

President's Message

February 2018

Members of the University community,

A week ago, I had the privilege of delivering the fourth annual State of the University Address to the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce. This event affords me the opportunity each year to speak about the University of Regina's successes and challenges to an audience of influential civic leaders.

The event took place at the Delta Hotel and as we gathered on Treaty 4 territory, it was only fitting that on the stage with me was the Eagle Staff that was presented to the University in early December. The Eagle Staff is a sacred object traditionally given to a leader or warrior for service to community. This particular Eagle Staff was made and presented to the University by Elder Roy Bison, his grandson, and his son Teddy Bison, a student in the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance.

Among the audience members at the address were: the Lieutenant-Governor of Saskatchewan, the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield; The Honourable Herb Cox, Minister of Advanced Education; other members of the Legislative Assembly; Mayor Michael Fougere; and many other notable business leaders. Also in the audience were many members of the University of Regina community, including alumni, members of the Board of Governors, Senators, current and past Chancellors, faculty members, staff and students. I would like to thank all who attended and commend you for representing the University so well.

The theme of my presentation this year was inspired by the provincial motto, *Multis e gentibus vires*, which is Latin for “From Many Peoples, Strength.” The motto highlights an important Saskatchewan characteristic – the ability for the diverse population of our province to come together and work for the greater good. Those of us who live, work and study at the University of Regina see that same sense of cooperation play out every day. We know that neighbours helping neighbours is a made-in-Saskatchewan attitude.

While my 2017 address focused on how the University contributes to the community, this year I chose to illustrate the opposite – how the community contributes to the University.

There are myriad ways that the community contributes to the University and its well-being. Some of those ways include the opportunities organizations provide for our students to volunteer, work or be mentored. Members of the community are also supportive of our Cougars and Rams teams and the many cultural events our students stage during the year. Throughout the summer months, support comes in the form of hundreds of youth taking to our campus to participate in sports schools and academic camps. These are just some of the many examples I pointed out in my address.

Also in attendance at last week’s event were six individuals whose connection and commitment to the University are especially notable. I took the opportunity to introduce them and told the audience a little about each one of them. I would like to share that with you as well.

The first person I introduced was Favour Amadi, who along with Victoria Ordu was deported to Nigeria a few years ago because as students they unwittingly broke immigration regulations by briefly taking part-time, off-campus jobs. After their deportation, Favour and Victoria wanted to return to the University of Regina to finish their education. They were short on funds, and travelling back to Regina seemed an impossibility. When the word got out, however, the generosity of our community proved itself once again, and funds were quickly raised so Favour and Victoria could return to Regina to continue their studies.

Next, I introduced Mo Bundon. Over the years Mo has served as the University's Board Chair, sat on the Hill School Advisory Board and on the Dean of Business Search Committee, and contributed to our University in countless ways. For his tireless advocacy and support for our University he received the 2010 Distinguished Service Award.

I then spoke about our most recent honorary degree recipient, Dr. Murad Al-Katib, another example of a strong believer in our University. The business he oversees, AGT Food and Ingredients, is a big supporter of student success. Murad also gives his time in many ways by volunteering with the Faculty of Business Administration. He is Chair of the Kenneth Levene Graduate School of Business Advisory Board, and actively mentors students in the Faculty.

Two other people the University can always count on were then introduced. Dr. Roberta McKay and Elmer Brenner are the “poster children” for *The College Avenue Campus Renewal Project*. They serve on the project’s fundraising committee and, in 2014, donated a world-class Fazioli piano for Darke Hall. Roberta and Elmer are always there when we need them, and they deserve our thanks.

Lastly, I introduced Olivia Arnal, an amazing Business Administration student who will be graduating this spring. Olivia has served in the Student Ambassador program for the past four years and has also been involved in the Random Acts of Kindness initiative on campus. Recently, she and her teammate won the accounting portion of the international Inter-Collegiate Business Competition at Queen’s University. Olivia supports the long-term vision of the University, something she demonstrated in the first year of her studies when she came to my office to give a donation to *The College Avenue Campus Renewal Project*. Olivia plans to work in the field of agribusiness in her home area of southwest Saskatchewan after graduation, but she has told me, “Whenever the University needs me, I’ll be there!”

It was an honour to speak about the University of Regina’s successes and celebrate some of the many people and organizations whose contributions are so important to the education we provide for our students. The long-term well-being of our University depends on support in all its forms. As members of the University of Regina community, our faculty, staff, students, alumni and donors contribute every day to our academic mission. You embody our provincial motto – “From Many Peoples, Strength” – and I cannot thank you enough for that.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor