



Report of the President & Vice-Chancellor to Senate

May 19, 2026

Dear Senate colleagues,

Spring Convocation will be taking place from June 1 to 5, with hundreds of recent graduates expected to cross the stage. This year's line-up is made all the more special by the fact that it will include the installation of our new Chancellor, Kristan Straub.

Convocation is one of my favourite times of the year – a moment to celebrate the accomplishments of our students, in the presence of their families, and to reflect on the impact that this institution has on the lives of those around us. It is also a chance to showcase what makes Laurentian unique, especially its bilingual and tricultural mandate and its role as a Northern university.

I would invite you all to take part in the event in any way that you can and to show your support for our students as they move on to the next chapter in their lives.

Gisele Roberts receives national award

Staff member Gisele Roberts, Laurentian's Director of Research and Innovation, was recently awarded the Canadian Award from the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM). This prestigious national honour recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service and dedication to the Canadian technology transfer community.

With over fifteen years of experience in research administration and innovation support, Gisele has been a driving force in strengthening the innovation ecosystem within Greater Sudbury and across Northern Ontario. As the Director of Research and Innovation, she leads the institution's commercialization efforts and builds vital partnerships between academia and industry to ensure that research outcomes result in real-world benefits.

Throughout her tenure at Laurentian University, Roberts has achieved several significant milestones that have shaped the University's innovation landscape:

- Negotiated the first licence agreement for the University, which resulted in the institution's first revenues from commercialization and its first issued patent.
- Led the creation of the Northeastern Ontario Resource Alliance, an organization that continues to flourish today as the Sudbury Innovation Alliance.
- Spearheaded the proposal for the first joint entrepreneurship program in Sudbury, established in partnership with Cambrian College and Collège Boréal.

- Served as a member of the steering committee for the Cliff Fielding Research, Innovation and Engineering Building and led the development of the Jim Fielding Innovation and Commercialization Space and The Foundry programming.

We are all very happy for Gisele, and count ourselves fortunate to have her as a colleague. Please join me in congratulating her.

MedTalks

The Northern MedTalks event took place on April 23 and went exceptionally well thanks to the efforts of Michelle Reid and her colleagues in the Laurentian University Science Communication program. MedTalks brings together healthcare experts and communication specialists to ensure that important health stories receive the attention they deserve.

Be Your Own Boss Pitch (BYOB) Competition

Hosted by The Foundry, BYOB gives students and recent graduates the chance to test their ideas in a real pitch setting, gain feedback from experienced judges, develop practical entrepreneurship skills. This year, 10 student teams took part in the event, which was hosted in the Jim Fielding Innovation & Commercialization Space at the end of April.

Judges for the event included Don Duval, Laurentian's Entrepreneur in Residence, as well as representatives from the City of Greater Sudbury and the Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth. Prizes for the winners were sponsored by IAMGOLD.

The range of ideas this year, from clean energy and healthcare innovation to robotics education and circular economy solutions, highlighted the depth of creativity and problem-solving happening across disciplines at Laurentian. Winners included:

1st Place — Green Subsidiaries (GreenFuel)

Jenny Tola Alabi

Green Subsidiaries converts organic waste into electricity and valuable byproducts using AI-optimized biodigester and methane-splitting systems.

2nd Place — Life-Cycle

Oliver Wuthrich-Giroux

Life-Cycle is an AI-powered mobile app that uses image and barcode scanning to instantly provide users with location-based options to repair, upcycle, donate, or responsibly recycle everyday items.

3rd Place — Easy Robotics by ROBOPARKS

Xingyu Zheng & Haoliang Sheng

ROBOPARKS delivers humanoid robotics-based STEM education programs that combine hands-on robot interaction with AI-assisted tools to engage code-naive students.

People's Choice / Choix du public — TriageIQ

Md Rashed Azad Chowdhury

TriageIQ is a clinician-supervised AI platform that transforms unstructured patient intake into evidence-grounded triage notes, differential diagnoses, and routing decisions — keeping clinicians in control while reducing documentation time and improving consistency across hospital settings.

Congratulations to all participants and to the winners!

Reasons for Hope Sculpture

On Earth Day, the University unveiled the 'Reasons for Hope' sculpture at the Vale Living with Lakes Centre. Created by Sudbury artist Tyler Fauvelle, this bronze monument is the first in a series of installations inspired by Dr. Jane Goodall's pillars for a sustainable future.

This specific installation at Laurentian spotlights the legacy of Project Peregrine. Between 1990 and 1993, Laurentian biologist Chris Blomme and a team of over 70 volunteers worked to restore the peregrine falcon to Northern Ontario. The project involved two years of releases from the roof of the student residence on campus, followed by two years at the George Lake cliffs in Killarney Provincial Park. In total, 71 falcons were released, successfully bringing the species back from the brink of extinction in the region.

The unveiling marks the beginning of a heritage project that will eventually connect environmental success stories across Sudbury – from the Vale Living with Lakes Centre to Science North and the Trans-Canada Trail.

IAMGOLD on campus

On April 15 and 16, Laurentian was pleased to host representatives from IAMGOLD, including President and CEO Renaud Adams. On April 15, Adams took part in Mining Redefined, an event hosted by the Goodman School of Mines and moderated by GSM Executive Director Dr. Nadia Mykytczuk. The session, which also included Chief Jennifer Constant of Mattagami First Nation and Chief Murray Ray of Flying Post First Nation, explored themes of leadership, partnership, and how innovative, responsible, and accountable approaches are shaping the future of mining.

On April 16, Adams delivered a lecture to the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce before meeting in the afternoon with first-year recipients of the IAMGOLD President's Innovation Fund, who presented their research. All of the presentations were very impressive, with a lot of interesting research completed and new initiatives launched.

The call for the second year of recipients was released at the end of April, with a submission deadline of June 6. This year, applications to the Fund are open to applications from any undergraduate or graduate student at Laurentian University. Projects can include activities or research related to the priorities outlined in the call. The Fund will support projects up to \$10,000.

CIM

On May 4 and 5, I attended the annual convention of the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy, and Petroleum (CIM) in Vancouver. Like PDAC, this is an important event for Laurentian to connect with industry partners and leaders, as well as alumni.

This is always an inspiring opportunity to see how our recent and not-so-recent graduates have taken their Laurentian education and gone out into the world to build careers, make new discoveries, and create new ventures.

Sincerely,

Lynn Wells
President & Vice-Chancellor