UNIVERSITY OF REGINA | Update

Long-term service awards mark rewarding careers

Imagine teaching the sons and daughters of some of your early students. Think about having approximately 8,000 students pass through your biology lab over the course of 40 years.

Gwen Jones has been there, and done that. Last week she was one of more than 100 U of R employees honoured for their contributions to the University community.

It was the University's 25th annual awards ceremony. The chair of the University's Board of Governors, Berny Wiens, noted that given the U of R's relatively short history, "most of those receiving awards have been with the University for a good chunk of its existence. You have contributed to the foundation of this institution."

That's certainly true of Jones, who began working as a biology lab instructor on the College Avenue campus before the "new" campus opened. Over the years she taught biology, botany, plant taxonomy, genetics, molecular genetics, cell biology and ecology to an estimated 8,000 students.

"So many of them went on to become medical doctors and teachers," she says proudly. "I was very lucky to get this job."

Jones, who is retiring, admits it will be difficult not to come back to work in the fall. For many years her fall routine involved working seven days a week, "because you're dealing with living things in the lab," she explains.

"I used to paint, and some of my friends have been giving me paint and other supplies, so maybe I'll have to take the hint," Jones laughs.

Librarian Ed Perry observed, after receiving his 35-year award, that he's never been bored in his job. Perry began his career working in the Library's back office, cataloguing books and journals.

Perry, who says he was a stutterer in those early years, credits former head librarian Sid Harland with giving his career a boost. Perry took the kill or cure approach by moving to the reference desk, where he dealt directly with a never-ending stream of student questions and requests. Harland had the courage to approve the move and support Perry. The stutter was soon gone. Working with students is still Perry's favourite part of the job.

"Every once in a while a project comes along that you can sink your teeth into," Perry says. "For instance, negotiating with the Toronto Stock Exchange to get four years of stock trading data for nothing, so a graduate student could complete her thesis."

Mona Acker of the Faculty of Social Work and the Social Policy Research Unit observed that the awards ceremony brings a public dimension to the appreciation expressed by the University to those employees who have dedicated a significant portion of their working lives to furthering the University's goals.

"I saw pride in the faces of those receiving awards and whispering among those who were watching, exchanging comments about how many more years until it is their turn," says Acker, who received a 30-year pin for her service.

Acker says one of the greatest changes she has seen at the University is in the attitude toward women at the faculty and support levels. Women housekeeping staff now have parity with their male counterparts, and female clerical staff and faculty members are treated with more respect, she adds. However, female faculty still lag behind male faculty in numbers and movement through the ranks. "Women still have far to go to achieve parity with U of R men," she states.

Gwen Jones, who has worked at the University of Regina for 40 years, was one of the employees honoured at the Long-Term Service Awards ceremony.

Professor of history James Pitsula received an award for his 25 years with the University. Pitsula has authored an impressive array of books and articles on the history of education, social welfare, sports, First Nations and government. Much of his work has a Saskatchewan focus, including a history of the University of Regina.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed my career and the opportunities for teaching, research, publication and public service that it affords," says Pitsula. "One of the most fulfilling parts of the job is the interaction with students, whose intelligence, humour and sincerity continue to amaze me."

CAMPUS LIFE CALENDAR

Sat., May 8 – 10 a.m.
16th Annual Forzani Group Foundation Sweetheart Run, Walk and Roll
Participate in a 2, 5 or 10 km race fundraiser for the Dr. Paul Schwann Applied Health and Research Centre.
University of Regina
Info: 585-4070
www.mdrunandwalk.com

May 13-15
18th Annual National Student Film & Video Festival
A national competition run by students.
Rainbow Cinemas
Info: 585-4619

Thurs., May 20 – 5:30 p.m.
20th Annual Distinguished Canadian Award Dinner
The accomplishments of Shirley Douglas will be recognized.
Delta Hotel
Info/tickets: 585-5816

May 24
University closed

For a complete calendar of events at the University of Regina visit our Web site at www.uregina.ca

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

Student film festival draws 85 entries from across country

It's the only festival of student films in Canada that is actually organized and run by students. This year the 18th annual National Student Film and Video Festival offers two nights of screenings of the best student productions in the country.

The festival is organized by the Regina Film and Video Student Society at the University of Regina. Society members are students in the Media Production and Studies department at the University.

"This year we received 85 entries from across Canada, and the selection committee has looked at them all," says festival co-ordinator David Geiss, who sent festival posters and information to every post-secondary institution in Canada with a film or video production program. "About half of the entries will be shown at the festival."

Viewers can expect the screenings to last three hours each night.

The festival began as a sideshow to the Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival. For the first few years a student volunteer would load film cans into a car and make the drive to Yorkton. There were no categories or prizes to speak of, but Yorkton did provide a showcase. Later, the student festival was established on its own, in Regina, and in 1995 the Regina Film and Video Student Society at the U of R assumed control of the festival.

Geiss says attendance has fluctuated from year to year as screenings have been held in different locations. "I think people get confused when the festival moves every year," Geiss observes. "Holding it at the Rainbow Cinemas means people will be able to get a drink and some popcorn, and have the complete movie experience." Geiss adds that the owner/operator of the Rainbow Cinema is very supportive of the festival, which has made his job much easier.

The jurors for this year's festival include Regina-based writer and filmmaker Trevor Cunningham, the president of the Saskatchewan Filmpool Co-operative, Dianne Ouellette, and Su Rynard, an independent filmmaker from Toronto. The jurors will view the films along with the rest of the audience. The winning entries will be played again as part of the awards banquet on May 15.

Geiss, who is about to convocate from the University, says the festival helps build the national profile of the Film and Video Student Society. It also enhances the reputation of the Media Production and Studies department, and supports demand for graduates of the program in the film and video industry. Some recent grads have been working behind the scenes on the "Corner Gas" television show, a homegrown comedy series that has attracted large audiences on CTV. Other U of R grads are working for Saskatchewan production companies or on various productions within the film and video industry.

Screenings of festival entries will be held May 13 and 14 beginning at 8 p.m. at the Rainbow Cinemas. Admission each night is $4.

The festival also includes a panel discussion with the three jurors on Saturday, May 15, beginning at 1 p.m. at the Filmpool. Christine Ramsay, a professor in the Media Production and Studies program at the U of R, will moderate the panel.

For more information, call David Geiss at 535-2772.

We want to hear from you! Tell us what you think of the U of R Update page

E-mail your comments to

communications@uregina.ca

University president David Barnard (left) and Saskatchewan Opposition leader Brad Wall chat about progress in construction of the new Centre for Kinesiology, Health and Sport during a May 3 Opposition caucus tour of the U of R campus. The Centre will open in September, 2004.

U of R Photo by A/V Services

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May 6— Whats On Cliff 301
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