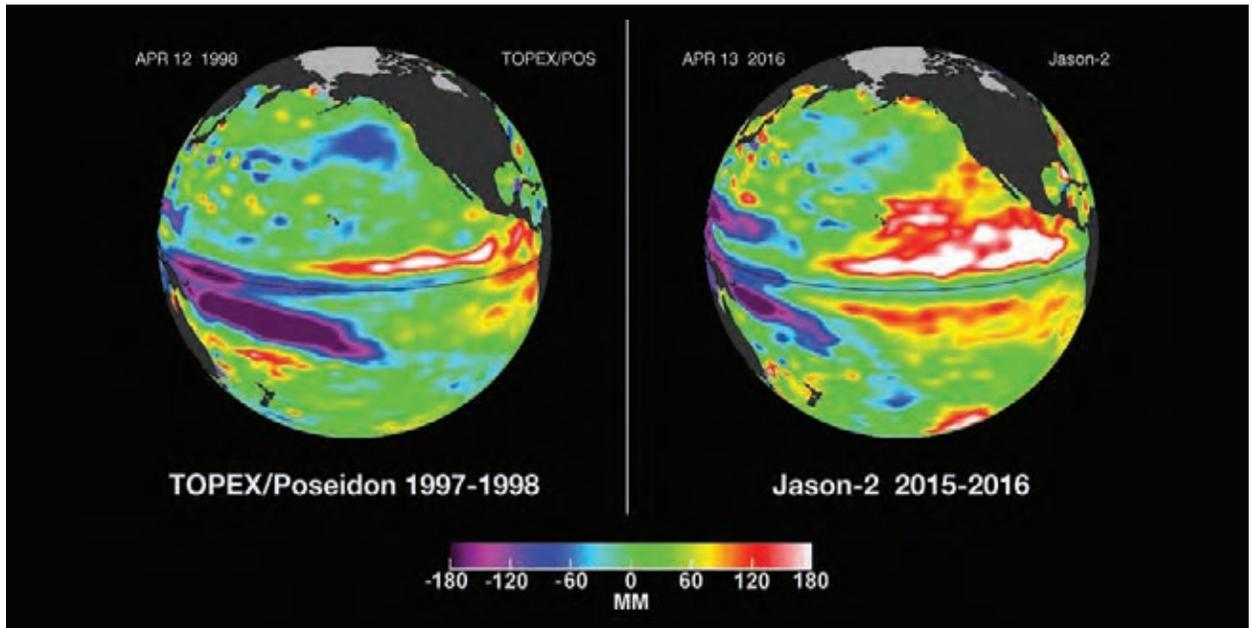
"Here we have an unusually warm ocean off the coast of South America; how does it affect the climate in Regina?" he asks. "And how does warming water in equatorial Pacific affect the amount of ice on the Arctic Ocean when there's no ocean current connecting the two?"

The answer to those questions is blowing in the wind.

Climatologists aren't sure what triggers an El Niño, but they do know it usually starts with a weakening of the trade winds that blow across the Pacific.

"The world's oceans cover 70 per cent of the earth and drive our planet's climate system," says Piwowar. "Where the ocean temperature is warmer, there is more active weather. The Pacific winds typically blow from east to west, pushing the warm surface waters westward, away from South America. As the surface waters are dragged away from the coast, deeper, colder waters in the eastern Pacific are pulled to the surface. The fish just love this because the deep waters are full of nutrients."

Sometimes, and for reasons not fully understood, the trade winds don't blow as strong as usual. As a result, the east-west surface current slows down and the upward nutrient pull along the South American coast weakens. Without the rich nutrients in the water, the fish leave. Large regions in the central and eastern Pacific warm up and we have an El Niño.



NASA satellite images compare ocean surface temperatures and sea heights from the famous 1997-98 El Niño, regarded as one of the most powerful in recorded history, and the El Niño of this past winter. The images reveal the most recent El Niño episode to be longer lasting and larger in area than the earlier episode that caused widespread drought, flooding and other natural disasters across the globe. Photo courtesy of NASA/JPL-Caltech.

This phenomenon can be observed from space by using a variety of remote sensing instruments carried by orbiting satellites. Thermal radiometers measure the amount of heat energy given off by the ocean surface, and scientists can determine the sea surface temperature from space to a precision of about one-tenth of a degree. The data can show the tell-tale signs of an El Niño: warmer than usual ocean temperatures off the Peruvian coast.

However, thermal radiometers only measure the top metre or so of the sea surface. Anyone who has gone diving into

a lake or ocean on a hot sunny day knows the surface temperature is often very different than the temperature below.

Piwowar explains that remote sensing scientists have discovered that mapping the height of the ocean is a more effective way to monitor the development of an El Niño because, as temperatures increase, the water expands, causing sea levels to rise. A space-borne laser altimeter can take billions of ocean height measurements over several days; the average of these readings produces an accurate estimate of the sea level.

During an El Niño, the warmer ocean can cause the sea level off the South American coast to rise by up to half a metre. Since the rise in sea level is a better indicator of ocean temperatures at depth, and not just at the surface, scientists prefer this method to map the extent of an El Niño.

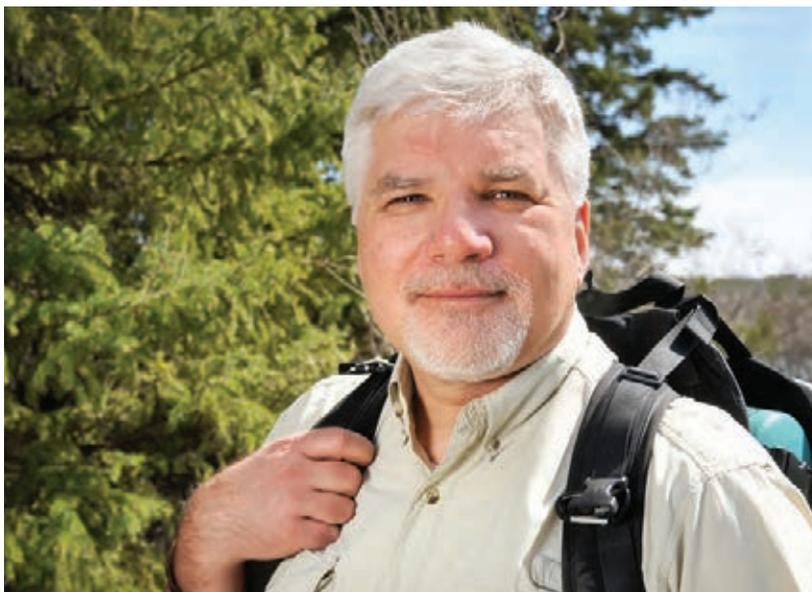
“This extra warmth in the ocean translates to more warmth in the atmosphere and this heat gets transported around the world in different ways by upper atmospheric circulation systems,” says Piwowar.

El Niño events happen every five to seven years. They do not cause global warming, Piwowar emphasizes, but are directly affected by it. If the ocean is warmer to begin with, then any temperature increase during an El Niño will be amplified.

“There’s no guarantee that every El Niño will have a warmer, drier winter on the Prairies, but it’s a pattern we observe repeatedly. Sometimes the effects aren’t that strong; the 2015-16 winter was a notably strong El Niño that we just are coming out of. We had a classic El Niño winter here.”

From the equator, to the Arctic, to the top of the Andes, El Niño has been affecting the planet’s environment, and people, for centuries. Before technology, people used other ways to predict weather that coincides with El Niño.

Piwowar recounts the research of Benjamin Orlove, an anthropology professor from the University of California at Davis who studied the



Joe Piwowar, associate professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, studies how El Niño affects different environments around the world.

Indigenous peoples of the mountains in Peru and Bolivia. Orlove noted that for over 400 years, these Indigenous people have looked to the stars in late June to forecast the best time to plant their potato crops. Farmers look at the Pleiades stars and study their relative brightness. If the stars are dim, they know that a drought is imminent and delay planting.

Climate scientists have known that El Niño reduces rainfall in the Andes, but until Orlove's study, no one had made a connection between the unusual presence of thin cirrus clouds high above the Andes Mountains in June and drought the following winter.

While ancient knowledge has merit, these days, scientists rely on data from NASA to study and predict the often disastrous effects El Niño has in different parts of the world.

Piwovar has mapped the effects of El Niño on the ice covering the Arctic Ocean. He observed that during an El Niño winter, there is an unusually light ice cover on the Sea of Okhotsk, north of Japan. At the same time, on the opposite side of the Arctic, there is abnormally heavy ice in the Labrador Sea, between the coasts of Newfoundland and Greenland. Interestingly, the Titanic was sunk by an iceberg floating down from the Labrador Sea in 1912 – an El Niño year.

South America was hit hard during this year's El Niño. Heavy rains swamped parts of the continent. By mid-January, floods had displaced more than 150,000 people. By mid-March, strong rains caused by El Niño killed at least 14 people and adversely affected another 59,000. Agricultural land was flooded, ruining more than 1,000 hectares of plantain and rice crops.

Even as waters subside, public health threats persist. The increased moisture provides the perfect breeding grounds for mosquitos and the viral diseases they spread, such as dengue, chikungunya and Zika.

"Typically, El Niño events peak in strength during the Northern Hemisphere winter and then weaken throughout the spring," says Piwovar. "However, El Niño can still impact the weather and climate across the globe even while it is waning. El Niño's impact on wind, air pressure and rain throughout the tropics can have cascading effects, even shifting the location of the mid-latitude jet streams which guide storms across North America," he says.

Such was the case this winter. People on the Prairies enjoyed a milder winter because the jet stream looped north over



According to Joe Piwovar, climate modellers forecast the Prairies to be warmer, particularly in the winter time, for the next 25 to 50 years. Weather like that experienced during the past winter may be the new normal 30 years from now.

the Yukon and Northwest Territories, while in Eastern Canada it dipped down over the mid-Atlantic states, delivering a colder, wetter winter.

"The warmer, drier winter is going to have an impact on a variety of things," says Piwovar. "There's very little snowfall so that's going to potentially affect agriculture producers because they depend on the snowfall for soil moisture."

The build up of soil moisture in some areas due to several very wet years recently may mitigate the impact of the really dry winter.

"If we don't get the really cold winters, it could affect the population of insects and other pests which typically freeze in the middle of winter and get killed off. I would be expecting a higher incidence of infestation of insects this summer," Piwovar adds.

Though we won't always have an El Niño winter, what we just experienced could be a glimpse of a typical winter in the future.

"Even though El Niño is not related to global warming, we are in a period of global warming and the climate modellers forecast it to be warmer in this part of the world, particularly in the winter time, for the next 25 to 50 years," says Piwovar. "So, if you liked – or disliked – the past winter, get used to it because these conditions may be the new normal 30 years from now." **D**

Judy Bird is a naturally curious freelance writer in Regina with degrees in Arts and Journalism from the University of Regina. Her combined love for writing and learning have enabled her to share stories and build bridges of understanding, particularly with topics about First Nations and Métis health and culture.

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In February, the Faculty of Fine Arts was rebranded as the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance, or MAP. The reimagining of fine arts departments across North America has become a trend in response to dwindling student numbers and fewer subscribed programs. Rae Staseson, once a U of R student, led the charge for change – this time in her capacity as dean of MAP.

**By Sabrina Cataldo, BA'97,
BJ'99, Cert. PR'04**

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department



Rebrand puts Media, Art, and Performance on the **MAP**

When Rae Staseson convocated from the University of Regina with her Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1987, she said, “Someday, I’m going to come back here and be the dean of fine arts.” Twenty-seven years later, her prediction came true.

She says of her time at the University, “It was the best undergraduate degree ever.” Staseson started her university career majoring in social sciences/humanities, but found her way over to the College Avenue Campus to take a drawing class. “And I never came back.”

She had always been creative – playing piano, singing and drawing as a child. But she had always seen herself as more of an athlete – she was a show jumper with horses for 14 years. However, the degree gave her freedom to explore. “You’re allowed to be brazen and courageous, and it was fun,” she says.

Not only that, her dog was allowed to accompany her. Part of it was due to safety – pulling all-nighters by yourself in a building with no pay phones is a scary prospect – but part of it was because the faculty and staff just enjoyed having the dog around.

“Those kinds of things made it unique and fun. The experience was great. It was supportive. It was challenging. I learned a lot about myself. I discovered I was a good artist, and when I applied to graduate schools, I got into 11 out of 11 schools,” she says. “This place is very fond and dear to my heart. When you really believe in a place and had such a great educational experience, it’s all the more enticing to come back and be part of it.”

Her journey back to Regina was a winding one. It began with a Master’s of Fine Arts program in sculpture at Louisiana State University. “I chose to leave Regina because I’m not a big believer of doing double degrees at the same institution. I’d already reaped the benefits of being here, so I wanted to go away. I had interesting criteria for graduate school: late deadlines, warm weather and somewhere I’d never been before,” she laughs.

After two years in Baton Rouge, Staseson decided to finish her degree at Rutgers University in New Jersey, on a full scholarship. There, she began doing performance art, creating “out of studio experiences.” She says, “I didn’t go to grad school to get a job. I went to grad school to have an experience as a professional artist, to impact my way of looking at the world.”

No one was more surprised than Staseson when she found herself teaching at Concordia University in Montreal in 1999. “I’m the accidental professor. Life moves in ways you could never predict.” She had moved to Quebec for love – her boyfriend at the time landed a job as a professor there. She applied for a nine-month teaching gig in communications studies, which ended up turning into a three-year contract.

“I was already changing their TV program to video production and I wasn’t even a tenured prof,” she says. A tenure-track job came shortly after. In her 15 years at Concordia, Staseson made major contributions at both the faculty and university levels, opening a media gallery, securing research chairs, and taking a leadership role in governance and strategic planning.

Throughout her time in Montreal, Staseson frequently returned to Saskatchewan, not only to visit family and friends, but also to make art. Her series of videos, wall projections and sound pieces, *Between Sand and Snow*, are based on landscape, memory and sight. “I really missed the landscape, the sound

and the sky. The geography speaks greatly to me,” she says. “In Montreal, Indigenous culture is quite invisible. I missed being around Indigenous people and the culture of Indigenous people. You grew up with it here. All of a sudden you start recognizing who you are and what feeds you. I wanted to come back to where I could really take part and be accepted into communities.”

Then the dean of fine arts job at the University of Regina came up, and she remembered the pledge she had made years before. “It was the perfect storm of things coming together,” she says.

When she started as dean in August 2014, Staseson immediately noticed the differences between the University of Regina and Concordia University. “It’s interesting coming from a university of 60,000 plus people [students, faculty and staff] – it’s a small city. Our University is a decent-sized institution, but you can still find your way around it,” she says. “People are friendlier here. Students and faculty can regularly say, ‘hello,’ to the president or provost. But more importantly, they say ‘hello’ back. The students are very important to the University in all the faculties, and it’s really noticeable.”

She notes the wealth of opportunities here for students at all levels, to do research, to collaborate, to work with the community, and to have professional placements. “In a big centre, you’re competing with other universities.”

Her beloved Faculty of Fine Arts remained a special place, nearly 30 years later. “Because we’re not a cast of thousands, the collegiality among the staff and the students is really

impressive. People care about each other. This place is special because it has hired really great people who have stayed and who have made a great impact. You see it. You feel it,” she says.

And Staseson can still bring her dog to work, now because she’s part of the St. John’s Ambulance Paws for Stress program, which brings animals to the University to help students relax during exam season.

In the one-and-a-half years that Staseson has been dean, the faculty has changed dramatically. The most visible transformation? The name. As of February 2016, the Faculty of Fine Arts is known as the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance, or MAP.

The reimagining of fine arts faculties across North America has become a trend in response to dwindling student numbers, fewer subscribed programs and misinformation in the press. “Most parents today really want their kids in business administration or engineering,” she says. “The name ‘fine arts’ may not resonate with those who want to see their children get professional jobs right after graduation. ‘Fine arts’ is an old term. It’s very ivory tower. It’s from a time when we had the privilege to go to art school. The pressures are different now. The cost of university is different now.”

Cultivating major change in institutions such as universities can be a challenging, slow process, but Staseson encountered no resistance to the renaming. Instead, she was met with enthusiasm at all levels of the decision-making process and was able to rebrand the faculty within eight months. “That’s pretty unheard of. People don’t like change. But I really think that this

faculty was ready. People were ready for the kind of energy and excitement we were generating,” she says.

Aside from having a catchy acronym, the new name emphasizes the contemporary and practical nature of the faculty’s programs. “Performance better sums up our teaching and research. Performance happens in every area of this faculty. It’s not just music and it’s not just theatre,” she says. “Media means something to parents. Kids are coming out of high school pretty proficient editors of media. They are sound artists and musicians because they are able to access all kinds of applications and software. Technologies have allowed them to be more creative much earlier. The name change appeals to that demographic.”

One relatively new and exciting program in MAP is creative technologies (CTech). This interdisciplinary program uses new media and technologies, as well as old and residual technologies. “It’s a place where students can play and experiment,” Staseson says. They learn computer science skills, programming skills, data visualization and how to build small robotics. Students perform with technology and experiment with 3D printing and modelling. “They are learning to be inventors,” she says.

An example is Rebecca Caines’ *Tablet Orchestra*, which features students using iPads as musical instruments to create compositions. Caines recently used iPads and music to work with patients at the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre. “She is looking at where technologies can improve quality of life. There’s a playfulness, but there’s also an interesting socially engaged practice,” Staseson says.



Previous page: Dean Rae Staseson of the recently renamed Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance, or MAP. Left: This 1987 photo shows Staseson and her dog Cleo in Wascana Park. Cleo often accompanied Staseson to classes at the College Avenue Campus. Right: Staseson poses in front of her work, *Water Drawing v.1 (2010)* a video projection at Concordia University in Montreal. Photo by Darren Ell.



Fine arts faculties across North America are reinventing themselves in response to dwindling student numbers and fewer subscribed programs. Here Staseson meets with (left to right) faculty administrator Jan Bell, Film Department head Mark Wihak and professor Carmen Robertson, Visual Arts Department. Right: MAP faculty member Megan Smith is working on her own CTech research project, *Riding Through Walls*. The project explores new ways to perform using available technologies. In this case, Smith is riding a stationary bike across Canada using Google Glass and Google Street View.

Some CTech courses are taught by a team of MAP, computer science and engineering professors. Megan Smith is a MAP professor in the CTech program. “More and more universities are offering this kind of program, but we’re one of the only ones that bring all of those professors into one space at one time. One of the principal reasons of working in this way is that once students move on to industry or creative practice, they will be working in teams. We ingrain this in the student process from the 100-level courses, so by the time they graduate they are very aware that they have to be an interdisciplinary person and work with other areas and skillsets to realize particular projects,” she says. The program has been operating for about five years, and the first students with minors in CTech convoked in fall 2015.

Smith is currently working on her own CTech research project, *Riding Through Walls*, which explores new ways to perform using available technologies. In her office, she hops on a stationary bike and cycles across Canada using Google Glass and Google Street View. “I’m testing the boundaries of corporate intranet and trying to physically penetrate the Internet,” she says. Smith designed and created the computer platform that makes the virtual Canadian tour possible and will be releasing an inexpensive do-it-yourself kit for anyone wanting to make their own journey. The project is part of an ongoing exhibition, *Project Anywhere*.

Smith says many CTech students end up employed at creative agencies as graphic designers or programmers, or as artists. “A lot of people become

self-employed because by the time they finish their degree, they have the skills to do projects on their own. They could also go into museums and galleries that need to develop new projects,” she says.

Staseson says, “Our students get jobs. Start Googling and you’ll find that the MFA and the BFA are the new MBA. Employers are finding that students coming out of fine arts, whether undergrad or grad, know how to do research. They have to write. They have to think outside the box. They have to work in teams and collaborate. Those are transferrable soft skills that you can take everywhere.”

Simon Fuh, a visual art student in MAP’s first graduating class, agrees. “I live life to be able to put food on my plate

and a roof over my head and still be a full-time professional artist. There are different pathways to that goal. It’s not like a professional degree program where it’s defined for you – you have to find your own way.” After convocation, Fuh, who has been named one of Canada’s 20 Untapped Emerging Artists, is finding his way to Toronto, where he has accepted an internship at a prestigious art magazine.

The faculty has opened itself up in the last year and a half to focus on serving all students – not just those who are pursuing BFAs and MFAs. In the 2014 fall semester, the faculty taught about 1,490 students. In fall 2015, that number had increased to almost 2,000. Staseson says students from other faculties get excited about MAP’s “sexy classes,” such as The Business of Fashion, Underwear and Social Meaning and Powwow to Proscenium.

MAP has also opened itself up internationally. Agreements with two different universities in Mexico City mean more student and faculty mobility. “Mexico City universities are really interested in our work in cultures of display and Indigenous contemporary art. That’s a niche of absolute excellence here that we know we can grow because we have the demographic,” she says.

Staseson’s goal is to put MAP on the map as the place on the Prairies to study. “There is already so much brilliant work going on. It’s just repackaging it and promoting it. That’s what I do really well,” she says. **D**



Simon Fuh, one of MAP’s first graduates, was recently named one of Canada’s 20 Untapped Emerging Artists.

Sabrina Cataldo is an award-winning writer and communications strategist in Regina.





Veterinary visionary

Pet ownership and the world of veterinary medicine can be filled with stress and trauma. Suicide rates among veterinarians, who might face a patient death every day, are staggering. The loss of a pet can be devastating for families; a contagious illness among large animals can be ruinous for agriculture producers. As Canada's only full-time veterinary social worker, Erin Wasson MSW'15 is at the forefront of a critical new vocation that is proving to be visionary. Most importantly, she is helping veterinarians, faculty, students and animal owners deal with the stresses that come from a life with animals.

By Jeanette Stewart BJ'15

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department and Caitlin Taylor

Erin Wasson explains what a typical day as Canada's only full-time veterinary social worker is like. It begins early in the morning, touching base with the master of social work student she's supervising. She then provides support to veterinary staff members who are looking for resources, before she's dispatched to counsel a client whose horse has just died. She wraps the day up by facilitating a workshop for hospital staff on compassion fatigue. "I'm busy," she says, bluntly.

Wasson walked through the doors of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVN) at the University of Saskatchewan in September 2014, with the goal of completing her master of social work practicum, specializing in the emerging field of veterinary social work. She's since gone on to a full-time position at the college, and her days are consistently as diverse as the one she describes.

Wasson spends about 60 per cent of her time working with clients of the WCVN's Veterinary Medical Centre. Her work at this teaching hospital involves mostly small animal cases, whether she's working with the veterinarian on the case or counselling the owners themselves. The rest of her time is split evenly between students and staff and faculty.

Wasson was drawn to the field in part due to her own love of animals. With two horses and two cats of her own, she knows first-hand the role animals play in wellness. After a bad day, Wasson often heads out to the barn for an "attitude adjustment."

Wasson has worked as a registered social worker since 2009. Prior to beginning her master's degree through the University of Regina's Faculty of Social Work, she served in a variety of human service areas, including mental health and addictions, medical social work and crisis intervention. She is warm and approachable, and knows how to instantly put a person at ease.

What she didn't know is whether she'd be accepted at the WCVN. While the field of veterinary social work is gaining traction at universities in the United States, it's still relatively new to Canada.

With increasing literature on the important role pets play in their owners' lives and well-being, as well as staggering statistics on the stress levels of veterinarians, it was easy to see where Wasson could help. But first she needed buy-in from the population she was about to serve. Would clients at the Veterinary Medical Centre want to talk to her? And more importantly, would faculty, staff and students seek her help?

The results surpassed her expectations.

"Sometimes I felt like I was riding a dragon. It was only a matter of time before it was going to unfurl its big wings," Wasson says. "It's bigger than I thought it would be."

There's at least one person involved with the program who isn't surprised by Wasson's success.

"If you build it, they will come," says Trisha Dowling, a WCVN professor and co-chair of the committee that created the unique veterinary social work partnership between the WCVN and University of Regina. "Within a month of beginning her placement, it was apparent to all involved that her skills and services were vital to the healthy functioning of the WCVN," she says.

Dowling has turned to Wasson, who connected her with the necessary resources to solve both professional and personal problems, on multiple occasions. "She whips out her cell phone and the cavalry comes to the rescue," says Dowling.

In an industry that celebrates overwork, Dowling says Wasson is a model of resiliency and self care.

The stress of the profession begins in veterinary school, as students balance a heavy course load and begin to deal with the reality that veterinary medicine isn't just about playing with puppies. Veterinarians constantly have to confront death, disease and distress, and this type of work can take its toll.

"The number one presenting concern is workplace stress, and I've measured that," Wasson says.

Dowling echoes this, citing the high suicide rate of veterinarians as an alarm

bell for the profession. Veterinarians are forced to deal with death on a near daily basis, and it's not always the passing of the 20-year-old family dog.

"It's really painful to euthanize animals that have problems you can fix," says Dowling, explaining that the financial realities of veterinary medicine add a layer of complexity to the profession. Veterinarians can't always practice to their fullest abilities because of the financial limitations their clients face.

"There's a lot of stresses as a veterinarian that other health care professionals don't have to deal with," says Dowling. "We get a lot of misdirected anger that you wouldn't see in the human health-care system, especially when clients feel guilty because they can't afford to pay for the care that their animal needs."

In addition to helping the veterinarians, Wasson has played a large role in helping clients. She's spent time working on disease investigations, and will often roll up her sleeves and help out a farmer in order to gain trust. For large animal producers, herd loss can affect their entire livelihood, and Wasson is able to talk to them about their struggles.

This large animal component is just one example of how the program has grown beyond the committee's initial hopes.

"I think that the program has done very well and far exceeded our expectations," says Darlene Chalmers, an assistant professor with the University of Regina's Faculty of Social Work who supervised Wasson's practicum, and co-chairs the veterinary social work committee.

The Veterinary Social Work Initiative began to take shape nearly three years



Photo by Caitlin Taylor.

Previous page: Canada's only full-time veterinary social worker Erin Wasson and her horse Gunner at Sandhills Stable just outside Saskatoon. **Above:** Trisha Dowling, a Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVN) professor and the co-chair of the committee that created a unique veterinary social work partnership between the WCVN and University of Regina, and her dog Zipper.



Wasson meets with co-chair of the veterinary social work committee Darlene Chalmers. Chalmers is an assistant professor with the University of Regina's Faculty of Social Work in Saskatoon and supervisor of Wasson's practicum.

ago when the leaders of the Faculty of Social Work and the WCVM met to discuss the potential for developing a veterinary social work program. It was through the support of WCVM Dean Doug Freeman and Faculty of Social Work Dean Judy White that the program began to take root. As soon as Wasson heard about the developing program, she knew she had to be involved.

Wasson cites White's support as an important element of the program's success thus far. "Having her support, interest, and also her acknowledgment that the work itself is important and that there is a role for social work in this vein of veterinary medicine has been really integral to the program working as well as it does," Wasson says.

Wasson has already worked with two master's students who are interested in exploring the different avenues veterinary social work can take. Key to the program's success is the willingness of those involved to work across disciplines to address problems.

Whether it is young medical students learning to ask about patients' pets, or the work therapy dogs play in supporting the elderly, the understanding of the human-animal bond is growing.

"People won't quit smoking for themselves, but they'll quit smoking for their cat. Somebody might not get

exercise for themselves, but if their dog is struggling, they'll get out and walk their dog," Wasson says.

Wasson believes the opportunities for social workers interested in this area are limited only to their desire to create them. A 2014 study by Ipsos-Forward on behalf of the Canadian Animal Health Institute showed 34 per cent of Canadians have at least one dog, and 32 per cent of households have at least one cat. That's millions of animals, and millions of people who have experienced a connection with animals.

"Collectively as a western culture, we are very tied to our creatures," Wasson says. "For students, or social workers interested in working with individuals, you can't ignore the human-animal relationship any longer. It's just intrinsically a part of people's lives."

She believes there's also a role for veterinary social work within the greater scope of social work. Research has shown that children who abuse animals are more likely to have been sexually abused or have witnessed violence. Animal abuse is often an indication of domestic violence within a home.

"It's still a new and emerging area for the profession of social work, so there's a lot more to learn and a lot more to do," says Chalmers. She believes the next steps will be to add more social workers to support Wasson in her work, as well as to incorporate veterinary social work

into different areas of the curriculum for undergraduate or graduate students at the University of Regina.

For veterinarians, this program will encourage new graduates to turn to social workers in their communities – whether to report incidents of animal abuse or to address their own personal challenges.

"As new veterinarians graduate, they have learned about self care and work-life balance from a social worker. They can call on and collaborate with social workers in their communities," says Dowling.

Wasson's work is receiving media attention and accolades from across the country. She's a frequent guest at conferences, including the recent Saskatchewan SPCA conference, the Saskatchewan Association of Veterinary Technologists and the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association. It's clear her work has resonated with many, both in the veterinary and social work worlds. Wasson was also recently nominated for a YWCA Women of Distinction Award for her contributions to the college. **D**

Jeanette Stewart grew up in small-town Saskatchewan and is a proud graduate of the University of Regina. She loves music and animals and works as a communications coordinator at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, where she's lucky to interact with dogs, cows and all sorts of creatures on a regular basis.

Todd Mintz BAdmin'90

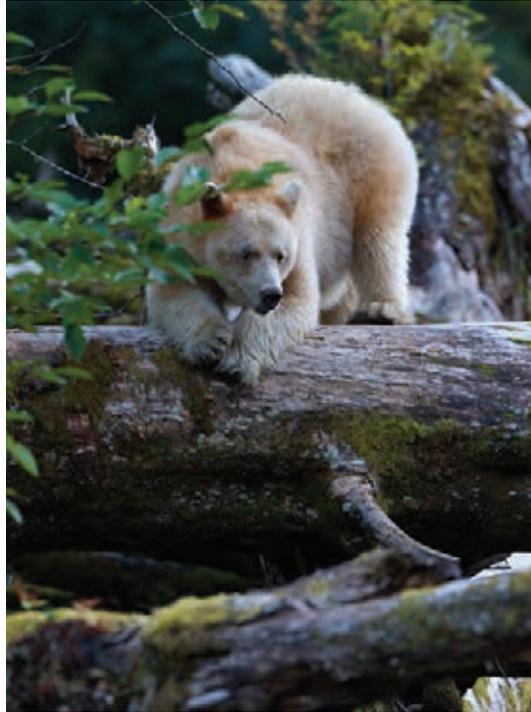
Groucho Marx famously declared, "I would never join a club that would accept me as a member."

That's not the case for Todd Mintz BAdmin'90 who was recently accepted as a member into the prestigious Explorers Club, an international society dedicated to the advancement of field research and exploration. Mintz is in good company. His fellow members are the likes of the first man on the moon, Neil Armstrong; the first men to summit Mount Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay; and the first man to set foot on the South Pole, Roald Amundsen.

Mintz was granted membership due to his extensive Arctic travel and nature photography. Mintz is a managing partner with MWC Chartered Professional Accountants LLP, but it's his work as an underwater and nature photographer that has seen his photos grace magazines, books, newspapers, scientific papers and websites throughout the world. He was awarded Best of Show in the internationally prominent Nature's Best-Smithsonian Natural History Museum – Ocean Views competition. His photographs have been part of two exhibits at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington D.C. and he has also received Best of Show honours in Scuba Diving magazine and twice in the SEA International Photo Competition sponsored by the Northern California Underwater Photographic Society. Mintz's images have been featured on the covers of magazines, including Nature's Best Photography, Sport Diver and Scuba Diving. He is also a member of the Ocean Artists Society, which promotes ocean art as a means to inspire people around the world to protect and preserve the natural environment.

To see more photos from Mintz, visit his website at www.tmintz.ca.





Opposite page top: Northern lights in Wapusk National Park near Churchill, Manitoba.

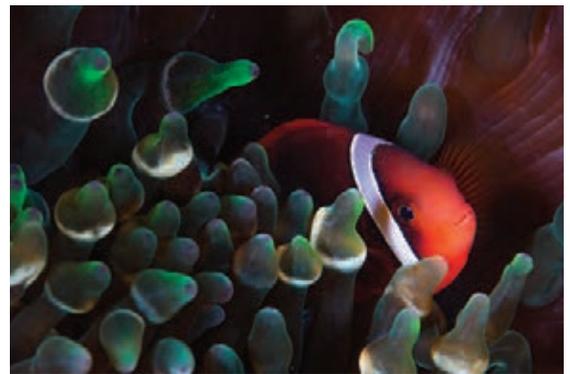
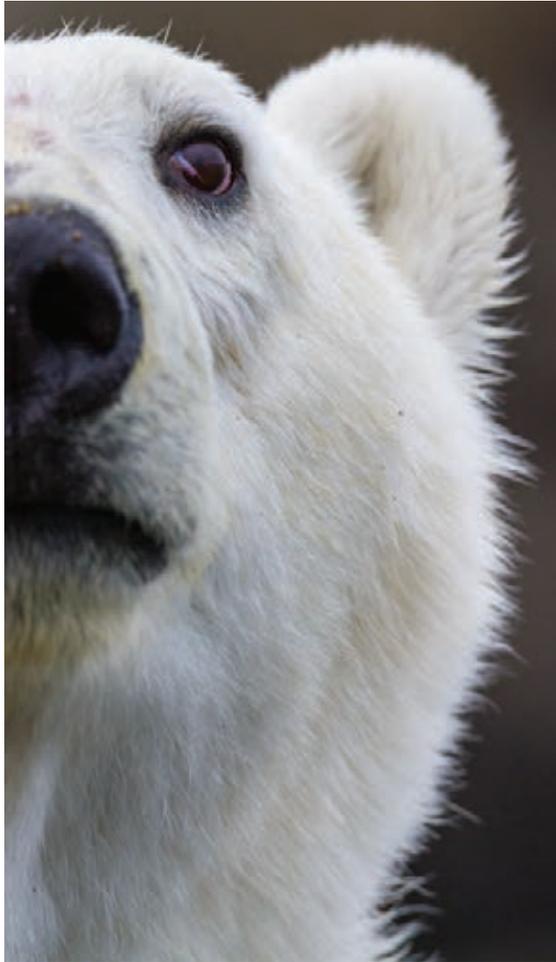
Opposite page bottom: Mintz surfaces in icy Canadian arctic waters.

Above left: Reef life in marine protected sanctuary in Anilao, Philippines.

Above right: Spirit Bear on Gribbell Island, British Columbia.

Above: Up close with a walrus on Ellesmere Island, Nunavut.

Left: Sandstone heart in Antelope Canyon, Arizona, USA.



*Above: Close up of a polar bear in Qikiqtarjuaq, Nunavut.
Top right: Skulls, Peru, South America.
Above centre: Anemone fish in Anilao, Philippines.
Right: Bowhead whale in Qikiqtarjuaq, Nunavut, Canadian Arctic.*



Top: Red fox near University of Regina in Wascana Park, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Centre: Iceberg calving in Qikiqtarjuaq, Nunavut.

Bottom: Diver under iceberg locked in winter ice, Pond Inlet, Nunavut.



For the first time in University of Regina history, two brothers will receive the institution's highest tribute. Gavin and Jack Semple have distinguished themselves in two completely different fields. Gavin is a well-known Regina businessman and philanthropist. Jack is one of Canada's preeminent blues guitarists. Each will receive honorary degrees at the 2016 spring convocation.

By Bill Armstrong

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department



All in the family

Jack and Gavin Semple reminisce quietly while walking around the Semple family homestead, about 25 kilometres north of Regina. A horse in an adjoining pasture, curious about the visitors, sidles up the fence line to accept some gentle strokes from Gavin and then Jack. As the old saying goes, you can take the boy off the farm, but you can't take the farm out of the boy.

While both Jack and Gavin have received multiple honours and recognition in their respective and very distinctive fields, they had similar reactions to the news the University of Regina was offering them honorary degrees.

"I was blown away when I got the call," Jack recalls. "I thought, 'Are you sure you got the right Semple?' Then, when it sank in that it was Gavin and I, I was just thrilled and proud."

When University of Regina President Vianne Timmons called Gavin with the news, he said it shook him in a positive way. "For a farm boy who spent eight years in a one-room school, this was something I'd never imagined. And to have Jack recognized in this way with me, I got a little bit choked up," Gavin says.

Having two siblings from the same family receive honorary degrees at the same time is unparalleled in University history. The brothers' accolades couldn't be earned in more different arenas. Jack is a virtuoso guitar player and singer whose music is usually associated

with the blues. In fact, his musical interests are eclectic and wide-ranging. He adores the music of Gordon Lightfoot, as is evident from the cover photo of his tribute album, which shows Jack seated, at one with his guitar, in a characteristic Lightfoot pose. Yet, his work with the True Jive Pluckers, a partnership with former Department of Music faculty member Ed Minevich and Regina Symphony Orchestra's Stephen McLellan, includes elements of jazz, gypsy and klezmer music, showcasing the trio's versatility and musical interests.

Gavin, on the other hand, is a born salesman and business entrepreneur. He began as a sales representative with a small electrical contracting company in 1972, guiding and transforming it into Brandt Industries Ltd. and the Brandt Group of Companies, the first privately-held business in Saskatchewan to achieve \$1 billion in annual sales. Gavin served as president of Brandt Industries and CEO of the Brandt Group of Companies, and is still active in the business as chairman.

Although he has been showered with many personal and corporate awards, including Brandt being recognized as one of Canada's top 50 best managed companies for several years in a row, Gavin quickly defers to Jack as the real entrepreneur. "He's been dedicated to his music and focused on playing the guitar since he was nine," Gavin says, "and he's had a successful



Opposite page: Spring 2016 honorary degree recipients Gavin (left) and Jack Semple photographed on the family homestead about 30 kilometres northwest of Regina. The brothers are the first siblings to receive University of Regina honorary degrees. Above: Although he no longer serves as president of Brandt Industries and CEO of the Brandt Group of Companies, Gavin Semple is still active in the business as chairman. The company is the largest privately-held business in Saskatchewan with sales of more than \$1 billion annually.



Gavin Semple in his office at Brandt Tractor Ltd. The company is the world's largest privately held John Deere construction and forestry dealer.

career even though he chose to settle with his family in Regina, which is not the centre of the blues universe.”

On the flip side, Jack describes his brother Gavin as the most humble, well-educated, self-made man he knows. “I was the youngest of the six kids,” Jack explains, “and Gavin was one of my mentors. At age nine, when I wanted to play guitar, Gavin and another brother, Jim, showed me how if I did my chores every day, I could get that guitar. Throughout my performing career, any time I’ve considered cutting my hair and getting a real job, Gavin has been there to encourage me to keep at it.”

Sprinkled throughout conversations with both men are references to the importance of hard work as a key ingredient of success, the familiar Saskatchewan work ethic. “You could not use the word ‘can’t’ around my father,” Gavin says. “Yes, it was hard work, but

you learned to enjoy the work when you felt the sense of accomplishment that came from being involved from seeding time through to the harvest.”

Brother Jim Semple, two years younger than Gavin, adds that all of the siblings learned important life lessons and values around the kitchen table from their hard-working, hard-driving father, John, and their compassionate mother, Blanche. “Our family had all meals together and there was always lots of discussion, mostly led by our dad.”

Gavin recalls that he and his father would debate all the time. Looking back, he realizes that his father was trying to teach him things, including that part of being a good leader is being a good listener. He also observed how his father applied his entrepreneurial spirit to build a successful farm business producing grain crops and raising purebred cattle, collecting and selling firewood and marketing fence posts.

At the same time, while their father was regarded as a successful farmer, the farmhouse had no central heating system, no running water and no electricity. Although such hardships were common among farmers in the area, Gavin calculated the size of the farmhouse at about 800 square feet. He noted that there were eight family members, and often a hired hand from the neighbouring Piapot First Nation, to be fed every day. “How our mother did it, I don’t know,” Gavin says, shaking his head as the sentence trails off.

Jim says the family was and remains close-knit, with 20 to 30 family members gathering about once a month to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. Jim gives most of the credit to Gavin and his wife Annette for keeping alive the

tradition of family gatherings that began in their modest farmhouse.

Jim and his wife Linda operated a welding shop for 14 years before they sold the business and Jim joined Brandt Manufacturing as a machine shop foreman. He retired 25 years later as vice-president of manufacturing. He recalls how he and Gavin listened over and over to the recorded teachings and philosophy of Earl Nightingale, a popular writer and speaker about personal development and motivation. In essence, Nightingale’s message was, “We become what we think about.” Jim adds that Gavin is regarded as the big thinker by his siblings.

“Earl Nightingale was no doubt a big influence,” Jim muses. “However, Gavin’s mind was open to the concept of unlimited possibilities, of striving to achieve one’s potential. His success exemplifies the promise of positive thinking.”

During their walkabout, Jack and Gavin also reminisce about travelling five and a half miles to the one-room Satulmari School, by horse and buggy or inside a wooden caboose on skis in winter, drawn by their faithful horses Topsy and Beulah. “There was a wood stove inside this wooden caboose,” Jack says. “Can you imagine that happening today?”

When Gavin completed eighth grade, there were no school buses to take students to high school, so his mother wisely arranged for him to attend Luther College in Regina and live in the boys’ dormitory on campus. At age 14 the move was a shock to his system, he admits.

“Here I was, living with 70 or 80 other students, and I’d literally never seen a shower before. And,” he continues, “they were really smart kids. It’s easy to be the

A family affair

When the Semple clan gathers, Jack and his family could provide an appropriate soundtrack, beginning with Sister Sledge’s *We Are Family*. Jack’s wife, Tara, plays flute for the Regina Symphony Orchestra, and the interests and talents of their three children prove the old adage that the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree: Kaitlyn is an actor, singer, dancer and teacher, while son Kieran is a songwriter, instrumentalist and singer, now living in British Columbia. Zenaya, the youngest, is a singer who really admires blues and jazz singer Etta James. (If you check out the Semple Family Band postings on YouTube, you can see and hear then 11-year-old Zenaya belting out a soulful version of Smoky Robinson’s *Who’s Loving You* during a performance at the Conexus Arts Centre.)

Over at the Brandt Group of Companies the familial connections run deep. Combined, the six Semple siblings have produced 54 offspring. Several of them have joined the family business, so there are plenty of opportunities to talk shop at family gatherings. Gavin’s wife, Annette, has played a significant role in the family business, and, he adds, has been his biggest supporter. (They celebrated 50 years of marriage in May 2016). Their daughter, Juanita, a graduate of the University of Regina Faculty of Business Administration, is the manager of recruitment for the Brandt Group of Companies. Their son, Shaun, and his wife, Gayleen, have two sons in the business: Christopher is vice-president of engineering, while Andrew is a sales manager. Christopher’s wife, Lisa, is a financial analyst.

Jim joined the company as foreman of the machine shop, which, at the time, had eight employees. He retired as vice-president of manufacturing, overseeing the work of 240 employees. And, Gavin is hopeful that grandson Matthew, who is in his third year of university, will also join the company.

top student in Grade 8 when you're the only student in Grade 8, so this was like being thrown in the deep end."

Gavin describes himself as a middling student at Luther College, suggesting that if there had been a secret "student most likely to fail" poll at the school, he might have been a candidate. He also notes there was a fair amount of discipline during the week. While he didn't like it at the time, he realized later it was a good thing. In 2004, Gavin led a campaign to repair the existing gymnasium on campus, which paved the way for Gavin and his son Shaun (now the president and CEO of the Brandt Group of Companies) to make a major donation in 2013 toward the construction of a new gym, called the Semple Gymnasium.

Being the youngest of the six kids, Jack was, in his words, the "young brat" who escaped the hard labour around the farm because his siblings wanted to protect his guitar-picking fingernails. Maybe Jack just substituted one form of hard work for another. Jim states most emphatically that no one ever had to tell Jack to practise his guitar lessons. "On the contrary," Jim laughs, "sometimes we were tempted to tell him to put down the damn guitar, because you couldn't get away from it in that little house."

More seriously, he adds that Jack is the best example of the theory that it takes 10,000 hours of practice for anyone to achieve mastery in his or her chosen field. Jim calculates that by practising three to five hours a day, Jack has logged at least 40,000 hours of practice, not including performances.

"His guitar has become an extension of himself," Jim says. "He has his mother's compassion, and he loves nature. As often as possible, he and I enjoy walking the trails on our family



Honorary degree recipient Jack Semple is one of Canada's premiere rhythm and blues guitarists.

property in the Qu'Appelle Valley. Jack hears music in the wind and the trees, where I just hear the wind and see poplar trees. He has a gift."

Jack began performing in public when he was 15. For two years in the 1980s he was based in Toronto, performing with The Lincolns, a funk and rhythm and blues group. Then he returned home.

"My first daughter was a little girl, and being around her at that time was the most important thing," Jack explains. "There was also my extended family here. I like Regina; it's the right size and a good place to raise a family."

Jack tours about 10 days a month, but he also plays at McNally's Tavern in Regina two or three times a year, one of his favourite gigs. He also performs at many local community fundraisers, such as for the Early Learning Centre and Souls Harbour Rescue Mission. When he isn't on the road, he stays involved with various projects, including working on soundtracks for film and television productions, often collaborating with a diverse group of musicians that he met and played with during his time in Toronto.

And, now that they are honorary degree recipients, what advice would

they pass on to this spring's University of Regina graduates? Jack stresses the importance of maintaining an attitude of humility as a way of remaining open to learning and growing. (Interestingly, when you trace the family name back to Middle English, Semple means simple, straightforward and humble.)

"I would say, respect your elders and those around you," Jack advises, "because you're not in their shoes, and they may have advice based on their life experiences that you can learn from. The more doors you open, the more doors you will discover opening for you."

Gavin's response mirrors his brother's. His words of wisdom are to believe that you have the capabilities to achieve success and to remember that failure is part of success.

"Most people coming out of school, I think, don't have a fully-formed idea yet of what they want to do with their lives, and I think that's perfectly normal," Gavin says. "I believe the answers are all out there, so I encourage everyone not to be afraid to ask questions." **D**

Bill Armstrong is a Regina freelance writer and amateur photographer with a strong interest in Saskatchewan history.

Photo by Michael Morien.



Jack Semple performs at the 2014 Saskatoon Jazz Festival.



Chief Tammy Cook-Searson of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band was first elected in 2005, at the age of 33. She is the first woman to lead the Band, one of the largest First Nations in Canada. Cook-Searson has distinguished herself as an outstanding leader. For that reason and many more, she is one of the honorary degree recipients at the University's 2016 spring convocation.

By Bill Armstrong

Photos by Kandis Riese

Born to **lead**

A photo of Chief Tammy Cook-Searson of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band reveals her sitting on a tree stump by the water, with a smartphone cradled in her right hand. At that moment, she was taking part in a conference call related to the emergency evacuations caused by the forest fires that raged across northern Saskatchewan in 2015. Another photo shows Cook-Searson smiling and waving to Band members returning home from the shelters in the south where they had been given refuge.

Those two images illustrate how she approaches her responsibilities as chief of the largest Indian Band in the province. “I needed to be there for the people, to be a voice for the people,” she says.

At various times between June 6 and July 22, 2015, about 6,000 of the 10,353 members of her band were away from their homes, uncertain what they would return to. Operating on little sleep during long summer days, Cook-Searson was involved in the myriad details of managing the emergency and communicating as much information as she could to her people. As one bus was being loaded with evacuees, a little boy asked her, “Are you the fire chief?”

A close friend, Waneek Horn-Miller, says Cook-Searson’s actions during the wildfire crisis reflect her leadership style. “Cook-Searson is unassuming at first; not pushy,” says Horn-Miller, who won a gold medal with Canada’s women’s water polo team at the 1999 Pan Am Games. “She is consistent and determined, and that is powerful. People recognize these character traits and believe in her. You can’t teach how to lead like that.”

Another long-time friend, former MLA and provincial cabinet minister Keith Goulet, says that like many leaders Cook-Searson has an immediate grasp of the issues under discussion. What sets her apart is that she is a superb communicator, able to explain those issues to people in Cree and in English.

Cook-Searson may have faced her greatest challenge during the 2015 wildfire season but she likes her job as a political

leader even more now than she did when she was first elected a Band councillor in 1997.

Cook-Searson is far more than a politician tethered to her smartphone. Her friend Horn-Miller describes her as a very traditional woman, one of the few First Nations leaders who have been successful in straddling the divide between traditional and modern ways. Cook-Searson has a trapper’s licence, and she and her husband, Jim, have just built a cabin close to her parents’ place at the trapline northwest of Brabant Lake. The cabin is a natural extension of her connection to her family and the rugged terrain where she grew up.

When Cook-Searson was young, her mother, Miriam, worked for an outfitting camp at Otter Lake, northwest of Stanley Mission, while her father, Charlie, was involved with mineral exploration in northern Saskatchewan and other parts of Canada. Part of each year was spent hunting, fishing and trapping, and Cook-Searson recalls listening to her mom and dad telling stories of the Cree legend Wesakechak and recounting other legends around the woodstove or campfire at night. Her mother now works at a health clinic in Stanley Mission, and her father, though nominally retired, stays busy turning moose hides into articles of clothing.

Thanks to her parents, Cree is her first language. It’s one of the ways she communicates with Band members and maintains her connections with her culture and her past. “We are fortunate in the north to still be able to fish and trap, to practise the skills that enable us to survive on the land,” she says. “I believe it is important to continue the ancient ways of doing things that respect the land, the plants and the animals. Those skills are connections to who we are.”

By virtue of her position as chief, Cook-Searson is also president of Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership, the for-profit economic development arm of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. Founded in 1981, Kitsaki invests in businesses operating in economic sectors where there is potential for profitability, along with training and employment opportunities for Band members. While much of the responsibility for managing



Opposite page: Honorary degree recipient Chief Tammy Cook-Searson, the first woman to lead the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, photographed beside the Montreal River near Lac La Ronge, Sask. Left: Cook-Searson being sworn into office for her fourth term by former Lac La Ronge Chief Harry Cook. Right: Cook-Searson presents then Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau with a starblanket during Trudeau’s summer 2015 visit to northern Saskatchewan when the area was being ravaged by wildfires.



Above: Tammy with four generations of Cook women (left to right): daughter Vanessa Searson, granddaughter Ciara Carr, grandmother Sally Roberts, and mother Miriam Cook.

Kitsaki's portfolio of investments falls to the CEO and Board, Cook-Searson remains involved in many meetings and negotiations.

Besides generating profits for on-reserve projects, Kitsaki employs from 900 to 1,400 Band members, depending on the season and the state of mining activity in northern Saskatchewan. Cook-Searson proudly notes that Canada North Environmental Services Limited Partnership, based in Saskatoon and wholly owned by Kitsaki, recently opened an office in Markham, Ontario.

"We believe it is important to diversify our investments," she explains, "because when some parts of the economy are doing well, others are not. We also want to provide a variety of employment opportunities to our people."

Goulet notes that Kitsaki has achieved steady growth under Cook-Searson's leadership, which he attributes to her holistic view of development. Rather than focus primarily on either economic or social development, Goulet observes, she has been successful in advancing both areas.

In addition to her responsibilities with Kitsaki, Cook-Searson is closely involved with several initiatives aimed at asserting the Band's treaty rights, most critically to redress the amount of land that the Band was to receive under treaty. Additional land, while not the complete answer, would help address the housing

and other social and economic problems faced by many First Nations across the province, including her Band. She was also involved in negotiations on another specific claim related to a 1904 agreement. When negotiations fell apart, she took the Band's case to the Specific Claims Tribunal in 2015.

Somehow, amidst all of these activities, Cook-Searson carves out time to pursue her passion for running. Even during the fire emergency of 2015 she ran, usually early in the morning or late in the evening. She clocked her personal best marathon time at Las Vegas last November and she is very close to qualifying for the Boston Marathon. She treasures the memory of being at a race competition where she presented a pair of moccasins to Billy Miles, the first American to win Olympic gold in the 10,000 metre race and only the second Native American to win an Olympic gold medal.

Chief Cook-Searson is the recipient of many honours, including the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. As for her honorary degree from the University of Regina, Cook-Searson says it represents the work of many people who have helped her throughout her life. **D**

Bill Armstrong is a Regina freelance writer and amateur photographer with a strong interest in Saskatchewan history.

MAP faculty member and printmaking instructor **Robert Truszkowski** was perusing the antique furniture section of a classified website a few years ago when an item caught his eye – a 106-year-old Chandler & Price 8" x 12" platen letterpress up for sale by *The Last Mountain Times* in Nokomis, Sask. A few weeks later, after a meticulous cleaning, the almost 700 kilogram press was brought back to life in a University printmaking studio. The relic is an old-school reminder of how it once was done, but it's also providing students with a novel new creative outlet.

D What is the history of the press?

It was purchased new in approximately 1908 by the Nokomis Times. The newspaper has changed hands and names many times and is currently The Last Mountain Times. The press last ran in 1991.

D How do you view its current use considering its history?

There is no doubt that it is a novelty; a throwback to a time when information moved slower. To hand-set individual pieces of lead type doesn't make sense in terms of mass communication anymore. It is a statement now, a political act.

D How does a mechanical hand press fit in the context of today's digital world?

There is a physicality to this press. It is cast iron and steel. You are very much connected to your process when you use this thing, and there is a tactility to the end result that is just not possible using today's digital tools. The thing that really connects to the present, though, is the fact that we can actually make photo-digitally generated printing plates and run them on this press. So you've got a photograph taken on an iPhone, worked up in Photoshop, output in negative on a professional inkjet printer and exposed and developed on 21st century photopolymer, locked into a 110-year-old cast iron beast and printed by young artists who were not even alive the last time this thing saw the light of day. That's incredible!

D What drew you to printmaking?

Initially, I think it was the community and camaraderie of the print studio. There's a real sense that we're all in it together;

students, technicians, professors. But if I dig really deep, I would say that the first time I saw a big copper plate with a photograph physically etched into it ... wow, that blew my mind and I was hooked.

D What do you strive to instill in your students?

That being an artist is not about standing around drinking wine and wearing a beret, while you wait for a big-time gallery owner to offer you a break. Artists work hard, so if you want to be an artist, you better get going!

D Despite the times your 1977 MG Midget has left you stranded on the side of the road, you have kept it for almost 23 years. What is your attraction to the car?

It takes work to drive this car – to start for the first time after winter, to adjust the handbrake, to fiddle with the electrics. It smells different than a new car. It handles different. It looks different. I get honks and thumbs up from strangers every time I take it out and about once a year someone offers to buy it on the spot. It's been with me since I was 16, and I can't imagine a spring where it's not waiting for me to take it out for a zip.

D Why does the world need artists?

In a world where we have access to every bit of information, literally, at our fingertips, in a world that measures worth in terms of dollars and cents, in a world that equates progress with answers, artists are needed to pose more questions than they solve, and to complicate expectations and common understandings of the world around us. Rarely are artists making art about making art. They make art to ask questions, push boundaries and shake us out of the status quo, and no subject or specialized field of knowledge is off limits. I couldn't imagine a world without artists.



Alumni Association President's Message



The University of Regina is built on a foundation of inclusion and openness. This can be seen in the diversity of both academic and extracurricular programming. It's also present in the interdisciplinary programs and the international components of education in all faculties. Even the Campus Master Plan has included these principles in the layout of buildings, public spaces and sight lines within the greater community.

With this foundation of inclusion and openness in mind, the Alumni Association was asked to consider adding a new member category to the Alumni ranks – that of associate member. An associate member in the Alumni Association would be an individual who has completed a non-credit certificate program of at least 80 classroom hours or a four-year Inclusive Post-Secondary Education experience resulting in a recognized certificate. Adding this category would extend Alumni Association membership to some Centre for Continuing Education students, English as a Second Language students and Campus For All students. Campus For All is the University of Regina's inclusive education program that sees students with intellectual disabilities take classes for a period of four years.

The proposal has been examined with great attention for the past two years. We have sought input from current alumni and student groups. We have also examined best practices across Canada. Perhaps the most compelling argument for change came in the form of messages from the families of the Campus For All students who stated that recognizing their sons and daughters as associate alumni is progressive, exciting and respectful.

The title of "associate alumni" was selected to show respect to these new groups but also to recognize with equal respect the efforts of University of Regina graduates who achieved their alumni status in a more traditional manner.

This question will be brought forward for ratification at the Annual General Meeting on June 16. I would encourage you to attend whether you are still connected to your alma mater or if you wish to become reacquainted with the University.

A truly well-rounded education provides perspective and appreciation for other points of view. Internationalism and widespread information sharing are enhancing many aspects of our understanding, our abilities to solve problems and our growth.

We should take every opportunity to connect with others and provide mutual support. As Barack

Obama noted in his 2009 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech:

"As the world grows smaller, you might think it would be easier for human beings to recognize how similar we are; to understand that we're all basically seeking the same things; that we all hope for the chance to live out our lives with some measure of happiness and fulfillment for ourselves and our families."

It is from this spirit of strength and recognition that our family of alumni can grow. By adding an associate member category, we can acknowledge other types of U of R students who have shared the same experiences, fought the same struggles and emerged stronger.

I look forward to seeing you at our Annual General Meeting and to welcoming new members into our ranks. Don't forget, the Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards dinner will be held on Thursday, October 6, on stage at the Conexus Arts Centre. Save the date for what promises to be an evening of alumni pride. Registration will open in August 2016.

**Brian Hillier DDA'04, BA'04, MBA'09, MHRM'11
President, University of Regina Alumni Association**

Upcoming Alumni Events

Alumni Association Annual General Meeting - Thursday, June 16

Research and Innovation Centre (new science building)

University of Regina Main Campus

5:30 p.m. Meeting

6:45 p.m. Reception

Please pre-register online at www.eply.com/URAAAGM1516022

Casino Night Fundraiser

The Regina Rams Alumni and Friends invite you to join them.

Saturday, June 25

RCMP Heritage Centre

5907 Dewdney Avenue

7 p.m.

Cost: \$100 person includes poker chips, food and pop. Cash bar.

Purchase tickets online at www.ramsalumni.com

Riders vs Redblacks and tailgate in Ottawa

The National Capital Region alumni branch invites you to join them in Ottawa on Friday, October 7.

Game time: 7 p.m. Tailgate information tbd.

Discounted game tickets are available at <http://www.capitaltickets.ca/oseg-promo> promo code: RBUOFR

Save \$12 - your price is \$45 per person including taxes.

Cougars Mens Alumni Dinner and Golf Tournament

The Regina Cougars Hockey Alumni Association invites you to join them for a dinner and celebration of the first four teams in modern Cougars hockey history. The following day is the association's 22nd annual golf tournament.

August 17-18

Murray Golf Course

12:30 p.m. shot gun start

Register at www.reginacougarhockeyalumni.com



University of Regina Alumni Association Awards for Excellence – Five faculty members have distinguished themselves amongst their students and peers and have been selected as this year’s recipients (left to right): Roz Kelsey, Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies – Award for Excellence in Service; Gordon Asmundson, Department of Psychology – Award for Excellence in Graduate Research Mentorship; Alec Couros, Faculty of Education – Award for Excellence in Teaching; Raymond Blake, Department of History – Award for Excellence in Research; David Gerhard, Department of Computer Science – Award for Excellence in Teaching. Since 1990, the University of Regina and the University of Regina Alumni Association have honoured outstanding faculty members for outstanding achievement in teaching, research, and service. In 2013, the program was expanded to include the category of graduate research mentorship.

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Join us for the 2016 Alumni Association Annual General Meeting

Thursday, June 16, 2016

Research and Innovation Atrium
 (in the new science building)

Meeting at 5:30 p.m.
 Reception to follow

If you are interested in becoming a board member, please send your résumé to
URalumni@uregina.ca

Please pre-register on-line:
www.uregina.ca/external/alumni-relations

1960-69

Peter Lacey BA'69 passed away on May 10, 2016, in Winnipeg, Man. He was a computer systems analyst and trouble shooter but he will be more remembered for his love of railways. In addition to being a director of the Winnipeg Railway Museum, he was the author of two books about Manitoba railways: *The Muskeg Limited* and *Tramway to the Pointe*. A third book was almost finished and may be published posthumously. His considerable railway research collection has been passed on to the museum. His dry wit and his wide-ranging knowledge on many subjects will be sorely missed by his family and many friends.

1970-79

Joan Spencer Olson's BA'72 first book, *Prairie Initiation: A War Bride's Story*, was released by Benchmark Press in October 2014. The novel received a John V. Hicks Award from the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild. From 1982 to 1990, Spencer Olson was a support worker for Wascana Home Care. In 1986, she edited an anthology, *Prairie Reflections*, for the Prairie Oral History Association. From 1994 to 2002, she was president of the Wascana Writers Group, contributing to three of their books. For many years she was also involved in local music and visual arts organizations. Spencer Olson has a daughter, Cheryl, and two granddaughters in Australia. She lives in Regina with her son, Robin.

Valerie Creighton BFA'74 was the recipient of a 2016 Saskatchewan Order of Merit award for her work in the arts. Creighton is president and CEO of Canada Media Fund.

Jim Hopson BEd'75 retired as director of education for the Qu'Appelle Valley

School Division in 2004 and as President/CEO of the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 2015.

Tim Low BAdmin'77 and his wife Donna celebrated their 35th anniversary on April 25, 2016. The Lows have been in British Columbia since 1992 but remain ardent Riders fans. Both attended the 2013 Grey Cup game in Regina. Tim is planning to retire in 2017.

Lynda Archer BA'78 earned a diploma in Speech Pathology and Audiology from the University of Toronto in 1973. After working for four years at Chedoke Hospital in Hamilton, Ont., she returned to school for graduate studies in psychology and growth and development at McMaster University. She earned a doctorate in 1985. In 1986, she obtained registration with the College of Psychologists of Ontario and went on to work as a clinical psychologist until 2008. Archer, who was always interested in creative expression and writing, earned a master's of fine arts in creative writing at Spalding University in Louisville, Ky. She has since published short fiction in the *Wascana Review*, *The Dalhousie Review* and *The New Quarterly*. Her debut novel, *Tears in the Grass*, was published by Dundurn Press in March 2016. The novel is set in Saskatchewan in the late 1960s.

1980-89

Dexter Bacsu BMusEd'81 taught music for 31 years and, although he is in his fourth year of official retirement, still works as a substitute teacher.

Alison Purdy BSc Hons'82, MSc'10, PhD'15 was the recipient of a 2016 YWCA Women of Distinction Award for Arts.

Brent Rowley BSc'84 has spent the past 30 years in residency in Timberlea, N.S. This year marks 27 years since founding his first company, Earth Information Technologies (now part of EIT Group) in Halifax.

Connie Gault's BA'84 novel *A Beauty* received two 2016 Saskatchewan Book Awards. The novel received the University of Regina Book of the Year Award and the Muslims for Peace and Justice Fiction Award.

Brenda Beckman-Long BA'85, BA Hons'88, MA'93 published *Carol Shields and the Writer-Critic* through the University of Toronto Press in 2015. A reappraisal of Shields' novels, the book contributes to the scholarship on life writing and autobiography, literary criticism and feminist and critical theory. Beckman-Long is an assistant professor of English at Briercrest College and Seminary.

Dave Hutchinson BA'85, BEd'97 has been appointed director of education/CEO of the Living Sky School Division Board of Education in North Battleford, Sask. Hutchinson served most recently as the superintendent/CEO with Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools in Nanaimo, B.C. Hutchinson also spent time with the School District of Mystery Lake in northern Manitoba as the assistant superintendent. He spent nine years as a superintendent with Regina Public School Division's Instruction and School Services Department. Over the course of his career, he has worked in K-12 education, including classroom teaching, curriculum consulting and development, teacher education, and high school administration.

Patti Rodger BEd'87, MEd'04 retired as a school principal from Prairie South School Division at Lindale School in Moose Jaw in January 2013. In 2014, she launched Taste-It Food Tours in Regina and

Moose Jaw and expanded the business to Cypress Hills in 2015. The business combines historic tours and gastronomic experiences.

Maria Hendrika BA'87 and **Janet McLellan Folk BAdmin'81** were co-recipients of the 2016 YWCA Women of Distinction Leadership and Management Award.

June Holter BAdmin'88, BA'95 retired from Farm Credit Canada in 2008 and worked with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region until 2013.

Ann Bishop CA'89, BA'96 has worked at the University of Regina since 1975. She now works part-time at Luther College's RESOLVE (Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse) and plans to retire in 2017.

1990-99

Isabelle Impey CSW'91 was the recipient of a 2016 Saskatchewan Order of Merit award for her social work and child advocacy.

A. Raynell Andreychuk LLD'93 (Honorary) was the recipient of the 2016 YWCA Women of Distinction Lifetime Achievement Award.

Rodney Ashfield BA'95 has opened Ashfield Orthotics: A Foot Health Clinic, Inc., a pedorthic clinic in Regina. After serving as an administrator for various non-profits and working as a rehabilitation therapist for the Government of Saskatchewan, Ashfield went back to university and took more courses to become a Certified Pedorthist and Pedorthic Technician.

Tim Toth BFA'97 is employed by AREVA Resources Canada as a quality and compliance advisor in the Safety, Health, Environment and Quality

department of the McClean Lake Operation, a uranium milling facility located in Saskatchewan.

Roz Kelsey BPAS'98, BEd'00, MSc'05 was the recipient of the 2016 YWCA Women of Distinction Education and Mentorship Award.

Sylvia McAdam's BHJ'98 book *Nationhood Interrupted* received the Regina Public Library Aboriginal Peoples' Publishing Award at the 2016 Saskatchewan Book Awards.

Kim Parker BEd'99 completed a second master's degree in Education-School Counselling at City University of Seattle. Her first master's degree in Education was completed in June 2013.

2000-09

John Redant BSc'01 ended 13 years with the Medical University of South Carolina's autism study in March 2015. In August 2015, he started an apprenticeship with Berkeley County School District, S.C. as a database administrator.

Jay Wood BA Hons'03 and his wife, Lindsay, have been living and working in New Zealand since 2012. He is a senior lecturer (equivalent to associate professor in North America) in psychology at the Auckland University of Technology.

Rachelle Holterman BAdmin'04 has been working at McNair Business Development Inc. since her graduation. She is a mentor with the Paul J. Hill School of Business and serves as an advisor to the JDC West entrepreneurship team. She recently participated in writing and judging the first Hill Case Competition.

Andrea Norberg BFA'04 has owned and operated Andrea Norberg Photography since June 2011. In the past two years she

has joined forces with alumna Erin Ball BFA'07 to create Twelfth Year Photography, as specialists in graduation and event photography.

2010-present

Selena Dieter BAdmin'10 has two granddaughters, ages two and three, and currently works for the File Hills Employment and Training Center as the employment skills coach.

Katie Bergman BHJ'11 recently published her first book, *When Justice Just Is: Confessing Brokenness, Cultivating Joy, and Creating Space for Authenticity in the Justice Movement*. Her book was published through WestBow Press and it is currently available in softcover, hardcover and e-book format from all major online retailers.

Cassidy McFadzean's BA Hons'11, MA'13 book *Hacker Packer* received the O'Reilly Insurance and the Co-operators First Book Award and the City of Regina Book Award at the 2016 Saskatchewan Book Awards.

Kara Halbgewachs BA'12 was married on August 30, 2014. Her son, Hunter Brian Joseph Halbgewachs, was born on February 20, 2015.

Hua Zhang PhD'12 is an assistant professor of Engineering at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Jamie Jelinski BA Hons'13 earned a master's degree in Art History from Concordia University in 2015. He is now working on a doctorate in Cultural Studies at Queen's University.

Anna Qureshi MEng'13 had the opportunity to attend the Society of Women Engineers conference in Nashville, Tenn. She enjoyed the many professional development

activities as well as the opportunity to participate in an event with other women engineers from all over the world.

Melissa Lalonde MA'13 was recently promoted to research associate with the Conference Board of Canada.

Leslie-Ann Schlosser BJ'13 was awarded a Rising Star Communicator of the Year award by the Regina chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). The award recognizes a Regina communicator who has demonstrated a commitment to the communications field in a professional capacity.

Matthew Jacobs BSW'15 and his partner had twin baby boys shortly before his convocation in 2015.





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The road more travelled

Early last November, Mike Boles pedalled his way into Regina's Victoria Park. For Boles it marked the end of an epic six-and-a-half-year, 61,000 kilometre cycling trip that took him through 38 countries and the limits of his mental and physical endurance. As he recalls the past half dozen years, he reflects on the reasons his pilgrimage began and why it ended.

By Mike Boles BAJ'06

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department and courtesy of Mike Boles



I still don't know why I turned my bicycle down that road.

Hell, it wasn't even much of a road – just two tracks cutting through dusty earth and blue bush too stubborn to die. Something called to me – that's all I can say – and out there, in the desolation of Australia's Nullarbor Plain, the voices in my head were the only friends I had.

So I listened. I followed the call south, away from the highway that had been my lifeline for so long.

The faint rumble of water on rock gradually came to my ears. I pedalled on

and it grew louder, thunderous. At last it reached its deafening peak and I stopped. I had to.

I was two steps and a 100-metre fall from what felt like the edge of the world. The Southern Ocean lay before me, beyond me, and under the spell of its enormity I forgot to breathe.

Then I heard something – an impossible release of pressure, like the brakes on a bus. I scanned the horizon, miles from tarmac, miles from anything, and wondered aloud if I was finally going mad.

I heard it once more.

What is that noise? I thought.

Again it sounded.

Shielding my eyes from the glare of the sun, I studied the turquoise ocean. A moment later a ripple appeared in front of me, then a vertical blast of spray, and from the murky depths came the most beautiful creature I had ever seen.

I don't know what brought it there – I don't even know what brought me there – but neither of us moved from that spot. I sat staring at that whale until the water went white with the moon, and as I curled up to sleep I could still hear it splashing below.

When I awoke in the cold silence of dawn, I was alone. I still remember the steely sky and the salt in the air. It was the day I decided I wanted to go home.

By then I had already been on the road for more than four years. In June 2009, not long after my 27th birthday, I had set out from Inuvik in the Northwest Territories with a shiny black bicycle, four pannier bags, and not the slightest understanding of what I was getting myself into.

Those early days were an awakening. I crossed the Arctic Circle, trundled through the vast wilderness of the Yukon and Alaska and turned south and east, over the Rocky Mountains toward the Great Lakes. Never had I felt so liberated, so capable.

My travelling life exposed a hunger within me. I was ravenous, almost delirious for experience and sensation. All I wanted was more.

In Duluth, Minnesota, on the shores of Lake Superior, I hopped onto a Polish freighter loaded with wheat bound for Europe. Or Morocco. Nobody, not even the captain, knew for certain. It wasn't until we were a day from the English Channel that a buyer for the boat's cargo was confirmed. We would put into Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

It was there, between oil-slick water and haranguing seagulls, that I first comprehended the scale of possibilities before me. Nothing tied me to that

port, just as nothing had ever tied me to the places I'd lived in Canada. I had an empty passport and a world before me. I could go anywhere.

And so I did.

Over the next seven months I cycled across 17 countries. I toured grand cities – Amsterdam, Barcelona, Rome and Budapest – and wheeled through tiny villages where goats wandered the streets and old women in shawls beckoned me to buy vegetables.

I delighted in them all. For hours each day I pedalled past golden fields and over mountain passes, powered by sunshine and a euphoria that could scarcely be checked. Night would find me sleeping under the stars, positively beaming with cheap wine and happy exhaustion.

Things started to change after Bosnia and Serbia. Maybe I started getting tired, or maybe the honeymoon was finally at an end. I had passed so many faces up to that point, but only in the Balkans did I begin to notice them. Too often what I discovered were the deep lines of poverty and war and intolerance. I found eyes that looked blankly to the future and saw nothing but pain.

This new reality rattled me. Never before had I seen bullet holes in plaster walls or children whose limbs had been blown apart by landmines. I knew nothing of the hatred levelled upon so-called murderous Gypsies. Rotting

garbage, starving dogs and burnt-out vehicles – it couldn't have been more foreign to a kid from the Canadian prairies.

Looking back on that time, I see that I turned inward. Sometimes the things I saw cut to my heart. Sometimes I was simply in danger. Although I refused to succumb to fear, each day I biked a little harder and spoke a little less. My appetite for experience was slowly being outweighed by my need for self-preservation.

Flashes of my old ecstasy remained, of course. Turkey, Iran and Turkmenistan are still some of my finest adventures, buoyed by people of such genuine kindness and generosity that I was humbled to my core. I was loaded with gifts and well wishes wherever I went. School children asked for my autograph. Parents plunked newborn babies into my arms for street-side photographs. Old men kissed my forehead and told me I travelled with God.

Even in Uzbekistan, where teenagers used my own knife to rob me of my bike and bags, I refused to fall into despair. When my belongings were recovered by grinning police officers, I gratefully accepted them, even though I had seen the bloodied faces of the thieves they had beaten behind closed doors.

Kazakhstan tested me again, and this time I crashed.

Shortly after I arrived in the country, a car skidded to a stop in front of me.



Opposite page: Back in Regina after his marathon cycling trip, Mike Boles and his Rocky Mountain Sherpa, the bike that carried him 61,000 kilometres across 38 countries and four continents. Left: Australia's Nullarbor Plain was the site of Boles' epiphany – after four and a half years on the road, he wanted to come home. Right: After more than two years on the road, Boles found himself in Indonesia having pedalled 40,075 kilometers or the distance around the world.



Boles in the place where his epic trip ended, Regina's Victoria Park.

The driver stumbled drunkenly in my direction until his nose nearly touched mine. When I turned away, he grabbed my beard and pounded my head with his fists. I tried to fight back but it was impossible – my shoes were still clipped into my pedals. Then, as I lay sprawled on the road, he somehow startled himself sober. He turned on his heels and left.

After that I considered packing up and going home – considered it for about five seconds. The very idea made me furious, and in my anger I closed myself off completely. I would be a robot, feel nothing if I had to, because there was no way I was ever going to quit. I didn't care what happened to me. I was going one way and that was further.

That fire was probably the only thing that saved me in China.

In late November 2010, I crossed the Tian Shan Mountains – a towering range that cuts between Mongolia and Tibet. The summit was a wasteland. I saw no trees, nor a single hint of life except for tattered prayer flags flapping in the icy wind.

I pedalled and pushed my bike 80 kilometres across that plateau. My second night was spent in a culvert because there was nowhere else to go. My fuel and water were frozen and my meagre rations were spent. All I ate that night was a single-serve package of butter I'd found on the road.

After midnight the wind became a gale and then a full-blown blizzard. Snow whipped into the culvert, covering my tent, pressing down on all sides. I woke up half buried, certain that my tent was going to collapse. By the time I wriggled myself free, I was soaked from head to foot and I knew I was in big trouble.

I shivered there until morning in the hope that the storm would ease. It only got worse. At dawn I found one end of the culvert completely blocked by snow and the other closing quickly. I dug my way out to get my bearings but couldn't see a thing. It was a total whiteout.

With a calmness that frightens me now, I crawled back inside, sat on my rucksack and prayed. I didn't ask for the blizzard to end. I didn't even ask for strength or guidance. My only chance was pedalling to safety, and I prayed that if I lost the road, somebody would find my body so my parents wouldn't have to wonder.

That's a hell of a thought before breakfast.

I dragged my bike and gear through waist-high snow and, after three trips, managed to get everything back on the highway. I set off with the wind howling, never able to see more than a few metres ahead. I used my boots to stop because my brakes were iced over and useless. My gloves froze so stiffly around my handlebars that I couldn't free my hands.

After 60 kilometres, near the limit of my strength, I reached a tiny village where I could warm myself and find supplies. I didn't even have the energy to celebrate. I just sat on a curb and stared dead-eyed into the distance.

I didn't see then what that distance held, and I'm glad.

Before me still lay a thousand-kilometre desert of grey gravel rock, and between its few cities there was nothing – no stores, no shelter, not even a twig for a fire. I would live like a dog to cross that expanse, begging at doors for shelter and eating scraps from the road.

I would suffer from dysentery for most of my five months in China, but it wasn't until Kunming, in the south of the country, that I was forced to stop cycling. I fell into a fever at a hostel and couldn't leave my bed. Once, after being racked by a fit of coughing, I lay there sweating and realized I'd soiled myself. I was too broken to even care.

I ended up in the hospital, and though I got better, I could never stay well. I pedalled into Vietnam and got an ear infection. In Laos, I picked up a stomach parasite. On the Indonesian island of



Left: Boles loaded down roadside on the Madura Pass in Western Australia. Centre: Some of his most harrowing times came in China where Boles succumbed to dysentery and was eventually hospitalized. Right: Boles spends some quality time with monks in Thailand.



Left: Boles visits a classroom in Indonesia. Centre: After 40,000 kilometres, it's time for new cycling shoes. Right: Boles in Portugal in a not-so-good state of mind.

Sumatra, I contracted dengue fever and spent two days shivering and burning in an abandoned stone house near the dirt highway. When I dragged myself back onto my bike and wobbled away, my arms and chest were covered in a rust-colored rash. By the time I flew from Bali to Darwin, Australia in 2011, I had nothing left. I'd worn my skin like iron for too long and now, at my weakest, all the things I had refused to feel poured into me. It crippled my spirit, and the few weeks I thought I needed to rest my legs in the city stretched into nearly two years.

In that time I didn't cycle. I didn't write. I hid from my friends and family because I was ashamed. The great adventurer who wanted to pedal the world was having a nervous breakdown in a darkened room. I had panic attacks every day for months. I couldn't be around people and I couldn't run from myself. Whatever trials had come before were nothing compared to this. It was misery.

My last attack came in September 2012. I can't say why it was my last, but I know it was the only one I didn't try to fight. I quit trying to be strong. I gave up on the adventurer and the athlete and the wanderer desirous of experience. I let them go, and though it terrified me, I somehow made my peace.

When it was over there was nothing left but me.

It took six more months before I found the confidence to get back on my bicycle. When I finally did, I had no plan or expectation. I wasn't interested in being anywhere in particular. I only wanted to pedal because I remembered how much I once loved it.

Lucky for me, Australia was the perfect place to heal.

I cycled west under tropical canopies of gold and green, past cockatoos and kookaburras laughing in time. As the earth turned to dust, I followed an old cattle trail that carved its way through sandstone gorges and muddy rivers.

I navigated the vast Pilbara region, an arid stretch of red-soil desolation where villages were often hundreds of kilometres apart. At times I carried up to 16 litres of water, and often it was just barely enough.

In the far southwest of the country I was awed by giant karri trees that shot like an arrow to the sky. The region was teeming with life – mushrooms and flowers, dolphins leaping from the sea, scuttling lizards and wallabies nibbling on grass outside my tent.

I didn't say much in those days. There wasn't much to say. I pedalled quietly and joyfully, content in knowing who I was and how far I could go. Though I craved no comfort, I found it at every turn. It was in that spirit that I came to the Nullarbor Plain, to the southern right whale revelling near the cliffs. As I sat staring at that creature, marvelling at its elegance, I discovered all I needed to make me whole. The elation and hardship and endless miles of the previous four years culminated in that one night, and I had nothing more to seek.

Still, it would be another two years before I returned home to Canada. I pedalled on to Melbourne and toured Tasmania before exploring both islands of New Zealand. In the autumn of 2015, I flew to San Francisco and began the

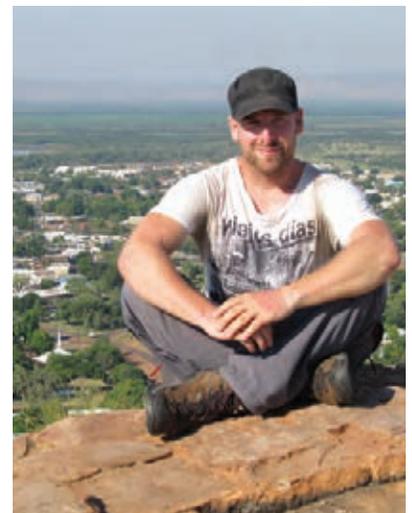
journey across the deserts and plains of North America.

And then, in early November, it was over. I wheeled into Victoria Park in Regina and found my friends waiting. I had been gone for six and a half years.

I lived a lifetime during my days away, and nothing would be easier than believing I'd seen and done it all. I could cling to the tough times and twist my heart into the soul of a cynic. But I won't – not ever. I'm here, on the other side, more in love with the world than I ever was. I'm proud of my goofy grin and weather-beaten bicycle. They are my badges of honour.

Is it naive? Am I a romantic, a dreamer?

I hope so.



Good times for Boles in Australia's Gregory National Park.



Remembering Jo-Ann Episkenew

By Dale Johnson

The University community lost an exceptional member of its family this winter when Jo-Ann Episkenew passed away on February 18 after a brief illness. As an educator, author and advocate for improving the lives of Indigenous people, Episkenew touched many. She was director of the University of Regina's Indigenous People's Health Research Centre (IPHRC) and previously served with the Department of English at First Nations University of Canada. She was an award-winning author and received a YMCA Regina Women of Distinction Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015. She served on many community boards and committees to help improve the quality of life for many people.

During her acceptance speech at the 2015 YMCA Women of Distinction Lifetime Achievement Award, Episkenew said, "I thank all of you for recognizing me and the little bit I try to do to make my children proud and my grandchildren proud. And hopefully when I leave this world, it will be a better place than when I started."

Indeed it is.

Here are a few recollections from people whose lives were enriched knowing and working with Episkenew.

"For those of us who loved her, she is like the sun – nourishing everything around her. We were all just lucky enough to be planets in her orbit. Now, what do you do when the sun goes out? We will attempt to do just as she taught us, and walk in her footsteps 'in a good way' as she would so often say. She is single-handedly responsible for producing dozens of Indigenous faculty members and graduate students. She has supported me all the way through my undergrad to my PhD, from being an 18-year-old to a 29-year-old mother. We have faculty members on campus who specifically stay here because of the support Jo-Ann offered them."

-Cassandra Wajuntah, acting director of IPHRC

"The day I found out I was accepted for my position was one of the biggest highlights of my life. Jo-Ann was passionate about the work that she was doing and I knew that I would be in a work environment that was for the betterment of our people. It wasn't long after that I realized I had become part of a team that was not only passionate about the work that they were doing but I also became part of a family that was passionate about each others' work. This has been an amazing experience that has shaped not only my personal growth but my vision for our people."

- Wendy Whitebear, research coordinator at IPHRC

"Her legacy as an Indigenous researcher and leader has inspired me to strive for more as a Cree journalist. Years ago, Jo-Ann expressed how important it is to carry on our people's message through the gift of storytelling. I am truly honoured and blessed to have known her. I am forever grateful for the time Jo-Ann spent with us here on Turtle Island, where she touched so many hearts."

- Shinoah Young, IPHRC research assistant

Episkenew is survived by her husband, Clayton, and their blended family of 13 children and more than 30 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

A student award in Dr. Jo-Ann Episkenew's memory has been established. It is awarded to a student that has an association with someone who attended residential school. To donate to this award or for more information, please call 306-585-5432.

Our commitment to research that has impact

It's often said that before you can reap the harvest, you must sow the seed. And thanks to three University of Regina engineering students, seeding just got easier!

The students competed in the 2016 agBOT Challenge to develop the most efficient unmanned crop seeder capable of planting two varieties of seed over half-mile-long rows, while providing real-time data. The team, consisting of students Joshua Friedrich, Caleb Friedrich, and Sam Dietrich, under the supervision of Dr. Mehran Mehrandezh in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, earned a first place finish in the international competition. The technology may soon enable farmers to seed and fertilize their fields without having to step onto a tractor.

The students won \$50,000 (USD), attracted attention from several North American agriculture companies, and sowed the seeds for a very bright future.



Photo: Dean Chertoff

Former student Dean Kertai (left) provided technical expertise, while team members Caleb Friedrich, Sam Dietrich and Joshua Friedrich developed the seeder.

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