

Message from the President – May 2009

As individuals, they are dedicated and impressive. As a group, they are inspiring and remarkable. I'm talking about our faculty and their diverse teaching and research contributions and accomplishments.

The success of our professors and researchers is vital to the success of the entire University. Their academic expertise and commitment are at the core of our mission. Their knowledge, innovation and creativity define all that we bring to our students and to the local and global communities.

With summer soon upon us, and perhaps a shift in focus to other activities and projects – or for students, a move into summer jobs and different kinds of learning experiences – this is an ideal time to look back at the academic accomplishments of our faculty over the last year.

Of course, in selecting examples to illustrate the valuable and diverse commitment of our faculty to their research and teaching, I risk the danger of missing many; but know without doubt that they are all important. This is but a small selection.

One of the many ways our faculty and researchers contribute to the academic mission is by sharing and generating knowledge among peers and within the educational community through conferences. One of the most recent, called Teaching and Learning to the Power of Technology, provided an opportunity to talk about best practices in teaching and learning with technology. In a province the size of ours, the use of technology is becoming more essential than ever to our teaching practice. This conference allowed some of our own experts including Alec Couros and Dean Shareski from the Faculty of Education to engage in meaningful discussions with educators from across Saskatchewan and Canada about how technology can better help us serve our learners.

Other conferences led by or involving University of Regina faculty over the past year focused on diverse topics, including: the renowned author Arthur Conan Doyle who created the Sherlock Holmes character; the literary, artistic and cultural value of comics; and trends in population health. A conference on missing Aboriginal women last August provided a widely publicized international forum to examine the violation of human rights in Canada and Mexico. Also on the international front, the University, led by Energy & Environment director Malcolm Wilson, was granted the right to host a session at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Poznan, Poland last December. This opportunity allowed us to profile our world-wide reputation as a leader in Carbon Capture and Storage technology – a reputation earned through two decades of work by our faculty members.

Faculty members' teaching and research activities frequently engage the broader non-academic community. For example, in April the first University-Community Circle on Urban Agriculture, hosted by the Institut français, saw six researchers/professors and six citizens come together to develop strategic actions for sustainable development of urban agriculture in Saskatchewan. The new "Business Briefs: Leaders in the Community" Lecture Series brought business leaders to campus as speakers and mentors to students in the Paul J. Hill School of Business. This series is part of a course that helps our students become business leaders through practical experience.

Faculty members often combine efforts and work across areas to engage the public. This was the case when education professors Marc Spooner and Patrick Lewis teamed up with colleagues from the

Centre for Continuing Education and the Centre for Social Justice and Anti-Oppressive Education to launch the "Talkin' About School & Society" public discussion series.

We celebrate the success of our professors and researchers, and are proud when their accomplishments are recognized by others. Last fall, for example, the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity named education professor June Zimmer as one of the 2009 Women in Sport Encouragement Fund recipients. This recognition was for her work creating the "Girls in the Game" program which helps young girls develop confidence, competence and friendship through sport.

The list of others who have gained peer, professional and public recognition over the past year is long. Again, I risk excluding many by pointing out only a few for the purpose of illustrating the wide and extensive range of achievements by all of our faculty, such as: Lynn Loutzenhiser, who received a New Investigator Establishment Grant from Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation; Mark Wihak, whose film "River" received the Best Screenwriting and "Reel Canadian Indie" Awards at the Canadian Filmmakers Festival; Mark Brigham, the Joseph Grinnell Award recipient from the American Society of Mammalogists; and Chris Somers, who was appointed Canada Research Chair for his work in the area of Environmental and Wildlife Mutagenesis. There are many, many others.

We value and honour all of our faculty for their dedication to teaching, research and service to the community. Your work is worth celebrating, and your commitment to the academic mission and to our students is readily apparent to many, both on campus and beyond. You make a difference in students' lives every day. You make a difference in our community every day. And you make a difference in the world every day. For this and all that you do, thank you.