

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS

# LAURENTIAN

WINTER 2010

## Beyond **STARGAZING**

**LAURENTIAN RESEARCHERS' SEARCH FOR  
DARK MATTER INTENSIFIES**

**Biofuel opportunities  
in resource communities**

**ALUMNI LAUNCH  
ASIA WEBSITE**

**Reality forensics**

# Celebrating milestones



Peter and Shirley Moutsatsos (centre) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with their best man and maid of honour, George and Helen Roumanes, at a party in June 2009.

*According* to proverbial wisdom, good things come in threes and the Moutsatsos family reinforce this adage. Fifty, too, is a special number for the family. In June 2009, Shirley and Peter Moutsatsos celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. In 2002, the family celebrated the 50th anniversary of a Sudbury institution: their family eatery, Gus's Restaurant. And in 2010, Laurentian University will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

"It was a beautiful day," says Shirley of the party her son and daughter-in-law, Steve and Janine Moutsatsos, and daughter and son-in-law, Faye and George Adams, co-hosted to celebrate their parents' wedding anniversary. "We had three generations of our family there, and a few of the guests from the day of the wedding made it too. It was wonderful."

In lieu of gifts for the happily married couple, friends and family contributed to the Peter

and Shirley Moutsatsos Bursary at Laurentian University, which they created to celebrate the restaurant's 50th anniversary. "My parents have always been proponents of post-secondary education," explains Steve. "My parents constantly reminded my sister and me that our education wouldn't end when we graduated high school. Since they couldn't afford post-secondary education for themselves back in Greece, they wanted to make sure we had every opportunity to succeed and thrive."

"Over the years, our family has used the pool and the gym, taken extra-curricular courses and graduated from Laurentian," says Peter. "It has been a part of our life in Sudbury. We are happy to give back to a place that has been so welcoming to us."

The Moutsatsos family is just one example of how the community embraces Laurentian University and its drive to help students excel. Gifts to the university such as theirs recognize anniversaries,

birthdays, and other special occasions. When directed to student financial assistance, gifts can go even further with dollar-for-dollar matching through the Ontario Trust for Student Support program.

Why not celebrate your next milestone with Laurentian University!

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# LAURENTIAN

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS

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Laurentian University  
Université Laurentienne



**ON THE COVER:** The Great Orion Nebula, a winter constellation, was photographed in 2007 with a 5-inch reflector telescope near the town of Killarney in northern Ontario. This nebula can be seen around 11 p.m. in the winter sky.

Photo by Pat Bédard, Sudbury, ON



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# Laurentian lunges ahead

FROM THE EDITOR, JENNIFER NAULT



**BE PREPARED TO** hear more about Laurentian University in the following few years, and likely, for much longer than that. And not just in this magazine, where Laurentian success stories are to be expected (and there are so many to tell!), but also in mainstream media. You can sense that word is getting out. A new study on fall 2009 admissions to Laurentian indicates

that new grads will surge in 2013/2014. In fact, there was an 11 per cent increase in admissions this fall compared to fall 2008. More students means more student involvement, activity, and community outreach – and, of course, more stories to tell.

Not only is the student body increasing, so, too, is the scope of Laurentian's activities and community involvement. With the construction of the Vale Inco Living with Lakes Centre now underway; a new Centre for Research in Social Justice and Policy recently formed; and plans for the proposed School of Architecture approaching final stages, there is so much to look forward to at Laurentian University. The time is now.

As evidenced in the past the surge in student numbers and scope of programs will have a large ripple effect on the region. The School of Architecture, should all the funding come through as anticipated, will revitalize Sudbury's downtown core; contribute to diversifying the northern economy, and improve the quality of life in northern Ontario. Yet it will also entice potential students from across the country to discover Laurentian.

Not only were Laurentian's admission numbers up this year: The number of "A+" and "A" students was up almost 10 per cent, and the overall entering average is on the rise. Among the 2009 fall intake, it is exciting to think that some may carry on to pursue their MA in architecture – right here in the City of Greater Sudbury. Sounds like the makings of a well-designed plan.

[magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca)

## LETTERS

In the article "Canadian Space Agency seeks Laurentian expertise" in the winter 2009 issue, writer Suzanne Charron-Violette focuses on the positive aspects of Laurentian professors being involved with the Canadian Space Agency's project to mine the moon. Professor Greg Baiden, and others, gain expertise and the university acquires valuable business partners. The problem is whether or not the moon should be mined.



First, I am not a science or engineering major and therefore can unequivocally say that I am not a mining expert. However, I do know that the moon is an integral part of the earth's gravitational pull and the oceans' tidal system. My question is simple. Is it a good idea to mine the moon? Do we have any idea what effect it will have on the planet and specifically on humans?

At the moment, feasibility studies are being conducted. The time is now to tackle these questions because the answers may vastly change after countries have poured large amounts of money into the research and have learned there are substantial financial gains to be made. I am pleased to see that Laurentian University, being in the business of education, is at the forefront of innovation. The question is, at what cost?

Instead of simply researching the difficulties of mining the moon, I challenge the university to put together a consortium to examine the possible effects mining the moon will have on our planet and whether the moon should be left alone. Obtaining funding for such an investigation may be a problem, but in the end, the results may just be as remarkable as overcoming the difficulties of working in space.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Ramsay (Laurentian BA psychology graduate, summer 2008)

## campus quiz

*Our winner from the summer issue's trivia contest is Elise Carbonneau (BSL 1982) of Toronto. She correctly identified Sunday, March 28, 2010, as the official date of LU's 50th birthday. Thanks to all entrants! Please send contact information so we can call you if you win.*

*A two-fold question this time around:*

**What is the date of the Gala to celebrate Laurentian's 50th anniversary, and where will it be held?**

*Send your answer to [magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca) with the subject line "Winter 2010 Trivia" before January 31, 2010, and we'll enter your name in the draw for a Laurentian gift pack. Good luck!*

## LAURENTIAN GOES DOWNTOWN

LAURENTIAN'S CAMPUS AND downtown Sudbury have never been so close.

The Rainbow Routes Association of Greater Sudbury has started work on the Ramsey Lake Road Project, a 2-kilometre path connecting walkers, runners, and cyclists to the university and downtown. Currently, there are bike paths on both sides of the road, close to speeding traffic.

Deb McIntosh, head of Rainbow Routes, believes the path will strengthen the psychological ties between students on campus and the downtown core. "They think it's far because there's a lake and a railway line in the middle," says McIntosh.

The 4-metre wide trail connects the university at South Bay Road, then heads west, following the south side of Ramsey Lake Road within the road allowance on the side of the Idylwyld Golf & Country Club.

"It's only 2 kilometres from Science North to Laurentian University. It's very walkable, incredibly good for riding. Parking can be an issue. You don't need that many cars going up there," says McIntosh.

Besides distance, another concern is safety at the intersection of Ramsey



Lake Road and Paris Street. At this juncture on the new pathway, cyclists and pedestrians will have to cross the street to continue onto the bike path toward downtown. McIntosh wants to find a way to be creative and make the intersection safe. "In Europe, they've got lines painted and you know where you're supposed to be," she says.

The Ramsey Lake path is part of a larger effort to make northern Ontario's largest city more pedestrian friendly. Construction officially started on

October 1. In order to meet requirements of federal funding, the work must be complete by March 31, 2010. Funding agencies include the TransCanada Trail Foundation, the City of Greater Sudbury, the National Trails Coalition, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

The trail will be covered with crusher dust, but may be paved if more funding becomes available, says McIntosh.

Let the trails begin!

By *Laura E. Young*

## First Rural and Northern Health PhD

**YET ANOTHER MILESTONE** for Laurentian University. Alain Gauthier, a lecturer in the School of Human Kinetics, successfully defended his thesis on francophone health and physical activity. In the afterglow of his defense, he said that finishing his interdisciplinary PhD in rural and northern health feels more like a beginning than an end. With well-earned research abilities, he is ready to tackle some new projects.

In his thesis, Gauthier examined the physical activity patterns of Franco-Ontarians,



Alain Gauthier

specifically those living in northeastern Ontario. He quantified the importance of physical activity among this at-risk group, and specified target populations.

In the last couple of years, Gauthier has been so submerged in his project on physical activity that it left him with little leisure time of his own. He credits support from his family, colleagues, and thesis committee in facing the challenge. "A doctorate degree is an accomplishment that one rarely realizes alone," says Gauthier.

By *Suzanne Charron-Violette*

# Good news in the numbers

LAURENTIAN PRESIDENT DOMINIC GIROUX



AS I REFLECT on 2009, I am delighted by the fact that Laurentian still remains the university of choice in north-eastern Ontario. This fall, first-year undergraduate admissions rose by 11 per cent and overall enrolment by 6 per cent. We continue to attract more students every year than the next five universities combined.

And our success is increasingly being noticed outside the Northeast: half

our students come from the rest of Ontario, Canada, and the world. What impresses me most is that our admissions increased without lowering our academic standards. For example, our admission of A + students is up 10 per cent.

To me, the diverse and increasing admissions are clear indicators that, in spite of the economic downturn, investing in post-secondary education is key to moving forward and addressing global challenges. And, if I go by the recent 9 per cent increase in enrolment in PhD programs, more graduates realize the value of investing in themselves and continuing their education at the graduate level.

Greater Sudbury Mayor John Rodriguez talked recently about the great momentum which is building at Laurentian. A strong partnership between Laurentian and the City will help attract more highly qualified professionals to the area. We are already working hard together to ensure the Laurentian School of Architecture becomes a reality and opens its doors in 2011.

Also featured in this issue is the donor report for the last fiscal year. On behalf of the university, my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for your generosity and your faith in Laurentian. Your contributions help us remain the university of choice.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dominic Giroux". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



## Fall 2009 convocation sees new master's degrees



Michelle Brunette (centre) received her MA in human kinetics, and researched how international students culturally adapt through sports.

LAURENTIAN RECOGNIZED NEARLY 450 students during two fall convocation ceremonies on Saturday, October 31. Laurentian conferred an honorary doctorate of laws upon economist David Dodge during the afternoon convocation ceremony.

Both ceremonies were webcast live, enabling relatives, friends, and others unable to attend in person to view them. Among this fall's new graduates were the two first grads of the university's master's program in human kinetics, Amy Blodgett and Michelle Brunette.

Amy Blodgett studied under the supervision of Robert Schinke and completed her research thesis in partnership with Wikwemikong First Nations community. Her thesis, entitled *The Reflections of Aboriginal Community Members Co-Researching with Mainstream White Academics through Sport*, combined six years of collaborative research with Wikwemikong, incorporating the community members' perspectives.

Michelle Brunette's research thesis, *Physical Activity as an Expression of Acculturation*, pointed to the benefits of physical activity and sport for international students. "Many international students choose hockey and curling to get to know Canada and Canadians," she says. Her research found that participating in physical activity and sports helps international students better adapt to the culture of their host community. She is planning to continue her research as a doctoral student.

"Our local community will benefit from the findings reported by both Amy and Michelle," said Tammy Eger, coordinator of the master's program in human kinetics. "We are particularly pleased that many of our students choose to undertake applied research projects and partner with local community groups, industries, and agencies."

With this last round of convocation ceremonies, alumni number nearly 41,000.

# Zeroing in on CANCER

By Laura E. Young

A LAURENTIAN PROFESSOR is helping to determine how well chemotherapy is working on a cellular level. Amadeo Parissenti, Laurentian's chair of cancer research, and a team of researchers, are patenting a new method for measuring tumour response to chemotherapy in breast tumours.

Their tumour study is published in the journal *Breast Cancer Research and Treatment*. In spring 2009, they took part in the Biodiscovery Toronto Technological Showcase, a forum that links ten top medical research institutions with companies searching out the latest biomedical technologies and expertise.

The study was conducted in Sudbury using breast tumour samples from across Canada as part of a clinical trial by the National Cancer Institute of Canada Clinical Trials Group. Parissenti's method for measuring chemotherapy drug response lies in the quality of RNA (ribonucleic acid), which is a key molecule in synthesizing the body's protein. Taking samples from breast cancer patients, researchers measured the quality of RNA in patient

Amadeo Parissenti has developed a new method for measuring tumour response to chemotherapy.



tumours after three cycles of chemotherapy.

If the tumour RNA quality is high, it indicates the tumour isn't responding. That means the patient should likely proceed to surgery or try another chemotherapy regime, Parissenti says.

But, if the quality of RNA has deteriorated, it would appear that the chemo is working: Therefore, continue treatment.

The study also showed that the drop

in tumour RNA integrity depended upon the dosage. The higher the drug dosage level, the lower the tumour RNA integrity, which indicates a clear relationship between chemotherapy and tumour RNA integrity.

Now, Parissenti is teaming up with Carita Lanner at Laurentian's Northern Ontario School of Medicine to expand this work to ovarian cancer tumours.

## APPROACHING FIFTY

**PLANS CONTINUE TO** take shape as Laurentian prepares for its biggest birthday bash ever – the 50th anniversary!

As Sunday, March 28, 2010, draws closer, a birthday party BBQ with hamburgers, cake, and official speeches is planned for Friday, March 26. At that time, students will bury a time capsule, says Laurie Bissonnette, chair of the 50th anniversary celebrations. As well, Laurentian will welcome *La Nuit Sur L'Etang* to campus on Saturday.

The Gala is confirmed for October 23, on campus. At the Gala, 50 alumni will be honoured. A number of partners are confirmed for the event, including the four area school boards, the City of Greater Sudbury and the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation, Helvi's Flowers, and TD Meloche Monnex. With a silent auction and other planned fundraising, "as a result, this phenomenal culmination of the 50th anniversary is expected to raise \$100,000 for alumni scholarships," Bissonnette says.

To nominate an alumnus or alumnae for recognition, and for regular updates on all anniversary events, please visit: [www.celebrate50.laurentian.ca](http://www.celebrate50.laurentian.ca)





## LU alumnus joins OLYMPIC TORCH relay

By Laura E. Young

**RYAN LAFRANIERE** (B.Sc. 2009) is doing his part to ensure the Olympic flame reaches Vancouver for the 2010 Winter Olympics. The biochemistry grad is Sudbury's first torch bearer; he is expected to carry the torch on January 2, 2010.

Last November, Lafraniere applied, thinking it would be the experience of a lifetime, and an opportunity to give back to sport. "Curling has given me so much over the years. I've been very fortunate to have been competitive and to have been involved in the sport."

The relay – reportedly the longest in history for a host nation's torch relay – will be the closest he will get to being part of the Olympics, he says. "When the flame is lit to open the games come February, I'll know that I've been part of making sure that the games are starting. It's a symbol of pride for our country."

Lafraniere is currently working on his teacher's degree at Nipissing University. He is a level-three coach through the National Coaching Certification Program and a learning facilitator, hosting clinics for the Northern Ontario Curling Association.



Ryan Lafraniere

Lafraniere enjoys the competition sport provides. "You're part of a community. I just like being part of that and the passion these athletes have to strive to be the best. I want them to be the best. If I can somehow contribute to their achievements, then I will."



From left: Adam Turcotte, professor  
Nicolas Robidoux,  
Chantal Racette,  
and Eric Daoust

**TO WRITE OR** even break complex computer codes, who would you call?

The Goliath-like Google called upon Laurentian graduates Eric Daoust (B.Cosc. 2009) and Adam Turcotte (B.Cosc. 2007, B.Sc. 2009) to join their 'Summer of Code' program and write code for open-source software projects.

Daoust and Turcotte, now in their first

year of Laurentian's master's of computational science, were among 999 students chosen from 3,500 applicants worldwide.

Turcotte reminisces about the summer and says he is grateful that he was employed by Google. "It was really nice to feel like I was contributing to something that people actually use," Turcotte says.

The students' work is but a part of a

much larger, complex program. Turcotte and Daoust, with some help from fellow student Chantal Racette and Nicolas Robidoux, a professor in the mathematics and computer science department, wrote computer code for GIMP, a popular free alternative to Photoshop.

# Every Emotion Costs in production



Alumna Darlene Naponse is directing her second feature film, *Every Emotion Costs*.

**“YES, WE’RE DOING** it in the North.” Anishinaabe writer/director Darlene Naponse (Hon. BA 2001) has taken on an exciting challenge, having convinced supporters to pour nearly \$1 million into the production of her second feature film, *Every Emotion Costs*.

After receiving a bursary from the National Screen Institute in January 2007, she gained valuable professional development to hone her screenwriting skills and networking abilities. She travelled to Toronto and other cities over the year, doing serious networking with movie-biz types. For the resident of Whitefish Lake First Nation near Sudbury, “it was an amazing chance – because we are somewhat isolated from a movie business kind of networking.”

Mentoring gave the artist/owner of Pine Needle Productions the confidence to remain true to herself. She is staying true to her home base as well, producing the film in the Sudbury area and around Whitefish Lake First Nation. She begrudgingly admits, however, the film industry is not as strong in the area – yet. “It would have been ten times easier if we had been in Toronto.”

The shooting took place over November 2009. Naponse hopes to premiere during winter 2010, at one of the major film festivals in the United States.

*Every Emotion Costs* revolves around three sisters, two of whom return to their reserve to bury their mother. Past relationships and family issues crop up and allow sister Quilla to discover who she really is. It depicts contemporary life from an Aboriginal perspective.

The cast for the film include: Michelle St. John, Roseanne Supernault, Nathaniel Arcand, Tantoo Cardinal, Adam Garcia, and Wayne Neegan. The film is directed by Joseph Mansourian.

By Suzanne Charron-Violette

# Good CHEERS



The Laurentian Pot Bangers out in full force.

**IF YOU CHEER**, the players will perform better. Laurentian University researchers measured the degree to which cheering affects athletic performance in team sports.

Pepsi and Gatorade referred to this research while launching a contest to find a national hockey cheer to support Team Canada Hockey. The cheer will be demonstrated at the world junior hockey championships in Saskatoon on December 26, and then erupt again in support of Canada’s hockey teams at the Vancouver Winter Olympics, February 12–28.

Ann Pegoraro (BA 1991, MBA 1994, PhD 2006 University of Nebraska-Lincoln), director of Laurentian’s Institute of Sport Marketing, and head of the sports administration program, was on the research team. They polled the Canadian women’s hockey team and found that 66.6 per cent believed a supportive crowd is important to their performance.

# A shot in the **DARK**

In 2009 – the International Year of Astronomy – the PICASSO experiment edged closer in the hunt for dark matter. PICASSO is run through Laurentian-affiliated SNOLAB, and Laurentian researchers and students play a key role in the collaboration. Now, the race to find the invisible particle has stepped up, and a Nobel Prize hovers on the horizon.

BY LAURA E. YOUNG

NIGHT SKY PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAT BÉDARD



**Ubi Wichoski, Laurentian physics professor, formed the PICASSO group at Laurentian in 2006, along with Jacques Farine.**

**T**he search for dark matter is the hottest, yet most cordial, of international battles – pitting physicists against physicists. Various experiments searching for dark matter – each with its own different, somewhat cryptic, name – involve projects in

Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

PICASSO's role in the race to find dark matter is happening underground in SNOLAB, a lab built within Sudbury's Creighton Mine. Every day, the warm-up begins with the long descent into the mine. Descending in the cage, the overwhelming feeling is awe over the fact that fundamental science is conducted here. Dim, dusty, and surreal, the main corridors of Creighton Mine wind in a steady march toward SNOLAB. The journey two kilometres underground leads to an assortment of detectors, including detectors for the PICASSO experiment.

Inside, the lab is reminiscent of a massive submarine: There are many rooms, with ladders connecting levels. Metres of pipe snake through the corridors. Operating labs are cramped, with some areas restricted.

At sea, submariners seldom showered, especially in the old days. But in SNOLAB, cleanliness is next to scientific discovery. To gain entrance to the lab, a thorough shower is required, sluicing off earthly particles in order to contemplate the universe. After showering, everyone dons the same uniform, with mining boots and a hairnet as accessories.

SNOLAB's underground location was strategic: The massive rock of the Canadian Shield literally shields the lab, minimizing the background noise and particles from the world above. "Think about a very hot summer night. You're trying to find a special, rare bug," says Ubi Wichoski, who formed the PICASSO group in 2006 at Laurentian University, where he teaches physics. "You have thousands of crickets and bugs flying around. If you go underground, you don't have the interference. It'll be easier to spot," says Wichoski.

Wichoski, the lanky physics professor with a knack for explaining complex science, has worked with PICASSO since 2003, first in Montreal and now at Laurentian. Jacques Farine, another Laurentian physics professor, also oversees the project.

Detecting dark matter will be *the* story in particle physics and cosmology. The group that discovers dark matter first could win a Nobel Prize, says Wichoski. Of course, discovery is one thing, confirmation is another, he says. Finding dark matter will give all the other groups a focus point for further exploration. "Once dark matter is discovered, it will open a new chapter of physics and a new window to the universe," he adds.

In this, the International Year of Astronomy, PICASSO took an important step toward discovering dark matter. Groups of physicists watched with bated

breath when the team shared its data at the prestigious international conference on "Topics in Astroparticle and Underground Physics." PICASSO detectors showed the greatest sensitivity in tracking dark matter interaction. The findings were based on data obtained from 2 of the 32 detectors. They did not discover the particle itself, but they lowered the sensitivity limits, or scale, of the detectors, bringing them closer to the threshold they think particle interaction will occur. In essence, their search is now in the right vicinity.

Since the 1930s, astronomers have collected evidence of dark matter. According to Wichoski, "We have to explain the evidence. To have clusters of galaxies, all the clusters you see in the universe, ordinary matter is not enough of an explanation. There wouldn't be enough gravitational pull to create these structures," he says.

The pursuit of dark matter requires a scientific leap of faith – and patience. The 2009 results of the PICASSO experiment, while important, are only one incremental step. Researchers intend to publish more results in 2010. In the meantime, those 32 detectors are working away in SNOLAB. The longer the detectors run, the more chances of dark matter interaction, Wichoski says.

The enigmatic nature of the research enticed six Laurentian students to the project. They inspect the detectors' gelatinous innards, developing new ways of analyzing what is happening, and noting individual differences between them. Much of the tinkering happens in a lab on campus, but they go underground as well.

Christine Kraus, the Canada Research Chair in physics at Laurentian, says it would be impossible to do the experiment without the students. "They have the guidance of the faculty, but they are the ones down there doing the day-to-day. It would take much longer without them," Kraus says.

Patrick Nadeau, who helped install the detectors, has made dark matter his career. He took his bachelor's and master's at Laurentian, and is currently working on his PhD in physics at Queen's. Nadeau says he enjoyed the small and collaborative environment at PICASSO, and the fact that everyone had a hand in every job. "I've been an operator sitting at a computer above ground, and you can actually observe the detectors, and make sure everything goes well. You learn a lot."

Brent Carscadden, a third-year physics student with PICASSO says, "It's not every town that has an international group doing such ground-breaking work."

Graham Gibson, a fourth-year physics student with PICASSO, recently attended an international conference with other dark matter physicists. "To have all these competing organizations at the conference," he recalls, laughing, "They're all cordial on the surface, but I think they're a little worried about the other guys."

*“They’re all cordial on the surface, but I think they’re a little worried about the other guys.”*

- Graham Gibson, fourth-year physics student at Laurentian



Physics students Brent Carscadden (top left) and Mafamiya Beleshi are members of Laurentian’s team on the PICASSO collaboration.

The PICASSO detectors are linked to a computer system that records and analyzes incoming data. The detectors’ containers hold a gravy-like gel composed of superheated droplets of Freon and fluorine. Interactions, or signals, register as mini-explosions.

## In the **DARK** about dark matter?

### > NEWS FLASH

About 85 per cent of the mass of the universe is missing. This means what we see on a clear night, such as stars and planets, barely registers, “mass-amatically” speaking.

Until about thirty years ago, astronomers thought the universe was composed almost entirely of ordinary atoms. More recently, there has been accumulating evidence suggesting there is another, invisible, form of matter.

Dark matter is the hypothetical, yet perfect, explanation for the vast majority of the universe. Yet finding dark matter is like trying to pin down a shadow. It is invisible, but is believed to play a central role in the evolution of galaxies and is thought to influence the speed and rotation of galaxies, orbital velocities, and the temperature of hot gases in clusters of galaxies.

### > PICASSO

The Project in Canada to Search for Super-Symmetric Objects – is a collaboration of scientists led by Viktor Zacek of the Université de Montreal, and includes teams at Laurentian University, the University of Alberta, Queen’s University, and SNOLAB, as well as Indiana University, the Czech Technical University, and the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics in India. ■

# REALITY FORENSICS



Photo by Jacqueline Mack

As an alcohol specialist, Mélanie Brisson (Hon. B.Sc. 2000) helps bring justice to those harmed by reckless behaviour.

By Suzanne Charron-Violette

**M**élanie Brisson (Hon. B.Sc. 2000) relishes learning about the Canadian justice system and contributing her knowledge in court. “It’s all very interesting,” she says. “But it’s not like what we see on TV.” Brisson is a member of the RCMP, working on behalf of the police on alcohol-related cases, which involves testifying for the Crown in criminal investigations. She is brought in to explain complex scientific principles to judge and jury. She feels like she has undertaken “a mini law degree, because of how much of the Criminal Code and the criminal process I’ve had to learn in order to do my job.”

One of 15 RCMP alcohol specialists in Canada, Brisson works at the Vancouver site of the RCMP Forensic Science and Identification Services, within the Toxicology Services program. She tests blood samples for alcohol. Her analysis and interpretation of these samples bring forensic evidence to criminal cases,

including impaired driving, sexual assault, suspicious death, and murder.

Brisson credits her early interest in forensic science to Laurentian professor Scott Fairgrieve. Following her time at Laurentian, she spent two years studying chemical engineering at Collège Boréal. She was hooked on forensics. Her two-month placement at the end of the program took her to a RCMP lab in Winnipeg, and she stayed there until landing a permanent job with the RCMP in 2005. The security clearance took a full year. Six months later, she was transferred to Vancouver.

Working at first as a lab technologist, she began finding the repetitious blood sampling monotonous, and realized her next step was to become an alcohol specialist. Still, she was hesitant to make the next move, admitting: “I didn’t want to testify in court.” But Brisson wanted a new challenge, and she grasped the opportunity to apply for the promotion – which she received about two years ago. To develop her expertise on alcohol, she dedicated

months reading all the literature she could find on the subject. Today, at 32-years old, she is one of the youngest alcohol specialists in the RCMP.

Real-life forensics is not like what we see on TV, she asserts. Nor is it like the mystery novels she read as a child, which prompted her early dreams of becoming a lawyer. The science came later, when she began taking biology classes at Laurentian. Brisson says she loved Laurentian’s friendly atmosphere and opportunities to acquire new skills. For instance, through the Student Ambassador Program, she gained confidence to speak in public and to qualify for a job as one of Laurentian’s liaison officers (directly following her degree). “Working for liaison was a ton of fun,” she recalls.

Today, she continues to find variety in her routine, as she travels to courts across the province of British Columbia, as well as teaches police officers how to administer breathalyzer tests. New horizons are beginning to emerge: “Eventually, I may crossover to the drug side of analysis and testimony. That field is a lot more involved, because there are thousands of drugs.” ■

## The real-life Dexter

Forensics, one of Laurentian’s niche programs, lays the groundwork for much success in the field. Mélanie Brisson’s professor, Scott Fairgrieve, is internationally renowned. He is chair of the department of forensic science at Laurentian University and consulting forensic anthropologist for the Northeastern Regional Forensic Pathology Unit in Sudbury, Ontario. He has provided expert testimony on numerous prominent court cases. In January 2009, he participated as an expert consultant to a well-known murder trial, in the matter of the State of Florida vs. Casey Marie Anthony. Anthony has been awaiting trial on the charge of first degree murder relating to the death of her daughter, Caylee Marie Anthony. More recently, in October 2009, Fairgrieve gave a forensics workshop to Lockerby Composite high school students, showing how blood spatters when dropped from various heights.



# At home in ASIA

Expatriates have all the resources they need to build a life in Asia, thanks to a website created by the Luciw brothers, both Laurentian grads and both living in grand expat style.

BY SUZANNE CHARRON-VIOLETTE



Paul Luciw (left) and brother John enjoy their website business.

Air Canada, American Express, Cirque du Soleil, Club Med, eBay, Marriott Hotels, National Australia Bank, Royal Bank of Canada, SONY, TIME Magazine, United Airlines, VISA. These companies, along with many others, have all run advertising campaigns on AsiaXPAT.com. The website, connecting resources in 15 major Asian cities, targets expatriates and other professionals relocating to Asia. The website is estimated to be worth more than \$20 million.

Yet in 1999, when the website was just in its infancy, amateur ads for domestic help – mainly housecleaning services – made up the bulk of their paid advertising. But the demand was there and the

site grew in popularity, causing big-name advertisers to take notice. Paul Luciw (BA 1989), the founder of the site, along with younger brother, John (BA 2003), recalls that at the onset, “We used to be up early in the morning because that was a critical thing for the site. The more maids who had their ads on our site, the more people would come there to hire them.”

While many dot-com startups were launching cleverly designed, magazine-oriented websites, the Luciw brothers went against the trend, opting for a pared down, yet practical, site. “We basically went with the concept that people relocating want their lives made easier,” says Paul. AsiaXPAT is filled with classifieds, including property

rentals, along with countless search categories geared toward making life abroad easier.

Paul leveraged his experience in property investment and management in China, launching an online property portal, which expanded to become a full-services portal for professionals and expatriates relocating to Asia. John’s experience in network administration also came in handy. Yet, back in 1999, setting up an online business was akin to the days of the Wild West – everyone was a pioneer. Their company’s greatest advantage, according to John, “was the rapid development schedule that we kept with our programmers and network

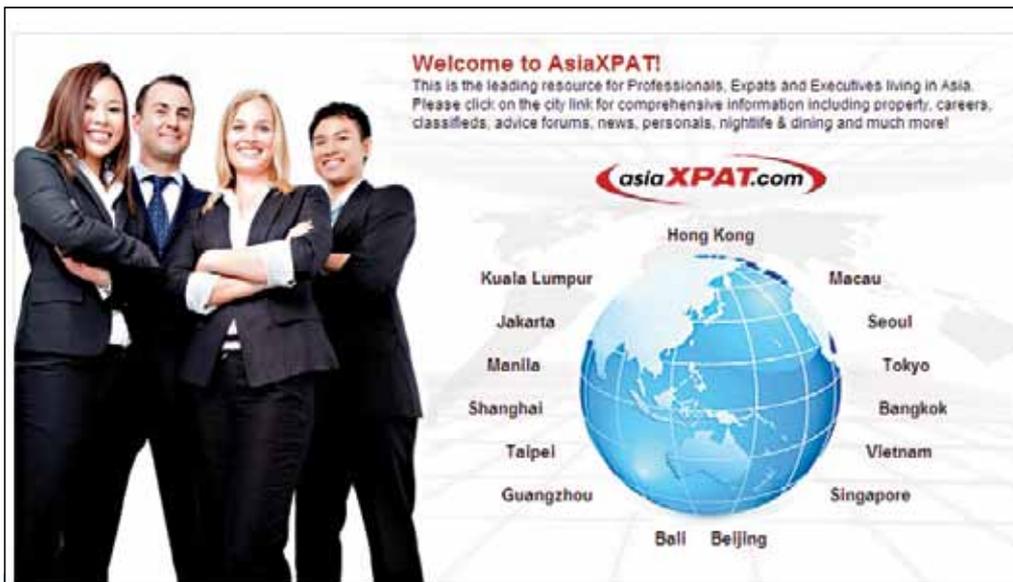
people. When we had an idea, we wanted it implemented as quickly as possible to attract more revenue and users to the site. But we ended up sacrificing some of the technical design.”

A web savvy review of their site supports this assessment. Laurentian University’s data analyst, Martin Laferrière (Hon. B.Cosc., 2006), notes, “there is nothing exceptional from a technology perspective. There are very few Web 2.0 applications with a single use, with Google maps as the exception.” To Laferrière, the website is not very easy to navigate because each page contains a lot of unrelated information – and affiliate advertising.

Nevertheless, it provides a useful service and is pulling in major advertisers. Paul recalls a time when advertisers had little confidence in online promotion. Still, the brothers stayed true to their business model: “Initially, we were able to convert enough companies to make the plunge to keep us afloat,” Paul says. “And, during the dark days of the ‘dot-com crash,’ we would grind away for the smallest contracts, trying to convince skeptical clients that online advertising was viable,” he adds. The real upswing came about four years ago, when global ad agencies began to recommend online advertising to clients. The company’s bottom line increased dramatically, with growth bursts of 50 per cent or more each successive year.

“Grinding away” to attain a goal is nothing new to John Luciw. Back in high school, he started up a band in the Sudbury area known as the Galahad’s Pad. Alumni Robert Gregorini (BA 1990) and Jeff Fuller (Hon. B.Com. 1991) also played in the band. Gregorini, owner of Sudbury restaurant Respect is Burning, reflects on John’s intense energy and focus: “One thing all of us took from the Galahad’s Pad was the ability to network, claw, and scrape our way to the next day; we learned hard-work ethics,” he says.

Those early band days yielded some important lessons. The Luciw brothers’ work ethic and their belief in communal interaction are the very same reasons why their website is so popular. Their website’s 500,000 unique visitors per year are drawn in by the website’s interactivity, which allows visitors to interface and offer advice to each other through AsiaXPAT’s online



**HITS VS. UNIQUE VISITORS**

**HITS:** The number of “clickable” graphics that appear when a webpage loads. Many sites use ‘hits’ to describe user traffic. If a website has, for example, 10 pages, and each page has 50 graphics, that would be 500 hits; if you multiply this number by 500,000 users, it will register 250 million hits, misleading people into believing the site attracts 250 million individual visitors.

**UNIQUE VISITORS:** The total number of individuals who visit a website – usually calculated on a monthly basis.

forum. Paul is convinced this type of interaction is far more useful than static FAQs.

The Luciw brothers are fulfilling personal projects as well. Paul is building an eco-friendly villa on a Bali mountainside with his Philippine girlfriend, Jonette Quiozon. The large, open-concept house will incorporate bamboo and recycled teak and iron wood. They also plan to convert their 1.5 hectares of land into organic gardens, or possibly even an eco-friendly resort. “I think we have a responsibility to set an example by living a sustainable lifestyle,” Paul says. “We won’t save the world, but I think it is crucial that people get out of the mindset that life is about buying more and more and more. Surely there is more to life than shopping.” And there’s no sports car for Paul, either; instead, he drives a small, low-emission vehicle. His company also built and maintains a school for underprivileged children in Java.

As for John, he’s chosen a more urban lifestyle in Hong Kong. As the company’s

general manager and chief technical officer, his continual connection to the Internet is “an integral part of life.” Yet “the ability to provide for my family is now my main focus.” He married Connie Wong, a Hong Kong Chinese in 2008. Both world travellers, they enjoy frequent trips in Asia and Europe, though that may slow down somewhat, as they’ve recently welcomed their first baby. Alexandre Waiman Luciw was born on September 20.

After graduating from Laurentian, Paul and John followed various callings, becoming well travelled – and well heeled – in the process. Now, the brothers are updating their website to attract more English-speaking Chinese, an untapped segment of the market. To do so, they are embracing industry standard design techniques and implementing a new framework. The upgrade to the site is expected to be completed by the end of 2009. Paul says, “We feel the best times in this business are yet to come.” ■



Spring, summer, fall, and winter: Green Mines-Green Energy is a year-round job for Laurentian's MIRARCO.

# Field of DREAMS

Universities debate ideas. Yet what if research at Laurentian could end one ethical debate and create solutions to several others? Since 2007, Laurentian University's MIRARCO has been leading Canadian research into crops for mine rehabilitation through the Green Mines-Green Energy program with Natural Resources Canada. Its early trials into biofuels sourced from crops grown on mine tailings may move the "food-or-fuel" debate off the proverbial table.

BY LAURA E. YOUNG

**M**aking biofuels out of mine tailings is the latest research on MIRARCO's horizon. MIRARCO, the Mining Innovation Rehabilitation and Applied Research Corporation, conducted successful trials last year growing crops that can be used as a base for biofuels on mine tailings. In partnership with Natural Resources Canada, MIRARCO is using waste materials (from sources such as the pulp and paper industry) to form a one-metre high layer of organic matter over mine tailings.

So far, the MIRARCO project has literally laid the groundwork for growing biofuel crops atop tailings. For mining companies and their environmental responsibility, it is a move in the right direction. It promises to be a sustainable strategy to deal with their waste issues, says Graeme Spiers, chair of environmental monitoring at Laurentian University and director of the centre for environmental monitoring with MIRARCO.

"Basically, it's a way of making mines green," says Spiers. MIRARCO is not developing the industry; instead it's proving they can provide the fuel crops to spawn a new biofuel industry, says Spiers.



Sam Smith  
(B.Sc. 2009) checks  
out a crop test site  
north of Sudbury as  
part of her work on  
the Green Mines-  
Green Energy project.

“GREEN MINES-GREEN ENERGY IS A PROJECT THAT EVERYONE CAN GET EXCITED ABOUT. IT’S A PROJECT TO BE PROUD OF AND IT’S COOL TO SEE HOW MUCH CAN CHANGE AND HOW FAST.” - Sam Smith, B.Sc. 2009

## the debate

With mounting global concern over the environmental effects of greenhouse gases, many are looking for environmentally friendly fuel options. Yet there’s an ethical debate over the growing of fuel crops, such as corn for ethanol, on prime agricultural land when people are starving and agricultural land is scarce. There is a backlash to the biofuels boom.

However, the land that MIRARCO has set its sights on – mine tailings in the Sudbury region – would put an end to that debate, says Al Lock (B.Sc. 1997, M.Sc. 2003), a senior environmental scientist at MIRARCO. “Just the fact it’s grown on these lands, it’s not a product that would ever be approved for human consumption, not even as livestock feed.”

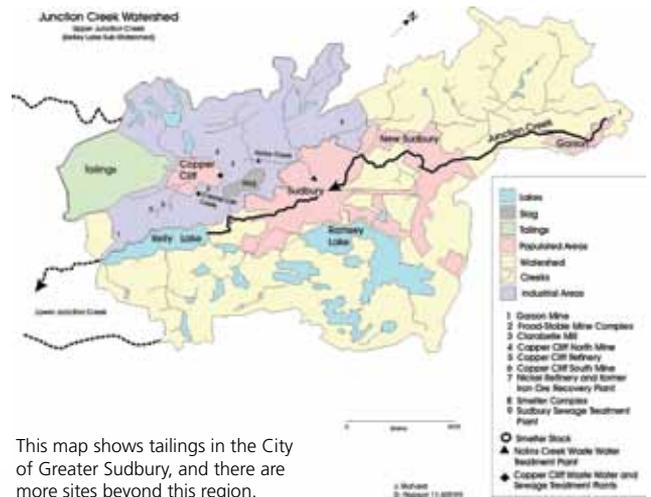
In Sudbury alone, mine tailings fill about 5,000 acres. In fact, northern Ontario has the most mine tailings sites in Canada, says Jennifer Hargreaves, a senior scientist at MIRARCO.

## the theory

The math is simple: Mine tailings site + pulp and paper byproducts (such as wood shavings) + either corn, canola, or switch grass = land reclamation and biofuel crops. There are additional benefits: The metre-thick cover of wood biomass helps to neutralize the acidity in the tailings, keeping dust down and allowing plants to grow.

## the four trial sites

There are two Vale Inco sites in Copper Cliff, Xstrata Nickel has a site in Onaping Falls (which uses municipal compost), and Goldcorp’s Delnorte mine tailings site is located in Timmins. All sites use conventional farming practices to show whether such techniques work on mine tailings.



This map shows tailings in the City of Greater Sudbury, and there are more sites beyond this region.



## the partners

Natural Resources Canada leads the projects. Bryan Tisch (B.Sc. 1988, M.Sc. 1997) is a senior environmental scientist at NRCan. On the national level, there are two other Green Mines-Green Energy partners growing biofuels on tailings, although on different tailings: coal mine tailings in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia and copper tailings in British Columbia.

At Laurentian, the core research team includes Graeme Spiers, Al Lock, and Jennifer Hargreaves of MIRARCO; Peter Beckett from biology, and several graduate and undergraduate students.

Mike Soenens of Green Zone Farms in Azilda does all the agricultural work on MIRARCO's sites. In order to use the product from MIRARCO's crops, the project needs to go commercial, far beyond the research stage, Soenens says. Before this can happen, the crops grown on tailings must be analyzed to determine the level of metal uptake, to eliminate health and safety concerns.

## the results

In 2008, Laurentian's MIRARCO was the first team of the three Canadian test sites to plant a trial crop on tailings. In 2009, they added two additional crop sites. Early data indicates negligible uptake of metals. "So far we haven't processed all our results, but we haven't seen significant differences in groundwater metals concentrations," says Jennifer Hargreaves. Spiers concurs: "They're taking up what they need to grow, and they're not at a level outside the norm for crops."

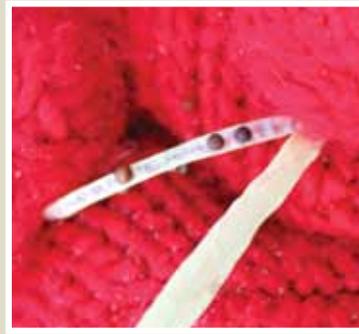
"Green Mines-Green Energy is a project that everyone can get excited about. It's a project to be proud of and it's cool to see how much can change and how fast," says Sam Smith (B.Sc. 2009). Growing up in Sudbury, Smith has seen changes in the landscape over the years. Now, she is contributing to a project that could bring about more change. When she was an undergraduate, she worked on the mine tailings crop in Timmins. She is now pursuing her biology master's at Laurentian, working the fields and crunching the data for the tailings site in Onaping Falls.

Growing biofuels on mine tailings suppresses dust directly around the tailing sites; provides a deep cover and lessens exposure to acid mine water draining; and provides potential fuel sources for the biofuels industry.

"It provides the mining industry with an opportunity to get carbon credits. It opens up new job opportunities in the North to create agricultural land, producing biofuels – at some point. We feel that it's a win-win situation," says Hargreaves.

For Spiers, this project is a great opportunity to rethink waste management, including mining and urban waste. Inquiries are coming in from around the world. "This stuff is being talked about internationally."

And, then there are the smaller voices of support. Where once the land was bare, now it's green. Bees, voles, mice, and crows have all found a home amongst the crops. "There's more life out there now," says Al Lock. ■



Canola seeds, close up.

## Biofuels in focus

The Ontario government is moving toward cleaner energy – though for some, not as quickly as hoped. A plan was announced to eliminate all coal as a fuel for four Ontario Power Generation stations, including Thunder Bay and Atikokan, by 2014. However, just this past September, the government stated these scheduled closures will take place by 2010, four years ahead of the 2014 target. Former Energy Minister George Smitherman says the closures will reduce air pollution and make more room for green, renewable forms of energy on the grid.

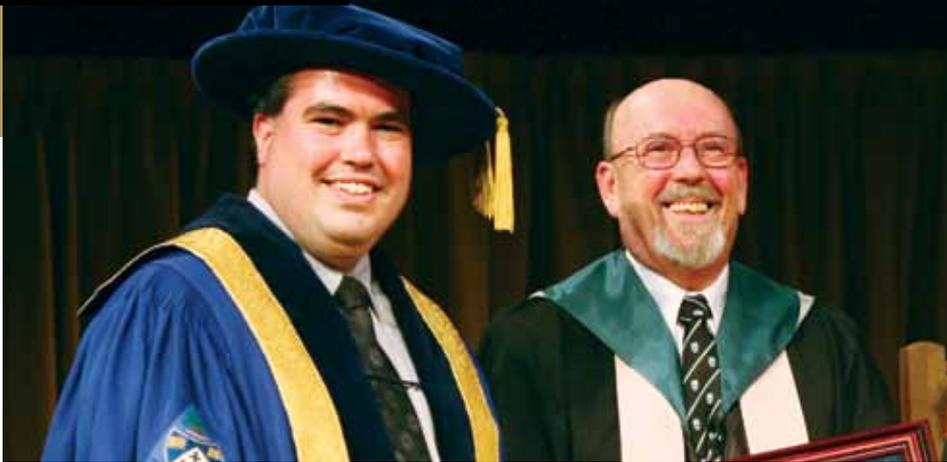
Theoretically, MIRARCO is able to offer such a renewable form of energy, because they are now growing crops, Jennifer Hargreaves says. "The main problem is not having a partner that can fulfill this biofuel aspect [turning the crops into fuel]. There is limited funding for that project at this point." So for now, MIRARCO has remained focused on the project's safety and sustainability.

Still, biofuels come with more than a "food-or-fuel" debate. The David Suzuki Foundation warns that biofuels are not a viable long-term solution; they only add to the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

In terms of economics, David Robinson, an associate professor in Laurentian's economics department, compares the rush toward a biofuels industry to the days of the gold rush. Biofuels is a 'dead end' economically, he says, because biofuels turn the high-value product of the forest into fuel. "Fuel is the lowest possible value you can get out of the forest. It's a move away from value-added in northern Ontario. You want to be adding more value to what you're exporting. Biofuels is a lower quality extraction industry."

If the biofuels industry is to move in the right direction, says Robinson, the best strategy would keep the industry local, ensuring northern communities use the product near its source, for such activities as powering forest-industry machinery, and even for local heating. This way, "you stop importing fuel. You're making your whole production more integrated and efficient."

MIRARCO's research is producing "expertise in the subtle interaction of a biosphere and what it takes to support local ecology," he says.



ROBERT SEGSWORTH,  
a political science professor  
at Laurentian since 1970,  
received the 2008-2009  
Teaching Excellence Award.

# POLITICAL ADVANTAGE

**R**obert Segsworth stands behind his students.

On a recent project, his third- and fourth-year political science students told city officials to pay attention to their research on a transportation issue, because their findings were shown to have worked in other cities. “That takes enormous courage for young people. But they know what they’re talking about. They’ve done the work,” Segsworth says.

At spring convocation ceremonies last June, Segsworth received the 2008-2009 Teaching Excellence Award. The award is a “mid-career affirmation that I’m on the right track,” he says. The fact that his students were involved is most gratifying to him.

A political science professor at Laurentian since 1970, Segsworth specializes in public administration and local government. He regularly brings in city officials to engage his students. His fourth-year classes conduct independent projects. Recently, his students helped a Sudbury city councillor ease some major traffic headaches on a busy urban street by researching and recommending certain traffic calming measures.

“I was so proud of them, for them. The quality of their work was really high.”

It’s been a mutual admiration society over the years. Lisa Bergeron (Hon. BA 2006) studied with Segsworth for three years of her public administration studies at Laurentian. She is currently the program research and evaluation coordinator at Our

Children Our Future in Sudbury. She even invited Segsworth to her wedding.

Segsworth’s talent lies in applying academic theory to real life, she says. “Coming into the workforce, we’re not always going to be referring to textbooks. Being able to have that background information and apply it to real-life situations really brought a lot of value to our degrees and our preparedness for the workforce.”

Chas Anselmo (Hon. BA 2004), a municipal advisor with the Ontario Ministry of Housing, graduated from political science in 2004. Thanks to a conversation he had with Segsworth in 2000, Anselmo switched over to political science, redirecting his entire academic career, which, he confides, “led me to where I am today.”

He later graduated from the master’s of public administration program at the University of Western Ontario in London. He discovered he was actually ahead of others in the program, thanks to his studies with Segsworth, Anselmo says.

Segsworth has high expectations, “but with those expectations come the support and guidance. He embodies the open-door policy of Laurentian,” Anselmo says.

Even students who aren’t at the highest academic levels can count on receiving Segsworth’s attention, Anselmo believes. “No matter what, the door is never closed. If you want the help, he’ll be there. “It’s hard to synthesize what makes him so excellent because there are so many ways he has affected students. It’s more than academic.”

Elyse Lamontagne (Hon. BA 2009) graduated *cum laude* in June. Segsworth called several schools to recommend her for graduate school. She has a scholarship to study her master’s in public administration at Carleton.

He was tough, she recalls, laughing. “I remember for one class I had four hours of reading to do.” On her final paper, she received a grade of 96 per cent. “I thought, ‘Oh My God! A 96 from Bob! You actually feel like you’ve done something. You’ve worked.’”

Born and raised in Sudbury, Segsworth says going to Laurentian was “the best three years” of his academic life. The professors were superb and Laurentian was focused as a liberal-arts undergraduate school, “which forced you to take courses you otherwise wouldn’t take,” he says.

When he was an undergraduate, thousands of fans would rally to watch Laurentian’s hockey team beat their opponents from larger universities. Laurentian was brand new: “There was a sense you were building something.”

He went on to earn his master’s degree in political science from Carleton University and his PhD from the University of Stirling. After teaching for more than 40 years, Segsworth remains excited to go to class. The students have changed, he reflects. “But they’re still full of energy and idealistic; some of them are frighteningly bright, just really, really smart ... we get some good ones.” ■

By Laura E. Young



## Reconnect with Huntington University!

Are you among Huntington University's best and brightest? Do you know someone who is? Don't wait a moment more to share news of your success, or that of your fellow alumni. On the eve of its golden anniversary, Huntington University is working to develop and enhance its alumni program through communications and celebrations, connecting alumni to the institution and one another. If you or someone you know is a former Huntington University student, resident, graduate, faculty, staff member or supporter, we want to hear from you!

Stay connected as a member of the Huntington Alumni Association, reconnect with your classmates, catch up with your old roommates and network with university faculty and friends. As a life-long member of the Huntington community, you are entitled to many services and benefits. Take advantage of exclusive Huntington alumni offers by sending us your recent mailing information along with a personal update by calling 1-800-461-6366, ext. 203 (toll free in Ontario) or 705-673-4126, ext. 203 or by e-mailing [huntingtonalumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:huntingtonalumni@laurentian.ca).

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# AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

## DEPARTMENTAL AND PROFESSOR UPDATES



### LAURENTIAN'S FIRST EXECUTIVES-IN-RESIDENCE

Former president of Vale Inco Ontario Operations, Fred Stanford, and Gemini Award-winning journalist and head of Fraser Strategies, Conway Fraser, have become Laurentian's first executives-in-residence. Stanford will work to position Laurentian as the global leader in mining. Fraser, the former producer of news and current affairs at CBC Northern Ontario radio, will support Laurentian's efforts to increase its recognition in the national media, as well as its outreach in northeastern Ontario and Simcoe-Muskoka.

Photo (from left): Carolyn Sinclair, chair of Laurentian University's Board of Governors, with President Dominic Giroux, Fred Stanford, and Conway Fraser, BA 1994.

### STEVE DANIEL, PARALYMPIAN

Health promotion student Steve Daniel wasted no time trying to improve sport options for people with disabilities in Sudbury. This September, with his first year at Laurentian barely underway, Daniel held an adaptive sports day with 10 sports to try – everything from wheelchair basketball to sledge hockey. Daniel especially wants to encourage youth with disabilities to find a sport of their own. Daniel finished 11th in adaptive rowing at the 2008 Paralympics. He was paralyzed from the waist down during a training accident with the Canadian Army in 2005.

### SARA BURKE WINS PRIZE IN CANADIAN WOMEN'S HISTORY

Sara Burke, associate professor and chair of the department of history, has received the 2009

Marion Dewar Prize in Canadian Women's History, presented annually by the National Capital Committee on the Scholarship, Preservation & Dissemination of Women's History. The committee cited Burke's research and teaching, and her impressive level of academic service as department chair. The Dewar Award was created in 2004 in honour of Marion Dewar, who served as Ottawa's mayor from 1978-1985.

### SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE RECEIVES BOOST FROM ONTARIO GOVERNMENT

Canada's first school of architecture in 30 years will likely be at Laurentian. The \$701,000 of Ontario government funding is being used to develop the plans, refine curriculum, open a project office, and build public awareness across the North

for the school. "Laurentian University strongly believes that a school of architecture would be a hub for development, creativity, and innovation in Greater Sudbury and throughout northeastern Ontario," says President Dominic Giroux.

### RESEARCH AWARD FOR BELAID AOUNI

Belaïd Aouni, professor at the school of commerce and administration and vice-dean of research in the faculty of management, is this year's recipient of Laurentian University's Research Excellence Award. Aouni is an expert in multi-criteria aid, decision theory, optimization, operation, and strategic management. He is chair of the Decision Aid Research Group (DARG) at Laurentian, a cluster of researchers who focus on studying decision-making processes within organizations, organizational performance, analysis of information technology and analysis of decision support systems.

### A NEW NURSING CURRICULUM

Professors Denise Newton-Mathur, Sharolyn Mossey, and Sheila Cote-Meek (acting associate vice-president, indigenous programs), Susan Manitowabi (director of Native human services), and Moira Morrison have received funding to implement a new nursing curriculum that will highlight culturally competent practices in health care for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. Other faculty involved in the project include Florence Luhanga, Neghesti Gebru, and Lori Reitze. Laurentian's School of Nursing, is working along with five other Canadian universities toward the implementation of the new curriculum.

### NEW SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR J.N. DESMARAIS LIBRARY

Laurentian University announces the creation of the Gaétan Gervais Fund, which will offer financial support to the J.N. Desmarais Library, for the purchase of books and other library material in French. The fund was named in honour of Gaétan Gervais, history professor at Laurentian, for his exceptional contributions to the francophonie at Laurentian University and in Ontario.



## RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

## IN MEMORIAM

**Derek Wilkinson**

Derek Wilkinson, acting dean of social sciences and humanities, and 37-year veteran professor in the department of sociology, passed away on October 12, 2009. He was 63.

Wilkinson was a fair, honest, and excellent scholar, says Simon Laflamme who worked with Wilkinson for 26 years. "He was very dedicated to Laurentian. He loved Laurentian.

He was confident in Laurentian. He wanted Laurentian to be great."

He will be remembered by many as a great advocate for a creative northern Ontario, a passionate teacher and researcher, and a dear friend.

**Jose Ramon Begona**

Jose Ramon Begona passed away on June 17, 2009, in Sudbury. He was 81. Begona was a pioneer in Canada for the Hispanic cause. He graduated from Salamanca University in Spain. His doctoral thesis was recognized internationally as a reference for the works of Spanish writer Ramon Gomez de la Serna. He came to Canada in 1967 to teach

at Laurentian. He was a part of the department of modern languages for 26 years before his retirement in 1993. Begona is survived by Aura (Cubillo) Begona (BA 1987) and their daughters, Maria (BA 1993) and Paula. "He left a legacy in Sudbury and outside comprised of love for people, his family, and his university," says daughter Maria.

**Carolyn (née Swords) Sturgess**

Former Lady Vees basketball standout Carolyn Sturgess (B.Eng. 1994) died Sunday, September 13, 2009, after a long battle with breast cancer. She was 39. She is survived by her husband, Kelly, and their two sons, Mason and Matthew. "Carolyn truly epitomized the Laurentian experience. She was a true leader to her teammates and classmates and is an example for students at Laurentian to

follow," says athletics director Peter Hellstrom. As recently as August 2009, she participated in a Weekend to End Breast Cancer in Edmonton, raising \$32,000 with her team.

At Laurentian, Sturgess excelled academically and athletically. She was part of the back-to-back winning CIAU national championships of 1989–1990 and 1990–1991, and CIAU bronze medals (1991–1992 and 1992–1993). The Lady Vees also won four straight Ontario championships while Sturgess was a member. She was inducted to the Alumni Voyageur Hall of Fame in 2008, alongside current Voyageurs basketball head coach, and brother, Shawn Swords.

In an email interview nearly two years ago, Sturgess reflected that success is defined, not by the medals, but by the type of person you turn out to be. "Everywhere I go, I take the tools I learned at Laurentian with me. Nothing is easy in this world, but if you work hard and prepare for events, things turn out. Laurentian taught me about pride and tradition."



Jamée Bradley and Charles Ramcharan

## Avoiding a splash in blue-green algae

### Why is blue-green algae showing up in the nutrient-poor lakes in and around Sudbury?

That's the unusual mystery Laurentian biologist Charles Ramcharan and biology master's student Jamée Bradley have on their hands.

Ramcharan has become the go-to biologist for blue-green algae issues in Sudbury. He has \$43,000 funding from the Nickel District Conservation Authority, Sourcewater Protection division and the Ministry of the Environment. He is working to understand why Sudbury lakes are starting to pick up the invasive algae. So far, algae blooms have been found in eight lakes in Sudbury and area, including Ramsey, McFarlane, Bethel, and Minnow lakes.

The algae has also been found as far north as Windy Lake. "Algae" is a misnomer; it's actually a bacteria. Microscopic cyanobacteria is present in most water bodies. But adding more nutrients to a lake, such as phosphorous and nitrogen, causes blooms to grow. Although only proper testing can tell whether the blooms are actually toxic – the blooms create a potential toxic soup, which have already caused deaths in livestock and house pets, such as dogs.

Ramcharan believes we're heading in the wrong direction. Climate change brings a longer growing season and more rainfall, weather activity that encourages blue-green blooms, he adds. The key is to start controlling what goes in our lakes now, he says.

Using phosphate-free dish detergent for washing dishes (either in the dishwasher or by hand) and phosphate-free fertilizers in the garden will help. People living lakefront should leave a buffer strip of plants and shrubs at the shoreline to help dilute nutrients running into the lake. As Ramcharan says, "Don't throw anything near the lake that you don't want to drink."

By Laura E. Young



# E.T. PHONE HOME!

**JACQUES TREMBLAY, B.COMM. 1982, LUAA PRESIDENT**

This title is a bit unusual, but as president of your alumni association, I am your voice and I want to make sure that I hear from you, our alumni. We use many different methods to keep you informed. The magazine is sent out three times a year, a newsletter is emailed monthly, and we also host a Facebook fan page for the Laurentian University Alumni Association, on which we invite all of our alumni, young and old, to become fans. All these different means, and yet we are not always sure whether we are reaching you. The magazine reaches many of you, but how many of you read these pages (and the LUAA president's message)? To keep you advised of all the ongoing events and future activities, make sure to visit us often at: [www.lualumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.lualumni.laurentian.ca).

With the 50th celebrations in 2010, we don't want you to miss a single thing. Do you know how to start an alumni chapter in your area? Or, do you know about the LUAA's contribution to the capital campaign? Or, about our affinity partners and the benefits available to you? Let us know what is important to you and how we can best reach you. Please send your thoughts and comments on these and any other issues to: [alumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:alumni@laurentian.ca)

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### LUAA SECTION WRITER

Kimberly Nadon, B.Sc. 2007

Your alumni association continues to work on your behalf, and we appreciate any feedback you can offer on our programs and services. Please send us an email at [alumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:alumni@laurentian.ca) with your suggestions.

## Reaching Alumni Chapters

Thank you to the dedicated alumni who devote their time to Laurentian University in their respective communities.

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### Write a new page in our chapters

Some of our chapters are seeking new leadership; don't miss your chance to make your mark in the LU book!

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During the first week of classes, a rivalry bash and pep rally were held to initiate all students to a Voyageur varsity soccer match. Free pizza was provided to all students, which they enjoyed as they cheered on both the Voyageurs and the Lady Vees to victory.

Photos by John Sabourin

# GETTING OFF TO A GREAT START

WITH THE LAURENTIAN STUDENT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



First-year students were welcomed to Laurentian in style by the Laurentian Student Alumni Association (LSA). Students from Ottawa and Sudbury were given the opportunity to meet other first-year students from their respective regions. To help ease them into post-secondary life, many members of the Laurentian staff were in attendance to answer questions, and student activity organizers held ice-breaking games to encourage guests to mingle.

## TRAINING THE TRAINER

Laurentian's faculty of management and its School of Commerce and Administration has initiated a "train the trainer" program, designed to teach Chinese accounting faculty how to convey their knowledge in English at the undergraduate and graduate levels. A group of 20 professors from universities in China were keen to be part of the program, which ran from June 15 to August 14. With such a successful turnout, the program is expected to be offered annually for years to come. As part of their Sudbury tour, they visited the KPMG LLP office, where alumni, including Laurie Bissonette, Don Garrioch, Ken Stonley, Tiffany Laferriere, and Cindy Collins, were eager to lend their expertise to their accounting colleagues from China, hosting them for a series of sessions on accounting practices in Canada.





The first graduates of the French H.B.Com. in June, 1987



The winners and sponsors of an excellence award in commerce



Professors Yves Robichaud and Jean-Charles Cachon with Stéphan Plante (B.Com. 1997) and Carrie-Anne Bois (BScN 1991).

## 25 YEARS OF SUCCESS FOR THE FRENCH B.COM.

BY JEAN-CHARLES CACHON

With success in mind, the French commerce program was launched at Laurentian University. In fact, the 2008-2009 academic year marked its 25th anniversary. Success was definitely in the stars for the 500 or so graduates of the program who are active in the areas of business, international trade, and service, half of whom are in northern Ontario, the rest across Canada and around the world.

With Gaëtan Gervais and Lucien Cortis' concerted efforts, the program started up in September 1983, with the author of this article as its first professor. The initial intake included just five students, but registrations quickly increased to total anywhere from 80 to 100 students depending on the year. Now, after 25 years, 500 degrees have been awarded in the program.

This fall 2009, more than 35 students are enrolled in first year. As in most previous years, the program attracts high school graduates from the Greater Sudbury area as well those from elsewhere in Ontario, Quebec, and outside Canada, not to mention a growing number of people taking advantage of our college articulation agreements, particularly at Collège Boréal and Cité Collégiale.

Over the last few years, a growing number of students have been also taking part in our international exchange programs with many countries, including France, Mexico, Finland, the Netherlands, and the United States. They take four-credit courses all the while immersing themselves in the work customs and methods used in business in the host country.

From the moment it was created, the French commerce program received support from prominent members of the North's business community, through *Les Promotions Nordcom*, a non-profit promoting French business studies in Sudbury and elsewhere in the area. Supporters included business pioneers like Conrad Lavigne,

Gaston Demers, and Norman Bradley; educators like Claude Raymond and Onésime Tremblay; as well as communications professionals like Marie-Paule Poulin and Thérèse Boutin.

Over the years, professors involved in the program have reflected the international Francophonie, including those from Europe and Africa, as from Ontario and elsewhere in Canada. In fact, since 1995, the head of the program has been Yves Robichaud, an Acadian from New Brunswick. Program faculty are very active researchers. Just recently, Bélaïd Aouni received Laurentian's Research Excellence Award and most faculty members are regularly rewarded for their work. Furthermore, two graduates – Normand Côté (accounting) and Luc Lagrandeur (marketing) – have been teaching in the program for several years.

Some 20 per cent of graduates earn most of their income from businesses they own, which is three times greater than the average. Contributing factors may be that Laurentian's commerce program is the first in Canada to involve all students in a business start-up project, not to mention its successful co-op program that, since 2006, allows students to acquire paid work experience during their studies. Several courses also include practical exercises in local and outside businesses which give Laurentian graduates an edge – hands-on business experience.

Yves Robichaud and other faculty, in partnership with other educational institutions, are currently working to develop a bachelor of business administration (BBA) in French, combining online studies and videoconferencing, which would further enhance access to university studies for Franco-Ontarians. Creating a stand-alone French School of Commerce is also an objective, along with a French MBA program. The next step though is the launch of the French bachelor of sports administration (SPAD) at Laurentian University ... coming soon. ■

## STROKES FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

## ANNUAL ALUMNI GOLF TOURNAMENT



1



2



3

Alumni and friends of Laurentian put their clubs together during Laurentian alumni's annual golf tournament in support of Laurentian students on Friday, June 26. A perfectly sunny day served as the backdrop to the tournament that was held this year at the Lively Golf and Country Club. This year's winners were the reigning champs, the Petryna Group. Proceeds from the tournament were directed toward student scholarships and bursaries, upholding the Laurentian University Alumni Association's motto, "Students First – Alumni Forever." Many sponsors helped make this event possible, including the title sponsor, TD Insurance Meloche Monnex.

1 - Wendy Watson, who played for Big Daddy103.9 Radio, tees off.

2 - Champions yet again! The Petryna Group never tires of winning the alumni tournament. From left to right: Nick Gonko, Frank LeBreton, Paul Maynard, David Petryna

3 - Marc Blayney from the NOSM team takes a shot as his teammates watch on.

Participation in established affinity programs has allowed the Laurentian University Alumni Association to support a variety of student initiatives, resulting in over **\$575,000** in endowed student awards.

As Laurentian University approaches its 50th anniversary in 2010, we look forward to growing our ongoing partnerships and offered services:



The Alumni Office strives to provide the best possible services to support students. These alumni initiatives would not be possible without your continued support.



*Students first - Alumni forever*  
[www.alumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.alumni.laurentian.ca)

## IN THE NEWS



(from left) Ontario Lieutenant Governor David Onley, Earl Black (BA 1997), Mary Mayer, and Denis Mayer, associate vice-president of student affairs, in Toronto.

### EARL BLACK RECEIVES COMMUNITY ACTION AWARD

On December 1, Earl Black (BA 1997), Laurentian's coordinator of special needs since 1989, received a Community Action Award from Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, David Onley, and Michael Chan, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. The award recognizes people whose leadership and commitment have created positive change for Ontarians with disabilities.

"We are so proud that Earl is being recognized for his long commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities are integrated and treated equally in society," says Laurentian president Dominic Giroux.

Black has been instrumental in bringing change across Sudbury. In 2001, Black founded the Independent Living Centre in Sudbury and Manitoulin. He was also involved with Persons United for Self Help (P.U.S.H.). He has been chair of the Accessibility Advisory Panel for the City of Greater Sudbury since 2003.

### MISSING PERSON

Diane Prevost, little sister to alumnus Jacques Prevost (BA 1967) and Laurentian University database administrator Lise Nastuk, was only two-years old when she disappeared from Grundy Lake Provincial Park in September 1966. Diane is believed to have been kidnapped; today, she would now be 45. The family's hope to find Diane was recently rekindled when forensic artist Diana Trepkov

mentioned Diane's case on Canada AM. Trepkov has produced a composite drawing of Diane as an adult. The OPP reopened the file and added Diane to their missing persons database. More information can be found on the family's website: [www.dianeprevost.info](http://www.dianeprevost.info).

### WINNING ALUMNI ON TEAM CHIRO

The Chiros were second in Canada at the Canadian Dragonboat

Championships in Montreal in August 2009. Their placing qualified the crew for the 2010 championships in Macau, China. In 2007, the team won two silvers and a bronze at the same event in Penang, Malaysia. Laurentian alumni on team Chiro include: Amy Frescura (HBA 2006), Beau Frescura (H.B.Com. 2005), Crystal Crema (BScN 2007), Jean-Stephane Presello (M.A.Sc. 2006), and Dylan Roberts (MBA 2007, and B.Eng. 2004).

### BUSINESS FIRST FOR TRACEY CORRIGAN FORBES



Tracy (née Corrigan) Forbes (H.B.Com. 2001) won the 2009 Fifth Business Postgraduate Corporate Communication & Public Affairs Prize by Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland. The prize goes to the top student in the program. "Tracey is our second prize-winner from Canada. Both students are future business leaders and role models, sustained by sound Canadian values," writes Nicola Furrie, the course leader, in a news release. Forbes relocated to Scotland in 2008. She credits Laurentian professors Ron Mulholland, Rana Haq, and Sheila McGillis for supporting her decision to pursue postgraduate studies.

### NORTHERN POET

Lillian Williams (Hon. BA 1991) lived the writer's dream when her first book of poetry was published by Wynterblue Publications in North Bay in 2008. The book can be ordered online from [www.wynter.ca](http://www.wynter.ca). Williams is a retired professor of health science at Northern College.

### DAVID ANSELMO IN FEATURE FILM

Writer, actor, and executive producer, David Anselmo (Hon. BA 1999), son of former Laurentian library staffer, Hélène Anselmo, returned home to his roots to write the script "Northern Boys," a feature film revolving around the lives of four boys growing up in a small northern mining town. After a successful career in the Asian film industry, Anselmo has linked up with Hideaway, a new Sudbury-based production company whose mandate is to create cinema in the North.

### STEVE RUSSELL (BA1993) PHOTOGRAPHS WONDERFULLY

Steve Russell, a *Toronto Star* photographer, has received one of Canada's most prestigious journalism awards for his collection of photographs published in 2008. He was honored at the 2009 Canadian Association of Journalists' awards gala in Vancouver, taking top prize in the photojournalism category. His portfolio included 20 images, ranging from a shot of Michael Phelps celebrating his team's victory at the Beijing Olympics to mourners grieving the stabbing deaths of a Brampton couple.

### ANDREW PEARCE PRACTISING IN THE NORTH

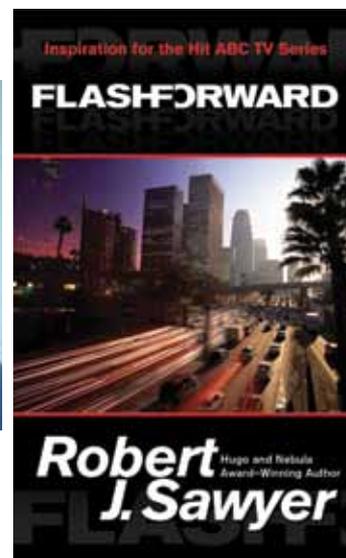
Andrew Pearce (M.Sc. 2000, Hon. B.Sc. 1988) is returning to his hometown of Sudbury. Pearce will work as a radiation oncologist at the Sudbury Regional Hospital's Regional Cancer Program. He obtained his medical degree with honours from the University of Toronto, and has worked at various cancer centres in Canada. His specialty is brachytherapy and the treatment of prostate cancer.

## TV FOR WRITER ROBERT J. SAWYER

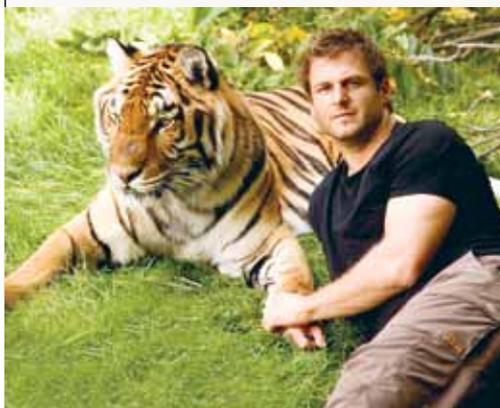
Robert Sawyer's novel *Flash Forward* became a television series that debuted September 24. The television show is airing on CTV in Canada and ABC in the U.S. In *Flash Forward*, the entire world



population wakes up after blacking out for two minutes and 17 seconds. Nothing is quite the same as before. Sawyer, who was awarded an honorary doctorate from Laurentian in 2007, has published 18 novels and several series of short stories. As sci-fi aficionados know, Sawyer's "Neanderthal Parallax" trilogy is set partly at Laurentian University.



## DAVID SALMONI'S LATEST FORAY ON ANIMAL PLANET



David Salmoni (B.Sc. 1998) a large-cat expert and filmmaker, is back on the media junket, thanks to his new show on the Discovery Channel's Animal Planet network. Into the Pride features Salmoni in an eco-tourism game park in Namibia. Accompanied by a film crew during the day and sleeping alone in a small tent at night, his mission was to win

over a pride of human-hating rogue lions and get them used to the company of humans. "These lions had been escaping, been cattle raiding, they'd been going after people and had been marked for destruction," Salmoni recalls. As well, Salmoni discusses his project at length with Jonathon Gatehouse in the October 5, 2009, issue of *Macleans* magazine. For more information on Into the Pride, visit: <http://animal.discovery.com/tv/into-the-pride>.



# The coach

BY SUZANNE CHARRON-VIOLETTE

Breaking into the business world after graduating from Laurentian University, Vernon Cameron (Hon. B.Com. 1984) never had time to craft a resumé, let alone knock on doors. Instead, personal referrals from people he'd worked with opened doors for him. He was most recently vice-president of the global marketing division, advanced materials solutions group, and head of manufacturing at Kennametal, a \$1.5- billion company headquartered in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. With operations in more than 70 countries, the company creates tools for metal work in the fields of manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, oil and gas, and mining and construction. In October 2009, Cameron made a move to West Chester, Ohio. As vice-president of the drainage business, he coaches staff at Contech Construction Products.

Cameron says many have felt the recession. Cameron is directly responsible for keeping production – and morale – in balance. Here, he shares some coaching strategies:

## FIRSTLY, IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MENTORING AND COACHING?

In my mind, coaching is a leadership technique. Mentoring, on the other hand, is really helping people manage their careers, or situations in their careers. Coaching is a methodology in which you try to ensure the employees' vision and the actions they need to take are in line with the coach's. It is a lot like coaching a hockey team: You want to create "followship." You use a lot of open question techniques to allow the employees to give you a clear understanding of what they feel is the outcome or vision, and the path they feel they need to take to get there. And that gives you a lot more alignment of goals, rather than just being a boss or manager speaking saying, 'Here's what I want you to do.' You flip it around and ask, 'What do you understand has to be done?'

PHOTO BY GARY KESSLER

Coaching employees is a lot like coaching a hockey team:  
You want to create "followship."

## Vernon Cameron (Hon. B.Com. 1984) coaches executive-level staff. Here, he shares his perspective on maintaining perspective.

### SO, YOU GET EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

Certainly, and then you have a very clear understanding of [the fact that] they know what direction they need to take, and they tend to be much more motivated because you have buy-in. They're part of the solution; instead of being directed to a path, they tend to want to create the path themselves. To me, this technique gives people a much better sense of ownership of the task at hand. And you tend to get better results and people go beyond their own expectations, and realize more of their own potential.

### COULD YOU GIVE ME A CONCRETE EXAMPLE OF COACHING, AS YOU SEE IT?

Mark Cornell could share his view on this. (Cornell is sales representative at Sandvick Mining and Construction Canada, in Lively, Ontario, and worked with Cameron a few years ago.)

Well, we were trying to renew energy behind our rebuilt component business. Mark had experience with this in the past, so I asked him if he was interested in taking on that business – at first he said, 'No, I'm too busy.' And so over the course of a couple of months, I did a lot of coaching with him about the business and where it should go. He got so enthusiastic that he ended up engaging and leading the team to success.

### INTERVIEWER TO MARK CORNELL:

#### IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHAT IS VERNON'S APPROACH TO COACHING?

Just positive reinforcement. He builds the individual up and gives them the confidence, and along with his backing and his support, he makes you feel you can do it. If you have an issue, you can go and talk to him. At the same time, he taught me how to better delegate what I was doing before. I was doing a lot of analysis, and we had hired this grad from Laurentian (Joanne Desjardins, Hon. B.Com. 1994). And she ended doing a great job on that task, probably better than I was doing.

Vern had good tools on planning and scheduling your workload, and setting targets and meeting these targets. He treats challenges not as a roadblock, but as an opportunity for something else. He thinks way ahead. While normal people look at things from 5,000 feet, Vern looks at them from 50,000 feet.

### INTERVIEWER TO VERNON CAMERON:

#### SO TELL ME, IS COACHING DIFFERENT DURING A RECESSION?

It's very easy to get wrapped up in the numbers in a recession and stick with the numbers, which is managing, not leading. When I reflect on the recession, it is even more important now because there is the risk of people's minds going adrift, because they are worried about how the downturn might affect them. So, the most important thing is to keep them engaged. It motivates them to be active instead of passive.

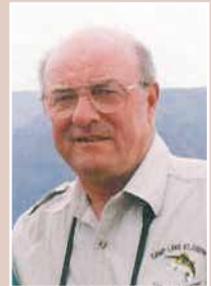
### DOES THAT MEAN YOU ARE CONSTANTLY EVALUATING YOURSELF?

You're always a student. I consider it a journey and you're always trying to get better at it, and, you know, we're human. If you're going to make mistakes, fail fast and learn from them. You try to read people's body language. You try and read their tones and voices and you try and read their reactions. And then you ask questions. Sometimes, you need to adapt your coaching style to the individual. I try not to prejudge. I want to go into a situation with an open attitude, trying to do more listening, less talking. ■

## The Camerons: Three generations of Laurentian graduates

### Clyde, the father

Clyde Franklin Cameron and his wife, Merle, had a daughter, Shelley, and son, Vernon. Clyde, a school teacher, earned his degree later in life, winning a bet against his son, who was also studying at Laurentian University at the time. Clyde graduated in November 1983, six months before Vernon. Clyde passed away in 2002.



### Vernon, the son

In 1984, Vernon Brent Cameron was only 20-years old when he obtained his bachelor of commerce degree. He and Colette Gladu have three children: Brent, Dean, and Jennifer.



### Brent, the grandson

In 2007, Brent Clyde Cameron received his honours bachelor of science, specializing in biomedical biology. He is currently obtaining his doctorate degree in naturopathic medicine in Phoenix, and intends to establish a practice in Ontario.



# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS



Ryan Dugas (biochemistry major)  
strives for new heights.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our students. Because of your generosity over the last year, Laurentian University students have benefitted from \$2,951,463 in new dollars to enhance their experiences at Laurentian. Twenty-five new bursaries were created over this twelve-month period! Other gifts helped purchase lab equipment, renovate a classroom, equip the Ben Avery Physical Education Building, and secure new acquisitions for the library. Thanks to our donors, Laurentian University can ensure a world-class education is accessible for our future leaders.

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# Laurentian's tree planting

# Legacy

## May 1988

Dean Doug Goldsack uses a golden shovel to plant a spindle tree in the lower Arboretum during Arbor Day ceremonies.

From left to right: Lorraine Moxam, Lorraine Brousseau, Doug Goldsack, Brigitte Angster-Beckett, Keith Winterhalder, Peter Beckett, Chris Blomme, Richard (Dick) James, and David Pearson.

Source: Laurentian University Archives



## October 2009

Science communications students plant 400 white spruce trees near the Willett Green Miller Centre to help offset 10% of Laurentian's annual carbon footprint.

Kneeling (from left): Sarah Bouchard, Julie Fisowich, Holly Baker, Merissa Scarlett. Standing (from left): Justin So, Jennifer McCallum, David Pearson, Mylène Lenzi, Kevin McAvoy, Myles Carter, Stephanie Russell, James Baxter-Gilbert, and Peter Beckett

# Alumni Updates

Take a few minutes to update us on what is going on in your life. We'll print it in the Alumni News section of the next *Laurentian University Magazine*. You can send us a photo as well.

Fax to: 705-675-4840; mail to Laurentian University, Communications and Marketing, 935 Ramsey Lake Road, Sudbury ON, P3E 2C6; or email [magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca).

Your update (up to 100 words):

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**Help us keep your address information up-to-date as well (only for alumni records; not for printing in the magazine):**

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