

# President's Report to Senate - December 2024

Aanii, Hello, Bonjour,

It's exam time at Laurentian and as we close in on the holiday break, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the significant achievements we have all made possible in 2024.

In addition to this, you'll find my regular updates, as well as updates from both the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, Dr. Malcolm M. Campbell, and Vice-President, Research, Dr. Tammy Eger.

## 2024 Retrospective

This closing calendar year has brought us all many reasons to be proud. Through our collective efforts, we have achieved so much, with some key milestones listed below.

- The launch of the Strategic Plan last spring, and the first months of its implementation
- The ongoing implementation of the Transformation Plan, including the hiring of our Lead Transformation Officer
- Significant progress made in implementing the recommendations from the Auditor General of Ontario, with many recommendations fully implemented or underway
- Laurentian's increased appeal to prospective students, with increased demand from high school students and international graduate students
- [Advances in hiring](#), with many key gaps filled in both faculty and staff roles
- Provided students with high-quality national and international experiences within [Architecture](#), [Sports Administration](#), [Computer Science](#), [Nursing](#), and the [Arts](#) to name a few of many examples
- The induction of our most recent Honorary Doctorates, including The Honourable Michelle O'Bonsawin, Dr. Catharine Farrow, Dr. Dan Andreae, Jason F. McLennan, and Tom Blake
- Rebuilt connections with over 50 Francophone partners, including academic, government, and community groups (e.g., Assemblée de la Francophonie de l'Ontario, Association des universités et collèges de la francophonie canadienne)
- Hosted Universities Canada's National Building Reconciliation Forum, which was attended by delegates from across the country
- Received multiple investments from tri-council agencies, private industry, and donors
  - [Laurentian Researchers Awarded \\$2.2 Million in Funding](#)
  - [Spotlight on Research](#)
  - [Laurentian University Receives Funding from the Province to Enhance STEM Education](#)
  - [Laurentian Receives Donation to Install a New International Quality Floor in the Ben Avery Gym](#)



- [Sudbury Researchers Awarded NSERC Grants Totaling \\$1.1M to Advance Mining-Related Projects](#)
- [Five year funding agreement reached between Vale Base Metals and Laurentian University](#)
- Awarded multiple research fellowships and research service and excellence awards
  - [Three Research Fellowships Awarded to Laurentian Faculty](#)
  - [Two Faculty Members Awarded Atkins Innovation Fellowships](#)
  - Two faculty honoured as recipients of [Research Excellence Awards](#)
  - Faculty, staff, and student honoured with [Research Service awards](#)

One year from now, I know that I'll be able to write about many more achievements, including and especially the completion and exit of the CCAA process.

## Congratulations

### **16 Days of Activism**

November 25 is the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. It also marks day one of the 16 Days of Activism, which includes December 6, this year the 35th anniversary of the École Polytechnique massacre. I would like to thank the organizers and participants who joined us for activities during this year's 16 days, which included the flag-raising on November 25th and the vigil on December 6.

### **International Culture Day**

A vibrant display of sights and sounds took center stage at the Parker Building Atrium on November 22 as we celebrated the rich diversity that makes up our community. I would like to thank the organizers as well as the many contributors who brought the event to life.

### **Virtual Career Fair Week**

Earlier in November a week's worth of activities took place as our campus participated virtually in a week filled with opportunities to connect with potential employers, explore career paths, and build valuable skills. Thank you to those who made this event possible.

## Strategic Plan

As a reminder to Senators, the process to contribute feedback towards the draft key performance indicators (KPIs) associated with its 2024-29 Strategic Plan remains open. The consultation on the draft KPIs will run until January 13, 2025 [and the draft KPIs and the survey can be viewed here](#).

## Transformation

The implementation of Laurentian University's Transformation Plan is making early progress, with some improvements already reported across campus and a strong foundation being set for future advances. The implementation began last fall and multiple aspects of the plan have seen progress over the past few months. In an update shared with the Laurentian community in late



November, updates were provided within each workstream. I would like to thank all those who contributed to these updates as well as those who continue to be engaged in the transformation activities.

## Festive Gathering

As we reflect on the past year, I'm looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our annual Festive Gathering on December 13. This is an opportunity to connect with colleagues and celebrate as a community the many things that we have accomplished together this past year.

Finally, as the year comes to a close, I wish all of you the best for the holiday break. I hope you all take the time to rest, spend cherished moments with family and friends, and return refreshed and reinvigorated for the new year.

Sincerely,

*Lynn Wells, PhD*  
*President and Vice-Chancellor*

## Update from Provost and Vice-President, Academic

It seems like it was only yesterday when we welcomed Laurentian University's fantastic students back to campus to start the 2024-2025 academic year. And yet here we are, less than two weeks after our basketball teams played their last home games of the year in the Ben Avery Gymnasium, and also just a few weeks until the end of the year. Those last two home basketball games provide apt representations of the contrasting ways people in our community have experienced the first term of this academic year. The women's basketball team played with heart to win a come-from-behind, hard-earned overtime victory; playing with amazing heart, impressive persistence, and collective positivity. The men's basketball team were victorious in an entirely different way - clearly outplaying their opponents from the outset, winning handily through consistent full court strength, precision play, and overwhelming teamwork. While these were two very different victories, the common elements were tremendous coaching and outstanding (and loud!) fan support.

Undoubtedly, your successes over the last term may have followed one or the other of the patterns of our basketball teams, or perhaps they followed an entirely different path altogether. However you created your successes - through dogged determination or with skilled ease - or some combination of the two, you should feel great pride as we head into the holiday break.

The Provost's Team continues to create wins as well. With the consultations around the Academic Plan culminating with the December 10th Senate meeting, we are poised to generate the first draft of our next Academic Plan for review in early 2025. Next term we will set this new plan on the path to approval.



As we launch our next Academic Plan, we will also put in place our next Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) with the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU). We are currently negotiating the next SMA, SMA4, referencing the guiding principles that have emerged from our Academic Plan consultations. Building SMA4 on the foundation of our Academic Plan also ensures that our mission and vision are on a sustainable financial footing.

The critical elements of our sustainable financial footing are academic budgeting and strategic enrolment management. Currently, Faculties and the various offices of the Provost's Team are developing their budgets for the next fiscal year. Simultaneously, the Strategic Enrolment Management Group (SEMG) is feeding back critical information to guide our enrolment practices. All the while, we continue to create a tremendous student experience, with relevant academic programming, while hiring and supporting faculty and staff to achieve these goals.

Watching everyone create these wins throughout the autumn term has been remarkable. One can see the accomplishments come to life in our students. Even as they get their heads down to write their pre-holiday exams, or complete a work placement, or partner with one of our amazing community partners, they have a look of deeper knowledge, of deeper understanding, of deeper preparedness for what the future has in store. As the first term of the 2024-2025 academic year draws to a close, I want to congratulate everyone - students, staff, and faculty alike - for the impressive victories you have created since September. Know that, just like our basketball teams, we have been cheering you on throughout, as we will continue to do into the future - although perhaps not as loud as The Potbangers!

I'll be back to share more wins, with even greater specificity, in the New Year! Wishing you all a festive, yet restful, holiday season, and all the very best in the year to come.

*Malcolm M. Campbell, PhD*  
*Provost and Vice-President Academic*

## Update from Vice-President, Research

### Staff Updates

Manon Valiquette has joined the Office of Research Services as a Post-Award Research Officer. Manon will be responsible for the post-award administration of research grants, contracts, and agreements. She will also support the work of the Animal Care Committee as the Animal Care Coordinator. Manon can be reached by email at [mvaliquette1@laurentian.ca](mailto:mvaliquette1@laurentian.ca)

The Office of Research Services is also pleased to report that Ryan O'Donnell will take up the Administrative Assistant position starting in January 2025. Ryan will provide administrative support to the Research Ethics Board, Animal Care Committee, Research Development and Creativity Council, the Jim Fielding Innovation Centre and the Office of Research Services. Ryan can be reached at [rodonnell@laurentian.ca](mailto:rodonnell@laurentian.ca)



The ORS and VPR team would also like to thank Heather Dufour for her service as Innovation and Commercialization Coordinator. Heather is now a Technologist in the Perdue Analytical Facility. The search for a new Innovation and Commercialization Coordinator will begin in early 2025. In the meantime, faculty and students can email [research-recherche@laurentian.ca](mailto:research-recherche@laurentian.ca)

## Strategic Research Plan Development Update

Members of the Strategic Research Plan planning committee have met with Strategy Corp Inc. to review the draft framework, principles and goals for the next Strategic Research Plan. Feedback from the Senate will be shared with members of the committee as the plan continues to be revised and refined. The committee will meet again early in 2025 to review the next draft which will subsequently be shared with Senate for feedback.

## Research Week 2025

Research week activities will take place between February 24-28, 2025. Faculty, staff and students will have opportunities to participate in a number of events including research insight talks, poster presentation sessions, graduate student symposium, 3MT, and Voyageur's Innovation Challenge to name a few. Calls for participation will be shared soon with a draft schedule of events planned to be released in early 2025.

## Award Calls

Faculty, staff and students are reminded of the following calls for research awards and recognition:

### [Research Fellowships](#)

**Applications for Research Fellowships** to advance research in the Faculty of Management, to advance Indigenous (First Nations; Inuit; Métis) research, and to advance Francophone research are being accepted until **December 10th, 2024, 4 p.m.**

### [Laurentian University Research Excellence Award](#)

Nominations for the 2024-2025 Laurentian University Research Excellence Award can be submitted up to January 10th, 2025 at 4 p.m.

### [Dr. Daniel Archambault Research Service Award](#)

The 2025 Research Service awards are open to faculty, staff and students. The Deadline for submissions is February 3, 2025.

## Congratulations & Recognition

- Congratulations to Dr. Kamran Eshghi, Associate Professor in the School of Sports Administration, on the impact of his research on [Buy Now, Pay Later programs](#)
- Congratulations to Dr. Mark Kuhlberg, Professor in the School of Liberal Arts, and students Sarah Gould and Fiona Symington on their work to document the [history of](#)



[Canada's Forest industry](#) and the unique contributions of Tembec Industries in northern Ontario

- Congratulations to Dr. Tammy Gaber, Associate Professor in the McEwan School of Architecture on having her work, *Sacred Spaces: Community and Continuity in Aalto's Architecture* on exhibit at the Alvar Aalto Museum in Jyvaskyla, Finland until January 5, 2025.
- Congratulations to Dr. John Ashley Scott and collaborator Corey Laamanen on being awarded over \$100,000 from the Ontario Research Fund and Canada Foundation for Innovation to [purchase equipment to advance their research on microalgae](#)
- Over 60 people attended the virtual learning session: Working Together with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples in a Good Way. The session was co-hosted by the Office of the Vice-President and Metal Earth.

## Canada's Innovation Leaders

Re\$earch Infosource's annual rankings were released on December 5<sup>th</sup>. With a sponsored research income of \$31,439 in 2023 which represents a 21% decrease from 2022, Laurentian is now ranked 34<sup>th</sup> nationally (down 4 spots). At the undergraduate level, Laurentian sits 3<sup>rd</sup> for research income and 2<sup>nd</sup> for faculty research intensity.

### Best Wishes for the Holiday Season

As 2024 comes to a close I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all faculty, staff and students who support and work to advance the research and innovation enterprise at Laurentian University. Whether you are a member of the Research Ethics Board, Animal Care Committee, peer-reviewer for internal award competitions, tri-agency leader, member of a graduate student scholarship committee, serve on the Research Development and Creativity Council or a member of the research services team your contributions are immeasurable. Research, discovery, innovation and creativity activities set universities apart. On behalf of all the staff in the Office of the Vice-President Research and Office of Research Services, we look forward to supporting your research ambitions and celebrating more of your accomplishments in 2025.

*Tammy Eger, PhD*  
*Vice-President Research*