

President's Message – November 2016

Members of the University community,

As we reach the halfway mark of the fall semester, there is lots of exciting University of Regina news to convey. I'm pleased to report that we have set a new enrolment standard with nearly 15,000 students enrolled in credit classes for the fall semester. This marks the eighth consecutive year of enrolment increases at the University. The continuous increases over that time affirm for me that our academic programming is resonating with students and that the services and supports we offer are not only meeting students' needs, but also helping attract them to our University.

When we break down enrolment numbers a little further, we see that the number of self-declared Indigenous students has grown by 16 per cent in the past year. A total of 1,811 self-declared Indigenous undergraduate students are enrolled this semester. That constitutes 14 per cent of the undergraduate student body. There are also 121 Indigenous graduate students, an increase of 16 per cent year over year. Our international student numbers are up this fall as well with 2,072 students enrolled, which is an increase of five per cent from fall 2015. These are statistics of which we can all be proud because they reflect our objective to be an inclusive and diverse university that supports our students' needs, is accessible, and welcomes the world to our campuses.

One of the best places to celebrate our diverse student body is at Convocation. Families travel across the province, country, and even internationally to witness their graduates crossing the stage to receive degrees, certificates and diplomas. On Friday, October 21, I participated in my 33rd University of Regina Convocation ceremony and was proud to congratulate 715 new graduates. Marcia Anne Mitschke was among them. She was awarded the President's Medal, which is presented to a student who has shown leadership in and commitment to extra-curricular activities while maintaining a minimum average of 80 per cent. Marcia is a Luther College student and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry with a cumulative grade point average of 88.26 per cent. She was also awarded the Faculty of Science Dean's Medal.

Dr. Zhong Li was also recognized at Convocation, receiving the President's Distinguished Graduate Student Award. The award is presented to the student who demonstrates outstanding academic performance in a graduate program, and has produced an exceptional thesis, exhibition or performance, and corresponding defense. Dr. Li earned a PhD in Environmental Systems Engineering during the course of her studies at our University.

To learn more about all of our 2016 Fall Convocation student award recipients, please visit: <http://www.uregina.ca/external/communications/releases/current/nr-10202016.html>.

At Convocation, I also had the pleasure of bestowing a Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* upon Ken Sunquist. Dr. Sunquist graduated from the University of Saskatchewan – Regina Campus with a Bachelor of Administration in 1970 and has had a career as an international strategic business advisor, management consultant and corporate director. He also served as Canada's ambassador to Indonesia and was chief trade commissioner for Canada. More information about him may be

found at: <http://www.uregina.ca/external/communications/feature-stories/current/2016/10-19.html>.

Awards of a different sort were celebrated earlier in the month. On October 6, the 2016 Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards Dinner was held at the Conexus Arts Centre. The annual awards honour our most distinguished alumni. This year's recipients were: Dr. Geoffrey Taylor BSc'74, Lifetime Achievement Award; Derek Stoffel BA'94, BAJ&C'96 (Campion), Distinguished Alumni Award for Professional Achievement; Dr. David Millar BSc'81, Award for Distinguished Humanitarian and Community Service; Lisa King BPAS'95, MAdmin'11, Dr. Robert and Norma Ferguson Award for Outstanding Service to the University of Regina and the Alumni Association; and Dr. Regan Schmidt BAdmin'03, Outstanding Young Alumni Award. I would like to offer my congratulations to all of our award recipients.

Throughout October the campus seemed especially lively. I saw many students putting in long hours working on assignments and preparing for mid-term examinations. I'm confident that some of them were taking advantage of the new textbook-lending program led by University of Regina Students' Union (URSU) in conjunction with the Dr. John Archer Library and our Faculties. The program, in which the Library acquires all required textbooks costing more than \$100 and places them on reserve for students, is helping shoulder some of the costs that students would otherwise face.

There were several Man Up Against Violence events held on campus late last month. Man Up Against Violence is a social movement that challenges some of the stereotypes about masculinity. Organizers and advocates presented workshops, videos and held socials and discussions over the course of four days to raise awareness and inspire others to help prevent violence in our communities.

Our first Indigenous Research Day was also held near the end of October. Thanks to support from the University's Indigenous Advisory Circle, among many others, the day marked a celebration of Indigenous research at the University and our federated colleges. The event included presentations on such topics as Indigenous residential schools, Indigenous arts, spirituality, and preserving Indigenous languages.

As you can tell, it has been a busy semester at the University of Regina! I know that November will be equally eventful as we move toward the end of the semester. I want to take this opportunity to thank faculty and staff for your continued engagement. I always find it inspiring to know that we are all here to support one another in providing the best possible academic and life experience for our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor