NEW INITIATIVES

U of S alumnus establishes major graduate scholarship in global food security

Dr. Patrick Man Pan Yuen, a distinguished pediatrician and U of S alumnus living in Hong Kong, has made a $1 million gift to U of S to establish the Dr. Donald Baxter Scholarships in Global Food Security.

With a matching contribution from the U of S Global Institute for Food Security, two $40,000-a-year awards will be offered to pay for students from China and Hong Kong to study at U of S, as well as U of S students to study in China. Read more details here.

U of S student aims to improve healthcare delivery for Indigenous peoples

Charlene Thompson (School of Public Health) has been awarded $108,000 for a three-year CIHR Aboriginal Research Methodologies grant to develop a model for improved delivery of health programs in Indigenous communities that, for the first time, incorporates feedback from the communities’ frontline health workers. Read more here.

U of S opens water research facility in the Rocky Mountains to study flooding and drought risk

U of S has opened a cold water laboratory in Canmore, Alberta, to better study the impacts of a changing climate on water resources. Part of the U of S-led international Global Water Futures program, the Coldwater Laboratory will improve the flood and drought resiliency of communities by developing tools that provide better disaster monitoring, predict future water availability and help stakeholders with water resource decision making. More details are available here.

Government of Canada invests $4.47 million for U of S livestock-forage research centre

A $4.47-million investment by the Government of Canada was announced by David Lametti, parliamentary secretary to Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and for Western Economic Diversification Canada on May 26. The funding is to support the planned construction of the university’s Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence (LFCE), two new facilities on U of S land designed to address forage, cow-calf, beef cattle, and environmental research.

The LFCE has already received commitments of $10 million from the federal and provincial governments, $10 million from U of S, and $1 million from the Saskatchewan Cattlemen’s Association. Details of the project and funding are available here.

Open SESAME: U of S building bridges in the Middle East through synchrotron science

U of S—home to the Canadian Light Source synchrotron—is part of an international effort to use science for diplomacy in one of the world’s most volatile regions. The Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME) synchrotron facility, a collaboration between Israel, Iran, Cyprus, Egypt, Pakistan, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority, is the largest scientific project in the Middle East. Canada, which has been granted observer status on the SESAME Council, will be represented by Rob Lamb, director of the U of S-owned Canadian Light Source (CLS), and a representative of the Government of Canada. Read the details here.
**U of S launches engineering engagement program for Indigenous youth**

U of S has been awarded nearly $150,000 in federal funding to teach Indigenous youth about engineering principles underlying the technologies and designs in their own communities. A grant from the NSERC PromoScience Program will invest $147,474 in the project over three years.

Sean Maw (Engineering) is working with Matthew Dunn, Indigenous Peoples initiatives co-ordinator at the College of Engineering, to develop a new education program entitled *Ancestral Engineering Design Activities*. The program aims to teach Indigenous youth about the engineering principles behind Indigenous technology and designs, such as the forces acting on an animal trap or the design principles behind choosing the materials for a canoe. [Read more here.](#)

**Aboriginal Student Achievement Program has helped close education gap at U of S**

Five years since its inception, the College of Arts and Science Aboriginal Student Achievement Program (ASAP) is demonstrating concrete success. A total of 383 students have enrolled in ASAP since 2012, according to a five-year report released this month.

Students within the program are more likely to return for their second year of study (60 per cent versus 46.5 per cent for those not enrolled in the program). ASAP students are also more than twice as likely to seek out the campus resources they need compared to Aboriginal students outside of ASAP. Three-quarters of ASAP students reported a sense of belonging to the College of Arts & Science and the U of S. [Read more here.](#)

**U of S to help northern Saskatchewan students access science and engineering programming**

U of S officially partnered with Northlands College in Buffalo Narrows, Creighton, Ile a la Crosse and La Ronge to offer a 42-week Pre-Engineering and Science (PRES) program designed to reduce barriers people living in northern Saskatchewan may face when preparing to enter into post-secondary science and engineering programs. The program which runs from September to April includes high school upgrading, 10 university courses, and programming designed to help ease the transition into university. [More details are available here.](#)

**Reputational Success**

**Four U of S students awarded prestigious Vanier Scholarships**

Four U of S PhD students have been awarded 2017 Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships, three of them Indigenous students. Awarded annually by SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR, and valued at $50,000 per year for three years, Vanier scholarships recognize top-tier PhD students who demonstrate excellence in academia, research impact and leadership at Canadian universities.

The winners are Jocelyn Joe-Strack (SENS), Terrance Pelletier (Educational Administration), Tasha Spillett (Education), and Ahmed Tamiyu (Mechanical Engineering). [Read the details of their research projects here.](#)

**Federal funding for renewed Canada Research Chairs**

Canada Research Chair in Photovoltaics Tim Kelly (Chemistry) and Canada Research Chair in Multiple Sclerosis Research Bogdan Popescu (Anatomy & Cell Biology) were renewed as Tier 2 chair holders, with a total of $1 million in federal funding over the next five years.
PotashCorp Saskatoon YWCA Women of Distinction Awards

Faculty, alumni and senior leaders were among the honourees at this year’s Saskatoon YWCA Women of Distinction Awards. Canada Research Chair in the History of Medicine Erika Dyck (history) was among five U of S alumnae awarded. Details about the other awardees are available online.

International partners gather at U of S to celebrate 20 years of food security development

On May 25 and 26, international researchers and dignitaries from U of S and Ethiopia’s Hawassa University celebrated a 20-year partnership of using pulse crops and education to combat child malnutrition and increase farmer incomes for thousands in Ethiopia. Through the project, researchers developed water-efficient, short-season pulse crops to account for a lack of affordable protein and deficiencies in nutrients such as zinc and iron, and assembled recipes and preparation techniques to make nutrients easier to absorb. Read more details here.

U of S student finalist in national research photo competition

Awang Hazmi Awang Junaidi (Veterinary biomedical sciences) PhD student in from Malaysia, has been named one of 20 finalists in the nationwide NSERC 2017 Science Exposed Competition, an initiative that showcases images of scientific research from all fields of study. His image is included in this month’s Research Update banner on each page. You can vote for Awang Junaidi’s submission, (image number 11) on the NSERC website. Read more about his image here.

Discoveries with Impact

U of S “Bat Men” shed light on bat super immunity

Vikram Misra (Veterinary microbiology) and PhD candidate Arinjay Banerjee (Veterinary microbiology) may have unlocked the secret behind bat “super immunity” to deadly respiratory diseases such as SARS and MERS, which often cause serious often fatal disease in humans but leave bats unharmed. In a May 2017 article in Nature’s Scientific Reports, the researchers concluded that unlike with human cells, bat cells actively suppress inflammation when they are infected with viruses. Read the full story here, which is part of the Young Innovators series published in conjunction with The StarPhoenix.

U of S study aims to improve depression treatment

Research from Lisa Kalynchuk (Neuroscience), Hector Caruncho (Pharmacy), and PhD student Kyle Brymer may hold promise for producing newer, faster-acting antidepressants using reelin, a protein naturally produced by the brain. In animals, the protein shows an antidepressant effect in just one day, and the ability to reverse structural changes in the brain caused by depression. The story is part of the Young Innovators series published in conjunction with The StarPhoenix.
Benefits of pet therapy recognized by Saskatchewan people in recovery
Colleen Anne Dell (sociology) has found Saskatchewanians recovering from addictions confirm the value of pet therapy as a pathway to recovery. A total of 86 Saskatchewan people responded a national survey conducted by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA), with 854 people in recovery across Canada responding. Of the Saskatchewan respondents, 68.4 per cent identified their relationship with animals or pets as an important support in recovery. As well, 39.5 per cent identified their relationship with animals or pets as important to maintaining their recovery. The details of the survey report are available here.

INITIATIVES

Newly launched centre hosts day focused on patient-oriented research in Saskatchewan
The newly launched Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research (SCPOR), headquartered at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S), hosted a one-day research profile event designed to connect people interested in patient-oriented research and to highlight SCPOR’s role in this important work provincially and nationally on Wednesday, May 17 at TCU Place in Saskatoon. Details about the event are available here.

New executive director named to lead U of S Fedoruk Centre
Following an extensive national search, John Root has been appointed executive director of the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation (Fedoruk Centre) at the University of Saskatchewan. Details are available here.

U of S will close research centre due to provincial budget cuts
International Centre for Northern Governance and Development (ICNGD) will close as of June 15, 2017. The annual targeted funding for this research centre was eliminated in this year’s provincial budget, as of April 30, 2017. The details of the closure are available here.

ARTISTIC DISCOVERY

Aboriginal Theatre Program takes centre stage
The first students in the wîcêhtowin Aboriginal Theatre Program at the University of Saskatchewan celebrated the completion of their certificate program with four shows of maskihkiyiwan nehiyawin: Re-igniting the Fire, directed by Carol Greyeyes.

wîcêhtowin, a Cree word meaning living together in harmony, is the first program of its kind at a Canadian university, and is helping a new generation of students tell stories about their place in the 21st century. Read more here.
CIHR Training Grant - Indigenous Mentorship Network Program
- **Caroline Tait** (Psychiatry), **Robert Innes** (Indigenous Studies), **Sylvia Abonyi** (Community Health and Epidemiology), **Lorna Butler** (Nursing), **Colleen Dell** (Sociology), **Leah Ferguson** (Kinesiology), **Heather Foulds** (Kinesiology), **Paul Hackett** (Geography), **Mansfield Mela** (Surgery), **Stephan Milosavljevic** (Physical Therapy), **George Mutwiri** (Public Health), **Sarah Oosman** (Physical Therapy), **Louise Racine** (Nursing), **Alan Rosenberg** (Pediatrics), **James Waldrum** (Archaeology and Anthropology), **Holly Graham-Marrs** (Nursing) were awarded $1,000,000 for Building Reconciliation Together: Transformative Intergenerational Mentorship. The project has additionally received $90,000 and in kind support from the U of S Council of Health Sciences Deans and $20,000 from CGSR.

CIHR Catalyst Grant
- **Vivian Ramsden** (Academic Family Medicine), **Shelley Krychuk** (Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture), **Sylvia Abonyi** (Community Health and Epidemiology), **James Dosman** (Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture), **Mark Fenton** (Medicine), **Holly Graham-Marrs** (Nursing) were awarded $1,000,000 for Building Reconciliation Together: Transformative Intergenerational Mentorship. The project has additionally received $90,000 and in kind support from the U of S Council of Health Sciences Deans and $20,000 from CGSR.

CIHR Operating Grant Canadian Community Health Survey – Nutrition Analysis
- **Hassanali Vatanparast** (Pharmacy and Nutrition) and **Susan Whiting** (Pharmacy and Nutrition), more than $91,000 for *Calcium and vitamin D intakes of Canadians: vulnerable groups and call to action for improving bone health.*
Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation

- **Paul Hackett** (Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit), **Sylvia Abonyi** (Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit), **Lorna Butler** (Nursing), **Geoffrey Maina** (Nursing) and **Kris Steward** (General Internal Medicine), $150,000 for Implementing the “Patient’s charter of tuberculosis care” in high incidence, partnered with CIHR’s Pathways to Health Equity for Aboriginals Peoples Program.

MITACS Accelerate

- **Lorna Butler** (Nursing, ICNGD), $195,000 for An Engaged Community for Shared Learning: Internships Contribute to Capacity Building in Northern Saskatchewan, in partnership with Cameco Corporation.

- **Douglas Clark** (SENS) with intern Sujata Manandhar, $90,000 for Identifying potential approaches to managing water resources in Champagne and Aishihij First Nations’ Traditional Territory, Yukon, in partnership with Yukon Energy Corporation.

- **Eric Lamb** (Plant Sciences), **Ryan Brook** (Animal and Poultry Science) and interns Hannah Hilger and Dale Gross, $90,000 for Grazing patterns vs. cattle in response to management strategies designed to improve habitat for species at risk, in partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

- **Christy Morrisey** (Toxicology Centre) with intern Margaret Eng, $15,000 for Tracking the effects of neonicotinoid insecticides on migratory birds, in partnership with Bird Studies Canada.

Apobiologix

- **Kerry Mansell** (Pharmacy and Nutrition), $14,500 for Budget Impact Analysis of Using the Biosimilars Grastofil and Basaglar vs. Neupogen and Lantus.

Fisheries and Joining Management Committee

- **Emily Jenkins** (Veterinary Microbiology) $10,000 for Beluga diseases and food borne parasites in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region – 2017-18.

Canadian Bar Association - Law for the Future Fund Grant

- **James (Sakej) Henderson** (Native Law Centre), $10,000 for The Mi’kmaw Nation’s renewed relationship with Canada.

Foundation for Legal Research

- **Wanda Wiegers** (Law), $5,000.00 for Rights of Foster Parents in Selected Jurisdictions.

- **Barbara von Tigerstrom** (Law), $5,000.00 for Direct and Vicarious Liability for Tort Claims Involving Violation of Privacy.

- **Michael Plaxton** (Law), $2,650.00 for Sovereignty, Restraint and Guidance: Canadian Criminal Law in the 21st Century and The 1982 Criminal Code: Documents For its Interpretation.

Cleft Palate Foundation

- **Student Paul Pown Raj Iyyanar** (Pharmacy and Nutrition) and **Adil Nazarali** (Pharmacy and Nutrition), were awarded the $5,000 2017 Subtelny Orthodontic Clinical Research Grant for Hoxa2 regulates osteogenic differentiation through Bmp signaling during palate development - Implication in cleft palate pathogenesis.