

# Degrees

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The University of Regina Magazine

## The Remarkable Olivia Arnal



University  
of Regina



## Pistachio Rose Chocolate Cake

Pistachios and rose are very familiar flavours in East Indian sweets. Combining this rich and indulgent combo with a moist chocolate cake is simply delicious! This recipe is a fusion favourite of mine. Below is the recipe I use, but feel free to add less or more rose essence (to taste) depending on your preference.

### Ingredients for the cake:

- 1 cup unsalted butter (room temperature)
- ½ cup milk chocolate
- 4 eggs
- 1 ½ cup sugar
- 4 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup sour cream (room temperature)
- 1 cup cocoa powder (unsweetened)
- 1 ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup chopped pistachios

### Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F and grease and line a baking pan (approximately 8 inch round).
2. Melt butter and chocolate in the microwave for 30 seconds at a time until melted. Keep aside.
3. In an electric mixer (whisk attachment), add the eggs, sugar, vanilla, and sour cream.
4. Whisk on medium speed until smooth (about 1 minute).
5. In another bowl, sift the cocoa, flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt and combine well.
6. Add the cooled butter/chocolate mixture to the mixer and whisk 30 seconds until smooth.
7. Slowly add the dry flour mix about ¼ cup at a time with a mixer on low speed.
8. Add the pistachios and then turn the mixer off (don't over mix the batter).
9. Fill pans and bake for 30-40 minutes. The centre of the cake should come back up if gently pressed.
10. Cool on wire rack before adding whipped topping.

### For the Topping:

- 1 ½ cup whipping cream
- 1 tsp rose water/extract
- 2 drops red food colour
- Pistachios

Use a whisk attachment in an electric mixer and whip the cream until soft peaks. Add rose extract to taste and the food colour. Spread the cream on top of cooled cake and top with crushed pistachios and silver paper/pearls for decoration.

Enjoy!



Vandana Jain BAdmin'04, MBA'09 was one of three finalists on CBC Television's The Great Canadian Baking Show which aired earlier this year. The CFO of the Saskatchewan Science Centre comes by her skills in the kitchen honestly – her mother was a talented cook and baker. Her specialty is combining Indian flavours with prairie ingredients. You'll find many of her delicious recipes on her website, [www.vandanabakes.com](http://www.vandanabakes.com).

Photo by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department.

So, what's all the fuss about?  
It's the launch of the  
new *Degrees* website at  
**[www.degreesmagazine.ca](http://www.degreesmagazine.ca)**.

Over the past several  
months we have received a lot  
of feedback from our readers  
asking that we consider a  
more sustainable approach by  
moving to an online version of  
*Degrees*. Others contacted us  
stating that they preferred a  
print version.

We were honestly at a  
crossroads and were unsure of  
where to turn – print or online.

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This is an exciting time for  
us at *Degrees*. We look forward  
to telling you stories about the  
amazing people associated with  
the University of Regina in new  
and appealing ways.

Greg Campbell BFA'85, BJ'95  
Editor

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**On the cover:** While other fourth-year students were studying for final exams, Olivia Arnal was on the family ranch, 100 kilometres southwest of Swift Current. The fact that finals coincided with calving season didn't faze the gifted student and volunteer. She just wanted to do her part to ensure that over 800 calves were delivered safely to this world. Photo by Don Hall.



## Features

**Spring 2018 honorary degree recipients** 7  
 Meet this spring convocation's honorary degree recipients.

**A look back at the Cougars** 10  
 The University of Regina women's basketball team won a bronze medal at this year's USPORTS Women's Basketball Final 8 Championships. It's not the first time the Cougars have been on the podium, as the women's basketball program has been one of the best and most enduring in the country.

**The remarkable Olivia Arnal** 16  
 Although Olivia Arnal met tragedy early in her life, she has always focused on the positives. Now, she's just about to earn a Bachelor of Business Administration and is about to embark on an entirely new phase of her life.

**Depression and the menopause transition** 24  
 University of Regina researcher Jennifer Gordon is an internationally recognized expert in perimenopausal depression, depression related to infertility, depression in pregnancy and

postpartum depression.  
**UnderstandUs** 28  
 Most people have friends or family members that have been touched in some manner by mental health challenges. Jim Demeray is one of those people. It led him to found UnderstandUs, a volunteer organization that raises awareness of mental health challenges.

**Regina's SEARCH has the best ingredient** 32  
 Regina residents are getting important health and social programs because of a student-run clinic that operates after hours in the North Central community.

## departments

**Feed Back** 2  
**President's Note** 4  
**Around Campus** 5  
**Focal Point** 20  
**Spotlight** 27  
**Alumni News** 36  
**Class Notes** 37  
**360 Degrees** 38

## President's Note



On April 6, the unimaginable happened when a bus carrying the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Humboldt Broncos collided with a tractor-trailer south of Nipawin, Saskatchewan. The terrible tragedy resulted in the death of 15. Five days later, the death toll rose by one when the team's athletic therapist, Dayna Brons, succumbed to her injuries. Dayna was one of ours. She graduated in 2016 from the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies. I understand from those in the faculty who knew Dayna that she was a very special person with a bright future ahead of her.

On behalf of all of those associated with the University of Regina, my heart goes out to all the loved ones and friends of those who lost their lives and those who are still recovering from their injuries. The accident has left a lifetime void in our province and its impact has rippled across the country and indeed around the world.

About two weeks later, on April 23, a man in a rented van plowed through pedestrians on a crowded Toronto street leaving 10 dead and 16 wounded. The horrific event concluded when a cool-

headed Toronto Police Service constable arrested the 25-year-old attacker without firing his service revolver.

When tragedies like the Humboldt Broncos bus collision or the Toronto van attack happen, there is a legion of brave men and women who burst into action to keep the peace and help those affected. Police, firefighters and emergency medical technicians are among those dedicated professionals who voluntarily put themselves in harm's way for the public good.

Public safety personnel are constantly in situations that teeter between life and death. They go to work knowing they will face inordinate on-the-job stress. Confronted regularly by injury, death, violence and threats, first responders and their loved ones often pay the price with their own mental well-being.

Research shows that incidences of post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression and anger are high among first responders. As many as two in five struggle with ongoing mental health issues, and suicide rates are tragically above the national average. Often, the toll of dealing with

dangerous situations or the aftermath of tragic events can be overwhelming and debilitating.

These facts drive home the important work that many University of Regina researchers are engaged in.

In early March, I was thrilled to help announce that the University of Regina's Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT) is receiving \$30 million to address first responders' and public safety personnel's mental health concerns.

Over the next five years, \$20 million will go towards supporting a new national research consortium between the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and CIPSRT. The new consortium will work to address the incidence of post-traumatic stress injuries among public safety personnel.

Over the same period, \$10 million dollars will support a collaborative project between CIPSRT and Public Safety Canada. The project is to develop an internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy pilot to provide greater access to care and treatment for public safety personnel across Canada. This will help address barriers to obtaining access to

mental health support for first responders in rural and remote areas.

Because we are a centre of excellence in post-traumatic stress disorder research, especially as it relates to public safety personnel, we decided the University should reach out and help those who were first on the scene of the Broncos bus collision and those impacted after the crash.

CIPSRT has teamed up with Wounded Warriors Canada and the Tema Conter Memorial Trust to ensure resources are available to all those impacted. The University is co-ordinating efforts with the Psychology Association of Saskatchewan to ensure psychologists with the right skills are available to public safety personnel affected.

In total the campaign, #KeepingThemStrong, raised about \$150,000 for those first responders.

While understandably it will take time to heal, by working through the grief together, we can get through these difficult times.

#BroncosStrong

**Dr. Vianne Timmons**  
President and Vice-Chancellor

Left: Nilgün Önder  
Centre: Noel Starblanket  
Right: Jack Sures with  
Governor General Julie Payette  
(Photo by MCpl Vincent Carboneau,  
Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2018.)



## Appointments

**Nilgün Önder**, acting associate dean (Research and Graduate Studies) in the Faculty of Arts, has been appointed associate vice-president (Academic). After receiving a BSc with high distinction in political science and public administration from the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, she moved to Canada to pursue graduate studies. She completed her master's degree with distinction in political science at Wilfrid Laurier University. She holds a PhD in political science from York University. Her term begins July 1, 2018.

**Jerome Cranston** has been appointed dean of the Faculty of Education. Cranston, an associate professor of educational administration at the University of Manitoba, also serves as the executive director, Student Engagement and Academic Success. He holds a PhD from the University of Manitoba, an MEd from the University of Lethbridge, and both a BEd and a BSc from the University of Alberta. His term begins July 1, 2018.

**Gina Grandy** has been appointed dean of Business Administration. She currently serves as associate dean of Research and Graduate Programs, professor in strategy and leadership and RBC Women in Leadership Scholar with the Paul J. Hill School of Business and the Kenneth

Levene Graduate School of Business. She has held tri-council funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Canadian Institutes of Health Research. She is co-editor of two books and her research on leadership, gender and women's experiences at work, stigmatized work and case writing has been published widely. Her term begins July 1, 2018.

**Esam Hussein** has accepted an offer to serve a second term as dean of Engineering and Applied Science. A nuclear engineer, he holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Alexandria University in Egypt and a doctorate from McMaster University. His five-year term will commence July 1, 2018.

**Larena Hoeber**, a professor of kinesiology and health studies, has been appointed interim associate vice-president (Academic and Research). Her term commenced November 14, 2017 and concludes June 30, 2018.

**JoLee Sasakamoose** has been named director of the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre. Sasakamoose is an associate professor of educational psychology and counselling in the Faculty of Education. Her research explores the intergenerational effects of historical trauma with Indigenous Peoples and the use of traditional healing methods in the promotion of health and

well-being. In partnership with the First Nations communities of Saskatchewan, she co-authored *Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Theory*, a theoretical framework to improve well-being of Indigenous Peoples. In January, Sasakamoose and University of Saskatchewan clinician Stuart Skinner were awarded a \$2-million Canadian Institute of Health Research grant to refine and expand an on-reserve diagnosis and treatment program (Know Your Status) for HIV, hepatitis C virus and sexually transmitted blood-borne infections.

**Noel Starblanket** has been named the University of Regina's Elder-in-Residence. He will work out of the University's Office of Indigenization and will advise faculty and students on matters related to curriculum and offer spiritual advice and personal counselling. Previously, Starblanket worked at the Aboriginal Student Centre providing support for students and the campus at large. Starblanket was born on the Star Blanket Cree Nation in Saskatchewan and is a descendant of Cree Treaty Chief Wahpiimoostoois who is a signatory to Treaty Four and Kaskitew Muscoosis Little Black Bear. Starblanket has spent most of his adult life advocating for Indigenous organizations. He was 24 when he served as Chief of the Star Blanket Cree Nation, making him one of the youngest First Nations chiefs in North America. Starblanket

has been the subject of some compelling documentaries over the years, bursting onto the national scene with the release of the acclaimed 1973 National Film Board of Canada production, *Starblanket*, which shows an outspoken and rebellious young chief.

**Rae Staseson** has been appointed to a second five-year term as dean of the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance. Her new term begins July 1, 2019. Since joining the University in 2014, Staseson has led the faculty in new directions, including a renaming and rebranding initiative in 2016. Under her leadership, new programs have been established, there have been major curriculum changes, and a rigorous internationalization plan has been created.

## Accolades

**Jack Sures** received a Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts in March. The award includes a \$25,000 prize and ensures some of Sures' work will be included in the permanent collection of the Canadian Museum of History. In 1965, Sures established the University's ceramics program at the College Avenue Campus. His works have been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally. The Order of Canada and Saskatchewan Order of Merit recipient passed away on Saturday, May 12. He was 83.



In 1991, he was presented with the Alumni Association Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching and, in 1992, he received the Alumni Association Award for Excellence in Research.

Faculty of Social Work student **Tracie Léost** was one of the recipients of the 2018 Inspire Awards held on March 23 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Léost was recognized for her 115-kilometre run from her hometown of Oak Point, Manitoba to downtown Winnipeg in the summer of 2015. The run was to raise money and awareness for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Later, Léost was approached by American musician Cass McCombs to produce a video about the run called Run Sister Run. She was also the subject of articles in Vogue magazine and the online music magazine, Pitchfork.

Four students from the School of Journalism received an Emerge Media Award for their documentary Crude Power: An Investigation into Oil, Money And Influence in Saskatchewan. The Emerge Awards is a showcase for Canada's best students of journalism, media studies and communications. **Caitlin Taylor, Jennifer Ackerman, Janelle Blakley BA'16 and Josh Diaz** received the award for videography. The film was a collaboration with a number of other Canadian universities,



media organizations (including The Toronto Star and Global TV) and funding agencies.

The hometown **University of Regina Cougars** finished with the bronze medal at the 2018 USPORTS Women's Basketball Final 8, beating McGill 66-63 in front of a packed crowd of about 2,400 at the main gym at the Centre for Kinesiology, Health and Sport (see story on page 10). It's the first national medal for the Cougars since 2013, when they picked up a silver medal. The Carleton Ravens won their first national title, beating the University of Saskatchewan Huskies 69-48 in the gold medal game.

For the second year in a row, **Duncan Campbell**, art director at University of Regina Press, has been honoured by the Association of University Presses. His cover design of *Memoirs of a Muhindi – Fleeing East Africa for the West* by *Mansoor Ladha* was selected as one of the top 50 among scholarly presses. *Memoirs of a Muhindi* is the story of Mansoor Ladha's exile from Uganda and eventual settlement in Canada in 1972. The book sheds light on the experiences felt by immigrants, the hurt of discrimination and other hardships of displacement.

#### Briefly

This year's **Five Days for the Homeless** campaign raised a record \$53,514.07. All of

the money raised goes to Carmichael Outreach, a non-profit agency providing emergency services and long-term supports to end poverty and homelessness in Regina. This is the third year in a row the Hill Business Students' Society has raised the most funds of any of the 19 universities across the country that participate in the event. In the past nine years, students have raised more than \$278,000 for Carmichael Outreach.

#### Research

On March 12, the Honourable **Ralph Goodale BA'71**, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, was on campus to announce a federal investment of \$937,000 for research at the University. The funding, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), is centred on substance abuse, as well as the health of older adults and those who care for them. Randy Johnner, associate professor in the Faculty of Social Work, received \$451,350 for her research project that will harness the power of technology to help people with substance use addictions.

Goodale also recognized the work of Shanthi Johnson, a professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies and research faculty at the Saskatchewan Population

**Left: Duncan Campbell**

**Right: On hand for an recent announcement of a federal investment of \$937,000 was (left to right) the Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness; Randy Johnner, associate professor in the Faculty of Social Work; Vianne Timmons, president and vice-chancellor; David Malloy, vice-president (Research).**

Health and Evaluation Research Unit. Johnson's team received a CIHR grant of \$485,775 to implement and study the impact of a home exercise program developed for older adults receiving home care, and their home care staff. The goal of the project is to improve the physical health and reduce the incidence of falls among older adults, while lowering rates of musculoskeletal disorders among support workers, who have physically demanding jobs.

The University of Regina's **Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT)** is leading a pan-Canadian consortium that is receiving \$30 million over five years from the federal government to address first responders' and public safety personnel's mental health concerns. Operating within the governance structure of the Collaborative Centre for Justice and Safety at the University of Regina, CIPSRT is a coast-to-coast multi-university team of top Canadian researchers, with many national partners and stakeholders from across Canada, including public safety executives and associations. This national network aims to identify the tools required to support the recognition, prevention, intervention and treatment of mental health concerns facing Canadian first responders and other public safety personnel.



# Spring 2018

## honorary degree recipients

By By Bill Armstrong



Photo by Craig Clendening, Camera One

### Elmer Brenner and Roberta McKay

Roberta McKay and Elmer Brenner are enthusiastic, longstanding supporters of the University of Regina, in particular, the well-being of the University's historic College Avenue campus. Whether it's by good fortune or good planning, they live and work where they can watch the current renewal of Darke Hall and the College Building taking place just up the street.

McKay and Brenner both have deep attachments to the place. McKay grew up in Regina, and recalls taking piano lessons in the basement of Darke Hall, followed by end-of-season recitals on stage in front of family and friends. Brenner's connections include Arts Education and Theatre classes, and a short time on the University Senate as a representative of library trustees. "I gained a greater understanding the institution's overall operation and a deeper appreciation of its importance to the entire community," he says.

The couple served on the committee that developed plans to renew the historic campus, and in 2012, inspired by plans to revitalize Darke Hall and the Conservatory of Performing Arts, donated \$250,000 toward the Building Knowledge project. Two years later they donated a piano for use in Darke Hall, but not just any piano. McKay and Brenner traveled to Italy, where – with the help of classical pianist Angela Hewitt, who once played in Darke Hall – they selected a world-class Fazioli piano that matches the acoustic properties of the performance space.

"It was donated to be in Darke Hall," McKay explains, "although it is temporarily stored on the main campus while construction is

underway." Brenner adds, "Our intent was that it be in Darke Hall and available for student use; we want students to experience what it is like to play a high-calibre piano."

McKay, a dermatologist, and Brenner, a designer and visual artist, may be best known for their support for College Avenue renewal, but their philanthropy touches the lives of many people in the community, particularly in areas such as the arts and health. They sponsor free Regina Symphony Orchestra programs at local libraries, the Regina Music Festival Association, and the annual Saskatchewan Fashion Forward Designer Award. The couple also founded the Saskatchewan Health Care Excellence Awards, which for ten years recognized the achievements of outstanding health care workers. Both have received a number of individual awards over the years. Among them, the City of Regina named Brenner volunteer of the year in 1978-79, and CTV Regina selected McKay as citizen of the year in 2007.

McKay says she was "certainly surprised" to receive the call from University of Regina president Vianne Timmons with the news that the couple were to receive an honorary degree. Both state they are pleased and honoured to be recognized by an institution that has shown an unwavering commitment to preserving an important part of Regina's built heritage, and to revitalize Darke Hall as a community performance centre.

McKay and Brenner will receive their honorary degrees at Convocation on June 7.



## Sheldon Kennedy



When Sheldon Kennedy learned that the University of Regina was to recognize him with an honorary degree, he grasped it as another opportunity to raise awareness about the societal issues that have become his life's work: the prevention of child abuse, bullying and harassment. "I don't do this work for the recognition," he says, "but to be a representative on these issues, so that people learn how to spot abuse and take action."

Kennedy played junior hockey for the Swift Current Broncos of the Western Hockey League, helping the team win the Memorial Cup in 1989, and then professional hockey for ten seasons. (In the WHL, he played against another honorary degree recipient, Brad Hornung. They had earlier been teammates on Team West, representing western Canada in an under-17 international tournament.)

Kennedy's determined advocacy for abuse prevention originates from his own harrowing experience with the Broncos. He revealed in 1996 that he had been sexually abused by his coach. Understanding that some people in the community had a "gut feeling" that something was wrong, but were unsure how to act on their suspicions, he wanted to prevent similar situations in the future. After brainstorming with Hockey Canada president and CEO Bob Nicholson and NHL Players Association vice-president Lanny McDonald, they determined it was necessary to "educate and empower the bystander."

To that end, in 1998, Kennedy roller-bladed across Canada, raising \$1.2 million to support the violence, bullying and abuse prevention programming delivered by the Canadian Red Cross. He and business partner Wayne McNeil later founded the Calgary-based Respect

Group, which delivers online training programs aimed at preventing bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination in sports, education and the workplace. Kennedy notes proudly that more than one million individuals – coaches, parents, teachers, administrators, managers and others – have completed one of the three programs, and are now Respect certified.

Kennedy's story, and his advocacy work, have drawn plenty of attention and recognition. A television movie about his life aired on CTV in 1999, and a video documentary about his life, *Swift Current*, premiered in 2016 when he was inducted into the Broncos' Hall of Fame.

In 2013 the Calgary Child Advocacy Centre was renamed the Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre, where he is the lead director. The Centre employs 120 police, health, education, justice, and child and family service professionals who work together to assess, treat and seek justice for physically and sexually abused children. "The Centre has changed the way we provide services to children and their families," he says.

For his courage in raising awareness about childhood sexual abuse and its prevention, Kennedy has received several leadership awards, as well as honorary degrees from the University of Calgary and the University of the Fraser Valley. He is a member of the Alberta Order of Excellence and a recipient of the David Foster Humanitarian Award. In 2015, he was named a Member of the Order of Canada for his commitment to abuse prevention and support for young victims of abuse.

Kennedy will receive his honorary degree on June 6.





Photo by Trevor Hopkin

## Brad Hornung BA'96



Hornung (front row, wearing "C") and Kennedy (immediately behind Hornung) were teammates and roommates on a mid-80s Team West in an international under-17 tournament that featured teams representing five regions of Canada and national teams from other countries.

Brad Hornung says he was humbled and honoured when University of Regina president Vianne Timmons, and Stephen King, a senior researcher in the president's office and a former classmate of his, visited him at the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre to tell him he was to receive an honorary degree from his alma mater. Although he has received many awards over the years, Hornung says he is always surprised to be recognized.

"There are a lot of people with spinal cord injuries who have accomplished more than I have; they inspire me," he says. "We might not know their names but they are achieving things every day."

Born and raised in Regina, and playing for his hometown Regina Pats of the Western Hockey League, Hornung was 18 when his dream of pursuing a professional hockey career came to an abrupt end. During a game in March 1987, Hornung suffered a severe spinal cord injury that left him a quadriplegic. He harboured no anger toward the player whose badly-timed body check ended his playing career, but faced his adversity in stride, graduating from Archbishop M. C. O'Neill High School and then continuing his education at the University of Regina. (King shared classroom notes with him.)

"Mom and dad instilled in me the importance of education," Hornung explains, "and I was fortunate to be able to take two or three courses per semester at the University of Regina."

Hornung received his Bachelor's degree in History from Campion College at the University in 1996. He then took several classes through the Faculty of Business Administration.

He has remained connected to the game he loves, working for several years as a scout for the Chicago Black Hawks of the National Hockey League. He currently works for the NHL's Central Scouting Bureau and, in this capacity, attends every Regina Pats home game, helping the NHL identify up-and-coming players. It is difficult to assess a player on their statistics alone, Hornung says, so he looks for both their quantitative and qualitative characteristics to include in his scouting reports. Hockey demands rapid-fire decision-making, he adds, so he looks for what he calls "hockey sense" and "intuition on the ice," along with the personal mannerisms that exhibit a player's leadership traits in game situations.

Illustrating that the hockey world is a small one, with innumerable interconnections, Hornung played hockey in the WHL against another University of Regina honorary degree recipient, Sheldon Kennedy. They were also teammates and roommates on Team West in an international under-17 tournament that featured teams representing five regions of Canada and national teams from other countries.

The Regina Pats have honoured Brad Hornung by retiring his number 8 jersey: it hangs in the Brandt Centre above where he stations himself to watch and analyze the games for his scouting reports. Each year, the Western Hockey League awards the Brad Hornung Trophy to the player who best exemplifies talent, desire and sportsmanship – traits that Hornung always displayed.

Hornung will receive his honorary degree on June 8.

# A look back at the **Cougars**



The University of Regina women's basketball program has been one of the best and most enduring basketball programs in the country. This spring, the team came within an eyelash of winning another national championship. Regina sportswriter Julie Waldu explores the roots of the program's success.

**By Julie Waldu BAJ'07**

Photos by Rae Graham and Trevor Hopkin and courtesy of University of Regina Archives and Special Collections.



**T**he University of Regina Cougars Women's Basketball team was taking on their rivals, the University of Saskatchewan Huskies, at home in the USPORTS Final 8 semifinals after beating them the week prior in the Canada West final. They were surrounded by 2,411 fans, who had packed the stands, the overflow watching from the upstairs track. A player couldn't ask for a better atmosphere: the crowd hanging on to every pass and shot, roaring for every Cougar basket and steal.

With two minutes to go, the game was tied at 68. The Huskies hit back-to-back three-pointers to take a 74-68 lead. Although they fought, urged on by their fans, the Cougars could come no closer than 74-71.

When the final buzzer sounded and the Huskies rushed the court in victory, the air was thick with disappointment, from the tears of the players as they made their way to the dressing room, to the fans who slowly filed out of the packed stands.

"You know, you work all year for that moment, and then it's gone in the blink of an eye," says Charlotte Kot, captain and fifth-year player in 2017-18. "I gave myself that night to be upset about it. You're kind of grieving the loss of the goal you have all year. When I woke up, though, it was still game day. I knew I would regret it in the future if I didn't enjoy that last game."

The Cougars had a competitive fire within them that wouldn't allow them to sit back in the bronze medal game, and they beat the McGill Martlets in a hard-fought match 66-63.

"It's a strange sensation, because we were 36-5, won our conference and finished third in the country and honestly, the season was a bit of a disappointment," says head coach Dave Taylor, signifying just how high of a standard this team sets for itself. "It's a really good statement about where we are as a program and a team."

There's a magic about this program — something that is difficult for alumni or coaches to put into words — but a wide variety of factors have come together to create a product that draws people to it, including recruits, top-level coaches and fans.

Over the past 20 years, the Cougars have finished only one season without a winning record. This is a team that, since 1968, has played in the national university championship 19 times, advancing to the final championship game on six occasions. It is one of the best programs in Canada.

The success of the program can be attributed to a number of factors. Alumni and coaches have a slightly different view on what has advanced the program to the position sustained success it has seen. Perhaps it is the high calibre of local players developed through the Regina club and school programs. It could be the emphasis placed on recruiting. Or maybe it's simply the mindset of maintaining a high standard of excellence. Together, the elements have created a product that draws the support of the community and makes this one of the most respected programs in Canada.

The Centre for Kinesiology, Health and Sport (CKHS) gym that was packed to the rafters in the 2018 championship semifinal game is a far cry from the early days of the program, and shows the level of growth over the years.

Sue (McKenzie) Burns BEd'81, MEd'02, who played for the team from 1977 to 1981 says, "The fans would strictly be our parents, and if you had a boyfriend, there'd be a boyfriend there too."

When women first started playing basketball at the University from the 1940s through the 1960s, it was recreational, emphasizing participation and exercise, says Jim Pitsula, a retired history professor from the University of Regina who also became one of the Cougars' most avid fans.

The first year the team donned uniforms as the Cougettes was in 1968-69, playing for the University of Saskatchewan – Regina Campus under head coach Sheila Ward. Their green uniforms were made off-site, and the armholes were so small, the women couldn't raise their arms, says Irene Wallace, one of the original Cougette alumnus. "In the locker room after practice we ended up taking scissors and making larger arm holes so we could actually wear them."

The developing history of Cougar women's basketball has continued to reflect the University, as it has grown from a completely local program to one that is recognized internationally.

Each head coach has continued to move the program forward. When Sue Higgs, a Department of Physical Education faculty member, began



Opposite page: The 1934-35 Regina College women's basketball team. Left: Sue (McKenzie) Burns. Right: Original Cougettes (left to right) Linda (Vail) Dodd BEd'74, Irene Wallace BEd'71, Ruby (Werhun) Patrick BEd'72 and Laurie (Woods) Burgess.



For most of the past 25 years, the University of Regina women's basketball program has been in the capable hands of Dave Taylor or Christine Stapleton.

coaching the team in 1971, she began to revolutionize the team and women's sport.

"I think she was a little bit ahead of her time in terms of, let's take these young women and really maximize their physical potential, in addition to teaching us so many things we didn't know about the game," says Burns, who noted that they were always in the lab doing fitness testing as well as training off the court.

After Higgs' nine-year tenure, there were two losing seasons before Sheila (Brennan) Beckie was hired. A Regina product, she had played for the University of Saskatchewan, and brought with her enthusiasm for the program, as well as a real focus on recruiting local players.

"We were losing really good athletes out of the city," says Dick White CA'89, BEd'74, who worked for the University for 34 years, including 20 as athletic director. "One of her focuses was to keep the best Regina athletes here at the start."

During her first season, there was such a lack of returning players and few players previously recruited that Beckie would have to join the players in practice to have enough bodies. Then, she successfully recruited Jackie Moore BPAS'91 of Thom Collegiate. The Cougars continued to improve, winning the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) final and going to the national championship in the 1988-89 season.

"These young ladies really put in a lot of time on their own outside of practice

time, working on their game, playing in the summers, getting into the weight room, taking their nutrition and fitness seriously," says Beckie. "That was kind of a turning point, I think, for the program, where it wasn't just an afterthought, but starting to be a premier program in the country."

After Beckie left, Debbie (Patterson) Nash coached for four seasons, but the strong group of players had graduated, weakening the program by the time Christine Stapleton was hired in 1993.

Stapleton had won a championship as a player with Laurentian University over the Cougars in 1991, and knew the type of basketball played at the University of Regina.

"The athletes were well prepared, extremely well coached, tough, fit, intelligent and sportsmanlike," she says. "They never stopped competing."

Stapleton continued Beckie's focus on recruitment, and began creating a community profile.

"I admire, especially, Sheila and Christine," says White. "They were able to recruit on the promise of, 'If you come, we will get better.'"

When Stapleton first arrived, she met with the coaches of the high school basketball teams. One of those coaches was Dave Taylor, who became her assistant coach and has been with the program ever since.

It was a struggle at first, but Stapleton recruited hard and was determined. She had played for and learned from legendary coach Peter Ennis, and brought passion, energy and confidence.

"The plan was to work hard," she says. "Build the grassroots, immerse myself in the community, and make sure that the best local talent stayed." To new players, she would say, "So, you've come here. You're going to graduate. And you're going to be a way better basketball player. And if we win a few games as part of this agreement, then we both win." And that's what we did."

For many years the team played in GPAC, which consisted of the University of Regina, University of Manitoba, University of Winnipeg and Brandon University. It was a tough division, but it meant the Cougars played the best teams each weekend.

"I remember a moment where, literally, Sandra Carroll, who was playing for Winnipeg, was outscoring us late in the game," says Taylor. "She'd average like 49 points a game against us. And that drove Christine and myself to where we're going, we've got to get better. Then Trena Mott BAdmin'99 came, and I call her the Pied Piper, because then Amy



Mickleborough BED'98 came, and Andrea Gottselig MEd'10, and that brought Becky Poley BA'02, Crystal Heisler BAdmin'03, BED'09, and the group that went to our national title."

The road to that title actually began the previous year, when the Cougars lost what Stapleton calls a "gut-wrenching" CIS Championship semifinal game against the University of Calgary. "I'll never forget going back to the hotel and going, 'That's never happening again,'" she says.

The next year, they once again found themselves playing Calgary in the semifinal game. Despite all of the changes they had made, and the whole shift in focus over the previous year, the coaches could hardly believe that at halftime, they found themselves down once again. They went into the locker room, walked the team through the game, tinkered with some defence, and the Cougars came back out and won the second half.

The final game was between the Cougars and the home team, the University of Alberta Pandas. The Cougars all wrote "MH" on the bottom of their white shoes, standing for "Make History." They did just that. Seven of the Cougars finished the game in double figures, and when the final buzzer sounded, they won 94-85.

As the Cougars became more successful, their fan base also grew. In 1999, the Cougars were playing the University of Manitoba in the best-of-three GPAC final. After the warmup, Stapleton and Taylor were walking

toward the team room, about 40 feet down the hallway from the gym, and could hardly get through because the lineup to the gym was out the door.

"Dave and I looked at each other, with big smiles on our faces, and were like, 'Can you believe this?'" says Stapleton.

Jeff Speedy, who was hired as the head coach in 2002 after Stapleton, says the city's passion for the program makes Regina one of the top places in the country to coach. "It's a special place to play, it's a special place to coach, and it's a very special program," he says.

Phoebe De Ciman BA'03, BAHons'05 joined the team in 1998, playing for four seasons under Stapleton and one with Speedy. Like many of the alumni, she has stayed in Regina and become a leader in the community. "I was so lucky to have been part of the program when that turnaround happened, where I could really see people were excited," she says. "The support from the community was absolutely fabulous. We were packed before the guys came in. It's very unique."

The last game played in the old gym was the Canada West Championship in 2004, when the Cougars beat the University of British Columbia, in front of over 800 fans packed into the small space.

"People hated coming there, because the sideline was packed with people, the end lines were packed with people, and the stands were right on top of you," says Cymone (Bouchard) Bernauer BKin'04, BED'09. "It was really kind of bone-chilling. You make a good play and the place erupts and the hair on your

arm stands up. It was very intense and just, really, the passion for the game was electric."

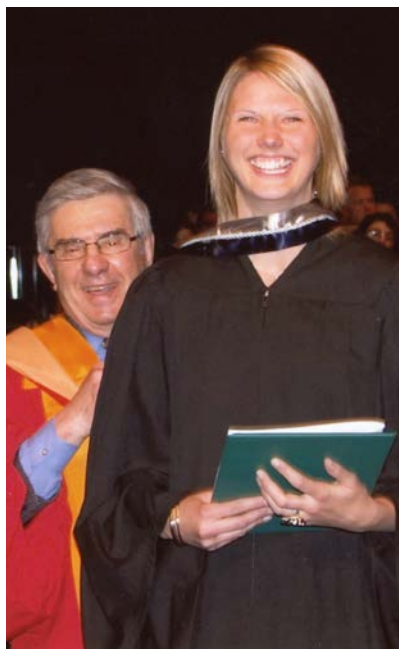
The next year, the team was creating new memories in a state-of-the-art facility after the Centre for Kinesiology Health and Sport opened. They needed to win the third game in the series to advance to the final four. The Cougars had graduated three players the previous year, one being Bernauer, who had been named the CIS Player of the Year. "We were trailing late in the game," says Speedy. "We were down six points with only five minutes left in the game, and I can still remember Jana (Schweitzer) Linner BAdmin'05, and Leah Anderson taking the game over. Basically, they were just saying, 'There's no way our careers are done today.' We won that game to even the series, and won the next day to go back to the final four."

The move to the new 2,400-seat gym meant a beautiful new team room, additional training facilities and, later, a jumbotron.

"It changed the atmosphere a little bit," says Maja Kralcacova BKin'09, who played for the Cougars from 2003 to 2009. "But it also gave the opportunity for a lot more people to watch us play."

Kralcacova was one of the first international players to come to Regina. Originally from Prague in the Czech Republic, Kralcacova played her senior year of high school in Macklin, Saskatchewan, before Speedy recruited her to the Cougars.

Photo courtesy of Maja Kralcacova



Left: Gord Staseson (grandpa to former player Maja Kralcacova) hoods her at her 2009 convocation ceremony. Right: The 2000-01 CIS championship women's team.



Graduating player, Charlotte Kot.

"The team is now kind of reflecting where the U of R's going," says De Ciman. "Internationalization is growing, and you can almost say it's mirroring the University."

While the Regina community supports its local players, it also welcomes international players, making them feel like family.

"It was just incredible how people embraced me. ... It was really nice, and that continued throughout all of my years," says Kralcacova, who stayed in Regina following her basketball career and recently became a Canadian citizen.

The warm welcome is because of avid fans like Gord Staseson, who Kralcacova now calls her "grandpa" for all he has done for her over the years.

"He took me under his wing, and started to help me fundraise money for Adopt-a-Cougar," says Kralcacova, who remains close friends with Staseson. "He actually raised money to bring my mom here for the (2009) CIS Championship, which was really touching, and I will never forget it."

Much of the recruiting to the Cougars, however, still remains within the city. Regina minor level and high school basketball teams continue to develop strong athletes who grow up wanting to play for the Cougars. Alumni give their time generously, coaching at various levels as they become role models in the community.

"I think we have always had the perfect storm," says Taylor. "We've been successful. Our players are great ambassadors out in the community. So there's that connection. ... Local will always be the foundation of our program. The minute that changes, we're in trouble."

Thirteen years after joining the Cougar women's basketball team as an assistant coach, Taylor was made head coach in 2006.

"It's a village that builds this program," says Stapleton, noting the athletic directors, deans of Kinesiology and Health Studies, and University presidents who have supported the teams and shown up to games. "And it's a guy like Dave, who has arguably the longest tenure of anybody associated with the women's basketball program."

Taylor is quick to acknowledge the coaches that came before him as the team's builders, while he says he is committed to maintaining that excellence as guardian of the program.

"There have been all these moments and times where I thought there were tipping points that could have gone either way. Oftentimes, it has been having the right player with the right mindset," says Taylor, in looking back on the team's success over the years. "The players have had that competitive drive and ownership, and just pursuit of excellence where anything less is just not acceptable."

In 2013-14 and 2014-15, the Cougars had back-to-back seasons where injuries became a huge issue, leading to two seasons where the team didn't go to nationals. The summer of 2015, Charlotte Kot became the team's heartbeat, and her drive to succeed permeated the entire team. "Everybody had that attitude of, 'Okay, enough. We can't be 500. This is not acceptable,'" says Taylor. "And now, we're back on a three-year run of being in the Canada West finals."

While players like Kot will certainly never forget playing in a national championship, she says her most important memories of the weekend were not on the court. Instead, she will remember the alumni who returned for the weekend, including those such as Andrea (Gottselig) Ward and Amy (Mickleborough) Moroz, who co-chaired the 2018 championship committee.

"The thing I will remember the most about that nationals was all of the alumni," says Kot, who was awed by the packed gym watching the alumni game and the lunch with over 65 alumni present. "The people change, but they are always your family. ... Once a Cougar, always a Cougar."

## Over the years

1967-68 – University of Regina Cougettes, a junior team, begin playing against other universities junior teams.

1968-69 – Sheila Ward becomes head coach; Cougettes begin playing in the Western Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

1971-72 – Sue Higgs becomes head coach.

1972-73 – WCIAA splits into two divisions; Cougettes begin playing in the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC).

1974 – As the University of Saskatchewan — Regina Campus becomes the University of Regina, the basketball team takes a hiatus from GPAC until the 1976-77 season.

1976-77 – The Cougettes appear at the GPAC final for the first time.

1978-79 – The Cougettes appear at the national (CIAU) championship for the first time as the host team.

1980-81 – Bernie Riffel coaches.

1981-82 – Linda Dodd coaches.

1982-83 – Sheila Beckie is hired as head coach on a 10-month term.

1983-84 – Beckie's contract becomes permanent; the Cougettes become the Lady Cougars.

1988-89 – The Lady Cougars win the GPAC final for the first time.

1989-90 – Debbie Patterson is hired as coach.

1990-91 – The Lady Cougars win the GPAC final; they appear in the CIAU final for the first time.

Early 90s – The Lady Cougars become the Cougars.

1993-94 – Christine Stapleton is hired as head coach.





**Left: The Cougars celebrate another medal in a national championship, winning bronze at the 2018 USPORTS tournament in Regina. Right: Crystal (Heisler) McGregor played with the Cougars from 1996-2002. Her death from cancer in 2014 brought players closer than they had ever been says former player Cymone (Bouchard) Bernauer.**

Never was this more apparent than when Crystal (Heisler) McGregor was diagnosed with cancer in 2012. McGregor played for the Cougars from 1996 to 2002. The Cougar alumni — including both her teammates and those from teams before and after — came together to fundraise and help McGregor in her battle against cancer. When she died in 2014, they began the Crystal McGregor Memorial Scholarship in her memory.

"It drew us closer together than we've ever been, and that's the beauty of being part of a team," says Bernauer. "No matter what happens to somebody in that extended family, we all pull together, and we all show up for support."

"As tragic as it was to lose Crystal, you try to answer the question 'why?' We tried to take the love and the positive out of it," says Ward. "Crystal reconnected all alumni in a deeper and more meaningful level of team than ever before."

It also demonstrated that no matter how busy life gets, the team is there past basketball. "The people are what matter," says De Ciman. "If someone needs lifting up, we'll be there. And if someone's joyful and celebrating, we'll be the first ones on the dance floor at the wedding."

While the results are important, that is only a piece of what has made this program successful.

"University athletics is part of a process of education of character development, intellectual development, social development," says Pitsula. "It is, by its very nature, part of that developmental shaping of personalities, shaping of character, preparing people for life."

That is certainly exemplified by the Cougars and the people they have become. This is a program that has not only captured the heart of the community, but also has become a reflection of it. Because, at the end of it all, while basketball has brought the Cougars community together, it is the people and relationships that forever uphold the Cougars spirit. **D**

1995-96 – Andrea Gottselig is named CIAU Rookie of the Year.

1996-97 – Christine Stapleton is named CIAU Coach of the Year.

1998-99 – Corrin Wersta is named CIAU Player of the Year; the Cougars win the GPAC final.

1990-00 – The Cougars win the GPAC final and the bronze medal at the CIAU Championship.

2000-01 – The Cougars win the GPAC final and the CIS Championship.

2001-02 – The Cougars move to the Canada West (CW) division.

2002-03 – Jeff Speedy is hired as coach

2003-04 – Cymone Bouchard is named CIS Player of the Year; the Cougars place first in the Final Four and second at the CIS Championship.

2004-05 – The Centre for Kinesiology, Health and Sport opens.

2006-07 – Dave Taylor is hired as head coach.

2007-08 – The Cougars place second at the CIS Championship.

2008-09 – Regina hosts the CIS Championship and the Cougars place second.

2011-12 – Dave Taylor is named CIS Coach of the Year.

2012-13 – The Cougars win the CW Final Four; Regina hosts CIS Nationals and finishes second.

2016-17 – Kyanna Giles is named USPORTS Rookie of the Year.

2017-18 – The Cougars win the CW Final Four; Regina hosts USPORTS Nationals and finishes third.

# The remarkable Olivia Arnal



There was a time when no one would have questioned Olivia Arnal if she didn't pursue a university education. After all, there had been so much tragedy in her life. But that was never a consideration for Arnal. Now, this remarkable young woman is about to earn a Bachelor of Business Administration. Along the way she has won the admiration of everyone who has met her.

**By Bill Armstrong**

Photos by Don Hall unless otherwise noted.



**O**livia Arnal slowly negotiates a one-ton truck down one of the trails that wind their way throughout the sprawling Bircham Ranch, a short drive south of the hamlet of Piapot in southwest Saskatchewan. Calving season is in full swing. For a few weeks Arnal will serve as a weekend ranch hand, commuting from the University of Regina until she writes the final exams that will bring her post-secondary experience to a close. Once she completes the requirements for her degree, the Cypress Hills ranch will become home.

Arnal's two-way radio crackles with updates from Wayne and Erin Bircham, and their sons Leigh and Jordan, about calves newly born, of cows about to give birth, and their locations. With about 850 cows – mostly Black Angus, some Herefords and Angus-Hereford crosses – giving birth from mid-March to mid-April, the season is a continual round of watching, waiting and helping with a difficult birth when necessary.

An uncommonly cold spring means the mothers and their new calves must be moved inside one of the barns to improve the calves' chance of survival. With an average of two calves dropping every hour, all hands are engaged in a hectic cycle of moving the newborns and their mothers inside, then moving them out the following day. Although calving season has the reward of bringing new babies into the world, Arnal explains, it often means next to no sleep, enduring cold weather, dealing with defensive mama cows and helping babies who need an extra pull coming out or a push to learn how to nurse properly.

Arnal's fiancé, Leigh Bircham, rides up to her truck on a quad after making his rounds checking cows. Over a rolled down window, Arnal and Bircham discuss the next chores. Bircham was born to ranch – the long days don't bother him and he enjoys the different jobs that come with the seasons. For Arnal, a weekend at the ranch is a refreshing escape from her life as a student in the Hill School of Business at the University of Regina. "I love the fresh air, and I don't have to think about what to wear. The work dictates that. There's only one thing to do," she adds, "and that is to help with the calving."

The reality that she is about to graduate with a Bachelor of Business Administration (with a major in Accounting and a certificate in Economics) is something Arnal marvels at, given the depths of tragedy she and her family have experienced. When she was eight years old, the family home on their ranch at Ravenscrag burned to the ground, although everyone was able to escape uninjured. Tragedy struck just a few years later when one of her older brothers, Blake, died in a farm accident. Then, just a few weeks before she was to begin classes at the University, two younger brothers, Sean and Lyndon, died when the tractor they were riding in crashed while going down a hill toward home.

The losses were absolutely devastating for Arnal; however, she never contemplated postponing university, as some people suggested. One reason for continuing on, she says, was her memory of one of her last conversations with her brother Sean. "He called me and was quizzing me about getting



Opposite page: Olivia Arnal with University of Regina President Vianne Timmons. (Photo by Trevor Hopkin) Above: Arnal checks a group of expectant cows from her living room. The ranch, located in the Cypress Hills in southwestern Saskatchewan, is home to 850 cows.





Arnal with her grandpa-in-law, 86-year-old Ralph Bircham.

into the U of R,” she says. “The pride in his voice that day is something I’ve taken with me each and every day I set foot in the Hill School. It is a fond, yet emotional, memory.”

Arnal demonstrated her enthusiasm for learning early. While she was still in Grade 12, she asked if she could sit in on a Business 100 class. Bruce Anderson, now executive lead, Outreach, and a lecturer in Strategy and Policy with the Faculty of Business Administration, was teaching the course in the winter 2014 semester. Anderson says he remembers the class and Arnal because requests from high school students for a “test drive” are rare. He recalls being impressed with Arnal’s poise and intellect and calls her a rising star. She was impressed, too: she decided she wouldn’t entertain going anywhere but the University of Regina. (Her mother Anne confides that she worried her daughter might be taking on too much by heading off to university, “... but what Olivia decides to do, she makes happen.”)



Arnal’s mother Anne Howell.

“If it had not been for the supportive and caring faculty in the Hill School, I would not have made it through the first semester, let alone earned a degree,” Arnal says. Her positive experience also prompted her to revise her original plan to spend three years studying business, and then transfer to the Law program at the University of Saskatchewan. She fell in love with the Hill School, and with business, she says.

In addition to her classes, she also jumped into volunteer activities on campus, continuing a practice cultivated during her high school years. She was a member of the Student Representative Council (SRC) at Eastend School, a K-12 school of about 100 students. She served as president of the SRC in Grade 11 and was active in the local Students Against Drunk Driving chapter. She also took a leadership role in establishing WE Day within the school. WE Day is an international movement that brings people together to make positive changes in the world. Arnal and her classmates helped organize a series of WE Day fundraisers that resulted in a \$10,000 donation to help build a school in Kenya.

In recognition of her volunteer activities, Arnal was one of ten recipients to receive a 2014 Governor General’s Caring Canadian Award. When University of Regina President Vianne Timmons noticed a news item about the award, and saw that Arnal planned to attend the University, she sent Arnal a note inviting her to meet.

Arnal admits to some trepidation before meeting Timmons, holding off until after Christmas to follow up on the invitation. She even borrowed some money from her mother to buy a new outfit, and concentrated on doing her best to be prim and proper when they met. During that first meeting, Timmons asked Arnal to pop in for a visit at least once a semester, and the relationship flourished. “Olivia puts her heart and soul into everything she does,” Timmons observes. “Once, on short notice, she went to an event in Ottawa as a student ambassador

representing the University. When she returned, she took the time to debrief me about what she'd observed."

Besides contributing as a student ambassador, Arnal served as the special events coordinator for the University's Student Success Centre, participated in the UR Guarantee program, and served as a tutor with UR International, helping ESL students learn English.

She is also a founder and director of the Arnal Boys Memorial Bursary for Young Farmers, which the family established in 2014 to assist young people between eight and 18 with their agriculture-related projects. The bursary provides grants of up to \$5,000 for young people attending school in southwestern Saskatchewan who are looking to buy farm animals or equipment to advance their projects. "In the first year, I hoped we would be able to give out \$3,000, but we awarded \$45,000, and the amount continues to grow," Arnal says. She credits the fund's rapid development to the good advice she received from several of her professors.

That first semester Arnal wasn't able to take Bruce Anderson's Business 100 class because of a scheduling conflict, but he and associate professor Wallace Lockhart were "adamant" that she participate in competitions with other business schools, such as the Inter-Collegiate Business Competition (ICBC).

In her second year, she was a member of the Hill School marketing team that made it to the second round. (Each year ICBC challenges more than 170 student teams from over 40 business schools in Canada and beyond to solve business cases in several categories. Six teams in each competitive event are invited to a final round, hosted at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario).

Arnal was hooked by the experience. Although her team did not make it to the final round, she resolved to try again. After spending a month at the Paris School of Business in June 2017 with fellow fourth-year student Amanda Kostur, the two teamed up to enter the accounting competition in their final year.

Working with their faculty coach Nola Joorisity, who lectures in business and accounting, the two spent many late nights preparing a written submission that won them the opportunity to compete at Kingston in January 2018. Combining their complementary skill sets and interests, Kostur and Arnal took a holistic approach to their business case challenge, and it worked: the judges awarded them first place. Later, at a celebration in Regina, Joorisity described the pair as poised, polished, articulate, professional and engaging in their presentation. "They didn't just do the accounting numbers, but also considered the marketing, human resources, operations and strategy."

Students participating in ICBC competitions draw plenty of interest from prospective employers, but Arnal had already begun scoping out employers well before ICBC. In her usual thorough way, Arnal developed a spreadsheet so that she could research and analyze the values and other qualities of potential employers. She also spent considerable time discussing possible career paths and understanding her own values with Eric Dillon, the Chief Executive Officer of Conexus Credit Union.

While the Hill School has a formal mentoring program that matches students with business leaders, the partnership between Arnal and Dillon developed informally. "I heard her speak at a Leaders Council event," Dillon says, "and I knew I had to meet her personally. She truly stood out from her peers, and she is a great example of what the business leaders of tomorrow will look like – driven, purposeful, humble and centred around making a difference in the world."

Arnal eventually narrowed her employer search to Innovation Credit Union, dropping in at branches around southwestern Saskatchewan, asking employees what they liked or didn't like about their jobs, and if they thought they were reaching their full potential. As a result of her comprehensive investigation, she began as a relationship manager trainee for Innovation, working out of the credit union head office at Swift Current. "My dream has been to work with agriculture and small business clients and help them achieve success," she says. "Innovation is the place that best allows me to see my dream flourish."

Reflecting on her four years at the University, Arnal expresses gratitude for all of the support that she received, including a University of Regina Retirees Legacy Scholarship, a Paul and Carol Hill Scholarship in Business Ethics and a Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce Award. Then, there is the emotional support: what she describes as a circle that includes "... many professors and staff, and of course Vianne, which has really and truly saved me. Many family and close friends of the boys struggle with heartache," she adds, "and I was worried starting university that it was something that might overwhelm me. Because I chose the University of Regina – and I guess the University of Regina chose me – I've been able to survive, and that is a debt which I will never be able to fully repay. The University will forever be the place that helped me grow." **D**

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

Photo by Trevor Hopkin



Left: Arnal and Amanda Kostur celebrate their first place finish at the Inter-Collegiate Business Competition at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Right: Arnal and her fiancé, Leigh Bircham, check on some cows.



## Emily Gardner – Street Artist

Photos by Oliver Crawford

*It's been quite a journey for alumna Emily Gardner BA'13. She grew up poor in Regina's North Central neighbourhood. While attending high school at Regina's Sheldon-Williams Collegiate, she spent one year living at Gemma House, the Salvation Army girls' group home.*

*When attempts to reconcile with her mother failed, her grandmother took her in and raised her. Gardner saw education as her way of escaping poverty and creating a more stable life, and started an economics degree in 2007. As a student, Gardner was active, becoming president of the Economics Student Association, a research assistant and a teaching assistant.*

*In 2013, she graduated at the top of her class and earned the Dr. Jack Boan Medal in Economics and the Dr. Alex Kelly Undergraduate Economics Essay Prize. After finishing her studies, she decided to move to New Zealand. (Her largely absent father was a New Zealander, entitling Gardner to apply for citizenship.) She earned a Master of Professional Studies in International Relations and Human Rights at the University of Auckland and later worked as a settlement officer in a large bank.*

*But Gardner was drawn to painting, a skill she developed in her youth to deal with anxiety and uncertainty. Today, Gardner works full time as a street artist, painting under the tag name Adore. Her murals can be seen throughout Auckland. Recently, Adidas commissioned her to produce a mural for the company's global adicolor campaign.*















University of Regina researcher Jennifer Gordon is at the forefront of the study of perimenopausal depression, depression related to infertility, depression in pregnancy and postpartum depression.

By Deborah Sproat

Photos by Trevor Hopkin,  
University of Regina Photography Department.



# Depression and the menopause transition

**Y**ou literally can feel it pushing you down. You would swear someone has their hand on your head and they're just lowering you to the ground."

That's how Jennifer Johnson, a Regina mother of two teenagers, describes the lows that have hit her frequently since she entered perimenopause, also known as the menopause transition, the period of a woman's life when she is approaching menopause and starts to experience symptoms of declining estrogen levels. Johnson has been feeling the impact of perimenopause for several years. First came the night sweats, soon joined by hot flashes, insomnia, irregular periods and the relentless lows.

Those lows first appeared when she was dealing with other problems, including conflicts with her son's father and a cancer diagnosis. All the burdens sent her to her doctor to ask for help, which is something she says she rarely does because she is "fiercely independent." Now, she is better able to handle the lows herself.

"I think when you have been going through it as long as I have, the sadness or depressions don't last as long anymore," she says. "You also know you are going to come out the other side, so that makes it easier. I just don't let it affect me the same way."

Now, Johnson has joined other sufferers and researchers to try to change the plight of women plagued

with perimenopausal depression. She is a patient-investigator in a University of Regina research study led by Jennifer Gordon, an assistant professor of psychology.

The menopause transition brings mood changes for many women, and an increased risk of clinically significant depressive symptoms for a significant number. In fact, the menopause transition is associated with a two-to four-fold increase in the risk of depression. Fluctuating hormone levels may be the cause, although scientific research has not confirmed the link.

Gordon has chosen to build her research program around women's reproductive health and much of her current work is focused on depression

in perimenopause. She was working towards a PhD in clinical psychology at McGill University in Montréal, focusing on depression and cardiovascular disease, when she took a class from Barbara Sherwin, a renowned expert in human psychoendocrinology (the study of the relationship between the endocrine system and mental health). Gordon chose to do a presentation on depression and estrogen. She was fascinated and knew immediately that this was where she wanted to focus her research.

About the same time, she met Susan Girdler, an American researcher whose work is focused on the effect of reproductive hormones on mood, specifically during phases of reproductive change, including postpartum depression, perimenopausal depression, and depression tied to the menstrual cycle.

"We really hit it off," Gordon says. The meeting convinced her to apply to the Québec Health Research Foundation for a post-doctoral fellowship to study with Girdler and colleague David Rubinow at the Women's Mood Disorders training program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"It was a very intense three years," she says. "It's a very demanding program but it's very good training. You learn how to write competitive grants and publish high-quality papers and learn all about women's reproductive mood disorders, very much focused on the biology and physiology, which was good because my background had been in clinical psychology."

At Chapel Hill, Gordon worked on the Perimenopausal Estrogen Replacement Therapy (PERT) study, a \$4 million trial that looked at the use of estrogen replacement therapy for the prevention of depression in the menopause transition.

"It's the first trial to look at estrogen for the purpose of preventing the onset of depressive symptoms in the menopause transition," Gordon says. "There have been a few small trials finding it can reduce depressive symptoms in already depressed women in the menopause transition ... so this was looking at recruiting initially emotionally healthy women, putting them on estrogen and seeing if they show any mood benefits from that."

Results of the study, recently published in the *JAMA Psychiatry* medical journal with Gordon named as lead author, were impressive. Seventeen per cent of the women receiving transdermal estrogen through estrogen patches developed clinically significant depression, while 32 per cent of those receiving placebo developed depression.

Two groups of women benefited more than others – those who had experienced stressful life events in the preceding six months and those who were in the early years of the menopause transition.

"The effects of estrogen were pretty striking in preventing the onset of depressive symptoms, especially in the early menopause transition. Of those who were on placebo, nearly 50 per cent of them had clinically depressive symptoms at some point in the study, whereas in the estrogen group the percentage was only three per cent," Gordon says.

Critics say that giving estrogen to prevent depression is out of line with current recommendations. Gordon doesn't dispute this statement, but she says those recommendations were based on research that showed giving estrogen to older women who are late into menopause could be dangerous. More recent research proposes that estrogen is much safer in younger women who are in the menopause transition or early postmenopausal period. It is generally agreed that more study is needed.

When Gordon began searching for a place to build her career, she found the combination of smaller community and robust, friendly psychology department at the University of Regina. Plus, the psychology department welcomed her focus on reproductive mood disorders.

"And I could see that there were very successful people in the department," she says. "I wanted a department that had mentors built in ... so I liked that too."

She continues work on the PERT study – among other things, she will write a paper on the impact of estrogen therapy on the cardiovascular health of participants. At the same time, she is

building her own women's reproductive mental health research program. With her background in clinical psychology and her training on the biology and physiology of women's reproductive mood disorders, she is in an ideal position to create a program that encompasses both.

Her first Regina-based study is the Fluctuating Estrogen and Menopausal Mood (FEMM) study, funded through an establishment grant from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF), which she says will be the most detailed look so far at the correlation between hormones and mood in the menopause transition.

"There haven't been any studies looking closely at the correlation between hormones and mood in the menopause transition. We think that extreme estrogen fluctuation may play a role in triggering depressive symptoms during the menopause transition, but previous studies have generally measured estrogen too infrequently, making it difficult to figure out what hormonal triggers may be involved in perimenopausal depression."

The study will measure estrogen and progesterone levels in participants, as well as mood, depressive symptoms and other factors that can impact mood, such as sleep and hot flashes, and baseline factors such as recent stressful life events, history of trauma, history of mental illness and sleep quality. Separate funding from the Banting Research Foundation will allow researchers to look at levels of cortisol, a stress hormone in saliva, to see if it is affected by hormonal fluctuations.

As a clinical psychologist, Gordon is also interested in exploring non-



Left: University of Regina assistant professor of psychology, Jennnifer Gordon. Above: Jennifer Johnson, patient-investigator in a University of Regina study led by researcher Jennifer Gordon.

pharmacological interventions for the prevention and treatment of women's mood disorders. She has initiated a study that will look at the use of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) to reduce the risk of depression in the menopause transition. This study will be funded through an SHRF Sprout Grant.

"Some of my research suggests that the hormonal environment of the menopause transition increases sensitivity to stress and that's why women are more likely to develop depressive symptoms," she says. Reducing stress using MBSR might help those women avoid depression.

This study will be the first time Gordon has undertaken "patient-oriented" research, a style of research that involves patients, families, health professionals, researchers and policy-makers working together to plan research, carry out research projects and help interpret and make use of the findings. She is enthusiastic about it and hopes to become a leader in the field.

"Across Canada there's a big push towards patient-oriented research," Gordon says. "The idea is you are doing research that is addressing patient-identified priorities, things that matter to the people who are affected by whatever you are studying. And they would be involved every step of the way."

Gordon has named two "patient-investigators" who were involved in the study design and will sit in on the first MBSR sessions to make sure they are tailored appropriately to the target population. They will also be involved in tasks such as the approval of questionnaires, analysis of results and dissemination of information.

Tracy Morgan, a participant in the FEMM study, is one of those patient-investigators. Morgan is excited to be involved in the MBSR study. She says her role fits with the skills she has developed as a medical lab technician and trainer at Canadian Blood Services, as well as her interests in subjects such as yoga and meditation. She feels the study may even help her deal with her own symptoms of perimenopause.

"I will be participating in this study and helping others," Morgan says, noting participants may feel more comfortable dealing with someone like her who is experiencing the same life change. "But it may also help me find a routine, maybe meditation and yoga, and I can keep using that long after the study is over. It will help me build my own routines, rather than trying to figure out all this on my own. I will have some input from some very knowledgeable people."

Gordon is hoping to broaden her research program to include other areas of women's reproductive health. As a first step, she is proposing the development of a psychological intervention for women struggling with infertility. She says patient-investigators will be especially valuable in designing this project because "better understanding their experience of infertility will allow us to create a more effective treatment program."

"The rates of depression and anxiety are very high in women struggling with infertility, even if it's their partner with the diagnosis. Approximately 30 to 40 per cent of women experience significant depression or anxiety as they are undergoing fertility treatments, and so far, psychological treatments are not terribly effective at improving that."

Group interventions have proven better than individual interventions, she says, but even group interventions have not been that effective in improving psychological health in this population. She proposes working with infertile women to learn more about their experience and the significant psychological challenges they have. The next step would be to develop and pilot a psychological intervention that maps on to those specific problems.


Gordon says the idea for this project grew out of discussion in the third-year Women's Reproductive Mood Disorders class she teaches. She created and loves teaching this course because the syllabus covers all her interests – including premenstrual dysphoric disorder, infertility, depression in pregnancy, postpartum depression and perimenopausal depression. She says that a class discussion about infertility distress highlighted the idea that coping

with infertility is even more difficult for women in Regina because they have to travel to get help.

Gordon's long-term goal is to establish a women's mental health research unit at the University of Regina to facilitate patient-oriented research in women's reproductive mental health. Most other provinces have clinics specializing in women's mental health, including reproductive mood disorders, but Saskatchewan does not and she hopes to help close this gap. The research she envisions would directly inform clinical practice and promote training for medical professionals in the assessment and treatment of women's reproductive health disorders.

"This mission is directly in line with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health's mandate to improve the province's treatment of mental health," Gordon says.

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*Deborah Sproat is a freelance writer based in Regina, Saskatchewan.*



**Tracy Morgan, a patient-investigator in Gordon's mindfulness-based stress reduction study.**



In 2012, **Jennifer Dubois BAdmin'16** was one of the prize winners in CBC's Boom Box Indigenous business competition. Her pitch to open an Indigenous hair salon and spa landed her second place, \$1,500 and three months of business mentorship. Five years later, Dubois realized her dream when she opened Miyosiwin Salon Spa.

The downtown Regina salon is open to all, but specializes in respectful and culturally sensitive services for Indigenous clients. Dubois, who hails from George Gordon First Nation, is actively engaged in her Indigenous culture. She named her salon Miyosiwin after the Cree word for beauty. Her son, Eagle, and her daughter, Journey, dance Powwow in regalia made by their mother.

Giving back to her community is one of her main priorities. The salon holds free elders' haircut days and father-and-daughter nights. She also donates time and products to various fundraising activities.

Sadly, Dubois' dream business was decimated by a fire that started at a neighbouring business. Dubois is determinedly working to rebuild the salon. She assures her clients that Miyosiwin will open again soon. If you want to reach out to Dubois, you can find her on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MiyosiwinSalon](http://www.facebook.com/MiyosiwinSalon).



**D** What is the main philosophy behind Miyosiwin Salon Spa?

*To break down barriers and to create a comfortable and familiar space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients.*

**D** What were the factors that made you decide to open your own business?

*I always wanted to be my own boss. After working for various jobs and businesses, I could never feel fully satisfied even though I've worked in some amazing positions.*

**D** What is the best thing about self-employment?

*The best thing about being self-employed is making my own decisions for the business – that's also the scariest thing.*

**D** What are some of the considerations of cutting hair in an Indigenous cultural sense?

*It's about understanding that there is a spiritual connection to hair. You can still give a great style or cut while also respecting cultural beliefs. Being culturally aware of what protocols your clients follow instills a trusting relationship with them.*

**D** Why has it been important to you for your children to be involved in traditional dance?

*We want our children to know their culture and to be able to carry on the traditions that were passed on before them. It's also about self-expression, identity and for them to know where they come from, which will help ground them.*

**D** What advice do you have for any budding entrepreneurs?

*Every setback, barrier or obstacle is an opportunity. Don't give up. There are times when you may feel alone, but there's so much support out there. Sometimes you just need to ask.*

**D** Are we seeing more Indigenous entrepreneurs?

*Yes, we are seeing more because more people are investing in Indigenous entrepreneurship. If it wasn't for Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation, I would not have had the opportunity to start my business when I did. I'm forever grateful for the program that helped make my dream a reality.*

**D** What was the most important attribute you acquired during your university studies?

*There is so much that I learned in university that has helped me on my journey. But it's the connections and friendships that I've made along the way that are most important.*



**In a gesture to honour his late father who battled depression throughout his life, University of Regina alumnus Jim Demeray established UnderstandUs. The volunteer organization raises awareness and works to remove stigmas associated with those living with mental health challenges.**

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

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department.



# UnderstandUs

It all began with an armload of T-shirts.

Jim Demeray DipBA'06 wanted to honour the memory of his father, who had passed away from a heart attack in 2011. His father had lived with depression his whole life, but never acknowledged it. Demeray himself lives with generalized anxiety. This is why it made sense to him to raise funds for the Canadian Mental Health Association. Demeray designed T-shirts emblazoned with “UnderstandUs” and took them to work to sell for the cause.

“When I was walking into work holding the shirts, I was saying to myself, ‘There is no way people are going to buy a T-shirt that is about mental illness. There is no way. I’m going to have to give these away,’” he says. However, by the end of the first shift, he had almost sold out. “The support was so huge. At that moment, I realized that I was on to something, that my perception that people don’t want to talk about this and don’t want to support it was incorrect.” Demeray used the money raised to start UnderstandUs, a not-for-profit organization that aims to change the conversation about mental health.

Demeray feels that UnderstandUs is a natural name for the organization. “I’ve played in bands before and sat around a table with my bandmates and came up with 85 names of a band, trying to get down to one. But the funny thing about this organization is that UnderstandUs was the first name I came up with,” he says. “A lot of times with mental illness, people believe that what someone is looking for is sympathy, but at the end of the day, understanding is a tool that anyone can use, and that’s what they’re looking for. The word ‘us’ was specifically around the fact that there’s a community of people that deal with this. It’s not ‘understand me’; it’s not ‘understand you, him or her’. It’s ‘understand us’ because there’s a lot of us, and that understanding goes a long way.”

Ultimately, what UnderstandUs is about is conversation. When he first started the organization, Demeray noticed

that people were scared to talk about mental illness and felt all alone in dealing with it. He also noticed that there were misconceptions around mental health disorders. Google Images searches for anxiety and depression call up dark and negative imagery. Many people believe that if you’re not debilitated or in the hospital, you don’t suffer from mental illness. These ideas didn’t mesh with Demeray’s own experience, so he started telling his story to anyone who would listen.

“When I was open with people about it, there were distinct reactions I received that made me realize that how we perceive mental illness is incorrect and is potentially damaging,” he says. Some people dismissed him with comments such as, “Life is too short to stress out all the time. You should just be happy.” Or, they would say, “I know people with real problems, and you’re just playing the victim.” Others were surprised because they had known him for a long time and had no idea he dealt with anxiety. There was another group of people who expressed gratitude to him for his openness because they were dealing with anxiety, too.

“All those things combined made me realize that there’s so many things wrong with how I was dealing with it and how we as a society deal with it. I should have felt comfortable talking about how I truly feel, so it didn’t come as a surprise. People shouldn’t have to pull me aside to thank me for talking about mental illness if they deal with it because they should already feel comfortable talking about it. People shouldn’t shut people down or be resistant because it’s a real thing that needs understanding, not resistance,” he says. “At that moment, I realized that I needed to do my part, whatever my part could be, to change those perceptions.”

The T-shirt sales led Demeray to establish a website with resources to help people with mental health issues. He was going to stop there, until someone asked if they could share their story on the site. The story received positive feedback, and he realized that the site could be a safe place for people to share their struggles and triumphs.

**Opposite Page:** Laura Hudson says reaction to her sharing her story of coping with depression on the UnderstandUs website resulted in an outpouring of love and a realization that many are touched by mental health challenges.



**UnderstandUs founder, Jim Demeray.**

Laura Hudson's article on [understandus.ca](http://understandus.ca) is called, *3 times my mental illness changed my life (for the better)*. She writes:

The best way I can describe my depression on my worst day is an inability to cope; a lack of resources – being thrown into a gladiator fight wielding a spoon. In those moments I look out and see my friends and the rest of the world with their suits of armour and swords parkouring their way through life as I watch from the corner, back against the wall, spoon clutched tight to my chest. It's a feeling of being unequipped. Like going scuba diving armed with a snorkel mask; the frantic treading of water, one arm flung over the side of the boat, choking back water as everyone else gracefully swims below, air tanks attached securely to their backs. But would you believe me if I told you that even after all of that, and knowing that for the rest of my life there are going to be many more days clinging to the side of that boat, that I wouldn't trade it for the world?

Hudson met Demeray when he gave a presentation to her business administration marketing class at the University of Regina. When students had to choose an organization to give marketing and strategic support to as their major project for the semester, Hudson's group picked UnderstandUs.

After learning more about the organization through the class project, Hudson was inspired to share her story on the site.

"It was terrifying when I sent it off to Jim. I don't know what I expected, but I didn't realize how many people it was going to touch. There was such an outpouring of love and gratitude. It hit home how much we're all affected by this," she says.

Hudson agrees with Demeray that mental illness should not be a source of shame. "There's another side to look at when it comes to mental illness. There's this stigma of it being a sign of weakness. But the truth is just the opposite. Some of the strongest, most compassionate, successful and self-aware people I know are living with a mental illness. The conversation needs to be flipped on its head. Instead of saying 'I'm sorry you have to live with this,' we need to be saying 'Wow, you are so resilient for dealing with this every day and I respect your strength for showing up.' Only then will people start talking and stigmas be lifted," she says.

The website's success led to requests for Demeray to visit elementary and high schools. "Teachers and educators don't have an active mental health curriculum. A lot of kids are suffering at an early age and don't really have any format of discussion about it. We felt we could be leaders in the education system and with youth in sparking a conversation," Demeray says. He notes that youth suicide is the second largest cause of death among young Canadians and that Saskatchewan has the highest rate of youth suicide in the country. The conversation he sparks with young people emphasizes that it's normal to deal with the emotions of mental illness, and there



are healthy outlets to combat it at an early age that will allow youth to remain on a positive path and be successful in life.

In his presentations, Demeray focuses on four main areas: self-love, healthy relationships, physical health and self-regulation. "If they focus on these four things, they can improve their mental health, proactively or reactively," he says. Part of the reason he feels it's so important to focus on young people is that he wishes someone would have talked to him about mental wellness at a young age. He believes that if negative thoughts, uncontrolled emotions and debilitating stress are not acknowledged early and countered with healthy options unhealthy habits will take over.

"I think that in adolescent years, people are susceptible to negative emotions, and they're also susceptible to pressure to go down the path of unhealthy outlets – drugs, alcohol, addictions, isolation and anger. I think if that discussion is left vacant, or it's done by people that the youth can't relate to, then we're missing the opportunity where we can better the lives of all youth. I don't want to see the consequences of us not doing it," he says.

The class presentations triggered online campaigns. The first was *Vulnerable Is Beautiful*, where students shared their vulnerabilities on video. "We got the kids involved as leaders. If they're vulnerable, it will cause people to see them being vulnerable without judgement, and they'll learn they can be vulnerable and not receive judgement," he says. One of the most recent campaigns, *Letters to No One*, focused on random acts of kindness. It was wildly successful, reaching more than 20,000 people on social media.

UnderstandUs also does outreach in the community, with volunteers selling T-shirts and starting conversations about mental health at events such as the Regina Folk Festival, Bazaart and the Queen City Marathon.

Branding plays an important role in how UnderstandUs raises awareness. Rather than starting with the cause and creating merchandise based on it, Demeray started with the brand and advanced the cause that way. He focused on making professional-looking designs for T-shirts and campaigns that would connect with people. "Once they liked the shirt and said, 'Hey, that's a really cool shirt – what is that about?' someone would say that it's about mental health. I think it's a great way to talk about something like mental illness and make it comfortable first," he says.

Photo courtesy of Jim Demeray



Funds from selling UnderstandUs apparel like the tank top above help fund educational workshops with Saskatchewan youth. Funds are also used to develop awareness campaigns and maintain the UnderstandUs website.



understandus


On top of the marketing skills he learned at University, Demeray's diploma in business administration has been key to the organization's success by providing him with a large network of professionals to draw upon. "The people I met in university are now out in the world owning and running businesses. They can offer services for us – like creating websites and videos for free – and the relationships I built with them have allowed that to happen," he says.

Given that UnderstandUs is fully volunteer-run and operates on \$28,000 per year, raised through merchandise sales and donations, those networks have been invaluable. Because of its strong brand and high-quality materials, many people assume UnderstandUs is part of a large organization, a branch of a national or international cause. "Although we are looked at like we have a lot of money to do what we do, we just don't. Without the generous support of our volunteers and the people that offer their skills for our organization, we wouldn't be where we are," Demeray says.

Demeray himself is a volunteer for UnderstandUs. While working a full-time day job as the general manager of Alair Homes, he runs the not-for-profit in his spare time. "It's something I'm passionate about, and I've never felt that it's a burden. This is fun for me, to create images and campaigns, to film with kids and to talk about mental health with the youth. I would want to do this with my time anyway," he says.

Given the organization's success locally, there has been a lot of pressure on UnderstandUs to expand. "I would love to be the biggest voice for mental health awareness in the country someday, but we want to really master what we do, so we are focused on Regina and surrounding areas," he says. The website allows the organization to have a global reach, however, with people from around the world participating in campaigns.

Demeray's team is currently working on UnderstandUs University, which will provide access to presentation materials that can be used in classrooms and businesses for mental health education.

In his own testimonial on the UnderstandUs website, Demeray writes, "I believe too many humans live with 'invisible pain' and we refuse to see it, hear it or acknowledge it. I refuse to allow the mental health chair at the table remain empty; I will fill it and give it a voice. I will make this pain visible, make vulnerability the pathway to beauty, celebrate the imperfect and be fearless in the fight for human understanding. My question is ... will you do the same?" 

For more on UnderstandUs, visit [understandus.ca](http://understandus.ca).

# Regina's **SEARCH** has the best ingredient



University of Regina students studying in a diverse range of disciplines are getting valuable health care mentoring by volunteering at SEARCH, a student run, primary health care clinic in Regina's North Central neighbourhood.

By Joshua Campbell BJ'10, MJ'16

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department.



Irene Mosquito sits stitching beads carefully onto a pair of leather gloves lined with soft rabbit fur. Her ease with both the stitching and the noisy children surrounding her are telling. Just behind her are various pictures of other crafts that she has shared with people who enter through the doors of the Four Directions Community Health Centre every Saturday. One of the crafts stands out.

"It's called a moss bag," she says with a warm smile. "They're used for more than just keeping babies warm." Mosquito explains how the moss bags are meant to simulate a baby's life in the womb. "There is even a cord with criss-crossed threads that sits on the inside of the bag," she says. "Every criss-cross of the thread has a traditional teaching related to it."

Amidst the hustle and bustle of people, many of them nervous University of Regina students, Mosquito is a calm oasis. Her beautiful black hair is pulled back in a ponytail. Calling her older than most of the others here doesn't seem quite right. The term grandma seems much

more appropriate because ever since she entered the room, the younger children gravitate towards her. She also has that unmistakable presence that makes certain people seem more like an elder than just elderly.

Mosquito is the support worker for SEARCH (Student Energy in Action for Regina Community Health). Started in 2009, SEARCH was the brainchild of a group of post-secondary students who wanted to get involved in a community health initiative in Regina's inner city. Their partnership with the University of Regina and the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region led them to Four Directions Community Health Centre, a clinic that had been offering primary health care in the North Central neighbourhood for more than 20 years.

Using student and professional volunteers, SEARCH builds upon the great work that Four Directions is doing by extending the hours of service into the weekend. Professionals at the facility include doctors, social workers, counsellors, nurses, nurse

practitioners, physical therapists and dietitians. Beyond offering these essential services to clients, the professionals provide mentorship to the student volunteers. This community of learning between professional mentors, student volunteers and clients is one of SEARCH's greatest assets.

Mosquito first got involved with SEARCH because she needed its services as a client. "It did a lot for me," says Mosquito, who lives in North Central but is originally from Whitefish, Saskatchewan. "For example, for physiotherapy, I didn't have to go far, because sometimes I didn't have a vehicle."

A convenient location was only one of many benefits that SEARCH offered. "When I needed to see the doctor or the physiotherapist, I knew that [SEARCH] was there for me and that I didn't have to worry about waiting, waiting, waiting."

The convenience and the friendliness of the people at SEARCH compelled Mosquito to work there herself. Recognizing the importance of



Opposite page: Kelly Husack, SEARCH's executive director, sits with Peter Boyko, who has been visiting the North Central clinic for four years. Above: Irene Mosquito (right) used to be a SEARCH client. Now she works as a support worker at the after-hours clinic. Mosquito sits with volunteer Busi Mabheha.



**Kelly Husack, SEARCH's executive director.**

Indigenous culture, SEARCH ensures it has staff who can provide leadership and guidance in traditional ways. "I let [the clients] know that it's okay to be Indian, to use their language, because a lot of people have lost their culture in this community."

Mosquito says that the ability to perform cultural activities such as beadwork and moss bags was lost as a result of residential schools. "The grandparents were the ones that were supposed to pass on the values and teach the kids," she says. "Now that piece is missing."

She sees her role at SEARCH as a way to bridge that gap. "We're trying to get all of that back, slowly ... Even here."

As with the other mentors, Mosquito sees her job as providing services to both the clients and the student volunteers. "If you are wanting to teach or work in the North Central community, you need to know the cultural aspects of it and I'm always here to help answer those types of questions, not just for the clients that come in, but also for the students," she says. "So teaching people all of these protocols – how to dress, what to bring – it's all an important part of being here."

Kelly Husack BKin'15 is SEARCH's executive director. She also leads the Blue Dot Movement, an organization that advocates for a healthier environment. Husack first heard about SEARCH in Christian Thomson's Indigenous Studies 100 class at the First Nations University of Canada. She still remembers her first day at SEARCH. Following the SEARCH orientation session, she was nervously standing against the wall when one of the social workers approached her and said, "Jump in there and go have a conversation."

This invitation would alter the direction of Husack's life and fundamentally change her perspective on community health. After three years volunteering, and having entered her second year as executive director, Husack sees health as so much more than just offering treatment. She says that the community aspect SEARCH offers is its greatest remedy.

"We spend a lot of time with our clients," she says. "Often, needs that are presented on the medical side tend to be a lot more complex than just, 'I have a sore throat, etc.' There tends to be a lot more compounding factors, so we try to allow more time for that."

Husack says that SEARCH helps lighten the load on the Regina health care system. "By coming here, people aren't utilizing emergency services, which reduces cost and strain on the emergency rooms at the main hospitals."

SEARCH also offers unique educational benefits to its student volunteers. "Students come in with their own backgrounds and their own sets of knowledge that they've gained through their university experience thus far," says Husack. "Then they get to meet and work with people in the community."

After years of working in interior design, Jessica Dunster BSNU'17 decided that it was time for a change. "I dealt with people that had lots of money to spend," says Dunster. "The materialism and the greed started to get to me."

That led Dunster to seek a career where she felt she could serve others. She quickly enrolled in a nursing program. It wasn't long into her program that Amanda Kukartz, SEARCH's previous director, came to her school on a student volunteer recruitment trip. Dunster had a choice of ten different placements and she chose SEARCH.

"I just felt that there was a lot of stigma to this area," says Dunster, "and as someone who was going into a health profession, I think that it was very important for me to understand the background that people from the inner city were coming from."

Now a registered nurse at the General Hospital, Dunster says that her learning at SEARCH is something that you can't get in a classroom. "You can go and take an Indigenous health class and learn about the residential school system and everything that happened, but here you have the opportunity to sit down with someone and learn about their particular experience: what it has done to their family, what's going on now and the issues that that has caused."

After completing her one-month course requirement, Dunster decided to continue volunteering. She eventually joined the student-led SEARCH Board of Directors and is now a board co-chair. "It was the individuals and families that I connected with that made it more personal for me," she says. "It kept me wanting to come back."

Dunster says that her time at SEARCH has opened her eyes to the judgement that marginalized people feel from our health care system, and, in turn, how she can become a better advocate. "Being at SEARCH has given me much more of a catalogue of contacts for help and supports that [marginalized] people can use."



Connecting with other students and professional mentors was also “huge” for her. She not only got to observe and perform pre-interviews with clients, but also to have key conversations with mentors about the clients’ diagnoses.

Above all, Dunster says that SEARCH has helped her dig deeper and look beyond the clinical aspect of what’s happening to people. And this, she says, has made her a better nurse. “It’s made me more aware of getting to know what’s going on in a person’s life, so you can have more of an impact,” she says. “It’s having a more holistic approach. For some Indigenous people, this may mean getting them access to an Elder.”

Dunster believes that without SEARCH, she would not have had the same depth of sensitivity to people—that she wouldn’t be doing the same “digging” that she does now.

A black string with a large plastic white bat is wrapped snugly around the neck of Matthew Pechey BScHons’15, a second-year medical student and SEARCH volunteer. “I’m a fan of Batman,” says Pechey. “I like to go to the Fan Expo in Regina—it’s a good conversation starter.”

Like Bruce Wayne, Pechey comes from a place of privilege. “I’m in a pretty advantaged situation as a Caucasian male coming from a middle-income family,” says Pechey. “Acknowledging that lack of fairness and knowing that there’s a responsibility to work towards something better is important, even if it’s going to be slow and difficult.”

Pechey speaks of the humility that he has learned as a SEARCH volunteer. “I am learning too. I might be doing one thing that I think is helpful, but then find out that it is completely inappropriate, that you need to be informed on what the specific needs are in the community rather than imposing your own prejudice.”

Pechey first volunteered with SEARCH during his undergraduate degree in psychology. Seeing how the professional counselling mentors worked with clients and their family members was eye-opening. “[The mentors] have worked within the community and the insights they bring are very valuable,” he says. “They know the events and the health care issues within this neighbourhood.”

If Irene Mosquito is the wise SEARCH sage, then Sam Berg is the Jedi master. A veteran counsellor of more than 20 years, Berg’s warm disposition is matched by his handsomely lined face and silver hair. “As mentors, we provide the services that we are professionally equipped to do and then we are observed,” he says. “We then debrief after each session.”

Berg says it’s fascinating to watch the professional and educational progression of the students during their time at SEARCH. “It gives them the opportunity to get out of the ivory tower and get involved with people on the ground,” he says. “It’s been a really wonderful experience working with them and with the clients that come here as well.”

Berg says that the students that come through SEARCH’s doors give him hope for the future. “If there’s a problem with millennials today, these aren’t typical,” he says with a laugh. “These are the type of people that get up in the morning, work hard and have dreams and ambitions.”

One of those millennials is Aimee Kowalski, a second-year psychology student at the University of Regina and one of the ten people experiencing their first day at SEARCH. Like Kelly Husack, Kowalski first heard about SEARCH in Christian Thomson’s Indigenous Studies 100 class. Originally from Moose Jaw, Kowalski says that the things she’s been learning in her Indigenous studies class are “blowing her mind” and that she sees

SEARCH as a great way to learn and help Regina become a better place.

Peter Boyko is a larger-than-life character. He is one of those rare people that can be loud and endearing at the same time. As soon as he rolled through the SEARCH doors, waves of smiles came over people’s faces.

Boyko has been coming to SEARCH for the past four years. While he’s definitely used the medical and counselling services, Boyko makes it very evident that the staff and students here are his friends and that the social aspect of SEARCH is extremely important to him. He often refers to different staff members, such as Kay Yee (a dietician) and others as if they were his regular chums on coffee row at a small-town diner. “Chats with these people ranged from the efficacy of hydroelectricity, to the KKK, and then the limited uses of solar power,” says Boyko.

A resident of Argyle Park, Boyko says he first noticed the Four Directions Centre when passing by on the bus. Now he doesn’t know what he’d do without it. “I had an ear infection once, a cold another time. I saw the doctor a few times. I saw a counsellor when the social worker wasn’t here,” he says. “It’s truly important that these [extended Saturday] hours are available.”

Boyko brings up the sign that hangs above the kitchen in the main room. It says, ‘Love is the best ingredient.’ “It’s not just a statement, but something that is lived out by the staff, and that includes those that come and volunteer on Saturdays,” he says. “I’m really happy this place is here.” **D**

*Joshua Campbell is a high-school teacher, freelance journalist, and proud husband and father who lives in Regina, Saskatchewan. He has a passion for investigative stories related to social justice, the environment, and Indigenous peoples.*



Left: Jessica Dunster left behind a career in interior design because she wanted to help people. She’s now a registered nurse who volunteers at SEARCH. Centre: Matthew Pechey, a second-year medical student and SEARCH volunteer. Right: Sam Berg a veteran counsellor and SEARCH volunteer.

## Upcoming Alumni Events

### Regina

Alumni Association Annual General Meeting  
Join us for the 2018 Alumni Association Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 in the Research and Innovation Centre Atrium. Please register online at [events.eply.com/URAA-AGM2018](https://events.eply.com/URAA-AGM2018)

Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards  
Celebrate the extraordinary at the 2018 Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards dinner on Thursday, October 11, 2018. Please save the date. Registration will open in August 2018.

### Edmonton

Rider tailgate with alumni and friends  
August 2, 2018  
Further details to come.

### Calgary

Alumni reception with President Vianne Timmons  
October 2, 2018.

### Victoria

Alumni reception with President Vianne Timmons  
November 1, 2018

Be sure we have your current contact information so we can send you the details about these events and other alumni activities. Update your contact information online at <https://www.uregina.ca/external/alumni-relations/update-your-info.html>.

**Questions?** Contact us at 1-877-779-4723 or [uralumni@uregina.ca](mailto:uralumni@uregina.ca).

## Chapter and branch contact information

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**Toronto:** Allan Bonner BEd'78 – [allan@allanbonner.com](mailto:allan@allanbonner.com)

**Ottawa:** Joanne Pomalis BSc'86 – [joanne.pomalis@gmail.com](mailto:joanne.pomalis@gmail.com)

### Alumni Associations

#### University of Regina Alumni Association

Bert Yakichuk PGDSGC'73, MEd'77 – [uralumni@uregina.ca](mailto:uralumni@uregina.ca)

#### Kenneth Levene Graduate School of Business Alumni Association

Chuck Sylvester CDP'99, CCS'02, MBA'14 – [levene.alumni@uregina.ca](mailto:levene.alumni@uregina.ca)

#### Hill Alumni Association

Nicole Nameth BBA'15 – [Hill.Alumni@uregina.ca](mailto:Hill.Alumni@uregina.ca)

#### Johnson Shoyama Alumni Association

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## 1960-69

**Ruth Warick BA'69, MA'83, MEd'90** is serving her fourth term as president of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People. It is the longest term of any president for the organization that promotes global hearing accessibility and human rights for people who have hearing loss.

**Brian Stubbings BEd'72, BA'09** spent 37 years teaching young people, including seven years in Zambia, three and a half years in Malawi and 26 years in the Regina public school system. Post-retirement, he taught English to newcomers to Canada at the Regina Open Door Society.

## 1970-79

**Heather Bishop BA'70** is a JUNO award winning singer-songwriter. She is best known for her folk and children's recordings. She was awarded the Order of Canada in 2005, the Order of Manitoba in 2001 and an honorary doctorate of laws in 2011. Recently she was appointed to the Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

**Michael Coyne MFA'77** has been a practicing visual artist for over 40 years. He taught art for 38 years at Acadia University (1977-86) and Memorial University (1986-2015). He founded the BFA visual arts program at Memorial University in 1986, and received the ArtsNL Hall of Honour Award in 2005.

## 1980-89

**Steve Robinson BAHons'86** became vice-president (Academic and Provost) at Brandon University in August 2016. He became interim president in August 2017, a role he will serve until a new president is appointed.

**Gordon Steinke BAJ&C'88** is an award-winning journalist, bestselling author and one of Alberta's most popular news

anchors. For over 25 years, Steinke has co-anchored Edmonton's Global News Hour on Global Edmonton. As well as enjoying his role as a broadcast journalist, he is having fun at speaking engagements talking about his Canadian bestseller, *Mobsters and Rumrunners of Canada*.

**Douglas Chase BMus'89** had a top 40 hit on Australian radio last year. He has also opened for the Black Crowes in front of 20,000 people and recorded with JUNO award winner Derek Miller.

## 1990-99

After 34 years in the Royal Canadian Air Force, **Ross Fetterly MAdmin'92** retired as comptroller and business planner. He is an adjunct professor in the Management and Economics Department of the Royal Military College and teaches courses in defence resource management and business planning to senior military officers and civilian executives in developing countries.

**Trish Livingstone BAHons'93** is celebrating her 20th year at the Government of Saskatchewan. She is the director of Corporate Planning, Evaluation and Improvement at the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice.

After teaching for 10 years in northern B.C., **Michele Curley BACed'95** and her family moved to Tanzania where she taught for four years. This summer, the family will move to Abu Dhabi, UAE.

**Rachel Sentes BA'96** has run a successful freelance publicity business for the past 10 years. She specializes in publicity for actors, writers, singers and businesses. She has worked with actors Kaley Cuoco, Linda Blair and William B. Davis, to name a few.

**Annamarie Aronoff BFA'99** worked in the international film and TV industry for 20 years. She and her husband launched a company and produced various

TV series and feature films worldwide. In addition, she designed a curriculum for the University of Regina that takes an entrepreneurial approach to international media distribution.

## 2000-09

**Jonathan Molina BA'00** owns a full-service marketing agency and a hockey management company. He has been officially recognized by the National Hockey League Players Association as a certified agent representing NHL players.

**Matthew Lawson BA'01** and his family moved from Calgary to Melbourne, Australia in 2017 in search of adventure. He is practicing as a senior lawyer in the Melbourne head office of a large Australian law firm.

For 16 years, **Kim Ursu BA'02, BAdmin'02** has been a foreign service officer with the Government of Canada. She is currently the Trade Commissioner responsible for promoting Canadian education in China.

**Jo-Anne Cadrin BSW'89, MSW'05** is one of three partners, including University of Regina alumnus Dennis Chubb BSW'76, that operate a Saskatoon-based consulting group. They facilitate change and strengthen organizations, workplaces, not-for-profits, communities and schools that face varying degrees of challenge. The work ranges from leadership coaching to strategic development to interpersonal dynamics, including conflict and bullying.

**Patrick Button's BAHons'08** story of a résumé experiment regarding age discrimination was featured in 35 media outlets such as The New York Times. His written testimony as a panelist at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's meeting is being published as well.

When **Nathan Nunweiler BBA'08** experienced the slow down of the oil and gas industry in southern Alberta, he made the move from commodities trading and

marketing to financial planning and investment advising. He enjoys helping his clients achieve their goals and educating them on investment options.

**TaraLee Houston BA'09** is an emerging artist working and living on Vancouver Island. She creates dialogue about the earth through community-based art with all ages, merging her passion for working with children and families with protecting the environment.

## 2010-present

After more than a decade living in North America, **Jose Condor PhD'10, MPA'12**, moved to Ecuador where he is a professor at Universidad Central del Ecuador. He is currently leading enhanced oil recovery projects and is working on establishing a research institute in his faculty.

**Alicia Wotherspoon BEd'12** has built a successful dance program that has empowered her students. After hosting a fundraiser, her team achieved their goal to convert a classroom into a dance studio. She is co-owner of Birch Hills Dance Centre and is adjudicating her first dance competition.

**Katherine McLeod PhD'14** a PhD graduate from the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies, works as an assistant professor of Medical Sciences in the Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University, Connecticut. She lives in Connecticut with her partner, former Saskatchewan Roughrider linebacker, Renauld Williams.

**Samantha Goertz BA'15** launched a digital advertising strategy business after graduation. She coaches companies on how to ethically run their digital advertising campaigns using ethnographic research.

**Sheryll Jurado BSRS'15** is a recreation therapist supervisor at Adair Acute Care at Osawatomie State Hospital, an acute psychiatric hospital run by the State of Kansas, with a 106-year history.

# Drenched in light



**D**renched in light. Invaded by light, startled into being by light. This is what it means to grow up in southwest Saskatchewan, the country of my birth and my childhood. Though I've lived a thousand miles away for over 25 years, in the blink of an eye I place myself, notebook and pen in hand, in the centre of a vast plain where no trees or hills or towering buildings hold back that luminous deluge from the sky.

Eudora Welty, the world-renowned fiction writer who grew up in Mississippi and who left her mother's house only for a short time to return and eventually grow old there, said, "Every story

would be a different story if it happened somewhere else." The same is true of people and poems. If I'd grown up where I live now, on the edge of the ancient rain forests of Vancouver Island, I would be a different person. My writing would be different too.

It wouldn't be simply a matter of west coast plants invading the space in my poems where prairie vegetation once grew; it wouldn't be simply a matter of birds native to this region chasing meadowlarks and redwing blackbirds from my lines, or wind sifting the yellow pollen of giant firs instead of dust onto the covers of my books. Something intrinsic would change. Something that comes from the particularities that



Even though she has lived on Vancouver Island for close to 30 years, Swift Current born poet Lorna Crozier still writes about the prairie and remains influenced by the landscape of her childhood. The Governor General's Award for Poetry recipient reflects on the nature of place and how it has shaped her writing.

**by Lorna Crozier PhD(Honorary)'04**

Feature photo by Don Hall.



define a habitation and shape the characters who thrive there, even those like me who moved away but continue to set their poems and stories in their original place.

What is it about the land of my birth and upbringing that influences the sensibilities of a writer such as me? The plains that surround my hometown of Swift Current confound those who first encounter them. In all directions the grasslands stretch far and away like a desert. Shadows from the clouds swim over the wild grasses and heads of wheat. The rills and shallow coulees shape-shift as daylight declines. With the dry land, the spare rain, come no sounds of rushing

water, no stands of trees shouting to the wind, though the wind is always there, a companion of loneliness, a keening that invades the imagination and leaves a solitary traveller speechless with wonder.

A stranger to this land complains there's nothing to see, nothing to hear. So many of my friends from the mountains or the coast tell me they drive for hours on the Trans-Canada through the Prairies, and they feel they've gone nowhere. If you're sensitive to this landscape, I reply, this nowhere is somewhere uncanny and true. Your ear and eye become subtly, exquisitely tuned.





**Lorna Crozier is an Officer of the Order of Canada, and has received five honorary doctorates, including one from the University of Regina in 2004. She lives on Vancouver Island with writer Patrick Lane and two cats who love to garden.**

Writers must, above everything else, develop the ability to listen, not only to other humans but also to the land itself, though its homilies can't be translated into any known tongue. Outside of the towns and cities in southwest Saskatchewan, when you're used to the noise of urban life, the silence you encounter seems impregnable. At first it could be mistaken for the muteness that arises out of emptiness. But it's not that. It's a quiet that demands attention. Something significant is about to be uttered, and silence has prepared a proper place for it. It is up to you to respond in kind.

If you are patient and attentive, you'll hear what the grass says as the wind passes over. A susurrant as soft as the brush of an owl's wing across the snow will vibrate the small bones of your inner ear. Your task will be to name that sound, to sing it into poetry, to find words that will speak it into being on a page.

This is a place that has grown a multitude of writers. Could the silence here be so strong that it demands an equivalent speaking? A man and woman faced with such a muffled eloquence must cry out, "I am here, I am alive, I am dying. Who will hear me?"

Only to the uninitiated does the openness of the grasslands appear empty. To the person who feels at home it is charged with possibilities. Something meaningful exists just beyond the grasp of our hearing, touch, smell, sight. It requires all the tools we have to coax it into language, though language will never have the final say.


"Look up, look up," you tell anyone who claims this country of your heart, of your imagination, is monotonous. In every season, every hour, the sky, spiralling above you, unrolls its clouds, its cobalts, its paler blues. The sky is an antidote to boredom. It's easy to lose yourself in its weathers and the beauty of its sheen. There is change in everything, it tells you, including in you.

The essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson claimed that a writer must be "a transparent eyeball." I can't help but see the prairie sky itself as that — a gigantic, clear orb that holds everything below. We are small inside it. No matter how important we might feel, we are merely specks in its huge seeing.

That could be a humbling, depressing thing, but it's a blessing for a poet. When you feel so seen, are you not drawn to look more closely, to gaze more fiercely and fearlessly at

what takes shape under the sun? If you pay attention, you'll glimpse a darkling beetle climbing over a blade of grass. In early morning you'll see the small fog of a chickadee's breath suspended above the feeder. You may even decipher a line or two scrawled across the clouds or the shimmer of something that just passed out of sight.

A South African writer I met this past fall at a poetry festival in Hong Kong tells me of a word that means "the sky just after a swan has flown through." That scrap of blue looks different from what surrounds it: the swan's beauty, the energy of its being has left a vestige of its flight. This is the kind of thing a poet is looking for, a brilliant trace of what can't be seen. It is the poet's task to make the unseen visible with reticence and grace.

The Book of Genesis begins with God's first words: "Let there be light." Surely He said that in the middle of the grasslands, perhaps on a small rise smack in the middle of what would become Swift Current to the west and Moose Jaw to the east. His radiant invention, spoken into existence, rolled out of the darkness of his mouth onto a long, undulating stretch of land. No wonder after 40 years of writing, I return here in the lines of my poems. It was words that created the light. And the light that shone on every worldly thing claimed this place as home. 

*Lorna Crozier is an Officer of the Order of Canada, and has been acknowledged for her contributions to Canadian literature, her teaching and her mentoring with five honorary doctorates, including one from the University of Regina in 2004. Crozier's books have received numerous national awards, including the Governor General's Award for Poetry. In 2012, the Globe and Mail declared The Book of Marvels: A Compendium of Everyday Things one of its Top 100 Books of the Year. Amazon chose Crozier's memoir, Small Beneath the Sky, as one of the 100 books you should read in your lifetime. A professor emerita at the University of Victoria, she has performed for Queen Elizabeth II. Lorna has read her poetry, which has been translated into several languages, on every continent except Antarctica. Her latest book, What the Soul Doesn't Want, was nominated for the 2017 Governor General's Award for Poetry.*



# AGING WELL ON THE PRAIRIES

Truth is, we're all getting older. And doing it well takes work.

Isolation can be an issue for older adults no matter the location. Those in rural and Northern Indigenous communities far from services, as well as immigrants and refugees aging in urban centres – far from friends and family – experience the same types of mobility issues, illnesses, and pain. These obstacles to good health have the potential to impact *all* older adults and their ability to lead healthy and happy lives.

A group of Saskatchewan researchers and community partners is delving into what it takes to age well in the province.

From ensuring small towns have proper sidewalks lining their main streets, to helping youth connect with and value the experiences of Elders, to encouraging organizations to deliver services collaboratively so they have more impact, the end goal is more successful aging for all.



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