

## **President's Report to Senate February 2023**

As I stated in my first Senate report in January, I continue to be touched by the warm welcome, the desire that I see right across campus to restore Laurentian's reputation and its key position in the higher education landscape, in northeastern Ontario, in Ontario, and right across the country. Now that I've also had a chance to be out in the external community a bit more as well, I see that support strongly reflected outside of the immediate Laurentian campus community as well.

I have a few updates for Senators, as well as some congratulations.

### **Transformation**

The Operational Transformation Consultant RFP closed on January 30th, 2023. Evaluators, which include members from LUFA, LUSU, LUAPSA and Senior Management, are currently evaluating the submissions. The Strategic Plan Consultant RFP closed on February 13th and will be evaluated shortly thereafter by the evaluating committee, which similarly consists of members from LUFA, LUSU, LUAPSA and Senior Management. Again, I point out that these are requirements of the Plan of Compromise and Arrangement, and that the consultants are to work with us, help us create our plan, not to impose their plan on us. It is crucial for everybody to take all the opportunities for consultation, to make sure that all have input into the plans going forward.

The letter requesting an amendment to the LU Act was sent to MCU seeking to permit representation of up to a maximum of two LUFA members as voting members of the Board of Governors; and representation of up to a maximum of one LUSU member as a voting member of the Board of Governors. This request is being reviewed by MCU. We continue our biweekly meetings with MCU.

Two successful planning forums have been held already (December, January) and the third will be on February 27.

The Search is well underway for permanent positions; University Secretary, Associate University Secretary, General Counsel and Legal Counsel. Search committees are being formed for the President, Provost and Vice-President of Finance and Administration search. Provost Brouwer can update on two decanal searches (Arts and Education & Health).

### **New faculty hires**

Funding for 10 new tenure track faculty members was approved several weeks ago, sending a clear signal that we intend to invest in the long-term sustainability of academic programs and the strengthening of our bilingual and tricultural mandate. The funding for these permanent hires comes as the University emerged from the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) on November 28, 2022. It is anticipated that approvals for further faculty positions will be

granted following the completion of the 2023-24 budget planning process, which is currently underway.

### **Enrolments**

Preliminary enrolment data for 2023-24 is encouraging. Obviously it's still early days but the trends are pointing upwards. Everybody has a part to play in now converting these applicants to registrants, so I ask everybody to do whatever you can to help in that conversion.

### **Black History Month**

In February, Laurentian is celebrating Black History Month. The Laurentian University African Caribbean Students Association (LUACSA) organised a Black Owned Business Market, an event to Discover African/Caribbean Food, two Popcorn Movie Nights, a special presentation entitled Celebrating Black Excellence, a luncheon with guest speakers entitled Let's Talk: Normalizing conversations, and a Cultural Day.

### **Health Measures for Winter 2023**

Covid Boosters and Flu Shots are offered through Health and Wellness Services. In addition, Health and Wellness Services continues to offer a Covid Assessment Centre where individuals can call or drop in to get evaluated and discuss either treatment, vaccinations, and/or isolation protocols. We continue to remind everyone in the community to stay home if they're not well.

In January, the University removed the requirement for masking in instructional spaces but continues to strongly urge individuals to continue to wear a mask where physical distancing cannot be maintained. The University has hired Safety Ambassadors who continue to support our community by filling mask dispensers and ensuring masks are available in classrooms.

The University has conducted a survey on ventilation rates in classrooms. The Occupational Health and Safety Manager also conducts individual assessments upon request. The University does have HEPA filtration units available should the assessment warrant extra protection.

The University continues to collaborate with Public Health Sudbury & Districts (PHSD) and wastewater is still being monitored. Further changes will be communicated as needed.

### **Parents' Night**

In collaboration with Dr. Eric Gauthier, Director of the School of Natural Science, Jason-Scott Benoit from the Office of Admissions, Megan Philion of the Fees and Awards office, Sean Baker and Jaqueline Cowan from Residence, and Pierre Bourgoïn of Student Success, the Office of Domestic Recruitment successfully held two Parents' Night sessions on February 1st and February 2nd in English and French respectively. Over the course of the two days, the group welcomed 108 people that attended by either coming to campus or connecting via Zoom Webinar. The group provided answers to more than 70 questions that pointed to topics such as accommodations, parking, out-of-province excellence scholarship eligibility, prerequisites, varsity athletics, and university transfers.

The two sessions were recorded and will be made available to the Laurentian University community via our official youtube account and have also been distributed to all registrants who pre-registered but could not attend. In addition, the Office of Domestic Recruitment has sent attendees follow-up messages seeking feedback on the event. Results will be shared with leadership and will help shape future Parents' Nights.

Special recognition goes to the Indigenous Student Affairs Office for allowing access to the Round Room and its technologies as well as Nicolas Meilleur, Kathryn Kettle, Mona Lapointe, Maxime Comeau, Roch Goulet and Ivan Samoylenko who represented the Recruitment Office and facilitated both sessions. In addition, a special thanks also goes to Marie-Lynne Michaud, Jean-Paul Rains and their respective teams for helping to push registrations to the event.

### **Indigenous Students Circle 2023 Round Dance**

The Indigenous Students Circle held a round dance event on January 20th 2023. It included a vendors market, a pipe ceremony, a feast, and the eponymous round dance.

### **Consent week**

The Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office (EDHRO) presented Consent Week 2023, January 23 to 27, an opportunity for Laurentian community members to engage in conversations focused on consent, healthy relationships and sexual violence response and prevention.

Consent Week's keynote address, "Reclaim Your Voice," January 24, 2023 featured Jungle Flower, who boldly shared the major lessons she has learned on her journey and healing from psychological abuse, physical abuse and sexual violence through a spellbinding combination of storytelling, spoken word and poetry.

### **Kudos from the Office of the President**

1. This past month, campus has been booming with a variety of events. This included the 13th annual Bell Let's Talk Day. Congratulations to all involved in the organization and execution of this mental health initiative. Special thanks to Isabelle Chaussé and her Student Success team whose commitment to breaking the silence and stigma around mental health and suicide is empowering.
2. Congratulations to Dr. Nadia Mykytczuk, interim president and CEO of MIRARCO, and winner of the 2022 Northern Ontario Business Award for Innovation. Dr. Mykytczuk has been at the cutting edge of innovation for her work in mine waste microbiology, and we are proud of her efforts.
3. We are also proud of our Centre for Research in Occupational Safety and Health who on January 20th hosted a free, virtual health and safety conference, "CROSHCon2023:

Resetting the Dial on Workplace Climate.” Behavioural change expert and researcher, Dr. Lisa Bélanger, gave the keynote address before LU researchers, including graduate students, presented their latest occupational health and safety research. Congratulations to the organizing committee and participants!

4. I congratulate Professor Paul Émile Legault who was recently honoured by Laurentian and SNOLAB at an event hosted in the Doran Planetarium to celebrate his legacy of thirty-nine years as the Planetarium’s Director. Legault also taught at Laurentian for fifty-four years. His lifelong contributions to astronomy and science education are inspirational. Congratulations are equally in order for the recently appointed Director of the Planetarium, Dr. Hoi Cheu.
5. I’d like to bring attention to the efforts of the Laurentian Cheerleading team, a group of twenty-three hardworking students dedicated to spreading Laurentian pride. The team continues to perform routines at half-time shows for Voyageurs men’s and women’s basketball teams. As they prepare for the Cheer Evolution Winterfest competition, we wish them well and thank them for their continued support of our Voyageurs teams. In recent Voyageurs news, congratulations are also in order for our women’s curling team who earned the Silver OUA Championship medal on February 5th. That same weekend, 10 new ‘personal bests’ were earned by members of LU’s Track and Field team; special shoutout to Tristan Routhier who placed 4th in the 300-metre at the York open. A new LU Voyageurs record was also earned recently by Track and Field athlete, Tre Ford, who ran 6.94 seconds in the men's 60 metre final at the McGill Team Challenge.
6. Kudos are also in order for the Harquail School of Earth Sciences, who on February 6th launched their “Special Edition Minecraft-inspired Rock identification game” at all 13 branches of the Greater Sudbury Public Library (GSPL). The game was conceived and developed by Geoscience Technologist, Tobias Roth. Congratulations!
7. Dr. Louis-Philippe Rochon was invited by the The Financing for Development Office of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) to speak about inflation and development. The seminar will take place in person at the UN Secretariat Building in New York on Wednesday, 22 February 2023.
8. Congratulations to Josée Lamoureux who received *“la bourse prestigieuse de l’Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l’Ontario pour les cycles primaire/moyen et moyen/intermédiaire”*.
9. Kudos to Heather Dufour for her leadership in developing programming with the Foundry in the Jim Fielding Innovation Centre. Working under the leadership of Gisele Roberts, Director of Research and Innovation, Heather launched a four-part series on entrepreneurship. The first event was held on January 26th and featured LU alumnus Kyle Marcus, owner of The Alibi Room and Managing Director of the Downtown Business

Improvement Association. Three more sessions will be held in February and March and will culminate with a pitch competition at the end of March which will be open to all students and recent alumni.

10. I also congratulate Sarah Bouchard, instructional designer for Laurentian Online, who recently received a 2022 national award for her volunteer work with Crohn's and Colitis Canada. She was honoured with the organization's National Unsung Hero award, recognizing a volunteer who has made a substantial contribution to the work of the organization.