Director’s Message

From its founding, the University of Regina has had a strong culture of community engagement, embodied in the motto ‘As One Who Serves.' In my years as a local community activist, I can think of few volunteer boards or social action projects that weren’t enriched by the involvement of people with a connection to the university, including students, faculty members, administrators, professional staff and support staff. Clearly, our university community takes seriously the idea that we are a public institution created by and for the public good. This was recently reinforced in the university’s 2009-2014 strategic plan, titled mâmawohkamâtowin: Our Work, Our People, Our Communities. Mâmawohkamâtowin is a Cree word meaning “co-operation; working together towards common goals.”

But maintaining mâmawohkamâtowin doesn’t come easy under the current economy. Workloads have increased across the board and jobs are more precarious, meaning both inside and outside the university there is less time for community. With rising tuition and increased student debt, many students put in long hours in the paid workplace while studying, leaving fewer hours in the day for social action. University-community connections that used to come naturally are now a struggle to maintain. More than ever, we need concentrated efforts and institutional supports to ensure our mâmawohkamâtowin – our social solidarity – remains viable.

Working co-operatively is the core premise behind the Community Research Unit, founded in 2008 within the Faculty of Arts. In the past year, community members called on the CRU to support their research and social action objectives in several areas. Matching university expertise with community expertise, in 2009-2010 our project partners worked to shed new light on the needs of single parents, the gap between available income and healthy eating for low-income citizens, and the 'lost' histories of marginalized communities. As well, our community service-learning program helped university students gain new knowledge by working in community-based settings as part of their coursework. We are also very proud to have recently been selected as one of eight sites in Canada to take part in a three-year national initiative that will examine and reform faculty performance review procedures, with an eye to improving recognition for community service and non-traditional academic work.

These activities are the result of the enthusiastic involvement of our many community and university-based project partners, whose work is highlighted in this annual report. I would like to thank our coordinator, Yolanda Hansen, for guiding community members and faculty to new networks, funding opportunities and friendships in the past year. Thanks also go to our 2009-2010 board members, who found time on their already overloaded calendars to discuss and consider project proposals and ideas for community engagement. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome two new members to the CRU board in 2010-2011, Tina Beaudry-Mellor and Vicki Nelson. In closing, I encourage citizens struggling with pressing issues in our community to look on the CRU as a friend and supporter. Please call any time to discuss your concerns and ideas for joint action.

In solidarity,

Patricia (Trish) Elliott, Director
CRU Symposium

On October 20, 2009, the CRU hosted a symposium entitled *Making the Links: Community Engaged Research in Regina*. This symposium brought together interested university and community partners to learn more about the unit, our initial research projects and partnerships. It was also a space to meet others with related interests and share ideas on possible research projects and support needs. We were pleased with the overwhelming response and hope to host similar events in the future. The symposium report is available on the CRU website www.arts.uregina.ca/cru

CRU Formalizes as a Faculty of Arts Research Unit

During the 2009-2010 year, the CRU Board of Directors and Faculty of Arts formalized the CRU as a faculty-based research unit in Arts. This formalization was a culmination of work on the CRU's Constitution, examination of resources and administrative structure, goal setting and recruitment of a Director. Our new structure allows us to pursue more opportunities and grow sustainably.

CRU Welcomes Director

We were very pleased to welcome Patricia Elliott, School of Journalism, as the Community Research Unit Director in March 2010. Trish is an Assistant Professor in the School of Journalism and a freelance magazine journalist and alternative media practitioner who has been cited numerous times by the Canadian Association of Journalists and National Magazine Awards for outstanding investigative journalism. Her research interest is alternative media, with a focus on community radio. She brings a wealth of experience to this position as a community activist for thirty years and as a participant in collaborative community-based research projects as both a community activist and university-based researcher. As Director, Trish is committed to creatively addressing power inequalities between university and community researchers, promoting academic reform to better empower community engaged scholars, and to advance community engaged scholarship as a powerful research methodology.

Community Engaged Scholarship Initiative

The University of Regina, through the CRU and Faculty of Arts, is participating in the national project “Developing and Rewarding Community-Engaged Scholarship: Towards the Transformation of University Policies and Practices”. This initiative is led by the Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and University of Guelph and includes a core group of eight Canadian universities. The goal of this national project is to advance community-engaged scholarship (CES) in Canadian universities by developing innovative competency-based models of faculty development, facilitating peer review and dissemination of products of CES, aligning faculty review, promotion and tenure policies and practices with standards of quality CES, and supporting community-engaged faculty through the promotion and tenure process. Few models exist currently at Canadian universities for achieving these goals and the CRU is excited for this opportunity, as it will be immensely beneficial to the work of community-engaged faculty members and students at the University of Regina.

The team participating in this three-year project is comprised of CRU Director Patricia Elliott, Dean Dr Richard Kleer, Dr Darlene Juschka and Dr William Arnal, and will be supported by the CRU.
**Ehrlo Community Services – Washington Park Place**

The CRU worked with Ehrlo Community Services (Washington Park Place) on a participatory action research project to explore the socio-economic needs of single mothers living in a supported housing complex. This research examined the barriers faced by single mothers in improving their lives and the lives of their children through focus groups. Partners in this project were researcher Amber Fletcher (PhD candidate Canadian Plains Research Centre), and advisors Shelley Sayer (Washington Park Place), and Dr Wendee Kubik (Women’s and Gender Studies Program). The project was wrapped up in May 2010 and initial findings were presented by Amber Fletcher at the Canadian Women's Studies Association (CWSA) Annual Conference, held as a part of the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities.

**North Central Community Association (NCCA)**

This collaborative project will compile and publicize written 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. All profiles will be publicized within the neighbourhood. Partners in the project are Rob Deglau (NCCA), Jan Morier (NCCA/Regina Plains Museum), William Brennan (Dept of History), Allan Lefebvre (North Central Shared Facility).

Two stages of research have been completed: in Fall 2009, Arts student intern Pam Rice (Psychology) did introductory work for the project and in Summer 2010, FNUC grad and Journalism student Ntawnis Piapot began interviewing North Central residents and collating a list of important residents and Scott Collegiate graduates. This phase was funded by the North Central Shared Facility.

**Regina Food Bank**

The CRU collaborated with the Regina & District Food Bank, REACH (Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger), and the Faculty of Social Work on a community-based research project examining the gap between the cost of healthy food and income available to Food Bank clients. This project uses published data to demonstrate the financial realities faced by different Food Bank clients. Partners on the project include Dr Nuelle Novik and Travis Bernard (Faculty of Social Work), Steve Compton and Lorne Dunsmore (Regina Food Bank), Dana Folkerson (REACH) and Fiona Douglas (Social Policy Research Unit).

**Saskatchewan African-Canadian Heritage Museum (SACHM)**

The CRU is facilitating a research project with the Saskatchewan African-Canadian Heritage Museum (SACHM) and Department of History to explore the history and contemporary contributions of African-Canadians in Saskatchewan. 2010 will mark the centennial of the settlement of African-Canadians from Oklahoma in the province. Partners on the project include Carol LaFayette-Boyd and Christine Lwanga (SACHM), Drs Philip Charrier and Ian Germani (Dept of History) and student researchers Deanna Matity and Terra Brockett. Results from this project were presented at SACHM’s Centennial Symposium on September 24, 2010.
Arts CARES is an intensive community service-learning program that gives Arts students an opportunity to work in and learn from community organizations as a part of their studies. For four days during the 2010 February break, 49 students from 7 Arts classes volunteered for 15 hours at partnering community-based organizations. Students completed community tasks ranging from filling food hampers, working with children, writing newsletter articles and creating educational games. They also participated in reflective workshops in which they learned more about community issues, shared their week with other students and reflected on what this experience meant for them as students and citizens. Arts CARES is designed an opportunity for students to connect theory to community practice, and to offer community partners a way to engage meaningfully with university students.

This is the second year that Arts CARES has been organized by the CRU and all aspects of the program have experienced growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>Service hours per student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participating classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total hours of service</td>
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Participating Classes

**Interdisciplinary Studies 101** (Global Citizenship) - Bryan Hillis

*Sociology 208* (Inequality & Social Justice) - Margot Hurlbert

**Political Science 100** (Intro to Political Science) - Tina Beaudry-Mellor

**Political Science 361** (Local & Community Politics) - Tina Beaudry-Mellor

**Women’s & Gender Studies 100** (Intro to Women's Studies) - Tina Beaudry-Mellor

**Women’s & Gender Studies 280AG** (Feminisms & Activisms: Dancing through the Minefields) - Brenda Anderson

**Women’s & Gender Studies 301** (Women & Health: Local & Global) - Amber Fletcher

*I appreciated the chance to contribute to something meaningful.*

Arts CARES 2010 participant


**Partnering CBOs**

AIDS Program South Saskatchewan

All Nations Hope AIDS Network

Briarpatch Magazine & The Sasquatch

Carmichael Outreach

Four Directions Community Health Centre

GBLUR Centre for Sexuality and Gender Diversity

Green Party of Saskatchewan

North Central Community Gardens

Planned Parenthood Regina

Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry

Regina & District Food Bank

REACH (Regina Education & Action on Child Hunger)

Regina Open Door Society

RPIRG (Regina Public Interest Research Group)

Regina Transition House

SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities)

Sofia House

Souls Harbour Rescue Mission

University of Regina’s Senior Education Centre

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*We think that the Arts CARES program has long term value to building volunteer and support bases among a younger generation of people. Exposure to what we do helps to also dispel the myths that often prevent people from getting involved in their community.*
Community Research Unit

**Mission**

The mission of the Community Research Unit is to enable the Faculty of Arts to serve as a resource for non-profit organizations and communities, rural and urban, and to be enriched in turn by our relationships with those communities. In so doing, 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. Our mandate is to 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.

For more information about the Community Research Unit, please visit [www.arts.uregina.ca/cru](http://www.arts.uregina.ca/cru)