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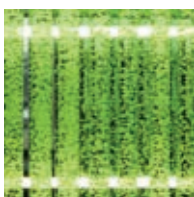
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IN OUR WISDOM

EDITORIAL

Research – No Longer Just for Big City Universities



*Bruce Rutley PhD
PAG is the
Director of the
GPRC Centre for
Research &
Innovation*

Grande Prairie Regional College has had a mandate for applied research and innovation since 2007. Shortly thereafter it created a new department called the Centre for Research & Innovation (www.theCRI.ca) to lead the development of its research and innovation capacity.

Since 2008, the College has aggressively pursued its research mandate in part thanks to significant funding from the Rural Alberta Development Network (\$3.4m grant). This decision and funding has enabled GPRC to become #15 among Canada's community colleges and technical Institutes. In fact, GPRC was #1 for growth between 2011 and 2012 because of projects like the Pollutants to Products featured in this issue of Wisdom.

So why is this important for GPRC and for smaller Colleges like GPRC which are located in remote and rural parts of Canada? One, because research and innovation require a different and important set of skills and thought processes; and two, because applied research and innovation are excellent tools for economic development. Let me explain.

In my mind applied research and innovation can be characterized in four ways: faculty led, industry initiated, student intensive and innovator centric. The first two will help explain my economic development point while the second will help with the skills and thinking point.

The Pollutants to Products (P2P) initiative led by Dr. Weixing Tan is an example of faculty led research. Dr. -

IN OUR WISDOM

- continued from page 3

Tan is pursuing his passion to convert today's pollutants into tomorrow's useful products. It is funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC, \$2.3 m) and numerous industry partners (~\$1.0 m). As part of the process of commercializing the bio-reactor technology, the College recently filed two patents. The P2P initiative provides learning and part-time employment opportunities for students. And we dare to imagine a new environmental technician program emerging.

The National Bee Diagnostic Centre (www.thenbdc.ca) is an example of industry initiated research. It was created in response to the needs of the beekeeping industry with financial support by Western Economic Diversification (\$1.19 m infrastructure) and the Rural Alberta Development Fund (\$0.9 m start-up operations). The NBDC is now a NSERC funded (\$1.75 m) Technology Access Centre that provides diagnostic services to determine biotic causes of bee mortality. It also provides a base for two faculty members to conduct their research. Dr. Henley's lab research will inform both our industry clients and her science students. Mr. Stromgren's field research will benefit current and future beekeepers – his students. Both of these initiatives brought new funding into the region, have created employment (3 full-time, 2 part-time); and in the case of the NBDC, local firms constructed the

building and now help to maintain it. In all, GPRC has attracted over \$10 million dollars into the region for applied research and innovation. Two examples of student intensive research come from the Nursing Department and the Animal Health Technology program at Fairview Campus. Nursing practice is predicted on evidence based practice. Evidence comes from research, and evidence that is not research informed is essentially opinion. The Animal Health faculty are about to embed feline viral surveillance research into two second year AHT courses. Students will conduct the research. Three cohorts of students will be involved. A new type of student will graduate. One who went to class and also learned applied research skills.

I believe innovator centric is a good way to describe our local innovators. Without a doubt they are focused on their ideas, their inventions and innovations. Without that passion to solve a problem and or create a new solution, things would not improve. They are demanding...in a good way. They apply a thought process that involves higher level critical thinking skills, creativity and for most of them, they are infused with entrepreneurial spirit and see the world with an eye to commerce. They are not your typical learner so...if you are wondering what this has to do with college and students – consider this.

At the CRI, we consider our innovation clients as students just a different kind of student. In many ways they represent the student of

the future – just in time learners. And they need our credentialed students – trades and business graduates for example. Together they will both create and embrace economic opportunity. Just one reason Grande Prairie has been #1 in Canada for entrepreneurship for many years and is known for its innovation.

Finally, I offer a personal perspective because research and innovation have changed me. I see the world differently; and I work more effectively as a result of the skills I gained, the rigor and discipline that research requires, and by being open to doing things differently (i.e. innovative). I believe we can all be innovators because, essentially, innovation starts between the ears. That's why I encourage every student to embrace research and innovation.

Its application requires confidence, confidence comes from experience, experience is gained through application and practice of new skills, new skills is about learning, and learning is what we do at GPRC. I believe that learning that includes applied research and innovation, infused with the entrepreneurial spirit, is critical to today's learner and the needs of this region.

This is why I think applied research and innovation needs to be embedded within the fabric of rural and remotely located Colleges like GPRC. These critical thinking skills are needed right here, right now. Our developing communities depend on it.



GPRC Works Here is an alumni initiative which highlights the impact of GPRC on the economy of our region.

Graduates of GPRC are employed in all business sectors and community support sectors - industry to health care, hospitality to classrooms. Our graduates are business owners, diplomats, scientists, teachers, nurses and physicians, office workers and oilfield workers, university professors and professional athletes.

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ALUMNI PROFILE



by Lisa Hollis

Everyone has a personal passion – visual arts, athletics, literature – the possibilities are endless. Brendan Dickson has a dual (and unusual) passion: music and bees! Growing up on a bee farm just outside of Grimshaw, Brendan has been surrounded by bees all his life. This made the choice of what to do after high school an easy decision.

Having completed GPRC's pre-employment General Mechanic course in 2011, "a course that frequently comes in handy on the bee farm" Brendan took the next step and enrolled in GPRC's newly resurrected Commercial Beekeeping program. "I grew up on a bee farm, so the opportunity for me to do it was there. But I also like it because it's a good job for me; I like being outside and doing different jobs all the time. Throughout the year, you do so many different things, and then in the

wintertime, you can do something totally different, whatever you want. Most jobs don't give you that chance."

This winter Brendan is "doing something different", working in Edmonton at the John Deere Dealership, but is looking forward to March when he will get back to tending some 3,000 hives alongside his brother, father and business partner.

While he admits that "the honey is probably the best part" he also holds the little workers in very high esteem. "They're pretty amazing creatures. The more you learn about them, the more you realize how incredible they are in so many things they do; the way they behave, the way they work as a group and do everything in the dark."

Brendan has combined his love of bees with his second love – music!

Adopting the stage persona "Honey Cowboy", he has "a couple songs about honey and bees, but sings on a wide variety of topics". His album entitled Unpasteurized, can be heard on his website HoneyCowboy.com and is available for download on itunes. In 2013 it was his good fortune to play at local music festival, Peacefest, and lately he has been busy playing various fundraisers and social gatherings. "Playing at beekeeper meetings has been successful for me as well" he adds with a laugh.

While Brendan has seemingly found his niche quite easily, he cautions that beekeeping is a lot of hard work. And while GPRC's program is top notch, for those who may be interested in following a similar path, he advises to "learn a bit on your own before committing to the yearlong course, so you know what you're getting into."

DONOR PROFILE

By Joanne Ballance

For an organization that is 92 years old, their mandate is as relevant today as it was in 1922: To raise money for the local hospital in order to provide for patient comfort. And raise money they do! Last year alone volunteers of the QEII Hospital Auxiliary Association contributed over \$100,000 for patient care to the QEII Hospital. I had the pleasure of sitting down with Past President Marion Leggett, President Wilma Friesen, Vice President Pat Galbrieth and longtime volunteer Marie Peterson following a recent Auxiliary meeting to discuss their ongoing

support of the GPRC Nursing Program and to get schooled on the history of their organization.

The commitment to provide for the comfort of patients in the hospital by this organization is to be commended. And volunteerism, it turns out, is one of their key success factors. The organization has been running successfully since 1922, and so a strong relationship has been built between the Hospital Auxiliary and the hospital it serves. Take the Gift Shop at the QEII Hospital as a case in point. The Auxiliary Gift Shop, located in the QEII Hospital is

strongly supported by the onsite health care staff, patients and visitors alike. The Gift Shop revenue, along with the myriad of other fundraising activities the volunteers undertake throughout the community, are the foundation for funding various hospital programs that run the gamut from giving each premature baby born at the QEII Hospital a handmade knit blanket and bonnet, to providing comfort items for patients and families in the palliative care unit.

The Hospital Auxiliary Association has even outlived programs they



l Auxiliary Association

once supported, such as the Candy Strippers. Who remembers those young, smiling patient care volunteers who sported the red and white pin striped aprons and caps? Marie Peterson recalled that several candy strippers at the Hospital aspired to become health care professionals; and many saw this volunteer opportunity for direct patient care as a first step to a career in Nursing.

Enter GPRC. In the early 70's GPRC was still in its infancy when the QEII Hospital Auxiliary introduced two \$1000 scholarships at GPRC for Hospital Candy Strippers who were

entering the field of Nursing. At the time, students pursuing a nursing degree completed one year of University transfer courses at GPRC and then transferred elsewhere to complete their studies. Today, GPRC boasts a fully subscribed collaborative Nursing Degree program with the University of Alberta and the annual bursary through the QEII Hospital Auxiliary Association continues to provide financial aid to nursing students completing their degrees on campus.

"Education is essential to a community," said President Wilma

Friesen, who taught school for 30 years prior to her retirement. "We need great nurses and GPRC provides excellent training." Vice President Pat Galbrieth adds, "We are so fortunate to have a facility such as GPRC in our community to provide nursing education."

And with the construction of the new \$620 million dollar Health Care Centre, located on the GPRC West Campus, educating nurses and allied health care workers is more important than ever!



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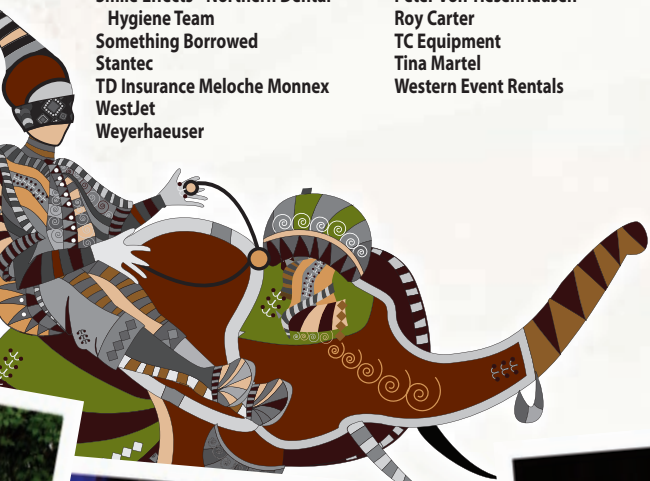
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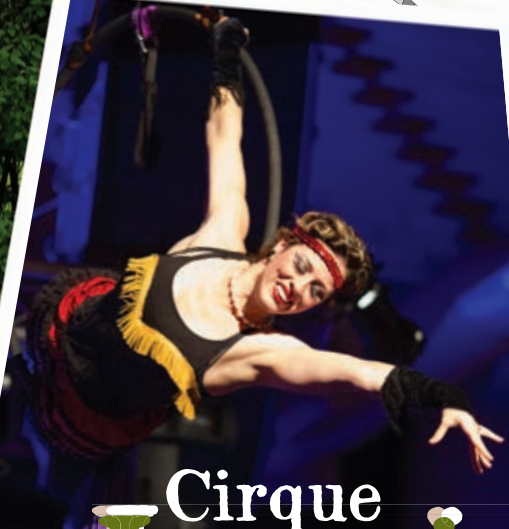
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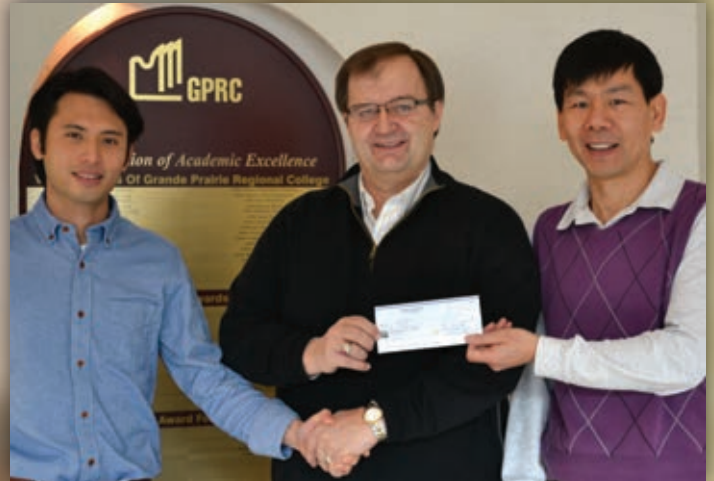
Alumni/Foundation Chair Erin Lynch and retiring board member Wayne Zack present a cheque in the amount of \$1,700,000 to VP Academics and Research Susan Bansgrove and President Don Gnatiuk.



Lance Leith of ATCO Gas presents Joanne Ballance with a cheque in support of their annual bursaries at GPRC.



Community Foundation of Northwestern Alberta CEO Tracey Vavrek and Kathy Dube of Ainsworth Lumber present Joanne Ballance, Development Manager and Don Gnatiuk, President with a cheque in support of trades awards and the Elder in Residence Program.



GPRC Instructor George Ding and Laurie Lin of the Chinese Association present Carmen Haakstad with a donation.



Students Kelsey Lefebvre, and Jalene Boucher of GP Vanier School in Donnelly - school community service project donated over \$2,700 of product to the Room of Plenty, January 2014.



St. Paul's United Church Donation – January 2014, donated boxes of food & \$1000 to the Room of Plenty Food bank.



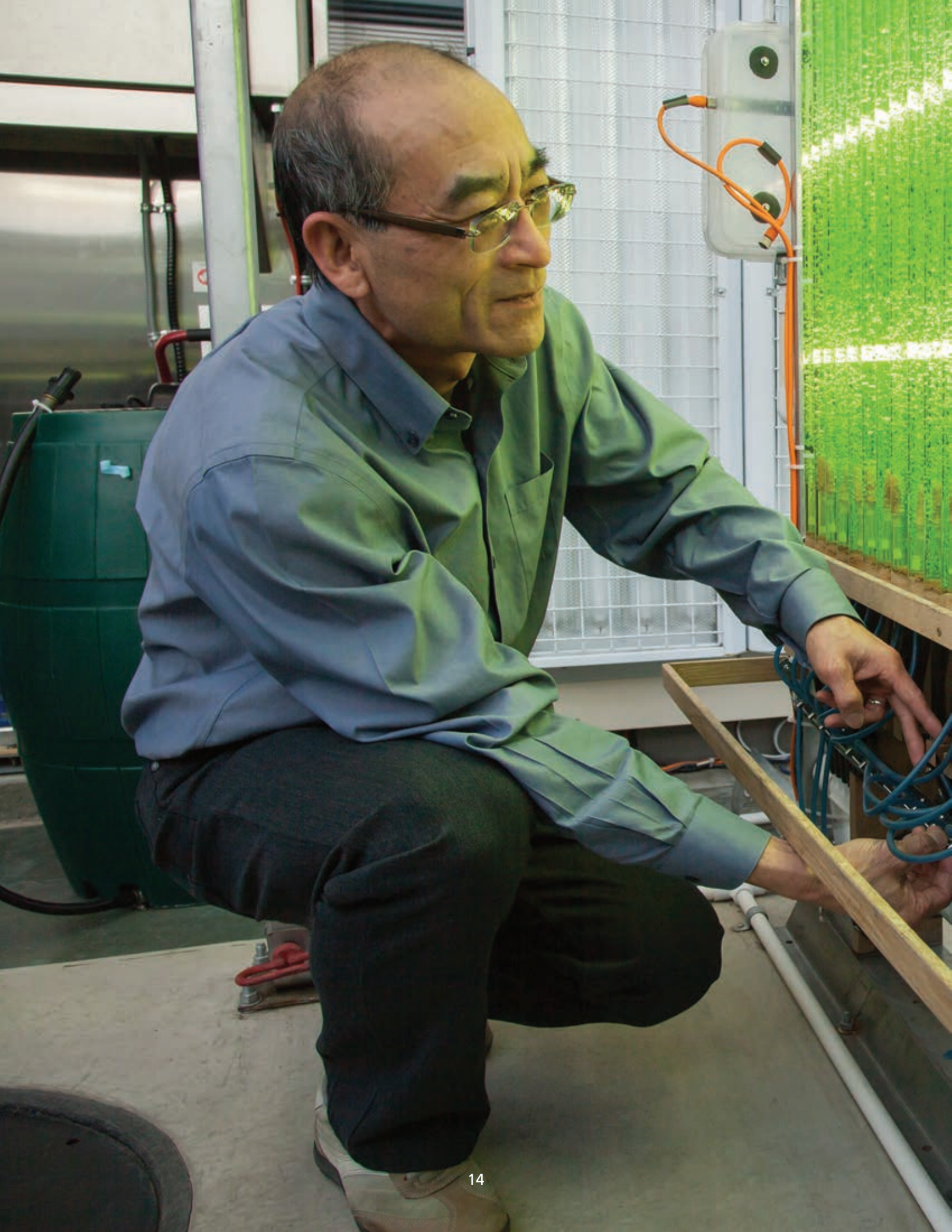
Office Administration Chair Garth Finlay and Joanne Ballance, Development Manager accept a cheque from Cris Seppola and Ryan Blais of nine10 Incorporated in support of the Friends of Office Administration Bursary



Archie Harvey Memorial Golf Tournament Committee member Wendy Saban and Supt. Ray Noble present GPRC President Don Gnatiuk and VP External Relations Carmen Haakstad with a cheque in support of their annual awards at GPRC.



Students from the Marketing Strategy class kindly made a donation to the Swan City Rotary Club in the amount of \$7,619 – representing net proceeds from the annual Peace Country Idol event.





Dr. Weixing Tan

and the GPRC Research Solarium

By Lynne Ness

Our region is known nationally and internationally for its energetic and powerful resource industry. The typical image of Grande Prairie includes big trucks, people in a hurry, busy restaurants and bars, thriving retail and realty businesses. But within a segment of the international scientific community, it is also known to be the site of some ground-breaking and world-changing research.

Behind the great white piles of snow, apart from the hurry and the hustle, is a research laboratory unlike any other anywhere. The work that goes on here is the brainchild of Dr. Weixing Tan, who has also designed and helped to

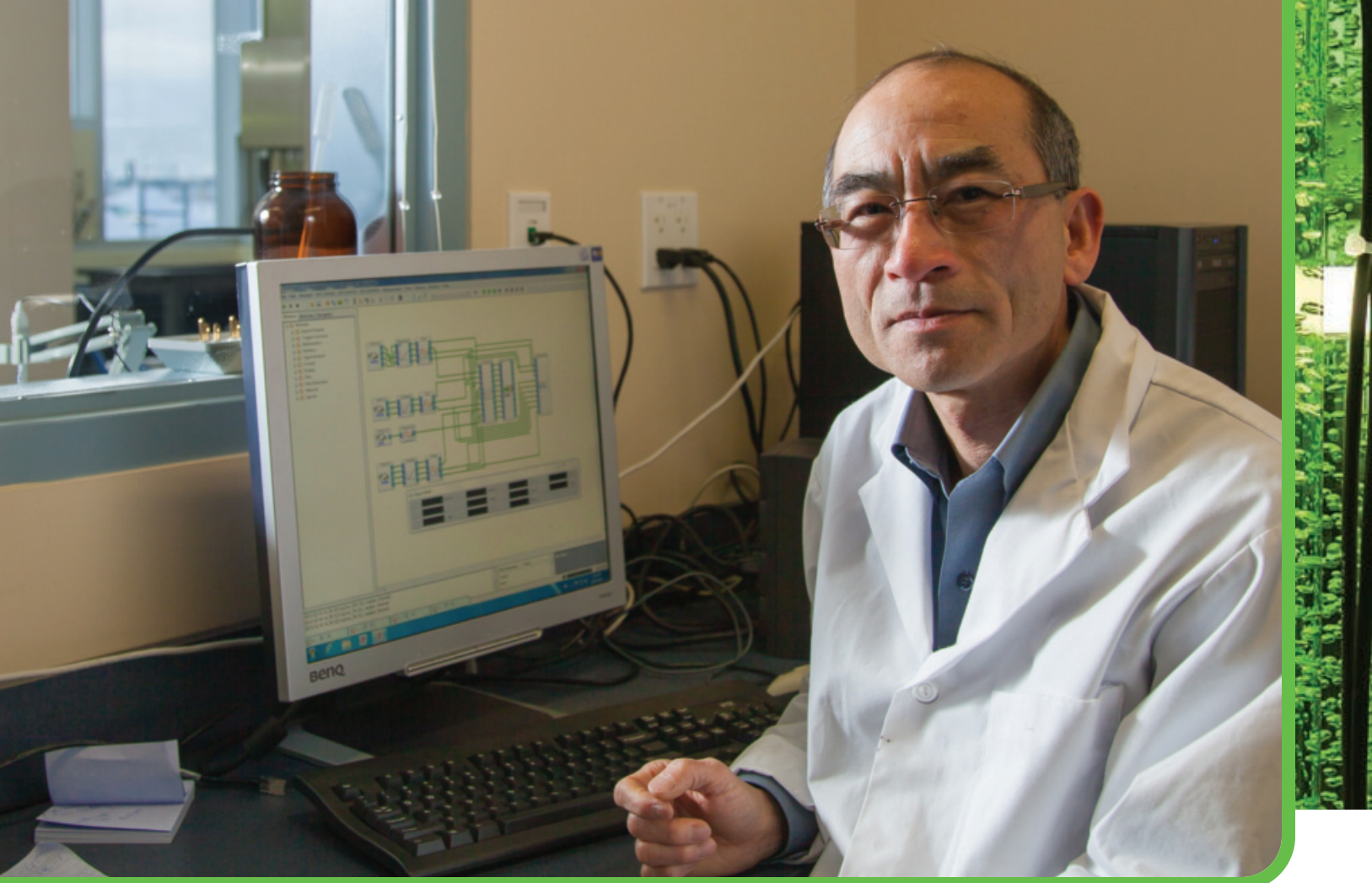
build the various components of the facility. His concept is so far-reaching, that northwestern Alberta may soon also be synonymous with the process that uses algae to turn carbon dioxide into products suitable as a food source for animals, fish, even humans.

Dr. Tan began the work about seven years ago, while exploring possibilities for the Alberta industrial bioremediation, including carbon capture and storage (CCS). The CCS process extracts carbon from CO₂ emissions, and stores it in the ground. "It is a temporary solution," says Dr. Tan, "but I don't see it as a sustainable long-term solution." And so he, with support from the College and research

grants, began this work.

Moving from the idea and basic concept to reality has taken much longer than Tan could have expected: funding had to be secured, a building had to be built to the specifications of the project, components had to be designed and built, then shipped and assembled. secured grants of over \$200,000 from the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and ConocoPhillips Canada, then had it built in the Netherlands, and finally a piece of equipment over 3,000 kilograms, was shipped to Grande Prairie for installation.

In September of 2013, though, everything was prepared for the substantial work to continue.



Research Associate Dr. Abigail Adebusi set up the work, and began to grow and harvest algae.

"The beauty of this is that it is a hybrid system. You can utilize both the sunlight and artificial light." Tan explains. "Algae, however, cannot take the full sunlight, and this is why in a natural pond environment the algae move deeper into the pond during the midday. Ours system is designed to solve this problem and optimize that reaction through sunlight diluting, so that we can increase the growth and productivity of the algae under natural sunlight conditions."

"We have designed a photobioreactor system wherein algae can be produced in high efficiency and high density," adds Adebusi. "The issue with algae is about the mass that you can produce. Some people use open ponds, but the problem is that you cannot control the parameters, how much CO₂ how much nutrients. You cannot control the microbes you get,

so if you get contamination for example, you cannot use it for animal feeds. For this system you get high density biomass – and it is still in the process of development."

Adebusi holds a PhD in Microbiology, which is a good background for this work. As Tan points out, algae is a plant, but it is a microplant! "Her knowledge and skills are directly applicable."

"I have always been interested in biotechnology," says Adebusi. "I have also been involved in the bioremediation of hydro-carbons. This is my first time working with algae, but it is the same thing, because I have learned how to develop a process, and how to produce products, so that is the whole thing."

The research is part of a greater concept which Tan has been working on through the Centre for Research and Innovation at GPRC, known as "Pollutants to Products." Several projects to date have successfully transformed "waste" to serve a

useful purpose – such as waste water into poplar wood fibre, or oilsand reclamation through winter tree planting.

Now the challenge is to refine this process, and eventually identify the salable products which it could generate. "Identifying products will be another stage – that will come when we are able to generate large quantities of the material and test it," Tan explains. "Our major focus now is to develop a highly efficient system that will allow us to scale up in order to produce at a level that will allow us to operate sustainably. That is our current goal.

"When I received the major funding from NSERC (National Science and Engineering Research Council) we knew we were going to move this project forward in a more substantial way. In order to really realize our models for sunlight utilization, we needed space such as this solarium to make use of sunlight to grow algae.

"We have tested some of the



“The capacity of microalgae to clean the air is amazing - not just dust but pollutants!”

– Dr. Weixing Tan

chemical composition of the biomass, being produced from this algae. It contains 53% protein! Imagine, that is higher than soybean! It could be quite a valuable commodity: it could be feed for livestock, for chickens, for fish. We are still in the process of finalizing our system so we can scale up. Once we reach that point – possibly in five or six months – we can begin to increase volume.”

As the algae grows in the GPRC research solarium, so does the sense of excitement, and dreams of possibilities for the future.

Is the concept of this world-impacting research occurring here in a “remote and rural” city unrealistic? Adebusuyi certainly does not feel that way. “This is a green technology, and I think everybody is interested in that, regardless of where it is being done. It is something that this society is welcoming. And open ponds will not work in Canada because of the weather; it makes sense to be doing

this research here.”

And in our increasingly “connected” world, physical location does not seem very important. Ideas and dreams, however, are becoming increasingly important as researchers work to find solutions to the challenges humans are creating for the survival of their own species.

Weixing Tan can dream of a very different future, and one which he can help us to achieve. “It is probably not too far away that we will commonly see food products of this sort,” he says. “I will not be surprised if in a number of years we will have acres of greenhouses beside a power plant. And since algae is a natural feeding stock for fish - which grow by eating algae – there is already some kind of plan to build some kind of aquaculture right next to the plant so that we can feed those algae directly to the fish, thereby completing sustainable cycle of nature by turning carbon dioxide eventually into our foods.

“And I can imagine, in the future,

one of these similar systems framed just like artwork in your home. It will be close to the sunlight of your windows, and will clean the air of your house once a day, enriching your house with oxygen, so everybody is healthy. And this system would be automated enough to create algae cake so that the family wakes up to a healthy breakfast on the table, fully cooked and delicious. I don’t think that is impossible. The capacity of microalgae to clean up the air is just amazing. Not just dust, but it will clean up all those toxic pollutants in the air.”

The system which Weixing Tan has developed is patented. It is working well, and the prospects for production of commodities are more than promising.

It is not inconceivable that our region, in the not-too-distant future, may become known nationally and internationally for its place in the global solutions to the challenges of climate change.

FACULTY PROFILE





Dr. Les Rawluk:

Mentor and Teacher In and Out of the Classroom

For 21 years, Dr. Les Rawluk has instructed chemistry in the science department at Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC). The formulas he teaches are complex, but his formula for teaching is simple, and the results have earned him exceptional student reviews.

"The academic world is asking these [first-year] students to make a commitment that will impact the rest of their lives. I try to support them by giving them a path, and I do that by being patient and respectful to them," says Rawluk pragmatically.

Outside of the classroom, he has an open door policy that extends to taking calls at his home. He says it is not unusual to find himself in the role of advisor and counsellor.

"Sciences can be tough, and that first year can be a harsh slap across the cheek," he says. "There are many students that just need the reassurance: 'I'm smart enough to be here.'"

Rawluk challenges his students, and in turn has gained their respect through his ability to bring clarity to a subject that can be difficult and abstract. The enthusiasm and energy he pours into his lectures and labs create a robust and engaging learning experience for his students.

He credits the teaching environment at GPRC with setting a culture that supports individual teaching styles, and gives him plenty of opportunity to interact with his students and impart his years of knowledge.

"A small school like GPRC gives me the opportunity

for hands-on learning with my students in various environments," says Rawluk. "I am able to share 21 years of tips and insights with students in my seminars, but I can then apply those theories with them in the lab." He adds that it is the combination of this culture and the smaller class sizes that enables him to take a more personal approach to teaching. "Within three weeks I know the name of every student in my class and I've learned a personal fact about each one of them," says Rawluk.

Rawluk knows first-hand the influence a teacher can have on a student's academic path. It was the support and encouragement of a high school chemistry teacher that inspired him to study chemistry. He credits the mentorship of a University of Alberta instructor who, in his fourth year of a bachelor's degree, gave him the confidence and encouragement to continue his studies and complete his PhD.

Rawluk's three year term as chair of the GPRC science department has been rewarding, he says, because it has allowed him to make contributions to the entire science department and to represent his colleagues in all of the science disciplines.

Rawluk refers to himself as somewhat of an old school instructor, one who prefers a chalk board over a white board. However, this professor, mentor and friend is a true innovator whose commitment to teaching has inspired learning in over two decades of students.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

AWARDS and RECOGNITIONS

GPRC Nursing instructor **Louise Rawluk** has been nominated for a prestigious award. The CARNA Awards of Nursing Excellence recognize several RNs and NPs for their contributions to nursing practice, from recent graduate nurses to those who have inspired through decades of dedication.

GPRC Instructor **Karen Oostra** has been awarded a MSN Achievement Award of \$2500.00 to recognize your academic achievement in your first year of graduate studies. This award is given to students who have the top GPA in the first year of MSN studies at Trinity Western University School of Nursing.

Retired GPRC instructor **Doug Frattini** was nominated in the "Grande Prairie Best of the Best Contest" hosted by HQ Grande Prairie online, and took 1st place for Teacher/Professor.

GPRC instructor **Sue Styles** received the Isabelle Adams Award for Excellence in Perioperative Nursing, presented to her at the Operating Room Nurses of Canada (ORNAC) Conference in Ottawa. Sue was nominated by her peers in the Operating Room Nurses Association of Alberta.

Several GPRC students were shortlisted in the The Health Council of Canada 4th Annual *Health Innovation Challenge*. In the individual category, **Randi Jackson** made the list for the entry, Emergency to Home: Improving Health Outcomes for Seniors Across the Continuum. Two group entries made the list: **Farell Archibald, Nahanni Hasselfield, and Crystal Goosney** for their entry on The Hamilton-Wentworth HSO Mental Health Program, and **Kenisha Constable, Tannis Donaldson, Lindsey Jones** for their entry on the Saskatoon Health Bus. This is a very significant portion of the shortlist, as there are just 5 entries in each category. The Health Council noted that "instructor **Tina Haayer** has been encouraging and working with her students this year to enter the Challenge, and her work has paid off!"

GPRC is among Canada's top 50 research colleges as identified in November 2013 by Research Infosource Inc. Grande Prairie Regional College



(GPRC) is ranked #1 for growth, #3 for research intensity, and #15 for research funding. This is a remarkable change from our 46th place ranking last year, and is credited in part to the establishment of the National Bee Diagnostic Centre one year ago.

ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS

GPRC fine arts instructor **Laura Michelle MacArthur** has completed the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy, Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies Program.

Nursing instructor **Tamara Van Tassell** was chosen to present her abstract, The Safety Screen: An Evaluation Tool as part of the WNRCSN Conference in Winnipeg, MB, February 2014.

Former GPRC voice student, **Amalea Lutsenko-Duek**, completed her Bachelor of Music degree last Spring at the University of Lethbridge and was accepted this year into a Master of Music program in voice, full scholarship, at Western University in London Ontario. Former GPRC Bachelor of Music voice student, **Chelsea Paul**, is in the second year of her Master of Music degree in voice, also at Western University.

Kelly Socha recently completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) in Australia. She has been given two awards from that institution for her graduate work: Kelly will graduate "with distinction" in her Master's program and has also been awarded the Dean's Commendation – Postgraduate Program.

APPOINTMENTS

In April 2013, GPRC Board of Governors Vice-Chair **Pete Merlo** was appointed Chair of the Board of Directors of Alberta Blue Cross Benefits Corporation.

An election was held June 26 to select the Grande Prairie Sports Council board of directors, with GPRC instructor **Leigh Goldie** named the group's first chair. The overall goal of the sports council is to increase

people's participation in sport, and increase the number of events that are hosted in Grande Prairie.

Don Gnatiuk, President and CEO of GPRC, has been appointed to the Board of Directors, Association of Canadian Community Colleges.

Jodi Minton, GPRC Be Fit For Life Coordinator was selected to the Canadian Sport for Life - a movement to improve the quality of sport and physical activity in Canada by linking sport, education, recreation and health, as the Active Living Representative on the Alberta Ambassador Network.

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

The Alberta men's volleyball team completed a gold medal sweep at the 2013 Canada Games in Sherbrooke, Quebec. The team, coached by GPRC men's volleyball coach **Mike Lauzon** and former Grande Prairie resident **Jon Goldie**, swept Quebec in three straight (25-22, 25-15, 26-24) in the gold medal match. Grande Prairie native **Brook Sedore** also played on the team.

GPRC and Wolves alumna **Cary-Anne Sallows-McTaggart** with her team **Renee Sonnenberg, Lawny MacDonald, Rona Pasika, Desiree Owen** (fifth player) and **Kurt Balderston** (coach), competed in the Olympic Trials, December 1-8, 2013, in Winnipeg.

The GPRC Wolves Women's Soccer Team won the Bronze medal at the ACAC Women's Soccer Conference Championships Oct 26. This is the first ever ACAC Medal for Wolves Soccer.

GPRC congratulates Wolves Soccer athletes **Maggie Zacsco, Danica Blasius, Julian Gonzalez** and Wolves Cross Country Runners **Hayden Hollowell, Riley Wallace and Jamie Wigmore** on achieving ACAC All Conference status. This is an accomplishment achieved through dedication, commitment and hard work.

Additionally, **Jamie Wigmore** has been nominated for the CCAA All Canadian Award. This award represents out-standing athletic, academic and community performance by the athlete.

Second year runner **Jamie Wigmore** took on the top female college runners in Canada competing in the 2013 CCAA Cross Country Running Championships in Toronto. Wigmore ran at or near the front of the women's 5 km race until the final 500m. At the finish, she ended up in 5th spot, 15 seconds behind the leading trio. Based on her top 7 finish, Wigmore was named a First Team Tournament All Star.

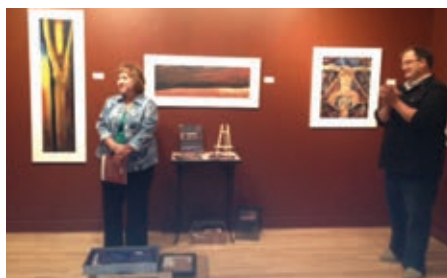
Wolves Men's Volleyball setter, **Troy Wiebe** and Team Alberta achieved gold at The National Team Challenge Cup, held in Gatineau, QC. Wiebe, a local product of Peace Wapiti came up through the Wolves Volleyball Club system and is now entering his second season with the GPRC Wolves.

GPRC student-athletes have been recognized for their performances this last season. **Josh Nicol** has been selected as an ACAC All Conference player for Men's Basketball, and **Kelly O'Hallahan** was selected to the ACAC Women's Basketball All Conference Team. In addition, Kelly is one of two nominees from the ACAC for the CCAA All Canadian Award.

PUBLISHED WORKS and EXHIBITIONS

The work of GPRC art instructor **Ed Bader** was exhibited as part of the

Genovus Art Competition in Calgary in April 2013. This competition, by invitation only, was aimed at mid-career Alberta based artists without a national profile.



Artist **Carmen Haakstad**, who is GPRC's Vice President External Relations, mounted an exhibition of his works for Alberta Culture Days at Beaverlodge Cultural Centre, and was honoured by a visit from the Hon. Heather Klimchuk, Minister of Culture, on the opening weekend of the exhibition.

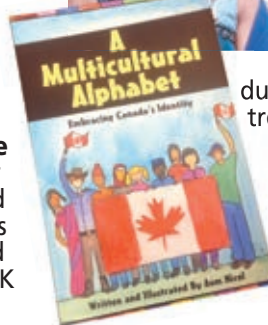
GPRC music instructor **Chris McIntyre** composed and recorded the music for a short action film which was released online in December 2013. The film has won awards at film festivals in LA and in Atlanta, and has reached some 500K views on YouTube since Christmas.



Canada's History Magazine has published an article by GPRC instructor **Dr. Daryl White**: "The Great Nickel Scandal." The magazine describes the article as "drawn from research for his dissertation on Inco and Alcan in the first and second world wars. Much of his research examines enterprise and government relationships in Northern Ontario."



Former GPRC instructor **Aum Nicol** published her book "A Multicultural Alphabet – Embracing Canada's Identity" which was written and illustrated by during her cancer treatments last year.



How to make a donation to GPRC

Donations from alumni, parents, corporations, foundations and friends have a direct impact on students at GPRC! Donations make a difference in the lives of students every day; aside from providing student comfort and financial aid, donations can encourage creative thought and the development of knowledge and experience that strengthen the fabric of our region, province, country and beyond!

There are many ways you can make a donation to GPRC

In Person:

Visit or call GPRC Community Relations 780.539.2719
E218 Grande Prairie Campus

Planned Gifts:

Planned giving is, in essence, deciding in advance what happens to your estate. It puts you in control. Whether it is cash, securities, life insurance, real estate, or gifts in kind, a well-planned gift ensures your legacy makes a statement about the things that are important to you. For more information go to:
www.gprc.ab.ca/alumni/donations/

By Mail:

Grande Prairie Regional College
Community Relations, E218
10726-106 Avenue, Grande Prairie, AB T8V 4C4

On-line:

Donating to GPRC on line is easy, safe and secure. Visit www.gprc.ab.ca and click on the "Donating to GPRC" button on the home page.

Sponsorship and Advertising:

Contact 780.539.2905 to discuss opportunities to put your company in the spotlight in one of our various sponsorship and advertising channels.





Cliff Turner

*From the Ground Up:
Building Foundations in
his Community*

By April Weavell

When Cliff Turner began his studies at Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) in 1972, he was not only elected Students' Association President in his first year, but became the first student representative to sit on Academic Council. Turner also had a hand in writing the constitution for the Council, working alongside Dr. Henry Anderson, GPRC's first president. It was the 70s and a time of protest, says Turner. Students wanted a greater voice in their college, and Turner dove in, ready to lobby on their behalf.

"I spent a lot of my time making sure that students had a say on Academic Council and in the constitution," says Turner. "We had a very good relationship with administration."

That year, the Students' Association would take responsibility for their own finances; until that time, funds had been managed by College administration. Students also wanted a designated area for the Association and their events. GPRC did not yet have one main campus, but was located in buildings throughout the community, predominantly in the downtown area around the sites of the current provincial building, courthouse and art gallery. Canadian architect Douglas Cardinal was still two years away from completing the curved and flowing brick college building that would launch his career as a renowned architect.

Turner and his fellow students secured space for their association in the basement of the college dorm (more recently known as the Wapiti Dorm). However, with students trying to sleep upstairs, the space proved less than ideal for some of the noisier late night events. In subsequent years, until the new building opened, many of their activities were held in a building across the street, where the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie now sits. Embracing the entire college experience, Turner, an avid sportsman, was also active on two of GPRC's sports teams. He played

offensive tackle on GPRC's brand new football team, the Golden Gales, and also played on the hockey team until he was forced to quit due to an injury. He was no less competitive in the sport of chess. He played with the Grande Prairie Chess Club, then, when he moved from the city, joined a club in Vancouver. Following his two years of sciences at GPRC, Turner spent a year in this coastal city of BC taking an electronics course.

He then made the decision to follow in the footsteps of both his father and grandfather, owners of Turner & Sons Construction in Grande Prairie, and applied to NAIT's Construction Engineering Technology program. He was eager to carve out his own niche in the industry, and was especially looking forward to Edmonton, where no one would know the Turner name or refer to him as "Charlie's boy." (Charlie was his dad, a well-known resident and business owner in Grande Prairie, who was also known for his outstanding hockey skills.) Turner laughs as he recalls his inability to shake the label – though at the time he was less than amused. "It was my second day of classes, and my English instructor asked us to introduce ourselves and say where we were from," he explains. "My heart sunk when I announced my name and hometown, and my instructor said 'Turner - are you Charlie's boy?'" Coincidentally, the English instructor, Mr. Burgess, had previously lived in Grande Prairie. It wasn't long, however, before Turner managed to elude his father's shadow, establishing his own reputation. Again, he jumped into student life with both feet; he served as faculty representative on NAIT's Students' Association and played on the school's curling team. Upon graduation, he was hired by Carlson Construction, a well-respected Edmonton construction firm, where he worked for two years.

With solid experience under his belt, he returned to Grande Prairie and started his own construction

company, Turner Lawrence & Associates. His partner, Al Lawrence, was a petroleum engineer and former GPRC student. The two opened a second company, Deep Basin Well Servicing, with Turner managing the oil service rigs construction component, and Lawrence handling well servicing. Turner sold his interests in the companies and he, followed by his brother John, decided to join their father. Turner & Sons Construction became a third-generation family business. Like many family businesses, Turner says "the old way and the new" sometimes clashed, creating interesting dynamics. He recalls one such example very well. With a keen interest in computers developed at a very early age, Turner decided to bring advanced technology into the company. He purchased his first computer, which he would use to run Turner & Sons' accounting, scheduling and estimating programs. It was an IBM System /34, ran on 64K of memory, was so large it took up the better part of an office, had a user's manual that covered an entire desk and cost him \$104,000. With this latest purchase, Turner & Sons even caught the attention of national trade magazines.

"It was difficult to convince my dad that I needed this computer," says Turner. When asked if his father was pleased with the outcome, Turner pauses, then responds, grinning, "I don't know."

Eventually, Turner and his brother bought out their father. In 1993, he formed a partnership with Mike O'Connor, an employee within the company, and TurCon Construction Group was established. Two years ago, the partners opened a Rainbow International franchise, providing restoration services for water, fire, smoke and mould damage. In addition to his business interests, Turner is well-known in the city's non-profit community for his commitment and his readiness to roll up his sleeves to do what it takes to help out.

"I think it's important," says

- continued from page 23

Turner as he talks about his volunteer contributions. "As business owners, we have a responsibility to make the community we live in a better place." Community involvement is an important cornerstone of TurCon's company culture.

Not surprising, over the years, some of Turner's construction projects with non-profits have morphed into committee or board positions with those organizations. He became a board member of the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie following a major building project with the gallery. He's also proud of his work on the finance committee of the Grande Prairie & District Association for the Mentally Handicapped, a role he stepped into after constructing their offices and shop. During his 25 years on the committee, he helped the Association achieve long-term sustainability with the launch of a recycling program and the opening of two bottle depots.

For nearly 13 years, Turner has

been a board member with the Grande Prairie Women's Residence Association, helping lead the organization through growth and change. He has been president for over eight of those years and has served in an advisory capacity for two major construction projects: a new 40-bed emergency shelter, Odyssey House, and, currently in the planning stages, a Supportive Housing apartment-style facility for women and children who are victims of violence.

Turner's face is also a familiar one among Grande Prairie's sports community. He's held numerous volunteer positions, including helping plan and execute the 1995 Canada Winter Games, the 2000 Alberta Summer Games and the 2010 Arctic Winter Games. While he usually prefers to work in the background when leading the charge behind a community project or initiative, this wasn't always the case. Turner is a former hot air balloon champion. His involvement in that sport put him up front and centre – literally – soaring high above the city.

True to his nature, he not only was a fierce competitor, but donated hours of his time to the sport, and was instrumental in bringing world class championships to the city. He has participated in virtually every role in the sport, and has been honoured by the Alberta Hot Air Balloon Association for his many contributions. Though he no longer flies, during his years in the sport he competed in several Canadian championships, and navigated at the World Championships in Michigan, US. He was poised to represent Canada at the World's in France in 1983; unfortunately, due to a disagreement with the French organizing committee, North America boycotted the competition that year.

From lobbying in the boardroom as a student at GPRC, to his years of steady commitment and service, the foundations Turner builds put an emphasis on community. He sets his sights high, then mobilizes his vision – action, determination and dedication his tools for driving a vibrant community.



**Help us recognize
the achievements
of GPRC Alumni!**



GPRC

Nominations welcome for our annual Alumni Awards.

Alumni Award of Excellence

This award is intended to recognize specific, recent accomplishments of GPRC alumni. The accomplishments may include such things as local, national or international honors, major championships, appointments to high office. This award will be offered when appropriate candidates are nominated, not necessarily each year.

Steps to the Greater Award

This award recognizes the outstanding achievements of GPRC alumni early in their careers or community service.

Distinguished Alumni Award

The most prestigious award of the GPRC Alumni/Foundation, this award was established to recognize GPRC alumni for outstanding accomplishments in their professions, and/or in service to their community, society or GPRC. The Distinguished Alumni is an example of alumni success for current and future GPRC students.

Members of the public and the College community are invited to submit nominations for these awards.

Go to gprc.ab.ca/alumni

Download the nomination form and submit before December 31 each year.

ALUMNI UPDATES

1973-1974

Toni Tesar **Secretarial Science**

I returned to GPRC for several courses over the years and eventually served on the Advisory Committee for the Office Administration program for 10 years. I worked one winter in Student Services in the evenings as well. My interactions with GPRC were always rewarding. After 21 years working at the Health Unit, I went on to work at the QEII Hospital for another 6 years before retiring and moving to the Edmonton area in 2001. Since that time I worked at the University Hospital for a short time, then took a complete change of direction and worked in the oil industry for the next 5 years. I am now enjoying my retirement in St. Albert and am serving on the Board of Directors at the 50+ Club and on the Executive of the St. Albert Newcomers Club. In between these activities, I enjoy travelling the world (well, mostly Europe and Mexico)!

1981-1985

Deborah (Ashton) Bramowicz **Education**

Years ago, author Deborah Ashton was given the task to organize and catalogue the city of Grande Prairie's entire collection of newspapers at the local library. What ensued was a thrilling adventure into a fascinating local history. The experience was also the seed of an idea: a story of a small town with a terrifying dark secret. The result is the thrilling novel, *Headline Alberta*, published in paperback and on Amazon Kindle on December 10, 2013.

"Headline Alberta is a novel about a town so deeply wrapped in mystery and secrets that the residents don't know how to untangle themselves," said Ashton.

Something terrible happened in *Headline, Alberta* in 1975, tearing apart two best friends, Suzanne and Beatrice. In 1995, another tragedy brings Beatrice back to town and she is stunned by what she finds. Why does no one else in the whole town see what is happening? Beatrice brings Suzanne into her discovery, and together they decide to get to the



bottom of the big *Headline* mystery that no one wants to talk about. The two friends force each other to see their own past, present and future in a new light, and at the same time, figure out why so many people are dying on Highway 65 outside of *Headline*. The truth is in the headlines.

Ashton was born and raised in Alberta, growing up on a small farm outside of Valleyview. There her family led an adventurous life of farming, camping, fishing and flying in her dad's small airplane. She lived in Grande Prairie throughout the 80's and 90's, working in radio and live theatre. In 1998, she and daughter Joelle moved to Illinois where Ashton achieved her degree in Computer Science in 2000. Today Ashton, husband Eric and son Adam continue the adventure, road tripping throughout Canada and the United States. *Headline Alberta* is her first novel.

Ashton posts commentary on writing and her numerous other interests to her blog on her website: headlinealberta.com
The novel was published in both paperback and e-book format through Amazon.

1983-1984

Cheryl A (Tunke) George **Office Administration**

I was married in 1989 and have five children - 4 girls, 1 boy. We have moved around to many different towns and cities in the past years following work and are now back in Grande Prairie. I was a stay at home mom during the kids' earliest years and now work full-time within the oil and gas industry.

1985-1987

Keith Lemay **Science** **Involved with Students Association (1987-88)**

Keith is currently employed as a Radiologist with Alberta Health Services.

1990-1993

Simon C Tamakloe **Trades - Electrical & Beekeeping - GPRC Fairview**

Simon currently resides in Ghana, West Africa where he is the Ghana Representative for World Help Through Technology

1991-1994

Kerri Freding **Livestock production and crop production - GPRC Fairview** **Involved in the Students Association (1992)**

Kerri now resides in Oliver, British Columbia.

1996-1998

Jennifer M (McDonald) Keay **B.Education transfer program** **Involved with Wolves (1996-98)**

I am currently a high school Social Studies teacher in Whitecourt and keep in close touch with my BFF from GPRC - Joe Bissell. If it wasn't for Joe (who was my roommate 1997-98) I would never have become involved in the Wolves Swim Team or Drama Productions - in particular Alice in Wonderland. My favorite memories of GPRC revolve around the drama program - particularly with Roxanne Dicke & Rob (the Tech. Instructor). Being the stage manager for Alice was incredible and ignited a love for theatre in me I cannot extinguish.

1996-1998

Tammie L (Woytowich) Adams **Animal Health Technology Diploma - GPRC Fairview**

Tammie currently lives in Port Moody, British Columbia, where she is working as a Technician at UBC.

1998-2000

Lynn (Novak) Seabrook **Bachelor of Education UT program**

Lynn is currently working as the GPRC Program Coordinator/ Sessional Instructor in Hinton, Alberta.

1999-2002

Emily J (Tarney) Thiessen **Business Administration** **Involved with Students Association (2000-2002)**

Emily is the owner of Competitive Edge Business Solutions Inc. "My time at GPRC created some of the fondest memories of my life. Thank you GPRC!"

2000-2001

Wendy (Seweryn) Hunt **Intensive Office Administration**

Wendy is currently employed by the City of Grande Prairie.



Matt Thorson

25

Game Developer

Former GPRC Computing Science student Matt Thorson has been recognized in the annual Forbes Magazine "30 under 30" list of the most important innovators and influencers under 30.

He is co-founder of Supergiant Games and co-creator of the action role-playing video game Bastion, which has sold over 2.2 million

copies since 2011 and won multiple awards at competitions including the Interactive Achievement Awards, Game Developer's Choice Awards, Spike TV Video Game Awards and Inside Gaming Awards.

An independent developer, Thorson created the archery combat platform game Tower Fall, regarded by many critics as one of the best multiplayer

games of 2013. Initially released for the OUYA and coming to PlayStation 4 and PC in 2014, it was a PAX 10 selection and won the Indie Cade Media Choice Award.

Matt attended GPRC from 2006-2008. His website is: mattmakesgames.com

2001-2004

Ashley R McDonald

Business - Marketing

Involved with Wolves (2004)

I moved back to Grande Prairie in 2013 after being in Calgary for the past 6 years. I opened Grande Prairie Dog Squad, Grande Prairie's first and only Professional dog walking and training company. www.gpdogsquad.com.

Editor's note: Ashley was awarded the Grande Prairie District Chamber of Commerce 2013 Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award!

2002-2004

Christy D (Chmilar) Doucette

Bachelor of Education - Secondary

I graduated from the University of Alberta in June of 2006. I am currently Director of Culture and Brand Management for Pomeroy Inn & Suites in Grande Prairie.

2003-2005

Kristin Carpenter

Bachelor of Arts - English

After almost six years in the administrative field (accounting, answering phones, filing, etc.) I began training to become a Calgary Police Officer! It is very physically, emotionally (most of my family lives in and around GP so moving to Calgary will be... interesting), and intellectually challenging. I'm excited and encouraged by my family and friends. This is the most exciting adventure yet!

2004-2005

Olive Toews

Business Administration

Certificate

Olive currently resides in Spirit River, Alberta. She is employed with the Village of Berwyn, where she is the Chief Administrative Officer

2004-2006

Kristy Mergaert

Animal Health Technology - GPRC

Fairview

I am currently employed at GPRC as an Animal Health Instructor, in Fairview.

2012-2013

Colette I (Piche) Morin

Office Admin 1yr Intensive

Booking Program

I graduated on May 4th, 2013 and was employed on May 7th! I am now working at Windsor Ford. A favorite GPRC memory was when I kept asking Grace Walton for help and finally one day she said 'you are giving me a headache'; she was so funny and just the way she said it we both broke out laughing. Grace was a big help to me; she understood what it was like to be an older student.

GPRC

GRANDE PRAIRIE • FAIRVIEW • GRANDE CACHE • HINTON • EDSON • JASPER

Save the Date!

July 19 & 20, 2014

There have been many changes over the past 40 years, and GPRC is very proud to be celebrating 40 years of success in our Animal Health Technology program. We invite you to come reconnect with old friends, to visit with your peers, and to help us celebrate AHT at our Fairview campus. For more information, please visit gprc.me/AHTAnniversary

1.888.539.4772 • alumni@gprc.ab.ca

w w w . g p r c . a b . c a

IN MEMORIAM



Elizabeth (Beth) Sheehan

The Beaverlodge native was well known for her photography, vast historical knowledge of Clairmont and the Peace Country as well as her own books about the South Peace's history.

Because her family was among

the first to settle in the region in 1909, Sheehan made sure to document pretty much everything that happened during those years and donated those artifacts to the South Peace Regional Archives. She was also one of the first supporters of the South Peace Regional Archives, helping establish the facility in 2000.

Beth Sheehan was also among one of the first to attend the Grande Prairie Regional College as an adult student in the general arts program,

when it was first established in 1966."

She continued to be a great supporter of the College, and made many contributions over the years, including establishing a Salutatorian award which is presented each year at Convocation. In 2012 Elizabeth Sheehan was presented with the GPRC Board of Governors Award of Distinction, the College's highest tribute to individuals within our community.



Ernie Radbourne

Great friend and supporter of GPRC, Mr. Ernie Radbourne, passed away on Monday, September 16th 2013. Mr.

Radbourne served GPRC as a member of the Board of Governors' from June 1988 to June 1991 and was a huge supporter of Wolves' athletics.

Margaret Cleaveley

Margaret Cleaveley passed away on Friday, June 21, 2013. Marg was well known at GPRC for her advocacy in securing programming and funding for non-traditional career programs for women. Her positions included Vocational Coordinator, and then Dean of Trades.

Ken Hanson

In March 2013 Mr. Harold Kenneth (Ken) Hanson, who passed away at the age of 78 years. Ken Hanson served as Chair of the GPRC Board of Governors from 1971-1974.



Ken Sutherland

The members of the GPRC Alumni Foundation Board of Directors expressed great sorrow and tremendous loss at

the passing of fellow Board member Ken Sutherland. Ken was Treasurer of the GPRC Alumni Foundation Board of Directors at the time of his passing.

Dianne Bedford

Dianne Bedford passed away on February 16, 2014. A long-time employee at GPRC's Fairview Campus, Dianne worked in a number of departments including Student Residence, the Alumni Office and, most recently, in the Registry office. She was an active member of Alberta Union of Public Employees (AUPE) Local 071/007.



Sara Lamoureux

In June 2013, GPRC mourned the sudden loss of friend and colleague Sarah Lamoureux who passed away in a

tragic accident. Sarah was well known throughout the College for her warm and caring personality, her adorable smile, and always helpful nature. Memories of Sarah will be treasured by her College family.

Karen Kennedy

Karen Kennedy, an Instructor Emeritus in the Human Services department, passed away in February 2014. Karen served the department and GPRC for over 20 years, retiring in 2008.

Unearthing the Monstrous of the Middle Ages

Jason Berg

by April Weavell

Eight years ago, while attending a lecture in Lane Borstad's art history class at Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC), Jason Berg had what he today calls his "aha" moment.

"During his lecture, Lane made a comment about the Middle Ages that made me think, 'That just can't be right,'" recalls Berg. "I went away that day and decided that I had to try and find the answer." Borstad had not only piqued Berg's curiosity, but raised questions in his mind about the many secrets in medieval history that were still waiting to be unearthed, questioned and debated.

That curiosity set Berg on a quest for the answer, taking him on an unexpected academic journey that would ultimately land him in England at the University of Cambridge – the third oldest surviving university in the world and one of the world's most respected post-secondary institutions. Berg would find himself spending each day studying and learning among the stone walls at a university that was founded hundreds of years ago

in 1209, walking the very hallways where renowned minds like Sir Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin and, more recently, Stephen Hawking had gone before him as students in search of answers to their own questions.

Berg's journey did not end there, however. Following Cambridge, he moved north to the prestigious University of Leeds in West Yorkshire, to complete a doctoral degree in medieval history.

Before venturing back in time, however, Berg's earliest post-secondary studies took him to Fairview College (now GPRC Fairview), where he obtained a two-year Turf Management Diploma, followed by a one-year Turf Equipment Certificate. As a horticulturalist and landscaper, he was employed at various golf courses in the province, then opened his own irrigation business in Calgary.

At age 25, Berg returned to post-secondary studies and commenced university transfer courses at GPRC. While he hadn't set out with a plan to study medieval history, he found the study of Roman and medieval art in Borstad's art history class

particularly interesting. He transferred from GPRC to the University of Alberta and completed a Bachelor of Arts in Ancient and Medieval History in 2009.

Since Berg had always wanted to study abroad, after completing his degree he decided to apply to universities overseas, including Cambridge.

"I was a regular working guy from Grande Prairie, so applying to Cambridge seemed like a long shot, but I decided I might as well aim big," says Berg. "I joked with my friends and with my mom that it would be nice to at least have a well-written rejection letter on Cambridge University letterhead." The Cambridge letter arrived. Berg was shocked when he read the word "accepted."

"I was gobsmacked," he says, the British slang word slipping easily from his tongue.

Berg spent an intensive 12 months at Cambridge completing his Master of Philosophy in Medieval History – the entire first month spent learning how to read Latin. He says that at times, simply walking around



the 800-year-old buildings – constructed in the very era that he was studying – would send chills down his spine.

“It was interesting to see in stone what I had always imagined about the Middle Ages and to participate in it in some weird way,” he says.

A memory that remains imprinted in Berg’s mind took place during one of his courses, which was held in a museum located right within Cambridge. Berg and his fellow students were handed a book by their instructor to view. The book was written in Latin and Old High German, and though at first glance there didn’t seem to be anything particularly remarkable about it, the students soon learned differently.

“The book was written in the 10th Century. It was 1000 years old and we were handing it around like it was the latest novel,” muses Berg. “It was almost a sensual experience because you could see it, touch it and smell it... it just felt and smelled old.” Berg explains that the university owns thousands of manuscripts written before the 15th Century.

Besides his fascination with the institution’s ancient history, Berg’s entire university experience was much different at Cambridge than what he had experienced in Canada. While the Canadian post-secondary institutions he had attended all had one main campus, the University of Cambridge is comprised of 31 colleges spread throughout the central city of Cambridge. To attend class or to meet with one of his instructors, Berg would have to weave his way through markets and

businesses to reach one of the other colleges.

Throughout his year at Cambridge, as Berg worked on his thesis, his research concluded that the question in his mind raised many years earlier in his GPRC history class could, in fact, not be answered. His zeal for the medieval and for higher education, however, drove him to pursue further studies of the Middle Ages.

He received a Cambridge bursary to learn German in Aachen, Germany for one month, then moved to West Yorkshire in October 2010 where he is a PhD student in the School of History at the University of Leeds. His thesis, titled “Conceptions of the Monstrous and Marvellous as Discourse on Frankish Identity,” delves into a text that is replete with the strange, monstrous, and obscure. Berg’s research aims to investigate the way in which early medieval authors used geography and monstrosity to define their world view and to define themselves as different from other peoples or regions.

In addition to his doctoral studies, one of his most recent notable projects has been the development of an Open Access academic journal studying the Early Middle Ages. There is great debate in UK higher education around Open Access. As a result, there have been government efforts to develop a system where anyone in the UK can access publicly-funded research for free – a practice that Berg and many of his fellow academics strongly support. Just recently, Berg and three of his colleagues launched a volume of

world-class research online and have more projects in the works.

“We wanted to show that this work can be done – and it can be done literally for free,” he says. The entire cost of the project was only about £50 (\$100 dollars), the fee for hosting the journal on the web.

Today, Berg is working to complete his thesis and has recently moved to Iceland with his wife Erika Sigurdson, a Leeds graduate who is originally from Winnipeg (the two were married last December). Erika received a post-doctoral fellowship from the Árnastofnun at the University of Iceland in the county’s capital city of Reykjavik where the two will make their home for the next three years.

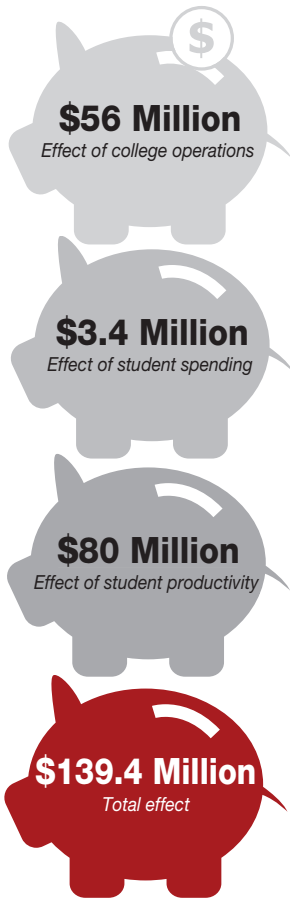
As Berg looks toward the future, he reflects back on a past at GPRC where, ironically, he started his “medieval journey” amidst the modern, flowing curves of the College’s renowned 20th Century architecture. He gives accolades to his GPRC instructors and their quality instruction, and even today, considers Lane Borstad and Jerry Petryshyn to be among two of his best.

Little did Berg expect that his “aha” moment sitting in an art history class at GPRC would take him on a journey that would span thousands of kilometres across the ocean and hundreds of years across history to place where that history would literally come alive in the books, bricks and mortar around him.

Editor’s note: Berg’s Open Access Journal went live online in July 2013 and can be found at: http://www.networksandneighbours.org/index.php/Networks_and_Neighbours/issue/current

Economic Impact of GPRC

Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) creates a positive impact on the regional economy and generates value in return for the investments made by its major stakeholder groups – students, society, and taxpayers. Using a two-pronged approach that involves an economic impact analysis and an investment analysis, a recent study has calculated the benefits to each of these groups. Results of the analysis reflect the 2011-12 analysis year.



IMPACT ON THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

During the analysis year, GPRC and its students added **\$139.4 million** in income to the GPRC Service Area's economy, approximately equal to 1.3% of the region's Gross Regional Product. The economic impacts of GPRC break down as follows:

Impact of college operations

GPRC employed 503 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in 2011-12. Payroll amounted to **\$46.1 million**, a portion of which was spent in the GPRC Service Area to purchase groceries, clothing, and other household goods and services. The college spent another **\$25.7 million** to support its day-to-day operations. The net impact of college payroll and expenses in the GPRC Service Area during the analysis year was approximately **\$56 million** in added regional income.

Impact of student spending

Around **1,009** GPRC students (including international) relocated to the GPRC Service Area from outside of the region and spent money at local businesses to purchase groceries, rent accommodation, pay for transport, and so on. The expenditures of students who relocated to the region during the analysis year added approximately **\$3.4 million** in income to the economy.

Impact of student productivity

Over the years, students have studied at GPRC and entered or re-entered the workforce with newly-acquired skills. Today thousands of these former students are employed in the GPRC Service Area. The accumulated contribution of former students currently employed in the regional workforce amounted to **\$80 million** in added income during the analysis year.

IMPACT OF THE PROVINCIAL ECONOMY

During the analysis year, GPRC and its students added **\$243 million** to Alberta's economy.

For every



spent...

\$3.70

Returned in lifetime income for **STUDENTS**

\$8.90

Returned in added provincial income and social savings for **SOCIETY**

\$1.50

Returned in added taxes and public sector savings for **TAXPAYERS**

Job equivalents based on income

Job equivalents are a measure of the average-wage jobs that a given amount of income can potentially support. They are calculated by dividing income by the average annual wages per worker in the region. Based on the added income created by GPRC, the job equivalents are as follows:

Effect of college operations
= **1,022** job equivalents

Effect of student spending
= **62** job equivalents

Effect of student productivity
= **1,461** job equivalents



Overall, the added **income created by GPRC and its students supported 2,545 average-wage job equivalents.**

NOTE: To see the full report on the economic impact of GPRC on students, society and taxpayers, please visit gprc.ab.ca



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