

President's message – August 2015

Members of the campus community,

In just over a month's time, our hallways, classrooms and laboratories will once again be bustling with students. I hope you share my excitement as we get close to the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year!

When I meet our new students each year, I'm always impressed by the quality of those who choose to attend the University of Regina. For example, the recipients of the UR Circle of Scholars Entrance Scholarship, one of our signature entrance scholarships, are some of the best and brightest in western Canada. Each year, the scholarship is awarded to 10 graduating high school students from 10 geographic regions, primarily in the prairies. The student with the highest grade point average in each region qualifies for the scholarship. Each recipient receives \$5,000 per year, and up to \$20,000 over four years. In order to retain the scholarship, the recipient needs to maintain a minimum average of 80% each year.

To give you an idea of the accomplishments of some of these students, here's a brief look at two who will be joining us at the start of the fall semester.

Danielle Major is from St. Brieux, Saskatchewan and is entering the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies with a 99.2% high school average. Yes, you read that right – 99.2%! Danielle will be joining the Cougars Track and Field team where she will compete in Canadian Interuniversity Sport hurdles and sprints. At the Saskatchewan High School Athletic Association in June, Danielle was the silver medalist in the 80-metre competition. As well, she is an active volunteer, having served at a long-term care home and veterinary clinic. She was also a group leader at Vacation Bible School.

Denis Ouellette is one of an increasing number of students who comes to the University of Regina from the Calgary area. Denis has been accepted into the Faculty of Science and will be pursuing a degree in actuarial science. He finished high school with a 94.8% average. In addition to his studies, Denis is involved in band and played ball hockey for the Calgary Fury ball hockey club, with whom he competed in three provincial championships and a western Canadian championship. Denis was the recipient of the Prometheus Award for highest academic achievement in junior high school and was an advanced placement student in high school.

Danielle and Denis are only two of our distinguished UR Circle of Scholars Entrance Scholarship recipients this fall. The others are: Aminta Mejia from Regina; Kelly Granil from Moose Jaw; Erin Hughes from Swift Current; Dominique de Leon from Prince Albert; Jacob Coulter from Hamiota, Manitoba; Tamara McVannel from MacGregor, Manitoba; Elizabeth McQueen from Saskatoon; and Kira Hall from Rouleau. I'm sure you'll be hearing a lot about them in the coming years!

One of the priorities of our strategic plan, *peyak aski kikawinaw*, is student success. In support of that, we are all engaged in a multitude of activities and initiatives – like the UR Circle of Scholar Entrance Scholarship, for example – that are aimed at helping our students succeed. As we

welcome all of our students to campus this fall, I encourage you to do what you can to make them feel supported. Take the time to find out how a student is doing. Ask if there is anything that you can help with. Or, just give them a reassuring smile as you pass in the hallway.

We can all play a role in ensuring that new students transition seamlessly into university life, and that those who return each year know that the entire University of Regina family is here to support them. That, in turn, can help lead to increased retention rates and pave the way for greater student engagement, achievement, personal growth, academic success and career readiness. Together we can help our students succeed.

I hope you enjoy the remainder of the summer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor