

Community Research Unit

FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

ANNUAL REPORT 2008 - 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

2008-2009 has been exciting for the Community Research Unit (CRU). It has been a year of learning and building great relationships with people from the university and community alike.

I have had many positive experiences as coordinator. Our pilot research project on housing in inner city Regina created excitement in the community and the report will go forward with Regina's Homelessness Initiative. Our Arts CARES pilot program was a smashing success, bringing together 27 undergraduate students, 7 organizations and 5 faculty members, many volunteers, staff and Arts CARES intern Danielle Pieracci. We hope this will be an annual community service-learning program. The CRU has facilitated two completed projects, is working on three others, and continuously receives ideas for exciting collaborative research.

We have had to say goodbye to a few board members over the past year. We've been lucky to work with Lynn Wells (chair, Associate Dean of Arts), Lynn Loutzenheiser (Dept of Psychology) and Anne Luke (Regina Early Learning Centre) during their time on our board of directors. We have also been saddened by the passing of board member Paul Beingessner. The contributions of past board members are valued.

2009-2010 promises to be a challenging and fulfilling year as we continue to establish ourselves as a bridge between the university and the community. We are pleased that Thomas Bredohl is joining us as new Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Studies). I have no doubt that the efforts and support of our board and partners will continue to strengthen and guide the Community Research Unit and I look forward to hearing from members of the campus and local communities.

Yolanda Hansen
Community Research Unit Coordinator

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Welcome to the Community Research Unit Annual Report. One of the greatest rewards in our position is to witness successful bridge building between university and community fostered by the CRU. The past year has been a busy one, and highlights include:

- facilitating, to completion, two community-based research projects that link community partners, faculty and students;
- facilitating an additional three community-based research projects, currently underway;
- the successful launch of community service learning across five undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, working with the organizations listed on page 3.

The strength of the CRU lies in our people, and we take this opportunity to thank our coordinator, Yolanda Hansen as well as board members, faculty partners, and students for their contributions. We are very sad to report the passing of Paul Beingessner in June; Paul was a longtime member of the Community Research Unit

Board and a passionate advocate for rural and agricultural communities in Saskatchewan.

We are excited about the possibilities before us in the near future. In October 2009, the CRU will host an interdisciplinary symposium, titled **Making the Links: Community Engaged Research in Regina**. This is an opportunity to learn more about community-based research, the CRU, and explore community research needs and ideas. For more details, check out www.arts.uregina.ca/cru. We encourage you to consider joining us!

We need and welcome your input, advice and support. Please contact us to share your thoughts and/or to propose new community-university projects and initiatives.

Kyle Hodder and Claire Polster
Community Research Unit Co-Chairs



CONTACT INFORMATION:

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PROJECTS AND PARTNERS

EHRLO COMMUNITY SERVICES – WASHINGTON PARK PLACE

To explore the socio-economic needs of single mothers living in a supported housing complex, the CRU is working together with Ehrlo Community Services Washington Park Place on a participatory action research project. This research is examining the barriers faced by single mothers in improving their lives and those of their children. Partners in this project are researcher Amber Fletcher (PhD candidate, Canadian Plains Research Centre), and advisors Shelley Sayer (Washington Park Place), and Wendee Kubik (Women's and Gender Studies Program).

NORTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (NCCA)

The CRU and NCCA are currently collaborating on a project to compile and publicize profiles of important historical and contemporary public figures from the North Central neighbourhood. The goal of this project is to promote pride in the community through increased awareness of the contributions of current and former neighbourhood residents in the fields of politics, sports & recreation and arts & culture. Partners in the project are researcher Pam Rice (Psychology student) and NCCA, with advice from William Brennan (Dept of History).

We have also completed a collaborative project with the community association that explored issues regarding housing in inner city Regina and the idea of a community-based housing support facilitator. The research was conducted by Danielle Goulden (MA student in Political Science), with the guidance of Rob Deglau (North Central Community Association), Hirsch Greenberg (Dept of Justice Studies) and Rebecca Schiff (Homelessness Partnering Strategy).

REGINA ALTERNATIVE MEASURES PROGRAM (RAMP)

The CRU has been working with RAMP since January 2009 on a research project analyzing the process and costs involved in issuing warrants for failure to appear in court. This research will be used to initiate a creative, and possibly cost-saving, alternative restorative justice program. The project is guided by Sheila Sinclair and Deborah Francis (RAMP) and Margot Hurlbert (Dept of Justice Studies/Sociology and Social Studies).

SEED REGINA (SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REGINA)

SEED Regina, now known as Blue Sky Community Development Corporation, is a newly formed community economic development organization that worked together with the CRU to develop its organization and study best practices in other prairie cities, with a focus on urban aboriginal participation. Sociology graduate Cassie Ozog worked on the project, along with Hirsch Greenberg (Dept of Justice Studies), April Bourgeois (SEED Regina) and Rob Deglau (North Central Community Association). This project was funded by the Government of Canada's Urban Aboriginal Strategy.

ARTS CARES

Arts CARES was an intensive community service-learning program supported by the CRU and organized by Yolanda Hansen (Coordinator) and Kyle Hodder (Dept of Geography) during the February break 2009. Over the course of a week, students from a number of different Arts classes performed service at partnering community-based organizations and participated in reflective workshops. This was an opportunity for students to connect the theories and ideas learned in the classroom to work done in the community. The program was well-received by students, faculty and community organizations alike. The CRU hopes to make this an annual program.

The CRU and partnering faculty members are a part of a team Centre for Teaching & Learning Scholars Grant; this project is evaluating Arts CARES 2009 and will offer recommendations for community service-learning in the Faculty of Arts and the campus at large. Principal Investigator Kyle Hodder (Dept of Geography, Arts CARES co-organizer) is joined by Yolanda Hansen (Arts CARES co-organizer), Bryan Hillis (Luther College) and Annette Desmarais (Dept of Justice Studies).

Participating Classes:

IDS 101: Global Citizenship

Bryan Hillis

WGST 301: Women & Health

Wendee Kubik

HJ 355: Food, Hunger & Social Justice

Annette Desmarais

PSCI 361: Local & Community Politics

Tina Beaudry-Mellor



Partnering CBOs:

AIDS Program South Saskatchewan

Four Directions Community Health Centre

Planned Parenthood Regina

REACH (Regina Education & Action on Child Hunger)

Regina & District Food Bank

Regina Open Door Society

SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities)

COMMUNITY RESEARCH UNIT (CRU)

The Community Research Unit connects the Faculty of Arts, University of Regina, with our communities by facilitating community-based research and community service-learning. Born out of the need to build relationships between faculty members, students, and the community, the CRU became operational in 2008.

Board of Directors June 2008 - June 2009

PAUL BEINGESSNER - NATIONAL FARMERS UNION

ROB DEGLAU - NORTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

HIRSCH GREENBERG - DEPT OF JUSTICE STUDIES

YOLANDA HANSEN - CRU COORDINATOR

KYLE HODDER - DEPT OF GEOGRAPHY

LYNN LOUTZENHEISER - DEPT OF PSYCHOLOGY

ANNE LUKE/MARY ANN McGRATH - REGINA EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

BONNIE MORTON - REGINA ANTI-POVERTY MINISTRY

CLAIRE POLSTER - DEPT OF SOCIOLOGY

LYNN WELLS - ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH AND GRADUATE)

MISSION

The mission of the Community Research Unit is to enable the Faculty of Arts to serve as a resource for groups in our communities, rural and urban, and to be enriched in turn by our relationships with those communities. In doing so, the University of Regina enhances civic engagement and its own actual and perceived value to the province as well as its capacity to produce high quality and relevant knowledge.

MANDATE

The Community Research Unit will function collaboratively as a partnership between community-based organizations and university faculty and students. It will provide independent, participatory research support in response to needs expressed by community-based organizations with a view toward building capacity and enhancing our communities' quality of life.