The COVID-19 Edition: #UofReginaCares
In the midst of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, University of Regina students (left to right) Anand Kumar, Eki Kristine, and Geraldine Hiagbe show their love while social distancing in front of the University of Regina sign. This issue of Degrees includes several stories about some others with big hearts. You can find a few heartwarming stories in the web series #UofReginaCares starting on page 34. To read the full collection of stories, visit www.uregina.ca/uofreginacares.

Photo by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department.
degreesmagazine.ca

www.degreesmagazine.ca

If you’ll have a read of the story “A pandemic-inspired performance” on page 35 of this issue, you’ll read about how the Student Emergency Fund is helping students through these trying times. Please consider a donation to the Student Emergency Fund. You’ll find information on how to give on page 20.

The story, “There is no Planet B,” starting on page 34, is about a lecture series that began early in the year. The lectures presented a multi-disciplinary perspective on climate change and involved researchers from across the University and other off-campus lecturers. Unfortunately, the series came to a halt because of COVID-19. Organizers are hopeful that it can recommence at some point in the future.

On page 30, “Farm dream is true,” is about how graduate student Marah Mattison realized her dream to curate a museum exhibition while doing an internship at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Although she did curate the exhibit of Indigenous artifacts in the museum’s collection, the exhibit was put on pause because of COVID-19. Starting on page 34, we present a taste of the stories from our web series called #UofReginaCares. That’s where you can find the full story of the Ham sisters. All those stories examine the ways that members of the University family are embracing the U of R motto, “As who serve,” and making a real difference in our community in the difficult times of COVID-19.

On page 38, associate professor of history Donica Belleise examines Canadian food security in times of crisis and offers a historical perspective on how food has affected our daily lives over time. How exactly these times might forever change our daily lives isn’t entirely clear at this point.

The challenges we faced putting together this issue of Degrees Magazine is nothing compared to the challenges faced by University of Regina students, faculty, and staff in reaction to the uncertainty. You can read about those challenges, and triumphs, in this issue as well.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of Degrees. Perhaps it will provide a bit of distraction in these trying times. In the meantime, keep yourself and your family safe. And, I highly suggest you go to YouTube and type in “University of Regina virtual tour.” I promise it will brighten your day.

Gong Campbell BR’85, BS’85
Editor (working from home)
In an ordinary year, the first week of June would have seen the University of Regina honour students who completed degrees at the annual Spring Convocation ceremonies. But as we all know, 2020 has not been an ordinary year.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, for the first time in the University’s history we were unable to gather in person to recognize the academic achievements of our graduates. This was a tremendous but unavoidable disappointment for our entire University community – faculty, staff, alumni, and most of all, our graduates and their families.

The fact that formal convocation ceremonies did not take place does not, however, diminish the achievement of our graduates. These talented and accomplished individuals are the newest members of our University’s family and friends could create their own special memories. We also launched a social media campaign, #StaffGrad2020, where all members of the community were invited to post their messages of congratulations to this Spring’s graduates.

COVID-19 has affected not just our graduating students; it has also had a distressing financial impact on many of our incoming and continuing students. A large number of these students have lost important sources of income – something that threatens their ability to enroll in courses and continue their programs. We know that many of our students have been working one or more part-time jobs. Too often, these students have seen their hours drastically cut or have suffered layoffs.

To mitigate the effects of student job and income loss, in March we began to promote our Student Emergency Fund. As June 8, thanks to the generosity of our donors, almost $325,000 had been distributed to help alleviate the financial strain on 350 students. Many alumni and other friends of the University have donated to this fund, and I thank you for your generosity and compassion. Your support means that many students in need can worry less about making ends meet and can focus more on their studies.

The need is still great. If you are in a position to help, please visit www.uregina.ca/external/donor-relations for details about the fund and instructions on how to donate.

In these unprecedented times, the University has taken a number of other measures to ease the financial strain on students. I’m pleased to report that there will be no increase to tuition this year. In addition, late payment fees have been reduced and parking fees have been suspended. The Recreation and Athletic fee has been waived for the Spring/Summer and Fall terms, and the University of Regina Students’ Union has suspended the U-Pass transit fee. All students who have financial holds on their accounts have had them removed so they can register for the upcoming terms. All told, these measures are estimated to save students approximately $6.4 million.

When students do begin classes in the Fall term, things will remain in what for now is the “new normal.” The remote delivery of courses that began in March has continued throughout the Spring/Summer term and will do so again through the Fall term. There is the possibility that a small number of low-density courses may be offered in person, pending the Fall term, but only if it is possible for students and teaching staff to gather safely in accordance with provincial health guidelines.

In the coming months, as circumstances permit, we will gradually move from emergency operations to more normal activities. To facilitate that, the University has assembled a small team that will inform the University’s recovery process.

In April, the University Recovery Planning Group (URPG) consists of key members of our University community who will advise the University Executive Team as they co-design the work of our academic, research and operational teams and navigate what we all hope are the final stages of the pandemic.

I have been truly inspired by the way our students, faculty and staff have pulled together (while staying apart) to meet the challenges presented by COVID-19. And although the pandemic has dominated our lives since early March, we cannot forget about the great successes many members of the University community have experienced during these times.

You will read about some of those successes in this issue of our university’s academic administration, and in the positions of coordinator of the Linguistics Program, founding director of the Centre for Stress and Traumatic Stress Research, associate dean of Arts (Research and Graduate), and for four years, dean of the Faculty of Arts. Chase has been leading the University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which focuses on minimizing the impact on the academic year and stress on students, faculty, and staff.

Effective April 1, David Gregory began his new role as interim provost and vice-president (Academic) of the University. Gregory had been serving as the dean of the Faculty of Medicine since 2011. Despite the current uncertainty because of the pandemic, Gregory’s overarching priority in his new role is to serve the University and members of the broader external community. He was named a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences in 2005, and the only registered nurse in the province to hold this prestigious honour. In 2015, Gregory received a President’s Award for Service Excellence in the University Spirit Award category for his significant contributions to the University.

Prior to his work at Royal Roads, Chase held a series of academic and administrative appointments at the University of Regina. Those include the positions of coordinator of the Linguistics Program, founding director of the Centre for Stress and Traumatic Stress Research, and the positions of coordinator of the Linguistics Program, founding director of the Centre for Stress and Traumatic Stress Research, and associate dean of Arts (Research and Graduate), and for four years, dean of the Faculty of Arts. Chase has been leading the University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which focuses on minimizing the impact on the academic year and stress on students, faculty, and staff.

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Joseph’s record-breaking indoor long jump came in at 2.73 metres (9 ft. 0 in.).

More than 800 attendees from across Canada packed the International Trade Centre in March for the University of Regina’s 15th Inspiring Leadership Forum, presented by TD. The first keynote speaker was Dawn Smith, an American writer and professor, who shared her story of going up in eventually and implicitly. She is an evangelical, fundamentalist old-fashioned granddaughter. Her TD talk, “Why I Left an Evangelical Cult,” has been viewed by over 2.5 million people since 2016.

Best-selling author and global advocate for equity, inclusion, and human rights Samea Zafar spoke about her escape from a decade of physical, mental and sexual abuse in the hands of her then husband. Living in Canada as a refugee, Zafar dreams of pursuing an education. Overcoming barrier after barrier, Zafar graduates at the top of her class at the University of Toronto only to find her dream of pursuing an education.

Shawna Argue BASc’87 was the recipient of the Lieutenant Governor’s Meritorious Achievement Award at a ceremony in Saskatoon last November. Argue is the first University of Regina graduate to receive the prestigious honour. She is also the first woman to receive the award in its 17-year history.

Argue has enjoyed a dynamic career that has seen her become one of the most respected members of the province’s engineering community. In addition to her professional accomplishments, Argue has been a tireless volunteer in the community, fundraising more than $40,000 for CIBC Run for the Cure and saving money for various organizations including Royal Regina Golf Club, Assiniboia Club, Regina Business and Professional Women’s Club, Canadian Red Cross Water Safety Service and the Royal Lifesaving Society.

It was a hometown win as, earlier this year, University of Regina business students placed first for School of the Year at DC West – the largest undergraduate business competition in Western Canada. The award is called the Professional of the Year Award, for the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia. Awarded by The Psychology of Pi (Paul). J. Hill School of Business in March, the award was celebrating its 15th anniversary with the theme “Growing Forward.” The competition saw student teams from 12 of the leading universities across British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba compete in the areas of academic ethics, debate and a social competition. The Hill team also placed first in the categories of Entrepreneurship, Athletics, Participation, and Charity Volunteer Hours with 5,036 hours volunteered. The team placed second in Debate and Social, and third in Business Technology Management, Human Resources, Not-for-Profit and Skill Performance. The Hill DC West team has now placed Greater than the top three as School of the Year 12 times – more than any other university.

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Gordon Asmundson, a University of Regina professor in the Department of Psychology, was awarded a $350,000 federal grant for his study, COVID-19: The Role of Psychological Factors in the Spreading of Disease, Discrimination, and Distress. The funding was part of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research’s 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Rapid Research Funding Opportunity. Asmundson, who is also a registered doctoral psychologist, is a Royal Society of Canada Fellow, and editor-in-chief of the journal of Anxiety Disorders and Clinical Psychology Review, is a researcher with a focus on health anxiety. Steven Taylor, from the Department of Psychiatry at the University of British Columbia and author of The Psychology of Pi (Paul). J. Hill School of Business in March, the award was celebrating its 15th anniversary with the theme “Growing Forward.” The competition saw student teams from 12 of the leading universities across British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba compete in the areas of academic ethics, debate and a social competition. The Hill team also placed first in the categories of Entrepreneurship, Athletics, Participation, and Charity Volunteer Hours with 5,036 hours volunteered. The team placed second in Debate and Social, and third in Business Technology Management, Human Resources, Not-for-Profit and Skill Performance. The Hill DC West team has now placed Greater than the top three as School of the Year 12 times – more than any other university.

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In the meantime, she has several new projects in the works with plans to begin development in the coming year: Fox credits the University of Regina’s film program – and the connections she made there – for equipping her with the tools necessary to succeed as an independent filmmaker in an increasingly challenging landscape. “I was really glad that we had a degree-granting program in Regina,” Fox says. “A lot of work that I’ve gotten was because of the attention received for Backroads: I appreciated that I was able to take my time at school, go at my own pace, find my footing, and really develop my voice. I think my career would be vastly different if I went east or west because I wouldn’t be focusing on stories that relate to my own familial history here on these lands. For me, there’s a huge value in staying on the land that I come from for my storytelling.”

The Department of Film at the University of Regina offers the only degree-granting film program between the Great Lakes and Vancouver Regina is perhaps an unlikely locale for a film school, in part of the country more often associated with agriculture and resource extraction. It has put the University in a unique position to attract emerging filmmakers from across the Prairies.

“Some of our best students come from smaller communities in the province,” says associate professor Gerald Saul BFA’93. “We’re training our own kids from our own province and helping them find their voice here.”

Saul has been teaching in the program since 1997 and says film culture has changed, with more images on different platforms being generated than ever before and technology that changes every year. However, the basics of what he teaches – frame composition, editing, film language, and working collaboratively – are similar to what he learned back when he was a film student. “We shoot more projects now, just because resources used to be more expensive, and that meant making fewer projects every semester,” he says. “But the same learning milestones are there.”

Now students are able to make more projects – and they can complete multiple projects every semester was very difficult,” he says. “Now students are able to make more projects – and they can work faster – but the same learning milestones are there.”

“An absolutely unique position to attract emerging filmmakers from across the province to the Prairies,” says associate professor Gerald Saul BFA’93. “Some of our best students come from smaller communities in the province.” In 1980, the first of the University’s film degrees was handed out. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has put the wheels in motion to establish a program, it wasn’t an easy sell. “There was an interest in film but unfortunately, when Dr. William Riddell (first principal of the University of Saskatchewan’s Regina Campus) sent a proposal to the faculty, they didn’t think of film as being one of the fine arts,” he says.

In 1975, Marner took leave from the University to attend the London Film School. In the meantime, he’d reached out to Jean Oser, a renowned German filmmaker and editor with a 40-plus year career working on such films as Westfront 1918 and The Threepenny Opera and Wagner’s Ring Cycle with G.W. Pabst. Marner convinced Oser to leave his residence in New York to cover Marner’s classes while he was away. Oser, whose legendary expertise and enthusiasm for film became synonymous with the program, found a welcoming home in Regina. He decided to stay and quickly became a favourite instructor.

“A really great quality of the film program, both undergraduate and graduate, is how impressively the faculty and staff support and mentor the students,” says Rae Staseson BFK’93, dean of the Faculty of Media, Art, & Performance. “Film students quickly have a sense of ‘home’ once in the Department, and this sense of place allows the students to prosper in ways they may not have in a different kind of program.”

This year marks 40 years since the University of Regina awarded its first degree in film. Its first graduate, Ronoveske, went on to enjoy a decades-long career as a Gemini and Canadian Screen Award-winning director for CBC Sports, whose credits include Olympic Games, Stanley Cup finals and Grey Cup games. But the origins of the program date back more than a decade earlier to the late 1960s when the University of Saskatchewan’s fine arts school (then at the University of Saskatchewan’s Regina Campus on College Avenue) attracted Terence Marner, an English painter and recent transplant to Canada. Marner had a personal interest in film and started teaching an introductory course in 1968, but when he started putting the wheels in motion to establish a program, it wasn’t an easy sell. “There was an interest in film but unfortunately, when Dr. William Riddell (first principal of the University of Saskatchewan’s Regina Campus) sent a proposal to the faculty, they didn’t think of film as being one of the fine arts,” he says.

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“Jean was a really good teacher and a great inspiration,” Marner says. Oser’s influence on film culture in Saskatchewan

By Wanda Schmöckel BJ’13

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department, unless otherwise noted.

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In the decades since the program’s humble beginnings, Saskatchewan has produced a bumper crop of filmmakers who would find their place as leaders in the Canadian film industry (and elsewhere) with a Prairie-based perspective on the world. University of Regina graduates have gone on to help make a number of home-grown television series and films, including Corner Gas, Wapato Bay, Prairie Giant, The Englishman’s Boy, Landscape as Music, Incredible Story Studio, RenegadePress.com, and others.

Alumni that have received or been nominated for Canadian Screen and Gemini awards include Jackie Draba BFA’94 (The Englishman’s Boy), Ian Toews BFA’99 and Mark Braderly BFA’98 (Landscape as Music), Dennis Jackson BFA’98 (Wapato Bay), Rob Pylyy BFA’00 (Znay Class), Ron Forsythe BFA’00 (CRC Sports and Sportscast), Jeff Bessley BFA’01 (Corner Gas), Jason Nicholson BFA’01 (Landscape as Music), Darryl Kenell BFA’03 (The Neighbour’s Dog), Lucas Pitsion BFA’14 and others. The program has also produced many educators, curators, and programmers, including Alumni Crowning Achievement Award recipient, Janine Windolph BFA’06, MFA’11 (Banff Centre), Emma Gilboy BFA’18, B.A. Honors’09 (Nottingham Trent University, UK), Roy Cross BFA’00 (Concordia University), Belinda New BA’86 (RPL Film Theatre and Rainbow Cinemas’ Studio 3), and Will Dixon BFA’85 (City TV Saskatchewan)

The foundations of Amy Mantyka’s BFA’12 business were laid at the film school during her graduating year. Mantyka runs Play Creative, a full-service production company in Regina, with fellow University of Regina film graduates Mike Markelburger BFA’12 and Chris Miller BFA’11. The company creates commercial content for a growing roster of clients ranging from Crown corporations to the private sector, enabling the company to maintain a full production and post-production studio, and employ a full-time staff of six.

“Without meeting those people in film school, I really wonder what I’d be doing today,” she says of her colleagues.

Mantyka graduated from the program in 2012, when the Saskatchewan film industry was taking a hit from the provincial government’s cancellation of the Saskatchewan Film Employment Tax Credit — a crucial element in attracting business to the local production industry. As it happened, Mantyka had decided to forge a business on her own a few years earlier, after spending time as a production assistant on a television show set between semesters.

While on set, even though she wasn’t yet out of school, Mantyka was asked which departmental roles she’d like to pursue. The experience gave her pause for thought and helped refocus her career path. “Sometimes it’s about learning what you don’t want to do,” Mantyka says. “I was thinking about what I wanted to do with my film degree and if it felt right to start working on large film sets. I didn’t want to commit to something I didn’t want to do,” Mantyka says. “I was thinking about what I wanted to do with my film degree and if it felt right to start working on large film sets. I didn’t want to commit to something I didn’t want to do.”

After her graduation in 2012, Amy Mantyka BFA’12 founded Play Creative with her classmates Mike Markelburger BFA’12 and Chris Miller BFA’11. The award-winning full-service production company has grown a national reputation for its outstanding video productions.

In the decades since the program’s humble beginnings, Saskatchewan has produced a bumper crop of filmmakers who would find their place as leaders in the Canadian film industry (and elsewhere) with a Prairie-based perspective on the world. University of Regina graduates have gone on to help make a number of home-grown television series and films, including Corner Gas, Wapato Bay, Prairie Giant, The Englishman’s Boy, Landscape as Music, Incredible Story Studio, RenegadePress.com, and others.

Alumni that have received or been nominated for Canadian Screen and Gemini awards include Jackie Draba BFA’94 (The Englishman’s Boy), Ian Toews BFA’99 and Mark Braderly BFA’98 (Landscape as Music), Dennis Jackson BFA’98 (Wapato Bay), Rob Pylyy BFA’00 (Znay Class), Ron Forsythe BFA’00 (CRC Sports and Sportscast), Jeff Bessley BFA’01 (Corner Gas), Jason Nicholson BFA’01 (Landscape as Music), Darryl Kenell BFA’03 (The Neighbour’s Dog), Lucas Pitsion BFA’14 and others. The program has also produced many educators, curators, and programmers, including Alumni Crowning Achievement Award recipient, Janine Windolph BFA’06, MFA’11 (Banff Centre), Emma Gilboy BFA’18, B.A. Honors’09 (Nottingham Trent University, UK), Roy Cross BFA’00 (Concordia University), Belinda New BA’86 (RPL Film Theatre and Rainbow Cinemas’ Studio 3), and Will Dixon BFA’85 (City TV Saskatchewan).

The foundations of Amy Mantyka’s BFA’12 business were laid at the film school during her graduating year. Mantyka runs Play Creative, a full-service production company in Regina, with fellow University of Regina film graduates Mike Markelburger BFA’12 and Chris Miller BFA’11. The company creates commercial content for a growing roster of clients ranging from Crown corporations to the private sector, enabling the company to maintain a full production and post-production studio, and employ a full-time staff of six.

“Without meeting those people in film school, I really wonder what I’d be doing today,” she says of her colleagues.

Mantyka graduated from the program in 2012, when the Saskatchewan film industry was taking a hit from the provincial government’s cancellation of the Saskatchewan Film Employment Tax Credit — a crucial element in attracting business to the local production industry. As it happened, Mantyka had decided to forge a business on her own a few years earlier, after spending time as a production assistant on a television show set between semesters.

While on set, even though she wasn’t yet out of school, Mantyka was asked which departmental roles she’d like to pursue. The experience gave her pause for thought and helped refocus her career path. “Sometimes it’s about learning what you don’t want to do,” Mantyka says. “I was thinking about what I wanted to do with my film degree and if it felt right to start working on large film sets. I didn’t want to commit to something I didn’t want to do.”

Her time at the University of Regina’s film program exposed her to the experience of having more control over an entire production and carving out a career that entailed directing her own work. “I’m very thankful I went to film school at the U of R because it enabled me to write and direct my own projects. It was definitely a very collaborative experience, but having that sense of authorship really influenced me.”

While the loss of the Saskatchewan film industry had an undeniable effect on the Department of Film, Saul is quick to point out that the value of its the program goes well beyond that of a training school. “We teach people to be creative and
In an April 1, 2020 announcement, Thomas Chase BA(Hons)’79 was officially named the University of Regina’s interim president. Chase has a nearly 40-year relationship with the University, beginning as a student. He earned a Bachelor of Arts (High Honours) in English in 1979. In 1984, he earned a PhD from Glasgow University in Scotland, where he held a doctoral fellowship in the Department of English Language. He has served in various academic and administrative positions at the University of Regina, including coordinator of the Linguistics Program, founding director of the Centre for Academic Technologies, associate dean (Research and Graduate) of the Faculty of Arts and, for four years, dean of the Faculty of Arts. Most recently, he served as provost and vice-president (Academic), having been appointed on July 1, 2011.

Our students today have a better sense of where they want to go. They’re more realistic.”

In many ways, the scene for local filmmakers and producers now harks back to the early days before the province’s film industry ever took root. While the bigger industry work that once employed many University of Regina graduates on large film sets is no longer an option in this province, there has, in recent years, been a notable increase in independent production.

University of Regina graduate Lowell Drea’s BF/01 feature film, WayCay, was produced in 2014. Graduate Matt Yim BFA’12 made his feature film, Basic Human Needs, in 2015, as did Department of Film professor Brian Stockton when he completed the Saskatchewan University of Regina sessional instructor Robin Schlaht’s BF/32 arts documentary series, Making It in Saskatchewan (City TV), was produced in 2019. If there’s a path forward to producing more Saskatchewan-based film and television, it may well lie in the kinds of smaller, boutique productions that it has seen over the past five years.

“Our own stories have to be made,” Marner says. “We have to tell our own stories or else we’ll just be left with other people’s.”

Wanda Schmöckel is a freelance writer and communications worker based in Regina.

How would you characterize your leadership style?

Consultative. I listen very carefully to a wide range of people in order to draw on the deep reserves of knowledge, experience and wisdom that the University campus possesses.

How do you see Canada’s post-secondary sector evolving over the next 10 years?

I believe the participation rate is going to continue to rise. We have as large a percentage of the population going to university now as went to high school in the years after World War II. I think the presence of international students on Canadian campuses will also increase in coming years.

What are the main lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic so far?

How incredibly well the University community came together on very short notice and moved the entire course inventory to fully remote delivery in the space of a week. This is the largest change management process the campus has seen in its 50-year history. Thanks to the hard work of faculty and staff, it was done. I’m very proud of that.

What do you see as the long-term repercussions of COVID-19?

I think there will be a new normal. I think the way we have interacted will change quite dramatically. I think the handshake is probably now a thing of the past.

What drew you to university administration?

A phone call from the then provost Kathy Heinrich asking me to take on the formation of the Centre for Academic Technologies. That’s what started me in university administration. I enjoy the opportunity to make change and to help the institution thrive and grow. One of the aspects of the job I enjoy the most is hiring highly qualified new faculty and deans and administrators.

What do you like to do away from work?

I love to cycle, walk, listen to music, and read. On a modest scale, I’m just learning how to garden. I’ve got a long way to go! I love to travel, work, listen to music, and read. On a modest scale, I’m just learning how to garden. I’ve got a long way to go!

You are an organizer. What drew you to the instrument?

Very simply, the low bass notes. As a young child I was fascinated by that sound. It’s what first hooked me on the instrument. My parents bought me several records by the great French organist Marcel Dupré, recorded in Paris. I was overcome by the sound of those mighty instruments in those resonant acoustic halls.

Where was your most memorable performance?

It was December 2002 in Sao Paulo, Brazil in front of about 1,000 people, the largest audience I ever performed for.

How do you see Canada’s post-

Do you miss the classroom?

Yes, very much. I love the classroom and teaching and the contact with students who are some of the most wonderful people on the planet.

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In Fall 2011, Arthur Ward BSc’17, CAdmin’17 was recruited by the University of Regina Cougars track and field team from the Caribbean island of Anguilla. To make some extra cash while studying, the triple jumper videotaped basketball and volleyball games for the Cougars’ coaches. He was also a freelance photographer for the University’s student paper, The Carillon, and worked part-time at a local camera shop. In the summer of 2015, he established Arthur Images, which remains the umbrella for all of his creative work. Following graduation, he secured a full-time job at the Regina-headquartered jewelry company Hillberg & Berk, but left to pursue his true calling – sports photography.

“I’m a storyteller by heart. Being a competitive athlete for 15 years, I would soak up all the amazing stories of my teammates and fellow competitors. The content I create today is a unique blend of my knowledge of sports, technical expertise, industry experience, along with my love for people and their stories. My ‘sportraits’ have elements of sports, technology, and people. These 3 pillars are the foundation of my creativity. I like to consider myself more than just someone who photographs sports, I’m someone who influences the perception of sport through my creativity.”

To see more of Arthur Ward’s sportraits, visit his website at arthurimages.com.
Clockwise from top: Former Cornell University sprinter and hurdler Max Hairston. Multi-event track and field athlete Nikki Oudenaarden. A member of the Saskatchewan Roughriders Fan CAM Rider Cheer Team defies gravity in this photo entitled Riders Cheer.

Clockwise from top left: Canadian beach volleyball athlete Megan Nagy. Members of the University of Regina women’s softball team in a photo entitled The Battery. New Zealand surfer Freya Bullock.
Helping students in a time of need

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are difficult enough on individuals who are fortunate to be able to work from home, families that have endured job loss are finding it even more challenging. But post-secondary students in our communities are some of the hardest hit by the pandemic, often facing the stresses of financial hardship while trying to stay on top of daunting academic workloads. Now there is a way to help struggling students – the University’s Student Emergency Fund.

By Evie Ruddy MA’08

When Londa Rose Pyne was younger, she dreamed of going to university but didn’t think her dream would come true.

“People tell kids they can grow up to be whatever they want, but because of my childhood, I thought I wouldn’t ever get to be anything,” says Pyne, a fourth-year student in the Bachelor of Indigenous Social Work program at First Nations University of Canada (Saskatoon campus) – a federated college of the University of Regina. Born in Calgary, Alberta, into a family that struggled with poverty and addiction, Pyne became homeless by the age of four.

“My mom and I got evicted from one of our houses, and we moved around a bunch,” she says. Pyne and her mother landed in Nipawin, Saskatchewan. The eldest of four children, Pyne helped her mother raise her siblings. After graduating from high school, Pyne struggled with addictions for more than a decade. However, she persevered and went on to receive a Youth Care Worker diploma from SIAST, where she graduated with distinction.

“When I got into college, I couldn’t believe it,” she says. “I wasn’t sure I’d get in, if I was smart enough. I had all that self-doubt that prevents us from chasing our dreams.”

Today, Pyne is realizing her dream of becoming a social worker. When she graduates, she will be the first in her family to earn a university degree.

“I’ve grown up without much of a support system, and I’ve gotten good at living with very little,” says Pyne. Still, when the pandemic hit, and Pyne’s car broke down, things got desperate. Pyne had been working at a 40-hour-a-week, unpaid practicum and taking an overload course. This left her with only enough time to work one paid shift a month. She could barely pay her bills or buy groceries, and she needed to purchase parts for her car.

“I’m a go-with-the-flow person, but when my car situation happened, that’s when it became overwhelming,” says Pyne. “I didn’t have anyone I could call to give me a ride, or borrow money from to get my car up and running.”

With no one to turn to, Pyne applied to the University of Regina’s Student Emergency Fund. When her application was accepted, it was a huge relief.

“I was filled with joy,” says Pyne. “It helps me realize that I do have a support system. With all the hard work that I’m putting into my degree, I don’t have the people around to support me or keep me going or tell me that I’m doing a good job or anything like that, so it makes me feel that I’m on a good path and that the U of R is a good support system for their students.”

From her years of working closely with students, Dr. Kathleen Wall, retired U of R English professor and 2001 recipient of the Alumni Associations Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching, understands the normal financial pressures of student life. When COVID-19 arrived in Canada, Dr. Wall was looking for a way to help students impacted by the crisis.

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“Like many people watching the pandemic from relatively comfortable vantage points—a secure income and a comfortable home—I kept wondering what I could do for the millions of Canadians who had lost jobs, or for students who wouldn’t find summer jobs this year, but I felt helpless,” said Wall. “The University of Regina’s appeal for student emergency funds gave me an opportunity to contribute where help was needed.”

The University of Regina Student Emergency Fund was created as a lifeline for students like Pyne, who are being hit particularly hard by the economic impacts of COVID-19. While caring donors have risen to the challenge, the number of applications for the Student Emergency Fund continues to grow each day.

In the past, many students got by living paycheck to paycheck with little left to cover unexpected expenses. Some used to rely on money earned from summer employment to cover the cost of tuition and living expenses for a full school year.

While each student story is unique, the recurring theme is that many students who were just able to scrape by before the pandemic hit, are now struggling to make ends meet and cover life’s necessities—never mind focus on their studies.

Michelle Intarakosit, a third-year nursing student, is another beneficiary of the Student Emergency Fund.

LIVING in a single-parent home with her mother and grandmother, Intarakosit feels fortunate to have such a caring family. “I do my best to support myself, but my mom supports us all—she pays for food and keeps the lights on at home. She really is the breadwinner of the household,” says Intarakosit.

Since COVID-19 hit, Intarakosit’s situation has become much more difficult. Intarakosit works as a casual employee at a care home for adults with physical, mental, and intellectual disabilities to hone her professional skills and help to pay the bills. She was expecting increased hours over the summer, but as a result of COVID-19, she can no longer rely on her job as a steady source of income for her family. To make matters worse, Intarakosit’s mother owns a sewing and alteration business that has been forced to shut down.

“We don’t know when she will be able to reopen her business and aren’t sure what she will receive from her applications to the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit and Small Business Response Fund. It’s really rough,” says Intarakosit.

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“We don’t know when she will be able to reopen her business and aren’t sure what she will receive from her applications to the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit and Small Business.
Imagine having to choose between paying rent, buying groceries and other necessities, or continuing your studies. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this was the difficult decision recently faced by Arian Pekaric, a University of Regina Business Administration student.

“This is bigger than any of us and none of us know what will happen next. There are factors outside of our control that have made paying rent and buying groceries very difficult and our grades are suffering because of it. We need financial support to be able to go back to focusing on our studies.”

Every day, more and more of our hardworking students like Arian are applying for emergency funding because their lives and finances are being affected by COVID-19. The part-time jobs they once counted on either no longer exist, or their hours are severely reduced. They are struggling to make ends meet while pursuing an education that is so important to them.

The need is great! Please consider donating to the Student Emergency Fund today.

More than 700 students have applied for assistance and applications continue to come in. Through your generosity, more students like Arian will have peace of mind and be able to achieve their academic dreams – something that is more important than ever in our world.

Today's students need your encouragement, your support, and your belief in their potential.

Your gift will send a message of care and hope to our students during these challenging times.

- You, I will provide a lifetime to our students who are being impacted by COVID-19 with my donation of:  
  - $50  
  - $100  
  - $150  
  - $250  
  - Other $ 

- Name:  
  - First  
  - Middle Initial  
  - Last  

- Address:  
  - City  
  - Province  
  - Postal Code  

- Email:  

- Phone:  

Please direct my gift to:  
- COVID-19 with my donation of:  
  - a one-time gift  
  - a monthly gift  
  - a one-time gift  

- Area of Greatest Need  
  - Please direct my gift to:  

Please send me information on donating appreciated securities  
- Please send me information on leaving a gift in my Will.

I've included the University of Regina in my Will.  
- Please send me information on leaving a gift in my Will.

Please start my monthly gift on  
- Please start my monthly gift on  

If you choose a monthly gift, you will receive a tax receipt for the total amount of your gift.  

- I am enclosing a cheque payable to the University of Regina.  
- I have enclosed a voided cheque for my monthly gift.  

Please start my monthly gift on  
- Date:  
- Signature:  

- OR  
- Name of Card:  
- Expire Date:  
- Card n  
- Signature:  

We will phone you at the number you provided to confirm the CVV from your credit card. You may change or cancel your credit card information at any time by calling 306-585-5310 or 877-779-4723.

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“Emergency Fund Payment,” says Intarakosit. “There is no money coming in. It’s a tough situation for us all.”

Wanting to help her mother out, Intarakosit has been periodically paying for groceries.

“My mother is always happy to support me, but I hate having to add to her burden with my bills during these uncertain times,” says Intarakosit, who is grateful to have received financial assistance from the Student Emergency Fund.

“It was such a relief,” she says. “It’s exactly the help I need right now. As a student, it feels so great to receive this type of support from your own university. So many other students are in a similar situation to me and having the Student Emergency Fund available to those who need it most is crucial.”

Many students who previously did not qualify for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit will now be eligible for funding through the Canada Emergency Student Benefit and Canada Student Service Grant announced on April 22. However, many students have been out of work for months with no source of income and they require financial support beyond what is being offered. Previous months’ bills still need to be paid and living expenses continue to mount.

On the day that Nadine Hiltz, a single mother of two children, was supposed to start a new job, her daughter’s school was closed due to the pandemic. As a result, she was unable to keep her job.

“I am at a loss for income,” says Hiltz, who received her last student loan payment in March.

A second-year Indigenous Social Work student at First Nations University of Canada (Saskatoon campus), Hiltz is juggling school and full time parenting, with no access to childcare. Both Nadine’s father and son are considered at a high risk for a serious infection if they catch COVID-19, so Hiltz and her children are in self-isolation from the rest of her family.

“I was extremely difficult,” says Hiltz. “Batting this pandemic has been difficult financially. It’s very scary. I am grateful that the University is helping its students. A lot of people will benefit from this help.”

Arian Pekaric is a third-year student at the Hill School of Business from Bosnia and Herzegovina, who lives happily in Regina with his wife. Like many students who juggle part-time jobs and full-time studies, he has worked as a sales consultant and marketing manager to pay for his tuition, rent, groceries, and other necessities. Last year, after his father was laid off from work, Pekaric picked up more hours to help support his family back in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When the pandemic hit, Pekaric was working at a gym and received a layoff notice, as all athletic facilities were ordered to shut down. Without his primary source of income, Pekaric went in search of other options.

“I was extremely difficult to finish the Winter semester,” says Hiltz, who has a three-year-old and nine-year-old. “With the anxiety and worry of the pandemic, and the fact that my son is high risk, it was nearly impossible to concentrate on my studies. When I finally got some downtime to myself, I was too exhausted to work.”

From the moment her son wakes at 6:30 a.m., Hiltz is focused on caring for her children, preparing meals, playing with them, cuddling them, helping them read, bathing them, and cleaning up. Every day, Hiltz and her children travel on a nearby gravel road to collect rocks and find frogs. They return home for quiet road to collect rocks and find frogs. They return home for quiet

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international students remain unsure if they will be eligible for the same social benefits that other students receive. Their impact on our well-being cannot be measured or quantified, nor can I put into words just how important and essential they are to some.

What do pets bring to people’s lives?

Pets are an extension of our lives and families. Their impact on our well-being cannot be measured or quantified, nor can I put into words just how important and essential they are to some.

What did you take away from your experience at the University of Regina?

Graduating from the University of Regina in 2010 paved the way to the rest of my life. I continue to stay in contact with many former classmates; it is strange to think that was 20 years ago. I marvel at the changes that have occurred at the University since then.

What is the most unusual pet you have treated?

I feel that I cannot single out one pet in particular since I have had the opportunity to be involved with so many different pets. Over the past 20 years, I have treated the typical dog, cat, guinea pig, and livestock animals. I have also dealt with snakes, lizards, rats, deer, coyotes, owls, ducks, and bats – to name a few.

What’s the most satisfying aspect to your job?

I love that every day is different – different pets, different health issues, and accompanying challenges that go along with it. I think the underlying factor that keeps me doing what I do is an inherent desire to help heal and alleviate pain for animals that cannot help themselves.

Tara Hudye BSc’00 grew up on the family farm near Kamsack, Saskatchewan and earned a Bachelor of Science at the University of Regina in 2000. She graduated from the University of Saskatchewan’s Western College of Veterinary Medicine in 2004. Hudye and her colleagues operate Regina’s Veterinary Mobility Centre, a full-service animal clinic that specializes in pain control in family pets. In 2018, she received the Saskatchewan Association of Veterinary Technologists Veterinarian of the Year Award and, in 2018 and 2020, she served as a volunteer veterinarian at the Canadian Challenge Sled Dog Race. Hudye is pictured here with Hector, the prostheses-legged dog.

What first sparked your interest in animals?

I grew up on a farm with livestock and working cattle dogs. I took a keen interest as a kid training the dogs basic obedience and the love of animals grew from there.

What kind of pets do you have at home?

We currently have two cats and two dogs. We have had various pets in our house in the past, including geckos, hamsters, fish and guinea pigs.

What makes your clinic unique?

At the start of my veterinary career, I was astounded by the number of pets that had chronic pain. The most common was due to arthritis and all the compensatory mechanisms that go with it. I became increasingly frustrated with pain management limitations and the accompanying limitations that go with it. I became increasingly frustrated with pain management limitations and the accompanying limitations that go with it. I became increasingly frustrated with pain management limitations and the accompanying limitations that go with it. I became increasingly frustrated with pain management limitations and the accompanying limitations that go with it. I became increasingly frustrated with pain management limitations and the accompanying limitations that go with it.

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There is no Planet “B”

A November 2018 Angus Reid national survey found that almost 20 per cent of Saskatchewan residents (second only to Alberta) don’t subscribe to human-caused global warming. The same survey indicated that Canadians do, however, look to university scientists to provide accurate information on climate change. So, this past January, a group of University of Regina researchers embarked on a series of public lectures that looked at climate change from a variety of perspectives – providing Prairie detractors with a combination of science-based evidence and Indigenous ways of knowing.

By Bill Armstrong

Photos by Trevor Hopkin, University of Regina Photography Department, unless otherwise noted.

One is inclined to look, there’s some alarming science regarding climate change out there. Average temperatures in Western Canada are rising at two to three times the rate of the rest of the world; there is a clear trend of 50 years of warmer than normal months in Regina; pests and invasive species have been detected in regions where they have never been seen before; there are more frost-free days in Western Canada; and, our Winters offer more rain and less snow.

With scientific evidence for climate change mounting and climate protests grabbing headlines around the world, University of Regina faculty members Sarah Abbott, Britt Hall and Sean Tucker knew the time was right to reach out and provide members of the public with access to reliable information about climate based on cross-disciplinary research and Indigenous ways of knowing. The Academics for Climate Community Lecture Series was born.

Abbott, an associate professor in the Department of Film who taught the first course on climate change last semester in the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance, was encouraged when a list of possible presenters with expertise in different climate issues, including Indigenous perspectives, quickly emerged.

Hall, a professor in the Department of Biology, adds that the three knew right from the start that the lectures had to be compelling without being confrontational. To keep audience interest piqued, plenty of informative visuals would be necessary, as well as engaging question and answer sessions. One of the goals of the series, she says, was providing information without political bias and avoiding the polarization that affects so much of the discussion on climate change in the public sphere.

Tucker, an associate professor of Business Administration, points out that the effort soon involved many different areas of the University, as colleagues stepped up to support the series with funding for promotion and to provide technical support.

Hall kicked off the series in January 2020 with her presentation called, “The Consensus is in: Evidence Supporting Human-Induced Climate Change.” That first event was held at Regina’s Bushwakker Brewpub as part of the monthly Science Pub Series hosted by the Faculty of Science. The rest of the lectures were held at the University of Regina’s College Avenue Campus.

In front of a full house, Hall shared basic information on how the Earth’s atmosphere works, followed by evidence supporting the consensus among scientists that the climate is changing due to increasing concentrations of the greenhouse gases that regulate temperatures on Earth.

She also explained how oceans, trees and plants absorb carbon dioxide, illustrating it with data gathered from the Mauna Kea Observatories located in Hawaii. The data shows lower concentrations of carbon dioxide in the northern hemisphere during the summer, when trees and plants capture carbon dioxide, followed by higher concentrations in the winter, when they release carbon dioxide.

“The records show the variations from season to season, and also the overall trend line over years, which is up,” Hall said. “The result is that both land and ocean temperatures have been increasing since 1976, with the devastating consequences we see regularly in the news. These include reports of warmer Arctic temperatures causing increased ice melt and a more unstable jet stream which pushes polar air further south more often than in the past. We are also witnessing more unpredictable and intense wildfires (think Australia, Port McMurray), drought (think Saskatchewan), and flooding (think great swaths of the UK) events.

In her conclusion, Hall conceded that conveying all of this distressing climate information – whether to the public or to her students – can be depressing. She optimistically noted that studies show that when researchers add a stressor to a model of an ecosystem and then remove it, the ecosystem often has enough resilience to rebound. However, she cautions, these are models and there are no guarantees. During the question and answer session following her presentation, Hall said people can expect to experience a transitional period in how society and the economic system operates as the world adapts to a lower-carbon future.

“What we can do is join a collective to take action, in any way they can. We are not asking you to change your lifestyle, but rather to adapt how you think about change,” Hall said.
reduce consumption where possible, vote for progressive governments, learn more and spread the word,” Hall said. One of the strong themes of the series was the recognition that understanding climate change and its associated issues can be difficult for people to grasp. It is particularly trying because the volume and range of scientific information coming at us can be overwhelming. The information often comes from several fields of study and requires people to consider a complex interplay of factors to gain a full understanding. In addition, cultural and ideological baggage can influence how people reach conclusions. The issue can be further complicated because, in this digital world, we have immediate access to climate change information that ranges from the truly reliable, to the utterly unreliable, to disinformation.

The understanding that climate change is a difficult subject is not surprising to people for get their heads around was a theme in David Sauchyn’s January 23 offering to the lecture series, “What does climate change look like in Saskatchewan?” Sauchyn is a professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies and the director of the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative (PARC). For the past two decades, PARC has been gathering data on changing climatic conditions – in some cases dating back hundreds or thousands of years – and tracking the resulting impacts around the globe. Sauchyn’s presentation was filled with information gleaned from observations of tree rings, glaciers, and lakebed and ocean sediments. He acknowledges that convincing Saskatchewanians that his research provides indisputable evidence of climate change might be his biggest challenge. The largest concentration of those who are skeptical, or uncertain about human-induced climate change, is on the Prairies.

Sauchyn is not surprised by this, in part, because our weather can be dramatically different on what seems like a minute-by-minute basis. “Our challenge is to tease out what is just natural variability and what is the effect of global warming, to separate the noise from the signals,” Sauchyn said. “And the Prairies is a good place to search for the signals because they are so strong, but so is the noise.”

The signals included in Sauchyn’s presentation are compelling – since the late 1970s, the world has experienced only one month that was colder than the historical long-term average. In Regina, over the same time frame, the daily minimum average temperature has risen more than four degrees Celsius. Long, harsh and cold winters, such as were experienced in the past, are now unusual, Sauchyn observed. Gordon Pennycook, an assistant professor of behavioural science in the Faculty of Business Administration, also studies how people approach the topic of climate change.

Pennycook noted that people with the highest intelligence are the most polarized around the question of whether climate change is real or not. “These people are smart, but they are influenced by their ideological bent, and their intelligence makes them better at convincing themselves that the things they see are true,” Pennycook said. “Interestingly, in other areas where we also rely on science to shape our ideas – such as nuclear power or genetically modified foods – we don’t see the same pattern.”

In the ensuing question and answer session, Pennycook shared research about how people handle information, including misinformation. Studies show that people who believe fake news don’t think that much about what they see or hear. With regards to accepting the science related to climate change, there is evidence that people can change their minds, although such changes are usually gradual. Pennycook is grateful that movements such as the Global Climate Strike have encouraged people to join the conversation and have helped to normalize the issue. It will take persistent efforts to make the big changes required, he concluded.

Michelle Brass CICA’02, BA’02(Hons), a member of the steering committee for the group Indigenous Climate Action, agrees that changes are coming. Brass titled her March 2 presentation Indigenous Climate Action: only land-based Indigenous-led responses are crucial to addressing the impacts of climate change. Climate change, she explained, is the breaking of the natural law, or pâstâhowin in Cree, the concept that humans are exploiting the land, water and animals, rather than living in relationship with them. “Being able to adapt to our natural environment has been embedded in our teachings,” she says. “We are also taught to always think about future generations when making decisions.”

Brass says finding solutions to the problems posed by climate change will require a shift in mindset, what she refers to as “Indigenuity,” a new way of approaching those problems by applying Indigenous stories and teachings. The solutions she explains, are rooted in the land and the ecosystems, and each area or region has its own balance. This will require us to respect and restore ecosystems where possible and do a better job of protecting biodiversity. We will also need courage to face the changes ahead, she added.

“We don’t know what our world will look like, but I think we
Climate discussions have raged on for years as this 2014 photo attests. Parents carry children among thousands marching through central Oslo, Norway, to support action on global climate change. According to organizers of “The People’s Climate March,” the Oslo demonstration was one of 2,800 solidarity events in 186 countries. (Photo by iStock)

place too much emphasis on what we might lose, and too little on what we stand to gain. There are opportunities for us to rebuild kinship systems and community, after all, we were all land-based people in the past,” she noted.

Margot Hurlbert, a professor in the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy and Canada Research Chair in Climate Change, Energy and Sustainability Policy, was the coordinating lead author for a chapter on land and climate in a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), released in 2019.

Using the data from the IPCC report, and applying it with a global and regional perspective, Hurlbert asked her audience to consider five climate change scenarios in her February 13 presentation, “Climate Change: Where are we and What Might the Future Bring? Scenarios and Pathways.”

“With the information we have from the social sciences and from economics, we can suggest future human pathways of what life might look like,” Hurlbert said. “Those five pathways range from a completely sustainable future to one that continues to rely heavily on fossil fuels. Those can provide us with a lot of information, but they are only illustrations to help people get their minds around the subject.”

The pathways, Hurlbert added, also challenge people to think about the degree of change they can imagine by asking questions about power production, the nature of clean technology, and how we will sustain our economy, infrastructure and communities. “There will be difficult trade-offs,” she notes, for example, in how land is used.

“We like forests because they absorb carbon and sequester it, but when we cut down forests to grow crops to feed the world, we regard that as also a good thing,” explained Hurlbert. “We also know that Saskatchewan farmers are good at managing crop rotations, which can be huge in sequestering carbon and nitrogen (two important greenhouse gases) in the soil. This is one way agriculture can help reduce the use of nitrogen fertilizer on crops.”

At the time of writing, the series is on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but all those involved are optimistic that the Academics for Climate Change Lecture Series will soon return and University of Regina researchers will continue to share the facts about climate change with Prairie audiences.

The videos can be found on YouTube by searching for Academics for Climate – University of Regina. For more information visit the Academics for Climate Community – Regina Chapter Facebook page.

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

Marah Mattison had a unique internship opportunity this past semester. Through a Faculty of Arts internship at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, she realized a dream – to curate a museum exhibition. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the exhibit has yet to be unveiled. By completing the curating project, Mattison became the first University of Regina history student to earn an honours degree by completing a hands-on project rather than writing a paper. No doubt that also helped her gain acceptance into the Heritage Studies and Public History program at the University of Minnesota – the first Canadian to do so.

By Sabrina Cataldo
BA’97, BJ’99, Cert.PR’04
Photos by Trevor Hopkins, University of Regina Photography Department, unless otherwise noted.

A s someone who was born in Guatemala and adopted at the age of 14 months by a Canadian family, Mattison BA’19, BA(Hons)’20 has always been fascinated by people and how culture is observed in different cultures. "Being adopted, I was already immersed into a culture that wasn’t mine. I’m always fascinated by how people can learn different things in different cultural settings. That’s why I went into anthropology, to learn about cultures in the world that are different than mine," she says.

Studies and Public History program at the University of Regina, earned her Bachelor of Arts in anthropology in 2019 and just completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in history. Moving from anthropology to history was a natural evolution, as she had taken a few history classes during her undergraduate degree and saw strong links between the two disciplines. "I was studying about how cultures developed, and so much touched on their history. History is more the facts, while cultural anthropology is about how people interpret their history," she says. "Culture is described more as how people live their everyday lives. A lot of the time, how they live reflects their history. History is the past, and things that happen in the past influence the present," she adds.

Mattison is especially drawn to Asian cultures. She has focused on Japanese and Korean cultures and histories, even taking language classes in both. "From a young age, a lot of cartoon I watched came from Japan. I was fascinated with the animation. From the animation, I came to learn more about the culture, and that led me to learning about Korean culture, because it’s very tied to Japanese culture. Because of the cartoons, I was learning more about their culture and then more about their history," she explains.

A conversation with history department head Philip Charrier took her research in a different direction, however. One day he asked her, "What’s your dream job?" Without hesitation, Mattison responded that she wanted to curate an exhibition of artifacts. Charrier made it his mission to make that dream a reality. "I realized that Marah needed a career internship," he says. He wanted to find her more than just a job placement, though. "What I had to find is a professional who would recognize Marah’s potential and mentor her. She will graduate from here with a fantastic academic foundation. But how do you take that and then go and put together an exhibition?"

Charrier teamed up with the University’s Community Research Unit, soon to be rebranded as the Community Engagement and Research Centre, to find Mattison an internship that would serve her academic goals, as well as benefit a local organization. The Centre’s internship program places students in such organizations as Sofia House, Saskatchewan Writers’ Guild, and Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. The internships involve 8 hours a week of students’ time for 13 weeks.

"The internships provide students with valuable work experience that helps kick-start their careers," says Lynn Gidluck BA’90, MA’96, PhD’15, the Centre’s community director. "As an employer, when you’ve got an entry-level job and have 20 résumés come across your desk, the ones that rise to the top have something beyond their education."

In addition to the experience gained in the internship, many students have been offered paid summer jobs afterward. They also make valuable community connections that could lead to future employment. "Hopefully by the end of semester, you’ve developed a good relationship with your supervisor in your placement, and they’ll give you a good reference or help you find a job with someone else in their network. Informal networking is how a lot of people find jobs. I think this even fields a little bit for some students," Gidluck explains.

Gidluck feels it’s important that the internship program focuses on placing arts students, specifically. "I think just this program shows the broader community what an arts degree teaches students," she says. "I think there are a lot of misconceptions that if you graduate with an arts degree, you don’t graduate with tangible skills you can use in the workplace. I disagree. An arts degree brings a lot of skills other degrees might not bring, such as critical skills and an ability to write. There are some perceptions out there that it’s not the most practical degree, and I hope that these internships help change that perception."

She also notes that the success of the internship program has challenged some common myths about younger generations lacking a work ethic. "I have not seen this," Gidluck says. "Students that I’ve helped put into these community placements have been impressive. Community partners have overwhelmingly said they would welcome interns again, if they can find people like the ones that they’ve had. And Marah is certainly one of them."

For Mattison’s internship, Gidluck reached out to Evelyn Siegfield, curator of Indigenous studies at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Coincidentally, Siegfield was working on a project that culminated in the curation of an exhibition of the museum’s Indigenous artifacts. The multifaceted project was conceived by Arzu Sardarli, a math and physics professor at the Prince Albert campus of First Nations University of Canada (FNUC). He, along with his colleagues from Royal Saskatchewan Museum and the University of Regina, has initiated a project where students could engage in math and science and be excited about what they were learning. He decided that archaeology was an intriguing route, because there is a lot of science involved in the discipline, such as the carbon dating and statistical analysis of chemical compositions of artifacts. The goal was to entice students into science by having them participate in a project that didn’t seem to be only about science.

"Usually what happens is that people learn something about Indigenous culture and oral stories, and other people make some measurements in the lab. With this project, you could combine both of those components," he says.

There were several phases to the project, which was supported by a Museum Assistance Program grant from Heritage Canada. The first involved Indigenous students, who travelled to the Sturgeon Lake and Pelican Narrows First Nations to interview Elders and gather their oral history about the relationship their people have with local artifacts.

Opposite: Marah Mattison’s BA’19, BA(Hons)’20 dream came true when she curated an exhibit of Indigenous artifacts at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Unfortunately, the exhibit was paused because of COVID-19. Above: Community Research Unit director Lynn Gidluck BA’90, MA’96, PhD’15,
Some interviews were conducted in Cree, and others are being transcribed by Mattison. Sardarli also forged a partnership with the University of Saskatchewan allowing students to use their synchrotron to analyze artifacts that Siegfried selected from the Royal Saskatchewan Museum’s Indigenous object archives. The final phase of the project will be the curation of an exhibition of artifacts that would tour the museum, the University of Regina, and the two First Nations. That’s where Mattison came in.

Sardarli wanted both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students involved in the project. “I’m not Indigenous, but as a professor at FNUC, I’ve worked with Indigenous students and learned from Elders. When I see interest from non-Indigenous people in these kinds of projects, I really appreciate that. The purpose of this project was to learn about Indigenous culture and research. The participation of Indigenous students [Margo Jobb, Alyse Custer, Ann Marie Dorain BA’16, BA(Hons)’18 and Skylar Wall] and non-Indigenous students [Mattison, Khaysa Osmani and fytomamani Mohanta], together, is very important.”

“arctica were found right here in Saskatchewan,” Sardarli says, noting that it was imperative for a student to curate the exhibition. “It’s one thing for students to learn about things in a book or a classroom; it’s another to touch the objects yourself. I always encourage students to participate in a research project—it’s very important for learning.”

Siegfried feels it’s essential for the exhibition to eventually return to the First Nations from where the project and stories originated. “Hopefully it will show people that archaeology is an interesting area as a discipline that Indigenous students may want to go into and study.”

To curate the exhibition, Mattison listened to the translations of the oral stories and, along with Siegfried, went through Indigenous artifacts from the museum’s archives. Siegfried provided Mattison with the background information of the pieces, explaining what they represented in terms of culture, what they could have been used for, and how they were made.

Throughout the process, Mattison learned that curation is not as simple as some may think. “It takes of lot of time and collaboration,” Mattison says. “At a museum, you have to write a few sentences for each artifact. It doesn’t seem like a lot, but it has to be short enough for people to read, yet fully explain the artifact. It takes a lot of editing,” she says.

The project was incredibly gratifying for Mattison. She used the internship experience as the basis of her honours requirement, becoming the first student in the Department of History to do a practical, hands-on project instead of a research paper for their honours degree. In the Fall, Mattison will be attending the University of Minnesota to pursue a graduate degree in heritage studies and public history. “It’s interpreting culture and artifacts in order to create exhibits for the public—very much what I’ve been doing in the internship,” she explains. “To be a curator, you have to know a lot about many things, so a master’s degree will give me the knowledge to be successful—and the tools necessary to have a career in museums.”

The original plan was for the project to wrap up in April 2020, but due to COVID-19, it was put on pause. Says Mattison, “Unfortunately with the current circumstances, I wasn’t able to fully develop my exhibit or display it, but maybe this project will inspire future students to carry on my work or create their own.”

While, ideally, Mattison would like to work in a museum that specializes in Asian history and culture, she would be happy working at any venue where she can continue learning and bring history to life. “A lot of the time when you’re talking about the past, it isn’t necessarily relevant to people. I like the visual representation that an artifact can bring to history and how it can connect people to that history. It can captivate people and bring history to life. That’s what I really like about this work.”

Sabrina Cataldo is an award-winning writer and communications strategist in Regina.
During the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the University of Regina community have embraced the University’s motto “As one who serves.” Alumni, students, faculty, and staff are lending their ingenuity, creativity, and deft ability to problem solve for the benefit of Regina and all the communities in which they find themselves. Here are a few tales from #UofReginaCares, a collection of stories about members of the University community who are opening their hearts to care for our community during these challenging times. For more stories, visit www.uregina.ca/uofreginacares.

The little idea that could

Jillyan Clark BSRS’18 had an idea for connecting seniors’ homes residents who can’t have visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic with kids stuck in the house with their parents. The result? A pen pal program that’s bringing real joy and caring to seniors and kids alike.

What started out as a single post on Facebook asking kids to send in letters and artwork to seniors at Qu’Appelle House, quickly generated 20,000 views and an overwhelming response from parents, kids, and adults alike.

“The pen pal program has been such an incredible experience and has become larger than I could have ever imagined!” says Clark, who is the recreation coordinator at Qu’Appelle House, a seniors’ residence in Regina. “I put out a post reaching out to kids that want to write letters to our seniors. It flew up within a day and a half! We got a lot of letters from that single post and it’s been growing since then.”

At last count, Clark estimates she’s received more than 75 letters and 50 pieces of art for the 34 residents. To ensure that residents’ health is not jeopardized, Clark receives the pen pal correspondence by email or snail mail and then takes pictures of the mailed items to share with the residents. So far, she has created six “Joy Walls” of pictures, art, and letters for residents to enjoy.

Since her initial post on March 30, the pen pal program has expanded to include participants from the general public, and from teachers in Regina and as far away as Nova Scotia.

“The partnerships I’ve formed through schools during the pandemic is definitely something I want to keep going forward,” said Clark. “Teachers have been reaching out to me to see if they can use this program as part of an English project or an art project where the kids will send in their contributions and then they can be graded.

Public interest in her program has generated more than enough letters to keep her seniors busy. Letter writing is now a part of the residents’ weekly activities.

“Kids want a reply so I want to make sure we respond to every letter we get,” says Clark. “Once a week we’re writing letters back to the children. A few seniors have written several letters. They enjoy it and want to do it.”

This overwhelming response has provided the perfect opportunity to extend the pen pal program to seniors’ residences in Regina.

“I’ve also referred interested people to other facilities that have partnered with us on this project – Cupar & District Nursing Home, Eden Care Communities, and Santa Maria Senior Citizens’ Home. That’s cool to see – my little idea that stemmed from just a conversation has grown into something that is inner facility.”

The drive to help make the world a better place is something that was instilled in Clark during her studies in therapeutic recreation and psychology at the University of Regina.

“I am still in contact with a lot of my recreation professors,” says Clark, who recalls her time studying under Rebecca Genoe in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Kathy Park, academic supervisor. “They really shaped the person I am in my career. They showed me what the outside world could look like. What they’ve done to advocate for recreation is amazing and I want to do that as well. This is a really good step in the right direction.

Clark was inspired to create the program by what she was seeing and experiencing at work, as well as from conversations with her sisters who have young children at home during the pandemic.

“Everyone’s going through something right now. It’s important to me to try and get my programs to benefit as many people as I can,” stresses Clark. “I truly look at my residents and they don’t always understand what’s going on during the pandemic. It’s heartbreaking.”

For the past seven weeks, residents in care homes across Saskatchewan have not been able to receive visitors.

“The one thing that gets me is that they don’t realize that people out there care about them during this time,” says Clark. “They think people are so involved with themselves and protecting themselves. They’re blown away by people taking the time to reach out to them and care about how they’re doing during this crisis.”

“Children are learning empathy and gratitude,” says Clark. “They’re inspired by kids and they’re inspired by each other. I’ve been thrilled to see how my fellow singers’ excitement as they share this performance with friends and family on social media, and am happy to see the positive responses in return. Performer or not, virtual is not the same as being in the same room with others, but wonderfully the connection is still very real.”

A pandemic-inspired performance

What does the University of Regina Choir do when COVID-19 makes it virtually impossible for them to get together to rehearse or perform? They meet up virtually and still make beautiful music together.

Necessity truly is the mother of invention, as borne out by the University of Regina Choir’s first virtual performance of Pierre Prudent’s “Il est bel et bon” on May 17. The piece is part of an entire program of music that the U of R Concert Choir and the U of R Chamber Singers were preparing to perform as part of an end of semester concert until the University moved all classes to a remote learning format in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Singing together in a choral setting allows people of all ages and walks of life to unite in language and expression to bring art and beauty to the world.

“The art form calls on the singers to engage every part of their being towards the creation of harmonious melodies that can only be captured in a single moment of time,” says Melissa Morgan, assistant professor within the University’s Faculty of Media, Art, & Performance, Department of Music. “As the realities of COVID-19 were revealed, our choir began to grieve the loss of community and the loss of singing.”

But from loss and heartbreak, creativity, and innovation can grow.

The pandemic has seen music educators around the world trying to come up with ways to keep the choir community alive. The virtual choir phenomenon that is exploding all over the world is one way to create community, but it is also a very difficult thing to do. Hours of work are required to fuse audio and video together. So, when Morgan and Clark, long-standing member of the University of Regina Chamber Singers and lab instructor in the Department of Computer Science, suggested to Morgan that they try to put a virtual choir together and offered up his services to help make it happen, the project was given the green light.

“It was a strange and sometimes uncomfortable experience for some of the singers – making a video, following music over headphones, and hearing their voice all on its own – but still they persevered,” says Alex. “They really shaped the person I am in my career. They showed me what the outside world could look like. What they’ve done to advocate for recreation is amazing and I want to do that as well. This is a really good step in the right direction.

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“A lot of them have said, ‘I don’t worry about myself because I’ve been through a lot of things that have shaped this world, like the wars,'” explains Clark. “They’re worried about the kids, honestly, so they’re writing their letters back asking how the kids are doing and sending them hints about how to keep busy.”

To participate in the pen pal program, reach out to your local care homes or contact Jillyan Clark, the recreation coordinator, or online at clark.jillyan@gmail.com

The virtual setting, Morgan knew, meant that each singer has to be brave enough to sing solo and record themselves into a video. The individual videos are then sent to an editor who, along with the choral conductor, weave together the mix of voices and video to produce the concert.

As was quickly discovered, this process is not without challenges. When the call went out to the singers, Morgan and Clarke soon found that not all singers had access to electronic devices with some students lacking the Wi-Fi bandwidth needed to create their individual performance. Additionally, some students, feeling overwhelmed with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic found themselves to perform, never mind battle with technology.

So, conductor and editor decide to draw upon the resources of former singers and alumni of the choirs for support. Additionally, they invited future singers – grade 12 students planning to study in the U of R’s music department this fall – to join in the choral project.

The response was amazing and the resulting 15 member virtual choir, dubbed the “UR Virtual Choir,” is a testament to the power of the human spirit. As the Chamber Singers had been preparing for their April 5th concert, the group decided to move forward with the piece’s light, fun, and uplifting madrigal style for their virtual performance. It was the perfect choice to bring hope and inspiration to the community in and around Regina, as well as to viewers the world over.

“Music truly is a gift and I am so grateful to be a part of such a fantastic community at the University of Regina – bringing light during these times of darkness,” says Morgan.

Given audience response, plans for the University’s Virtual Choir Concert are underway.

To view the performance, go to YouTube and search for U of R virtual choir.

Feeding their souls while feeding others

In the spirit of Ramadan, Muslim students from the University of Regina have teamed up with Regina residents who have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In times of crisis, communities come together to support those who need it most. During the COVID-19 pandemic, members of Regina’s Muslim community have banded together to create meaningful impact.

Left: Jillyan Clark BSRS’18 strives to ensure her pen pal program benefits as many people as possible. (Photo courtesy of Jillyan Clark) Right: A screen capture of a pandemic-inspired performance by members of the University’s Chamber Singers and the University of Regina Concert Choir.
Ramadan use the month as a time to self-reflect, pray, spend time with family and friends, and give back to the community. Observers will fast from dusk to dawn as a form of worship, an opportunity for his organization to lend a helping hand. “We recognize that there was a tremendous need in the community,” says Ahmed. “If 8% of students have volunteered to help with planning, management, promotion, and distribution of the food hamper. It is beautiful to see so many different members from our community collaborating so effectively.”

With classes now finished for the Winter semester, many students have been seeking out opportunities to help out wherever possible. Moolla notes that among the more than 50 volunteers that have been assisting with the hamper drive, U of R students have played a critical role in the project’s success. “If U of R students have been key to much of what the RMCEER has been able to accomplish,” says Moolla. “They have been doing the groundwork: making deliveries; sorting food; posting on social media; working on the website; and, recruiting new volunteers.”

Public safety is top priority for the group. Each volunteer is outfitted with personal protective equipment, including masks and gloves. When coming together to collect their food hampers, volunteers communicate with drivers through their car window for their household needs, then open either the vehicle’s back door or trunk to load in. All interactions are contactless and ensure proper social distancing protocol is taken.

“We are fortunate to have many doctors and nurses in our volunteer community including Shaqib Shahab, chief medical health officer for the Government of Saskatchewan, who we look to for guidance,” says Moolla. “They are making recommendations and ensuring everyone can remain safe.” Each week has seen 50 hampers handed out to deserving people in the community – and larger numbers are expected as word of the program continues to travel. If someone is unable to come for the hamper pickup, they can contact RMCEER who will dispatch a volunteer to make a contactless drop-off. Umar Khan, incoming president of the MSA and RMCEER volunteer, has been moved by the tremendous team effort from all involved to help those who need it most.

“It is truly inspiring to see so many people working together to do something good,” says Moolla. For anyone interested in donating groceries to the food hamper program or is in need of one, please visit the Regina Muslim Community Emergency Response website or Facebook page to learn more.

Volunteers with RMCEER had heard of interest from many U of R students looking for ways to assist with the food hamper program. The U of R Student Muslims’ Association (MSA) was approached and has been able to utilize its network to contact potential volunteers and get the word out to those in need. Maah Ahmed, president of the MSA, saw the tremendous opportunity for his organization to lend a helping hand. “We recognized that there was a tremendous need in the community,” says Ahmed. “If 8% of students have volunteered to help with planning, management, promotion, and distribution of the food hamper. It is beautiful to see so many different members from our community collaborating so effectively.”

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Food in a time of crisis

Food is essential to survival. It is also essential to identity. Perhaps at no greater time than the present have we been aware of these facts. As news of the COVID-19 pandemic began circulating, Canadians hurried to grocery stores, stocking up for the upcoming crisis. By mid-March, experts had begun warning against hoarding. There is plenty of food in our supply chain, they said; do not “panic buy” lest we create shortages – and very real hardships – for the most vulnerable members of our communities.

There were, however, problems emerging. In mid-April, the national media became aware of a major COVID-19 outbreak at Cargill’s meat processing plant in High River, Alberta. Given that Cargill is one of Canada’s largest beef suppliers, there was tremendous pressure to remain open. Such scenarios were repeating themselves across the country and internationally. On farms, in factories, in transportation and in retail, people are working in dangerous conditions. Labour shortages, illness, stress and overtime have all combined to make working in the food industry incredibly harrowing – and in some cases, deeply tragic.

Meanwhile, potential supply problems loom. In some regions, food costs are going up, purportedly due to “higher operating costs, lack of availability of raw materials, and the current exchange rate,” as Atlantic Grocery Distributors put it. Local stores are scrambling to keep shelves stocked, creating frustrations for customers who only shop bi-weekly in attempts to practice social distancing. For their part, producers have been aggrieved because, although consumer demand is growing, they are having difficulty switching over product lines meant for wholesale toward the retail sector. In more remote communities, including several First Nations, concerns are increasing over reported declines in food shipments. Additionally, Food Banks Canada has launched a special appeal for $1.5 million because donations have been decreasing; there have also been fewer volunteers available. As an historian of Canadian food, I have paid close attention to this developing situation. As my colleagues and I well know, it is during times of national crisis when food concerns move to the forefront of national debate.

By Donica Belisle

The ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world’s food supply could be disastrous. Hoarding, international trade disruptions, shortages of farm workers and processing plant closures, among other issues, threaten to push global food security to the tipping point. Associate professor of history Donica Belisle assesses the Canadian food security situation and puts today’s challenges in an historical context.

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Photos courtesy of Donica Belisle unless otherwise noted.
wild in Canada, and which Canadians particularly enjoy, including salmon, fiddleheads, maple syrup and berries. These foods are also present in Indigenous cuisines. But given that Canada is a colonial enterprise, one that has built its own food system upon already-existing food systems, it is important to recognize that Canadian food is colonial food. Moreover, so-called iconic Canadian foods such as Nanaimo Bars, poutine and butter tarts all derive from European foodways. One can certainly identify Canadian cuisine if one wishes; however, one must also acknowledge that this cuisine has a violent history, one that has marginalized Indigenous peoples, even as it has advantaged settlers.

Other, more time-limited crises in Canadian food history have also occurred. Of particular note are the First and Second World Wars. During these events, the Canadian state went to great lengths to reduce Canadians’ consumption of certain foodstuffs, and to then send such foodstuffs to Great Britain. During the First World War, Britain called upon its Empire to increase their shipments of beef, pork, butter, sugar and flour. These foods were needed not only for civilians, but for the British military. In 1916, Canada stepped up production of these goods, by the end of the war, it had tripled its exports to the Mother Country. Meanwhile, on the home front, Canada introduced 28 Orders-in-Council that regulated meat, dairy, sugar and wheat consumption. At no time did Canada introduce rationing during the war, instead, through propaganda, as well as threats of fines and jail sentences, it urged civilian compliance.

Things were different during the Second World War. Having witnessed skyrocketing inflation between 1917 and 1921, in 1939 the federal state created the Wartime Prices and Trade Board (WPTB). Designed to curb inflation, reduce shortages and ensure supplies for overseas, the WPTB was an unprecedented form of market control. In 1941, the WPTB introduced comprehensive price, rent and wage controls. The next year, it introduced rationing. Each Canadian household was issued a ration booklet that they used to purchase meat, sugar, butter, preserves, tea and coffee. Not until 1947, when the last of the rationing restrictions were lifted, did Canadians return to peacetime conditions. Even then, people protested. Almost as soon as restrictions were lifted, prices rose. In response, many argued that Canada should restore price ceilings. Only in this way could it guarantee nutritious food for all.

As we grapple, again, with problems in the food supply, it is helpful to reflect on past crises. Lessons from both the World Wars offer insights into how our federal government, today, might move forward. Should shortages deepen, we might expect the state to introduce new measures that resemble the cautious steps taken during the 1910s. However, should both prices and availability become severe, we might expect stronger measures, ones more in accordance with those introduced during the 1940s. Through both price regulation and rationing, Canada’s federal government was able to adequately protect Canada’s food supply. In fact, price control and rationing during the Second World War actually improved Canadians’ diets. While price restrictions kept food prices at affordable levels, rationing ensured that there was usually enough food available for all but the most disadvantaged.

That being said, we must also remember that the crisis we face today differs in certain ways from the past. Rather than needing to regulate Canadian food consumption to fight an overseas war, we are now needing to fix current problems in our food supply.

Even more importantly, we must today also recognize that even if Canada solves its food problems related to COVID-19, many in this country will continue to experience food insecurity. Thus, even as we turn to past crises for insights into current times, so must we also remember that there are ongoing food shortages in Canada, unrelated to the pandemic, that also require urgent attention.

Donica Belisle is an associate professor in the University of Regina’s Department of History. She is the author of the books Purchasing Power: Women and the Rise of Canadian Consumer Culture and Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada.
The University of Regina is honoured to share with our community the U of R 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

Built on a First Nations’ concept that honours the interconnectedness of all things, we seek to explore unanswered questions, empower our citizens, generate high-impact scholarship, and embrace Canada’s diversity. Now more than ever, it’s time for “All Our Relations” to come together at the University of Regina.

To learn more about our Strategic Plan, visit www.uregina.ca.