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# ART HOUSE

**YVETTE MOORE: PASSION FOR PRAIRIE LIFE FUELS ARTISTRY AND COMMUNITY WORK**

# ELECTRONICS DESIGN TECHNOLOGIST

# GADGET GURU

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DR. LARRY ROSIA, PRESIDENT AND CEO

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## WELCOME

Spring and fall are my favourite seasons in post-secondary: spring, because that's when many of our students complete their programs and move closer to realizing their career aspirations, and fall, because we have a fresh intake of students eager to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge.

This spring, graduates crossing the stage in our convocation ceremonies are receiving the first-ever Saskatchewan Polytechnic parchments. They are following in the footsteps of the many well-respected graduates of SIAST — the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is building on the very solid foundation established by SIAST as we continue our transformation into a new kind of post-secondary enterprise, one that specializes in student-focused and employer-driven applied learning.

As a polytechnic, we are expanding our scope of programming to include degrees of an applied nature where demand for

such programming exists and in fields where we have expertise.

We will also continue to meet growing demand for certificate and diploma programs, and for apprenticeship training.

Through our ongoing evolution, we will develop new types of partnerships in support of economic and social growth. This year, for instance, we launched two centres of excellence — the Manufacturing Centre of Excellence and the Centre for Minerals Innovation. Stories about these new initiatives appear on pages 9 and 12 respectively.

We will also continue to expand our applied research activities (see page 28) to help partners find innovative solutions for real-world problems.

Student-focused and employer-driven applied learning and applied research are key elements of what it means to be a polytechnic.

And why do we need a polytechnic in Saskatchewan? Quite simply, because growth drives the economy, business drives growth and people with real-world skills drive business.

“ We will continue to expand our applied research activities . . . ”

Saskatchewan Polytechnic Magazine is a publication of Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
Editors Ashley Hatley, Linda Miller-Wenman Contributing writers Barbara Balfour, Sara Bedal  
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On the cover: Yvette Moore, photographed by Tom Bartlett

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## MINING SAFETY STUDY TO SAVE LIVES, LIMBS

Sask Polytech is partnering with the International Minerals Innovation Institute and the University of Saskatchewan on a **two-year research project** that's examining how safety cultures and safety behaviours in the minerals industry can be improved. Six major mining companies are participating in the **\$786,000** project, which is expected to reduce workplace accidents and ultimately increase the global competitiveness of Saskatchewan's minerals industry.

## CRITICAL CARE NURSING PROGRAM EXPANDS

Sask Polytech recently expanded its Critical Care Nursing program, giving more registered nurses access to specialized education that prepares them for employment in intensive care settings. This year 80 students from across the province are expected to graduate from the advanced certificate program, offered through distance education and including labs and clinical practicums.

## HOSPITALITY PROGRAM IN INDIA SUPPORTS IMMIGRATION

Thanks to an agreement between Sask Polytech and the Continental Institute for International Studies (CIIS), students in India can enrol in Year 1 of Sask Polytech's Hotel and Restaurant Management program in Chandigarh, Punjab State. CIIS will start delivering the program in September, while Sask Polytech will be responsible for the program's quality assurance. After Year 1, students may be eligible to complete the diploma program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Saskatoon Campus and potentially settle in the province.

## CONVENIENT ONLINE OPTION FOR CARPENTRY APPRENTICES

Sask Polytech is piloting a program that allows Carpentry apprentices to attend classes on-campus for three weeks a year instead of the typical seven weeks. The program, developed with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission, includes 21 weeks of online training and faculty support during evenings and weekends. A hit with Level 2 and Level 3 apprentices, the program will be extended to Level 4 apprentices later this year.

## DISTANCE ED LETS STUDENTS JUMP-START POST-SECONDARY STUDIES

This winter, a number of Saskatchewan high-school students tested the post-secondary waters by taking dual-credit courses through Sask Polytech distance education at their high schools. The Sask Polytech courses included CAD Drafting Level 1, Applied Trades Measurement and two courses in Medical Terminology. The opportunity let students earn a high-school credit and a Sask Polytech credit simultaneously, and gave them a better understanding of higher education and how their studies could translate into careers.

## BIOSCIENCE, VET TECH STUDENTS FAST-TRACK TO U OF S DEGREE

Sask Polytech and the University of Saskatchewan have signed two agreements allowing Sask Polytech students to carry over more academic credit than ever. Graduates of Sask Polytech's two-year BioScience Technology diploma program can now apply 60 units of transfer credit to the U of S's four-year or honours Biology program and earn a degree after two more years of study. Under the second agreement, students in Sask Polytech's two-year Veterinary Technology diploma program are eligible for 30 transfer credits into the U of S's Animal Science or Animal Bioscience program so they can earn a four-year degree in three years.



## ENROLMENT CONTINUES TO GROW

**15%** increase: Program enrolment (over five years)  
**7%** Aboriginal enrolment up to **18.5%**  
**20.5%** increase: Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

## GRAD EMPLOYMENT HITS 10-YEAR HIGH

**94%** New grads employed  
**90%** Aboriginal grads employed  
**98%** Satisfied employers

## GRADS TRAINED IN COMMUNITY SAFETY

In April, 13 students from across the province completed Sask Polytech's first Community Safety Induction Training program, offered in partnership with Saskatchewan's Ministry of Justice. The six-week program provides peace officer-level training and includes on-site and online courses on defensive tactics, tactical communication, law, the Criminal Code, traffic, mental health, crisis intervention, investigations and other key subjects.

## A STREAMLINED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Starting this spring, students in Sask Polytech's 577 online credit courses have the opportunity to connect and communicate through Brightspace, a powerful online learning platform. Students can participate in online discussions and access a huge range of resources. Sask Polytech has offered online learning for 14 years.

## SASK POLYTECH, U OF R CELEBRATE FIRST COLLABORATIVE NURSING GRADS

Fifty-four grads made history last fall, the first to graduate from the Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Sask Polytech began delivering the program along with the University of Regina in 2011. The grads were part of an accelerated option that enabled them to finish about eight months sooner than students in the regular four-year stream.

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# A WOMAN OF VISION

## YVETTE MOORE'S PASSION FOR CREATIVITY FUELS EVERYTHING SHE DOES

**S**ixteen years ago, Yvette Moore climbed a scaffold for the first time. Her mission was to restore the 1910 heritage building she'd just purchased in Moose Jaw and convert it into an art gallery — in less than three months.

It was a daunting undertaking.

Moore's project team consisted mostly of friends and family. The repairs included not only the removal of the suspended ceiling and original flooring in the former land titles building, but also called for more than a tonne of plaster and 140 litres of paint stripper, which would ultimately reveal solid copper doors and window frames.

The Yvette Moore Gallery of Fine Arts opened right on schedule March 27, 1999, with Saskatchewan's then-lieutenant-governor, the Honourable Jack Wiebe, cutting a copper wire (in lieu of a ribbon). It was a pivotal moment for Moore.

Up to that point, painting had essentially defined her career.

A painter of evocative prairie scenes, Moore painstakingly captures a high level of detail in her artwork.

### FAMILY PRIORITIES

Moore started painting in acrylics when her son was a baby, grabbing precious minutes while he napped to work at her easel. Then her three daughters came along. "The children grew up with me painting — it just became part of their life," says Moore.

But when her marriage broke up in 1985, she had to take a hard look at her future. "I was living off my artwork, but I couldn't quite see that as sufficient in raising a family," she says.

Moore decided to return to school as a mature student and moved from Radville to Moose Jaw. She'd had an interest in building and design since hanging out in her father's workshop on the farm as a girl, so she enrolled in a two-year architectural engineering technology program at the Saskatchewan Technical Institute (now Saskatchewan Polytechnic).

But when the head of the

program met her as she checked out the building where classes were going to be held, he noticed her three- and seven-year-old daughters in tow.

Moore says he shook his head.

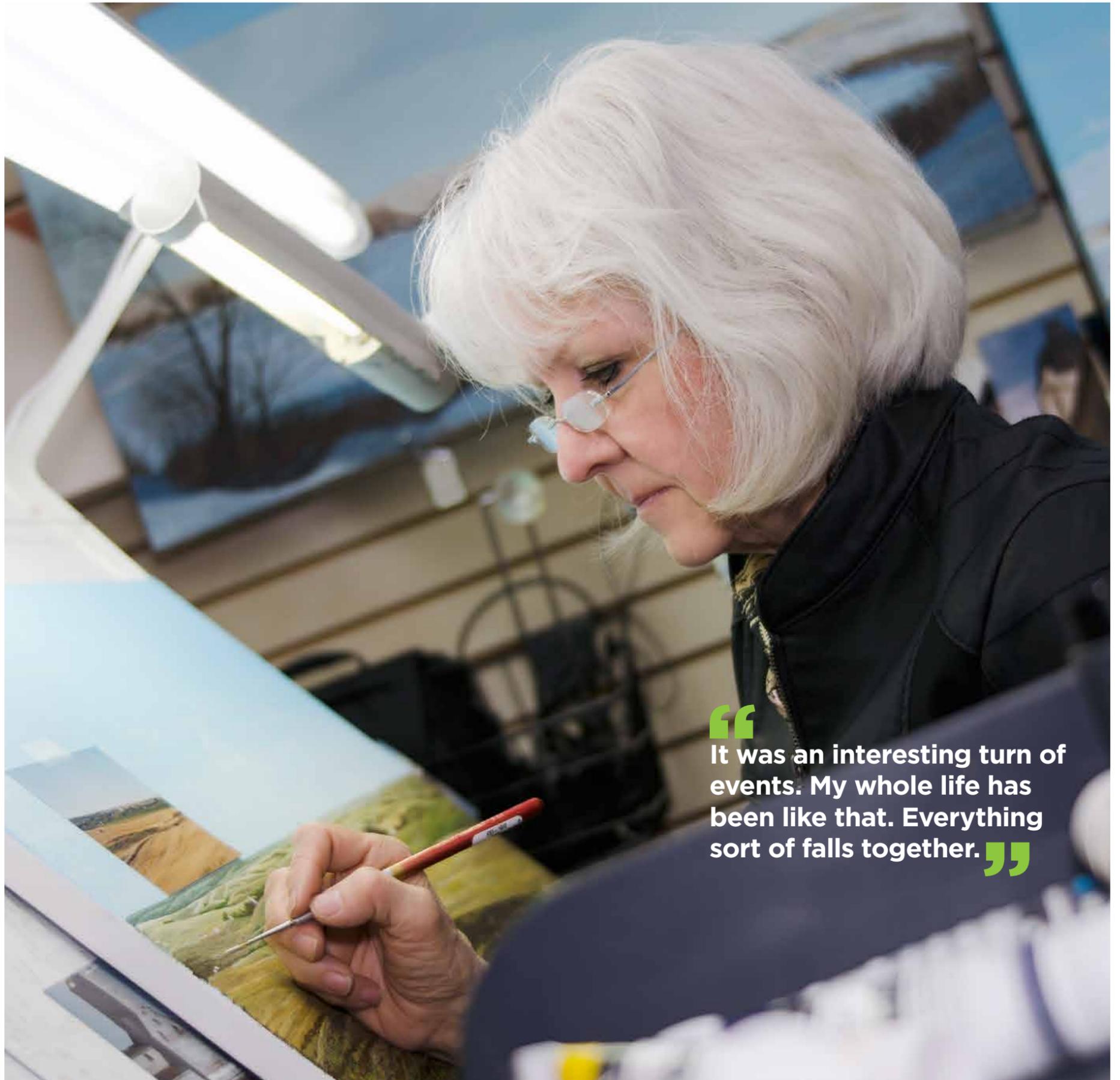
"It was one of the hardest courses they offered. He just could not see how I could do it," she says.

She became even more committed to pursuing the diploma program — and her determination paid off. Moore graduated near the top of her class with a high grade-point average, and at convocation, a partner in a Regina architectural firm approached her to line up a job interview.

"I hadn't even set out to find a job yet," Moore says. But she earned the architectural technologist position, which came with the flexibility of working at home two days a week.

"It was an interesting turn of events," she says. "My whole life has been like that. Everything sort of falls together."

She made the hour-long commute to Regina for a year, but after a stretch of black ice landed her car in a ditch, Moore decided to try going it alone in Moose Jaw.



“It was an interesting turn of events. My whole life has been like that. Everything sort of falls together.”



he continued freelance design work and focused on her art.

It was a propitious decision. Three years later she received a telephone call from Tundra Books, with the news that she had been chosen to illustrate *A Prairie Alphabet*, by writer Jo Bannatyne-Cugnet. It was important that the illustrator knew and understood the Prairies, Bannatyne-Cugnet says: "I couldn't have someone doing a John Deere tractor in purple because it was 'cute.' It had to be realistic." In less than a year, Moore had completed all 26 paintings.

The children's book went on to be a best-seller and garnered praise outside Canada. Tundra notes on its website that *Publishers Weekly* hailed "Moore's intricate, realistic style — calling to mind a cross between Andrew Wyeth and Norman Rockwell."

In 1992, Moore received a Mr. Christie's Book Award for excellence in book illustration in Canada for *A Prairie Alphabet*. The prize was \$7,500. "As a single mom, that was incredible," Moore says.

Subsequently, Moore and Bannatyne-Cugnet collaborated on two other books, *A Prairie Year* and *Heartland — A Prairie Sampler*. Together with *A Prairie Alphabet*, the books have sold almost half a million copies.

"What's really important about Yvette's work is how she records

**“What's really important about Yvette's work is how she records our present. That's why it resonates...”**

our present," Bannatyne-Cugnet says. "That's why it resonates with people."

**PRAIRIE LIFE UP CLOSE**

It's also one of the reasons people — tourists and locals alike — spend time at Moore's gallery. There, they can experience Moore's portrayals of prairie life up close; view the work of other artisans such as potters, glass artists and jewellery makers; shop for one-of-a-kind gifts or nosh on rhubarb spinach salad, Saskatoon-berry crêpes or other homemade creations in the Gallery Café.

Moore's youngest daughter, Sarah, manages the café and handles communications, creative and events for the gallery, while Moore's son, Tyler, does custom framing on site.

The gallery has long been a family affair. Middle daughter Chantelle focused on sales and marketing there for 10 years, although she is now a business instructor at Sask

Polytech. Eldest daughter Rynette is an operations director and a Sask Polytech alumna.

Moose Jaw — which brands itself "Surprisingly Unexpected" — attracts about half a million visitors annually, but it hasn't always.

"Twenty years ago, Moose Jaw was pretty much in the doldrums," says Deb Thorn, the city's economic development officer. "Tourism helped put Moose Jaw on the map. It took the work of a lot of people, and Yvette was a key part of that process. She's always been a strong proponent of heritage."

**BIG-PICTURE ATTITUDE**

In fact, Moore feels so passionately about preserving historical buildings that she funds a Sask Polytech scholarship recognizing top students in the Architectural History and Business for Renovators courses of Sask Polytech's Architectural Technologies program. And she's currently restoring her own Moose Jaw heritage home.

It's this kind of big-picture, forward-thinking attitude that characterizes Moore's community work. She's been a director of the Moose Jaw Chamber of Commerce for eight years, and has held director roles with Tourism Moose Jaw, South West Tourism, Moose Jaw's Heritage Advisory Committee, Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan, Moose Jaw Arts in Motion and the Saskatchewan Honours Advisory Council.

In 2005, she was named Saskatchewan Woman of the Year and, from 2007 to 2012, was an honorary colonel with the Royal Canadian Air Force's 15 Wing Moose Jaw.

In 2013, Moore received the Moose Jaw Chamber of Commerce Business Leader of the Year award, and this April was among 10 recipients of the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, the province's highest honour.

Those are just a few of the achievements of an entrepreneur who does her own bookkeeping, gardens ferociously and delights in receiving power tools as gifts.

In March, at an International Women's Day event, Moore told the women to learn as much as possible. "The more skills you have, the more independent you become." ■

**W**hile most people picture agriculture and mining when they think of Saskatchewan, the booming manufacturing industry has also become a significant part of the provincial economy.

In 2013, Saskatchewan accounted for \$15.7 billion in the purchase of manufacturing equipment, which increased to \$16.5 billion in 2014 and is expected to continue on its upward swing for years to come.

"As oil and gas remains a key industry and the mining sector evolves, we need to ensure we have the manufacturing capacity in the province to support them," says Jamie Hilts, dean of the School of Mining, Energy and Manufacturing at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

**NEED FOR EXPERTISE**

Last November, Sask Polytech formed a partnership with Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters to meet the province's rising need for expertise in the form of a new initiative, the Saskatchewan Manufacturing Centre of Excellence.

"We've already begun to see benefits from the centre in a number of areas, which we anticipate will continue," says Tom Kishchuk, president and CEO of Mitsubishi Hitachi Power Systems Canada Ltd. and chair of the Saskatchewan Manufacturing Council.

Housed on the Saskatoon campus with a \$1 million annual budget,

**“We've already begun to see benefits from the centre in a number of areas, which we anticipate will continue.”**



TOM KISHCHUK, RIGHT.

**MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE**

New partnership to support a fast-growing industry sector

the aim of the centre is to focus on three priority areas in manufacturing: increasing productivity, battling labour and skills shortages and improving innovation through education and networking.

"Through this partnership, we are most looking forward to becoming a significant contributor

to the manufacturing sector, not just through producing well-trained graduates from the trades and industrial programs, but also through our expertise in the area of applied research," Hilts says.

"Developing and delivering the necessary educational and training programs is key to ensuring the manufacturing industry continues to evolve in a positive way and that we can compete on a global scale. We see ourselves as a world leader in both the development of specialized equipment and in servicing manufacturing needs."

Programs will be developed to meet various industry demands including leadership skills and new technologies such as 3-D printing.

A new executive-in-residence program will offer mentorship and networking to groom the next generation of manufacturing leaders and bridge the gap between academia and industry.

"We're developing current and future leaders, and creating awareness of the sector within broader trades groups that will help to address labour shortage issues," Kishchuk says. ■

# SKILLS ON A WORLD SCALE

SASK POLYTECH WAS A **LAUNCH PAD**  
FOR TWO MEMBERS OF TEAM CANADA



## Q&A

**ROXANNE KANAK**

**Q** | When you were in school trying to juggle responsibilities, what was your favourite thing to do to relax?

**A** | Yoga.

**Q** | What song transports you back to your days at Sask Polytech?

**A** | Probably anything by Fitz & the Tantrums. I was really into them while in school.

**Q** | If you could spend a weekend anywhere, where would you go?

**A** | Just a weekend? The mountains probably.

**Q** | Who inspires you?

**A** | My mom.

**Q** | What book have you read more than once?

**A** | *A Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket (aka Daniel Handler).

## Q&A

**CARSON GUSTAFSON**

**Q** | When you were in school trying to juggle responsibilities, what was your favourite thing to do to relax?

**A** | Take walks and explore Saskatoon. It's a beautiful city, and I couldn't get enough of it!

**Q** | What song transports you back to your days at Sask Polytech?

**A** | "Coming of Age" by Foster the People.

**Q** | If you could spend a weekend anywhere, where would you go?

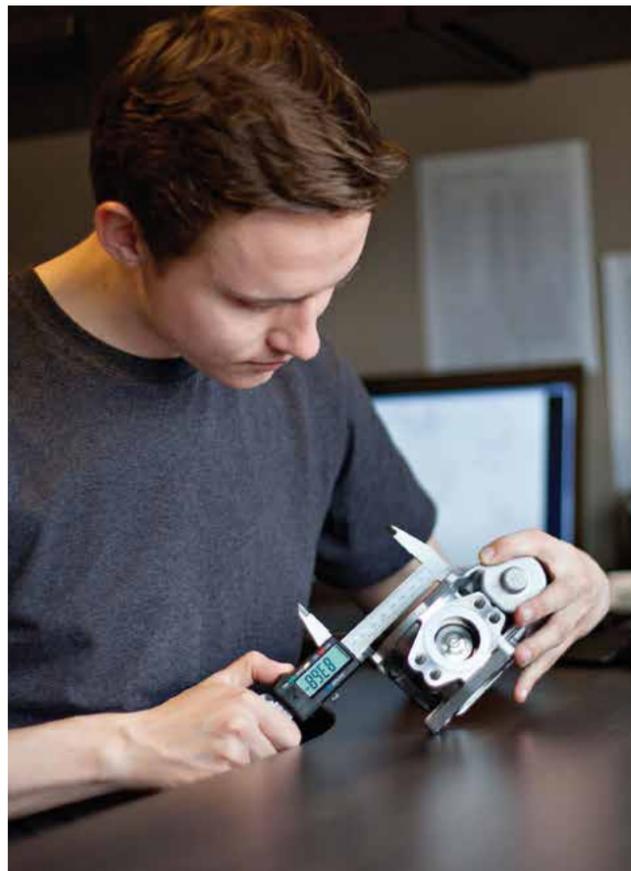
**A** | I'd go back to Florence, Italy, and sightsee till my feet hurt.

**Q** | Who inspires you?

**A** | My parents.

**Q** | What book have you read more than once?

**A** | *Ender's Game* (award-winning science fiction novel by Orson Scott Card).



Imagine designing something to fit a specific need, refining the design, making it bigger, stronger or more visually appealing — then printing it in 3-D and putting it together for presentation in front of a critical audience.

Now imagine doing all of the above in six hours.

National Skills Canada champions Carson Gustafson and Roxanne Kanak don't need to imagine. They've been performing under this kind of pressure for years, preparing to represent the best of Canada's vocational training on the world stage.

This August, Gustafson and Kanak will be part of Team Canada in São Paulo, Brazil, during the 43rd WorldSkills Competition ([worldskills.org](http://worldskills.org)), where competitors from more than 60 countries will demonstrate their trade skills against the most demanding international standards.

For Gustafson, a 2014 graduate of the CAD/CAM Engineering Technology program at Sask

Polytech, the competition is a chance to push himself and do what he loves. It was his gold medal-winning national performance while still in high school in 2012 that drew the attention of his current employer, Integra Engineering, which hired him as a designer and offered to pay for his further schooling at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

### PURSUIT OF PRECISION

Gustafson, 21, first began drafting designs in Grade 8 with paper, a pencil and a ruler. "I really enjoyed it. When I told my parents about it, my father, who was a teacher at the local high school, told me about the drafting program there," he says.

"I realized I really wanted to pursue it as a career and become better at this skill. I like the precision behind it, and the accuracy involved with 3-D modelling software. It's such an exact and particular task. Everything being manufactured is due to people like us who translate concepts into

“**We're one of the few post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan that offer the skills to excel in the competition in this category.**”

reality. I believe there's a real art to this aspect of design, and there's a lot of creativity involved in coming to the right solution.”

Gustafson says Sask Polytech prepared him for the competitions, at which he won gold in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

"We're one of the few post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan that offer the tools to excel in the competition in this category," he says. "I'm hoping the instructors will push toward bigger representation of our program and convince students to enter, the way my high-school teachers did."

In February, Gustafson and Kanak had to pass an additional nationwide WorldSkills selection trial to make it onto Team Canada.

They are paired with trainers who work on their skills for five to 10 hours a week, organize extra classes for them to take and keep them focused and in the competitive spirit.

Like Gustafson, Kanak discovered what she was good at early on. Growing up in the small town of Quill Lake, attending a school with only 130 students, she didn't have the option of taking a graphic design program. It was a position on the yearbook committee that helped spark the interest that led to her career as a print graphic designer.

"I was creating layouts for the book, and I loved doing it, spending lots of extra hours on it. I figured I could make a career out of it if I loved it that much," says Kanak, who grew up watching her mom scrapbook.

She describes her vocation as a kind of visual problem-solving.

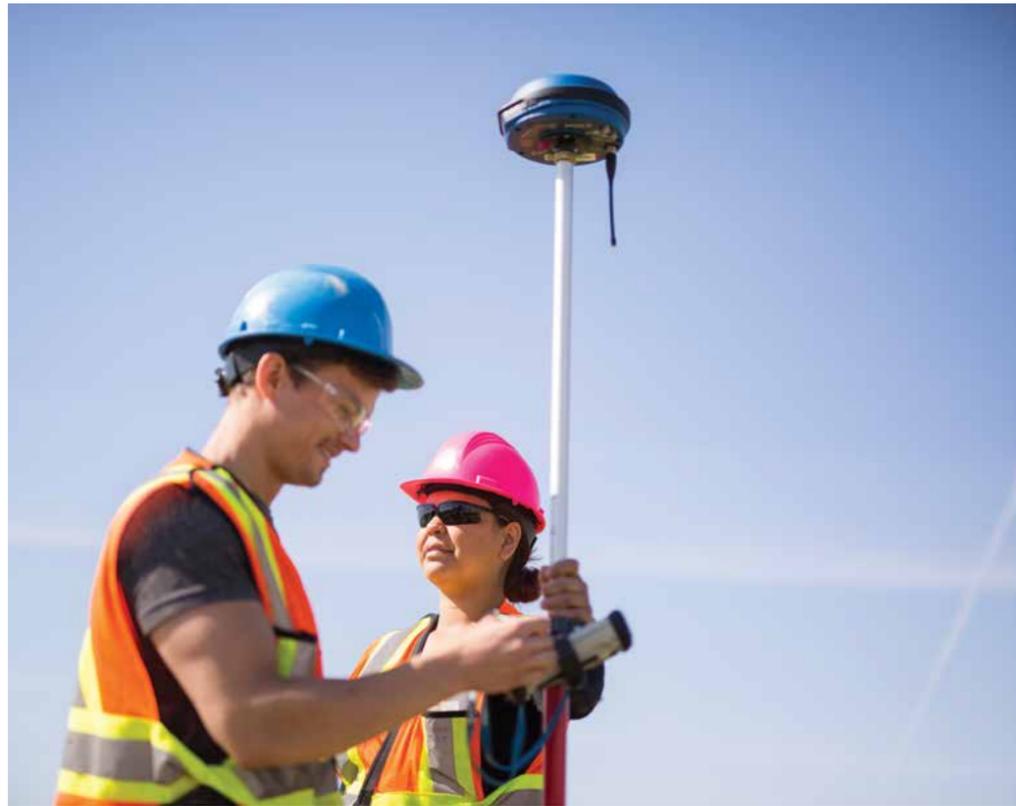
"Many people may not realize the thought process that goes on behind everything that gets printed — fonts, colour matching, typography, centre and alignment," says Kanak, 20, who currently works for WOW Factor Media in Moose Jaw.

### 'COOL OPPORTUNITY'

Going into skills competitions, participants have no idea of what will be expected from them. On one occasion, Kanak had to create a magazine cover and three inside spreads for a global strike movement. On another, she had to create a logo, letterhead, business card, entry ticket and gift shop bag for a museum in Germany within an allotted time period.

She is the first student from Sask Polytech's Graphic Communications program to qualify for WorldSkills.

"It's such a cool opportunity, and Sask Polytech has been very supportive. I'm hoping to get recognized on a larger scale in a bigger job centre — maybe even somewhere crazy like New York." ■



# DIGGING DEEPER

Centre for Minerals Innovation helps to **strengthen** the mining workforce

**R**ich in natural resources essential for powering and feeding the world, Saskatchewan is home to a booming mining industry that accounts for 30,000 jobs in the province. From potash and sodium sulphate to gold and diamonds, the earth offers a bounty.

But as the mining economy grows, so does the demand for a skilled workforce. To facilitate these evolving needs, the brand-new Centre for Minerals Innovation was established through a partnership between Saskatchewan Polytechnic and the International Minerals Innovation Institute (IMII).

Launched in November 2014 and sponsored by a combination of Saskatchewan-based companies and government funds, the

centre offers education, training and services specific to the mining and minerals industry.

“We’ll do that in a number of ways,” says centre director Cristal Glass-Painchaud.

### A LEADERSHIP ROLE

“Within Sask Polytech, we have 50 existing programs that are putting out graduates qualified to work in the mining and minerals industry. The centre can find out what industry players need, and connect them to what we have available in the institution,” Glass-Painchaud says.

The school can also respond by creating new programming, she says: “We can provide a leadership role in bringing the training wherever and whenever it’s needed.”

The Centre for Minerals Inno-

vation is not a physical building. It’s an operational unit within Sask Polytech — a brokering service driving connections and opportunities between industry and education, Glass-Painchaud says. The centre will provide leadership and management training within the context of continuing education. Courses will be delivered on-site at Sask Polytech as well as online.

“Our set-up allows us to extend our reach for delivery and allow for student access beyond a classroom — especially at the northern mine sites, which are remote,” she says. “I see the centre as a valued resource for industry and students, allowing us to target skills and education needs to foster a workforce that contributes to a strong economy for the province.” ■

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BLIND HOCKEY PLAYERS IN ACTION. IN GOAL IS MIKE SIMMONDS, WHO INITIATED THE PROJECT TO DESIGN A BETTER PUCK.

# PUCK PERFECTION

Sask Polytech helps to solve blind hockey's biggest riddle

While the sport of blind hockey has been around since the 1950s, the question of what to use as a puck has, until very recently, remained the unsolved Rubik's Cube of the game.

Played by athletes with 10 per cent vision or less, the game uses an adapted puck that is bigger and slower, and makes noise on the ice. Variations that have been tried include a nail-embedded plastic wheel from a toy wagon, a juice can and a sheet-metal puck filled with ball bearings — capable of doing considerable damage.

But now, thanks to the efforts of a six-person team in the Electronics Systems Engineering Technology

program at Sask Polytech, a new puck is being developed around which the blind hockey community can build the sport — and perhaps one day take it to the Paralympics.

It all started when Mike Simmonds, a blind hockey player who lost his sight due to diabetic retinopathy, approached Anthony Voykin at the Saskatoon campus to discuss a solution.

## 'SO FAR ADVANCED'

Simmonds is the only Saskatchewan player participating in an annual international tournament held by Courage Canada Hockey for the Blind, a national charity that leads the development of the sport.

"We were more than willing to support such a neat project that

“There have been close to 70 puck attempts so far. This one looks like it's on the right track for sure.”

improves the quality of life of those with vision impairment,” Voykin says. He approached the polytechnic's applied research office to secure more than \$20,000 in funding.

Voykin's team came up with the idea of a puck that is rubberized on the outside, with a familiar look and

feel, although larger at five inches in diameter as opposed to a regulation puck's three inches. Inside are the protected electronics that make it beep and vibrate so that players can hear it when it's flying through the air.

When the stick hits it, the pulses of sound speed up.

The final electronic prototype was used on the ice at the Courage Canada tournament in Toronto in February.

"The players told us the puck is so far advanced from anything they've used in the past. The executive director of Courage Canada told us they're certainly in it for the long haul to make this puck as accessible as possible," Voykin says.

Simmonds, a comedian and writer who often works blind hockey into his routine, could not be more pleased.

"Everybody at the tournament I spoke with was really excited to hear that we've got a school taking the time to design something, get players' feedback and actually get it right," he says.

"There have been close to 70 puck attempts so far. This one looks like it's on the right track for sure." ■



INSET: ANN AND GEORGE MERTLER. MAIN PHOTO: GEORGE WORKING ON A FAMILY MEMBER'S LOG HOUSE.

# A LEGACY OF CARPENTRY

Couple donates an enduring gift with tax benefits

During the 64 years they were married, Ann and George Mertler were inseparable. When George passed away in April 2012, Ann started thinking about a way to celebrate George's life, honour his memory and acknowledge his talent as a master woodcrafter.

Leaving a legacy to help students made the most sense, so in 2012, the Ann and George Mertler Bursary for carpentry students was established.

"George was a very ambitious man and looked forward

to building up this city and the country. Where else could he give his efforts to? Wood was his line of work, and he enjoyed it so much," says Ann, 92. "I'm a giving person. If I help someone else, I feel better. Whenever I needed help, I received it myself — and education is what everyone needs."

As an added bonus, leaving a legacy also made sense for tax and estate planning purposes. The Mertlers provided enough funds to award an annual \$4,000 bursary to two students. Starting this year, they will also be transferring bank

stocks to the school, giving Ann the benefit of a tax receipt but removing the taxable capital gain to her.

A further \$100,000 in bank shares will be transferred to the school upon Ann's passing, to be held in perpetuity. The dividend paid from the shares will be used for bursaries.

"When you transfer corporate stocks, you are not taxed on the capital gain and you are also given a charitable receipt for the amount donated," explains Ann and George's son, Gord. "The school will take the stocks and provide funds to the students. Over the

## DONORS INVEST IN STUDENT SUCCESS

Gifts from industry and individuals ensure that Saskatchewan Polytechnic students have the support they need to succeed.

Seven donors have contributed major gifts of equipment and cash with a total value of almost \$4.6 million.

The gifts include print media equipment, cars and heavy equipment, along with funding for equipment replacement, facility upgrades, simulation lab enhancements and student awards.

Our thanks to SaskPower, Husky Energy Inc., the Estate of John and Helen Lockwood, Crown Investments Corp., Norquest College and Yara Belle Plaine for their leadership and commitment to Sask Polytech.

If you or your organization is interested in supporting Saskatchewan Polytechnic, please contact Alison Matheson at 306-775-7717 or email [alison.matheson@saskpolytechnic.ca](mailto:alison.matheson@saskpolytechnic.ca).

years as the stocks increase in value, the school can use the capital appreciation of the stocks for equipment or school upgrades. With this arrangement, there is also a benefit to my mother and to the estate. Rather than being hit with a huge capital gain at her death, the funds will be used for the school and bursaries."

George, who spent his career as a millwright foreman, would have been thrilled to help others pursue a career in woodworking, Gord says: "Dad knew the value of Sask Polytech (then SIAST), as he was getting young fellows working with him as graduates and apprentices. He really appreciated what the school had to offer and the types of people it was turning out," he says.

"I think this is the true meaning of a legacy — it will just keep on giving back." ■

# ABORIGINAL SUCCESS, ASAP

Program is building skills and **boosting** achievement

The first in her family to graduate high school, Colleen Charles went on to complete Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Recreation and Leisure Management program. A mother by age 21, she then earned a master's degree in education and is now planning a PhD.

Meanwhile, several years after completing the Electrician apprenticeship program, Grant Pierce returned to Sask Polytech as an instructor in the same field.

These are just a couple of examples of the successes sparked by Aboriginal programming at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

Recognizing a need to help increase Aboriginal students' success, the Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) was established in 2009. It includes 21 recommendations for removing barriers to education, ranging from financial and literacy skills to navigating life in a larger city. Sask Polytech has



ABORIGINAL STUDENTS ENROLLED AT SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC

“Many of our students are the first in their families to embark on a post-secondary education.”

had a consistently high Aboriginal student population, and ASAP seeks to build on that by increasing the program completion rate.

So far, a number of achievements have been accomplished: enrolment of self-identified Aboriginal students is more than 3,200, and the school completion rate for these students is increasing. This is due, at least in part, to supports including Aboriginal advisers, a community coordinator, emergency bursary funds and a transition program for new students that starts a month before classes begin.

“Many of our students are the first in their families to embark on a post-secondary education,” says Myrna Yuzicapi, special adviser on Aboriginal initiatives and co-author of the ASAP.

### GROWING CONFIDENCE

“Just having help finding their way around, knowing where to go for groceries and seeing people they recognize makes a huge difference,” Yuzicapi says.

“The most noticeable benefit from the program is the students' confidence and assertiveness



GRANT PIERCE, RIGHT

level — they're head and shoulders above others who didn't have that opportunity,” she says, adding that 95 per cent of students who take summer transition courses successfully complete their programs.

A new Aboriginal balance scorecard will help identify areas to be further improved, says Jason Seright, Sask Polytech's director of Aboriginal Strategy.

“It's like a report card looking at areas such as representative workforce, amount of financial resources given, space dedicated to Aboriginal support services and programs, and how many Aboriginal students are employed after leaving their programs. There are also questions that students can answer on how satisfied they are with the services. This helps everyone in the organization play a part in this strategy.”

To ensure the future success of ASAP, Yuzicapi says, the institutional culture needs to be inclusive.

“We have a rapidly growing young Aboriginal population,” she says. “We need a better understanding of the history that contributed to our present circumstances, a curriculum that includes Aboriginal ways of knowing and learning, and different teaching and evaluation strategies. This will benefit everyone.” ■

“By the end of the season, Morin had led his team to the city championship and was named Coach of the Year.”

Phil Morin is a bit of a hockey nut. An avid fan of the NHL's Winnipeg Jets, he watches games every chance he gets. He also coaches a midget team in Prince Albert, a labour of love that lets him flex his leadership and motivational skills in, quite literally, a different arena.

Morin started head coaching last season. What followed was the stuff Hollywood movies are made of. The teenage boys on the Stars Black team began the season as underdogs, a group of players who had no one to coach them. But by the end of the season, Morin had led the team to the city championship and was named Coach of the Year by the Prince Albert Minor Hockey Association.

### FAST-FORWARD LIFE

These were gratifying accomplishments, and all the more so because Morin fit his volunteer coaching into an already packed schedule. An industrial mechanic with Cameco, Morin flies in to the company's Key Lake uranium mine site for seven days at a time. Then it's back home to Prince Albert for seven days, to his wife, three kids (with another on the way) and the team.

Morin is also president of the Key Lake-McArthur River local of the United Steelworkers union (likely, he says, the local's first president of First Nations origin). “Last year, we were bargaining almost every night,” he says. It wasn't unusual for him to wrap up a meeting at 6 p.m. in Saskatoon, drive 90 minutes



## THE MECHANICS OF A WIN

Phil Morin's championship attitude flows from his work to coaching young athletes

to PA to coach the team and then head back in the morning.

If his life seems like it's frequently on fast forward, that suits Morin just fine. It hasn't always been that way.

In the 1990s, he couldn't find work as an electronics technician. “I had to do something,” he says, so he got his trucker's 1A licence and hauled for Northern Resource Trucking to mines in northern Saskatchewan. After starting at Cameco in 2001 as a slurry driver, he hauled high-grade uranium from mine to mill. He had his eye on the

company's industrial mechanic apprenticeship program, but had to earn enough seniority to qualify.

In 2007, he was accepted into the four-year program, which included two months at Saskatchewan Polytechnic (then SIAST) in Saskatoon each year. “I had the same instructor for three of my four terms,” says Morin. “He knew me, and I knew what he expected.”

The standard set by that instructor is now something Morin applies to his work, and to his aspiring young hockey teams as well. ■

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## BETTER BALANCE

“I like where I work because my average commute time is around 20 minutes, which means more of a work-life balance.”

*Amber*  
Alumni, Medical Radiologic Technology

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Water is the lifeblood of every community — and for Howard Kirby, the most rewarding work is helping the smallest communities, the ones least able to afford technologically advanced water treatment solutions.

“We’ve done a lot of work for small hamlets, villages, towns, regional parks and First Nations communities, and renovated over 100 small water plants,” says Kirby, an award-winning business operator and a 1973 graduate of the water sciences technology program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

“We’ve been able to help small communities that would otherwise struggle through lack of finances,” he says. “If a water-treatment solution turns into a large engineering project, it can end up being beyond their scope, so we try to keep systems small and affordable.”

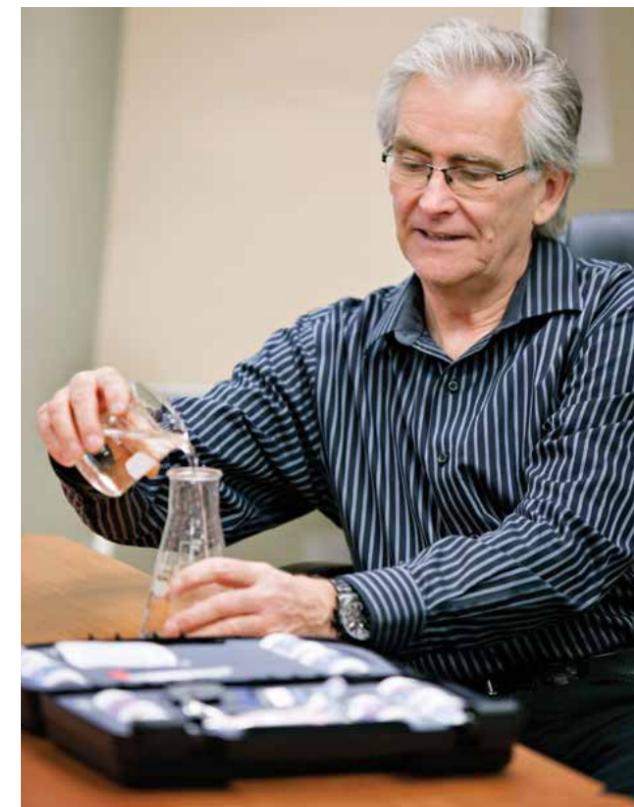
### GROWING BUSINESS

When Kirby first crossed the stage more than 40 years ago to accept his diploma from Sask Polytech (then known as SIAST), he had no idea he would one day help these smaller communities as owner of one of the province’s largest water system distributors.

Nor did he expect to be back, four decades later, to accept his second diploma, an honorary award from Sask Polytech in recognition of his numerous achievements in the water industry.

“When we started Anderson Pump House in May 1983, we had no idea we’d be able to grow the business to compete against multinational corporations,” says Kirby, the company’s president and CEO.

“Our sales keep climbing every year. We hope we can continue to employ as many people as we do today and keep serving a wide range of customers,” he says. “The building blocks of our business



## GO WITH THE FLOW

Sask Polytech alum’s career has reached a **high**-water mark

“We hope we can continue to employ as many people as we do today and keep serving a wide range of customers.”

have been our technical ability, quality products and customer service. We make sure to have fun at what we’re doing.”

Kirby’s company, which specializes in the design of pumping, water treatment and turf irrigation systems, employs 46 in Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan, serving a customer base that stretches from Lloydminster across the province and all the way to Hudson Bay.

Last year, Anderson Pump House was inducted into the Achievements in Business Excel-

lence Hall of Fame, received the Battlefords Business Excellence Heritage Award and was honoured with a Supplier of the Year Award at the Saskatchewan Water and Waste Water Show.

Kirby credits his time at Sask Polytech for his success.

“My diploma in water sciences technology was an ideal foundation,” he says. “I’ve hired six water sciences grads from Sask Polytech and two are employed currently. Having been through it myself, I am certainly aware of the high quality of the program.” ■

### Q&A

**Q** | When you were in school trying to juggle responsibilities, what did you do to relax?

**A** | Socialized with friends from my hometown of Coronach who also lived in Saskatoon.

**Q** | What song transports you back to your days at Sask Polytech?

**A** | “Crocodile Rock” by Elton John.

**Q** | If you could spend a weekend anywhere, where would you go?

**A** | Camping in the mountains with my family.

**Q** | Who inspires you?

**A** | My wife and best friend, Sharon.

**Q** | What book have you read more than once?

**A** | *The Five Levels Of Leadership*, by John Maxwell.

**M**ike Nord remembers taking an organizational behaviour course at Saskatchewan Polytechnic and thinking, "I will never, ever use this class."

The 1994 graduate of the Business Administration program could not have been more mistaken. Today, it's among the classes Nord uses the most.

"In fact, with every single class I can think back to, I'm using some part of it in my job today," says the general manager of the Battlefords and District Co-op Ltd., an operation with gross annual sales of \$105 million and almost 300 employees.

"The faculty members at Sask Polytech have all contributed to the business world before they came back to teach — that practical experience is very useful, because they can apply it to help us understand. They also care about their students."

Nord, 43, began his career in co-operative retailing systems as a student working for the Melfort Co-op. He has since worked at nine different co-ops, in addition to a four-year stint as a training officer at the Hilton Hotel in Tokyo.

There, he learned to speak and write Japanese at a high intermediate level and met people from all over the world.

"In Tokyo, you could see something new and amazing every night. Learning about a culture so much older than ours is fantastic if you're interested in history at all," Nord says. "You just have to



# LEARNING THAT WORKS

Mike Nord's education was the start of a lasting career

**“The faculty members at Sask Polytech have all contributed to the business world... That practical experience is very useful.”**

have an open mind and be willing to learn.”

Today, no two days are the same at Nord's job, which involves overseeing five different areas — human resources, marketing, safety and operations, finances and social responsibility — and making sure they run smoothly.

"Because I have been given so much help from other people

in my career, I also enjoy helping our employees achieve their own goals," he says.

"We're really fortunate to work with people who are passionate about what they do.

"So many of our employees have worked for us their whole lives, and at least seven hold 35 years of experience. What company can say that? Not many." ■

## Q&A

**Q** | When you were in school trying to juggle responsibilities, what did you do to relax?

**A** | I was engaged to my now-wife Glenna, and we loved to have people over for dinner and entertain. We still love doing that.

**Q** | What song transports you back to your days at Sask Polytech?

**A** | "Two Princes" by the Spin Doctors. And our theme song was definitely "Hotel California" by the Eagles.

**Q** | If you could spend a weekend anywhere, where would you go?

**A** | Disney is a brand that always brings smiles to the faces of my whole family. We love Disney World.

**Q** | Who inspires you?

**A** | Walt Disney. Walt was a truly great human being.

**Q** | What book have you read more than once?

**A** | *Straight from the Gut*, by Jack Welch, the longtime CEO of General Electric.

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# CHANGING LIVES & COMMUNITIES

## HELPING PEOPLE IS ITS OWN REWARD FOR FACULTY MEMBERS

For some Saskatchewan Polytechnic instructors, using their skills to help improve lives is second nature. Here's a look at two examples.

### #ONE

#### FREE DENTAL CARE TAKES AWAY THE PAIN

For a year, the patient had been unable to chew on the left side of her mouth, and she couldn't afford the cost of dental care. After undergoing a free-of-charge, tooth-saving root canal worth \$1,500, she couldn't stop crying, which alarmed the volunteers around her until they understood that her tears were happy ones.

"She was crying because the pain was finally gone," says Sask Polytech Dental Hygiene instructor Dean Lefebvre. Since 2012, Lefebvre has spearheaded a one-day community oral health initiative to offer free dental care to low-income, inner-city patients referred by Regina's Food Bank.

Last year, 70 patients were provided with more than \$32,000 worth of free dental procedures thanks to generous donations and 100 volunteers. It was the largest volunteer turnout in the history of the one-day dental health event, held every spring, and included dentists, denturists and dental therapists, as well as assistants and hygienists from the program at Sask Polytech.

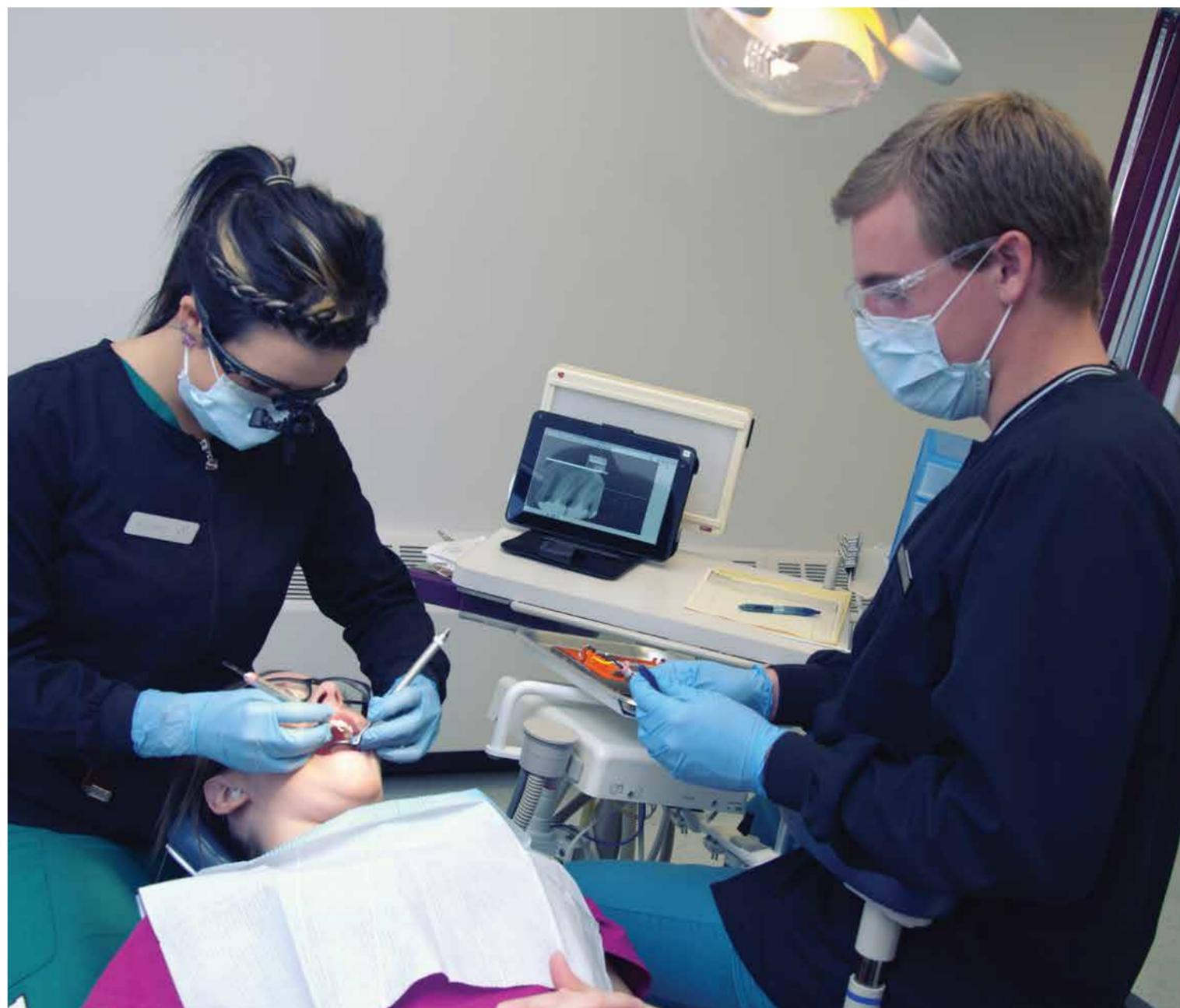
"Many of the people we saw that day carry stories that resonate," Lefebvre says. For example, one patient who received a tooth extraction was so relieved to be pain-free that when she got home, she turned around and hopped right back on the bus to bring the dentist a thank-you card.

"It's pretty easy for these folks to choose paying their power bill or buying food over getting a tooth fixed. Getting this treatment at no cost is huge for them."

The need to provide more extensive care was observed early on at the Dental Hygiene clinic on campus, which offers services at a reduced rate and allows students in their second year of the program to meet clinical requirements.

"We started this because of the need we were seeing within the community — patients were coming in with cavities, broken teeth and ill-fitting dentures. And there were so many barriers to acquiring care, such as the costs of transportation and child care, both of which we provide," Lefebvre says.

"At the end of the day, everybody leaves feeling so good. It's a pretty gratifying experience."



LUCIE CLARK'S HUSBAND MIKE AND DAUGHTER DANICA LISKE.

### #TWO

#### A PERSONAL CONNECTION WITH DEMENTIA EDUCATION

Chemical Technology program instructor Lucie Clark keeps track of every student she has taught in the last 25 years — she's even Facebook friends with many of them.

"Lots of companies are phoning us because chemistry techs are so sought-after," says Clark, herself a Sask Polytech alumna. "I always keep an eye out for opportunities for my grads."

Some of Clark's most significant contributions to the community are through her tireless efforts volunteering and fundraising for the Alzheimer's Society of Saskatchewan. Clark's mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at age 63, and Clark's husband was diagnosed with dementia at 53.

"When my husband was diagnosed with front temporal dementia, I was only in my 40s. It rocked my world. It was life-changing," says Clark, whose

daughter, only in Grade 12 at the time, ended up delaying post-secondary to help care for him.

"It evolved into us doing a lot of public speaking to raise awareness about this aggressive kind of dementia that hits in people in their 40s and 50s, and can tear apart and financially ruin a family."

Clark and her daughter have spoken at venues ranging from conferences and care homes to galas and university classrooms.

After only four years, Clark's husband had to be moved to a nursing home. She found one across the street from Sask Polytech, and she feeds him lunch and supper every day.

"He's still my husband, and I've made that promise that I would take care of him and be with him," Clark says. "In five years he hasn't said my name, but he knows me, he recognizes my voice. It's not easy some days — I'll walk in and say, 'Hi Mike, do you still love me?'"

"Sometimes he'll say 'No.' Sometimes he'll say 'Yes,' and I'll say, 'Well that's good, because I still love you.'" ■

# NEW Saskatchewan Polytechnic Alumni Award

The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Alumni Award celebrates the contributions of alumni to our communities and our province. The award provides \$1,000 in financial support to Sask Polytech students who are the children, stepchildren, grandchildren or stepgrandchildren of registered alumni.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic alumni include graduates of SIAST and other institutions that make up the new Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Alumni can register at [www.saskpolytech.ca/alumni](http://www.saskpolytech.ca/alumni) or by contacting the alumni office at [alumni@saskpolytech.ca](mailto:alumni@saskpolytech.ca).

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# AUTO MOTIVATION

Saskatoon Campus head of **automotive programs** discusses his car collection, travel tips and more

**A** former music teacher, band director and clarinet player, Jim Kerr is also an experienced mechanic — and head of automotive service technician programs at Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Saskatoon Campus. Here, he talks about cars and offers some travel tips.

#### What got you interested in cars?

"I started taking my first car apart when I was six. My dad gave me a 1928 Chevrolet truck to do whatever I wanted with. Growing up on a farm in White Bear, Sask., there was always something around to fix. That's how I started learning about mechanics."

#### What car was your first love?

"The first love I had was a 1964 Chevy, black with a red interior. I've owned more than 20 of them over the years. I've driven just about everything on the road and that's still my favourite car of all time — in fact, I'm restoring one right now."

#### How many cars do you have in your collection?

"Right now I own three cars and four motorcycles — I drive and ride all of them. My baby is a '57 Thunderbird that I've owned for 35 years. Both my sons came home from the hospital in it."

#### Do they live in a "man cave"?

"I have a garage at my home where they're stored for the winter. You could call it a man cave, but I refer to it as my den. It's a workshop complete with a TV and audio system, and it's heated all the time. The teapot is always on."

#### What are you working on?

"I'm restoring a '64 Chevy Impala — it's a sanity break for me, where I can spend some time in isolation, concentrating on something I enjoy. If I become tired, I set everything down and walk away and know I can come back any time and pick it up again from where I left off."

PHOTOS BY TOMBARTLETT

“That would have to be the Aston Martin DB6 from the James Bond movies. They're very pricey, but just gorgeous cars.”

#### What's your favourite movie car?

"That would have to be the Aston Martin DB6 from the James Bond movies. They're very pricey, but just gorgeous cars."

#### Favourite *Fast and Furious* movie?

"I've seen all but the last one. They're fun, but nothing to do with reality. My favourite racing movie has to be *The World's Fastest Indian*. An older gentleman from New Zealand modifies a 1920 Indian motorcycle and sets the land-speed world record at Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats. Even if you don't like motorcycles, it's still a great movie." ■

## JIM KERR'S TOP 5 TIPS

### on taking your next road trip with young kids

**1** Allow for lots of time when you're travelling. Many people think the destination is all that matters, but the trip is an adventure in itself.

**2** Get the kids in appropriate car seats. Some seats fit better in certain styles of cars. Try them out in the vehicle, and see how they fit. Check with your local fire hall or ambulance station — they often hold sessions on how to properly fit a car seat into your vehicle.

**3** When children get bored or tired, they tend to make noise, which could impact the safety of your driving. Try playing games with them, like who can spot the most blue cars; give them a map, if they're a bit older, and see if they can follow it and identify the next town. Many rely on video games, but there's a lot you can do without resorting to electronics.

**4** Stop often.

**5** Always travel with a picnic basket; school playgrounds are wonderful places to have a picnic in the summertime. Let the kids run around and burn off some energy — then they'll be ready to sit and rest for a while.



# FISHY TALES

Saskatchewan has world-class fishing for walleye, northern pike, perch, burbot (the only freshwater member of the cod family), lake trout and rainbow trout, says **Steve Yanish**, professional fishing guide and Natural Resource Technology lab technician at Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Here are some tips to help you catch the meal of a lifetime.



### TOP LAKE CHOICES FOR YOUR FAVOURITE FISH

- 1 **PIKE** - Last Mountain Lake
- 2 **WALLEYE** - Tobin Lake, Last Mountain Lake
- 3 **PERCH** - Buffalo Pound



**PIKE** With spawn finished up but the main lake temperatures still in the single digits, pike will be searching for the warmest water. This generally occurs in shallow (under two metres), south-facing bays. Not all bays are created equal. Look for narrow openings that allow pike access to the depths while preventing too much of the cold main lake

water to get blown in. Fish numbers will increase as the sun heats up these shallow areas, making afternoons more productive. This will last until the temperatures reach the mid-teens, forcing the giants out. Slow your presentations (how the fly is delivered) as the fish can be lethargic. Consider breaking out the fly rod.



**WALLEYE** will also be looking to feed heavily to recover from the stress of the spawn. Key spawning areas are gravel or rocky points, the mouths of inflow creeks and rock-covered shorelines. They will not stray far from these areas. Remember, walleye have eyes that are well suited for low light and will be

more active around dawn and dusk. Key in on the wind-blown side of the fishing area as this will pile up the food chain and concentrate forage. Keep your baits a bit smaller and cover as much area as possible to find active fish. They are a schooling fish, so if you find one, there will be more.



**YELLOW PERCH** are also excellent table fare. Their tight schooling behaviour, generous limits, abundant numbers and willingness to bite make them a great species with which to introduce a youngster to fishing. They will be found around

old vegetation and rocky points. Focus on depths in the two- to five-metre range. These are favourite spawn spots and also provide a place to hide. Once the school is located, drop an anchor. Keep your baits small and watch your rod tip.

## RECIPE CAMPFIRE BAKED FISH

A fabulous fish recipe from **Steve Yanish, professional fishing guide and Natural Resource Technology lab technician at Sask Polytech.**

### INGREDIENTS

- Boneless fish fillets
- 1 onion, sliced into rings
- Whole mushrooms
- Zucchini slices
- Broccoli or bok choy
- 2 limes
- Cherry tomatoes
- Red/green pepper
- Fresh vegetables of your choice (consider asparagus or yam slices)
- Greek seasoning to taste
- Spicy Thai sauce to taste

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Start with two layers of foil large enough to lay the fillets on, with plenty of extra foil to wrap them.
- Spread onion slices on foil.
- Lay boneless fillets on top of onions. This will keep the fish from sticking and burning.
- Sprinkle Greek seasoning to taste.
- Pour small amount of Thai sauce over fish.
- Squeeze juice of one lime over the fish.
- Carefully pile all remaining vegetables on top. Try placing pepper rings down first to stabilize the other vegetables.
- Slice second lime; place slices on top.
- Add more Thai sauce and seasoning to taste.
- Place two more layers of foil over everything; fold edges together multiple times for an airtight package.
- Place package on grill and set over a bed of hot coals (flames will scorch the pack.)
- When food begins to cook, the package will puff. Remove it from the heat and let it shrink back down. After about five minutes, place it back over heat. It will puff again within minutes. This will mean it is cooked through.
- Cut package open and enjoy!



# BALANCING ACT

**Gwen Bourque** finds the parallels between her leadership roles in technology and in the military

**G**wen Bourque is trying to set an example for her daughters, showing them they can do anything they want.

"It doesn't matter if it's a male-dominated field or not," says Bourque, who works simultaneously in two non-traditional fields.

The mom of two teenage daughters is continuing her 23-year career in the military, and was awarded the Lieutenant-Governor's Military Service Pin in 2014. Since 2000, she has also been working in networking and computer programming at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, where she's currently manager of infrastructure services.

Bourque, 40, has been with the military since she was 17. She graduated from the Computer Systems Technology program at Sask Polytech in 1997. "At first, I thought I was going to be a nurse. But when I went away with the military and

worked in that capacity, I passed out the first day," she says with a laugh. "I decided it wasn't for me."

### SUMMER JOB

Bourque, who grew up in Saskatoon, first joined the military to earn money for university: "I thought it would be a good job in the summer — you'd always have full-time work and then you could work part-time during the year. I started as a medical assistant, became a clerk and now I'm a logistics officer."

In 2006, Bourque completed a seven-month tour in Afghanistan, working with government aid agencies on civil-military co-operation and reconstruction projects in Kandahar.

"It was pretty dangerous, a very different world," she says. "I remember coming home and thinking how good we have it as Canadians. I was really very happy to be Canadian."

Currently, Bourque is the commanding officer of 38 Service Battalion, the Reserve Force service battalion assigned to 38 Canadian Brigade Group. The service companies provide transportation, supplies, food services and maintenance support to all field units within the group.

"I'm the boss — in charge of all the logistics and combat service support, such as fixing the weapons and fixing the vehicles," says Bourque, who has also taught courses for the military in Europe and Turkey. "What I like about working for the military is being able to go out into the field. The camaraderie and teamwork make it so rewarding. And then with Sask Polytech, it's nice to be back in my office," she says.

"There are absolutely parallels between my two jobs — leadership skills and planning are required for both." ■

# CHEERS FOR LOCAL BEER



DAVID THIESSEN.

Partnership with brewery ensures protection of **unique** flavours

**T**hanks to a partnership between Saskatchewan Polytechnic and a local brewer, the unique flavours of a regional beer will be permanently preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Last summer, two students worked full-time at Sask Polytech's BioScience Applied Research Centre to analyze and identify the genetic profile of a yeast used by Saskatoon's Great Western Brewing Co. for the production of its beers. The unique culture will then be cryogenically frozen and kept off-site to ensure a backup is always accessible in case of catastrophic damage such as fire or flooding.

The project received funding from NSERC, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, which allowed for the necessary equipment to be acquired and for the two students to be paid for their efforts, says project lead Lance Wall, an instructor in the BioScience Technology program.

"The students used molecular biology to determine the particular strain of the yeast they're using, and to identify key growth and morphology characteristics as well as ways to preserve the yeast long-term," Wall says. "At this time, we're still poring through the data. Once we've had a chance to put the report together, we will provide that to Great Western Brewery and hopefully that will lead into another

project. Research always yields more questions," he says.

"This is a great opportunity for students to be applying the skills they learned in the program. Such projects develop their independence and confidence, which they take out into the workforce. One goal of applied research is to add value both to the programs and the students who participate, who can use it as a springboard in their search for employment."

### UNIQUE TASTES

Second-year student Janet Chung, one of the project participants, found it incredibly "complicated and fascinating," she says. "It was so interesting to discover that different species of yeast are responsible for each unique-tasting beer."

For student David Thiessen, his previous degree in Microbiology and Immunology from the University of Saskatchewan gave him a good foundation with regards to handling and growing yeast. "I've always found genetics very interesting so I was excited to work on the project," he says. "It was exciting to be doing research independently and using molecular biology to discover the answers to important questions. I had to do a lot of thinking on my feet and redesigning of experiments to get results.

"I am a fan of Great West and their beers. They've got a good strain of yeast working for them." ■

## 5 MORE APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS

### 1 EXPERIENCE FIRST DESIGN

Designing the PlayNar application prototype gameplay experience.

### 2 THE TALKING HEAD

English additional language students' language assistance tool.

### 3 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

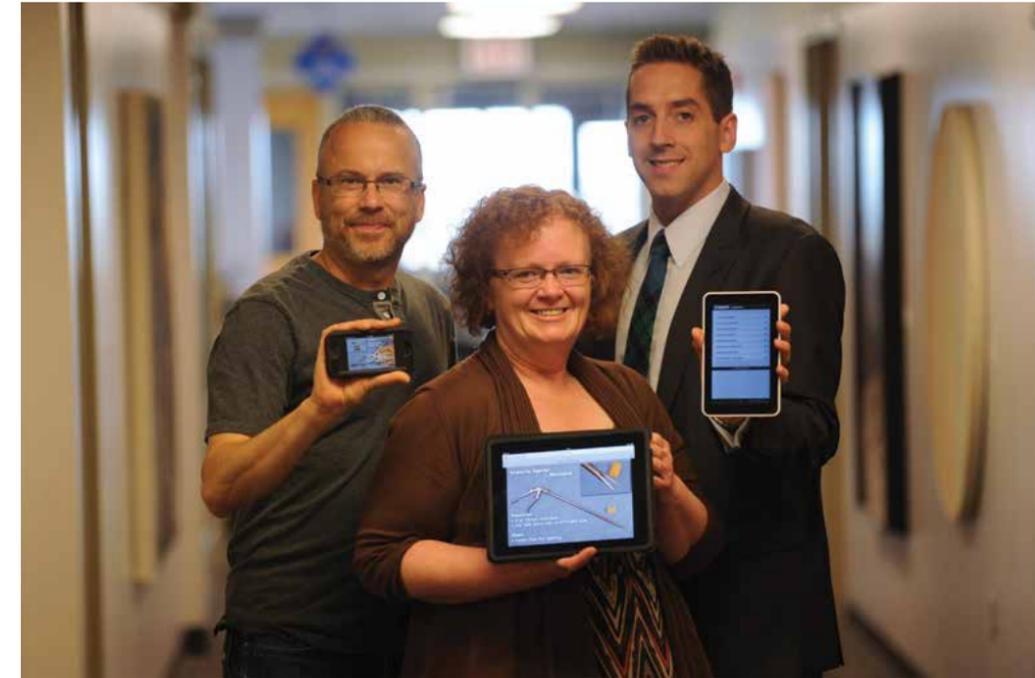
Sun Ridge Residential mobile app for new home energy efficiency.

### 4 FISH SURVEY

Saskatchewan fish survey and collection.

### 5 RURAL WELLNESS

Centre for Applied Research in Rural Community Wellness.



FROM LEFT, DALE LIPP, GRAPHIC ARTIST; CAROLE CLARKE, FACULTY, PERIOPERATIVE NURSING PROGRAM; ELI AHLQUIST, PROGRAM HEAD, PERIOPERATIVE NURSING PROGRAM.

# AN INSTRUMENT BY ANY OTHER NAME

New app helps OR nurses select the right instruments

**W**hat's in a name? In the operating room, knowing an instrument's name could save a life.

Thanks to a new app, the hesitation that occurs when a surgeon asks for an instrument by an unfamiliar name is being reduced in Saskatchewan hospitals.

Designed by a team of nursing, graphic design and computer system professionals at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, the surgical instrument recognition app is accessible from tablets and smart phones. With an annual subscription, students can log onto InstruMentor.ca to access rotatable 3-D images, listen to audio pronunciation of each tool name in a Western Canadian accent and access practice exams.

The need for a more interactive, hands-on learning tool became evident in the process of updating the online course taken by registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and medical device reprocessing students to learn about operating room instruments.

### CATCHING ON QUICKLY

"In the textbook they used for reference, there would be just a plain picture of an instrument, which makes it difficult to know the scale of it and what to do with it," says Eli Ahlquist, program head of the perioperative nursing programs in the School of Nursing.

"The textbook was American, so it didn't have the same names we use in Canada, or what names they would be hearing when going

into practice. Students would read the name and pronounce it in their heads a certain way, so when they went into the clinical environment and the surgeon would ask for the instrument, they didn't always put it together," Ahlquist says.

"Thanks to this app, from the feedback we've been hearing from surgeons, it's amazing how much quicker the students catch on to the names now."

It's not just students who are actively using the app, which has been three years in the making. Ahlquist says a surprising amount of interest has come from industry as well.

"The manufacturers of instruments are using it as a learning tool for their reps, and we've also promoted the app at conferences for working professionals." ■



# NEVER JUST A NUMBER

Saskatchewan Polytechnic education was the key to giving **Gaurav Thakur** a foothold in Canada

**W**hile trudging down the streets of Moose Jaw in -50°C wind chill, bleary-eyed from working the night shift at Tim Hortons, Gaurav Thakur would keep warm by thinking of the career that awaited him.

A native of Mumbai, India, a tropical city of 12.5 million, Thakur came to Canada in 2011 and was so impressed by the culture, friendly people and plentiful jobs, "I decided to make it my home," he says.

Thakur, 30, holds a master's

degree in management studies from the University of Mumbai and a post-graduate certificate in marketing and business intelligence research from Algonquin College in Ottawa, which was his first stop in Canada. He zoomed in on Saskatchewan as a place to settle when he saw the thriving economy and numerous opportunities.

"I then started my search to shortlist a school or college, and found that Saskatchewan Polytechnic offered a hands-on education, which I wanted to

acquire here so local employers would be more willing to accept me," he says.

After Thakur completed the Business certificate program at Sask Polytech in 2013, he had two job offers on the table. He chose a full-time, permanent position with Scotiabank, and soon was offered two promotions as a small business adviser on top of his role of personal banking manager.

Dealing primarily with agricultural finance, Thakur takes pride in being a key player in the success of

the farming community.

"I get to interact with the local community and the people who contribute to it," he says.

Thakur continues to operate a Facebook page he started for Sask Polytech's international students, which currently has almost 500 members.

"I will always be grateful to the people at Sask Polytech," says Thakur. "My experience there has been remarkable. The instructors were concerned about you — you were never just a number." ■

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