

Community Research Unit Faculty of Arts University of Regina



Animated conversation at Community Connections event. Photo courtesy Brendan Anderson.

Annual Report 2018-2019



The Year in Review

The CRU was pleased to welcome Michelle Stewart back in July 2018 after she stepped down as Director during her sabbatical year. Naomi Beingessner (former CRU Coordinator) made the decision in May 2019 not to return to the CRU after taking a two-year educational leave from the position. She is a Doctoral Candidate in Environment and Geography at the University of Manitoba. We wish her well and thank her for her years of hard work and dedication. The CRU would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Nick Jones. In his role as Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Studies), Jones provided wise counsel to the CRU. His interest and support for community-based research and the work of the unit was greatly appreciated. We know he will do a great job in his new role with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research. We welcome Troni Grande, who joins us around the board table in Jones' place. During the year under review we welcomed new board members Allyson Stevenson, faculty representative, Politics and International Studies and Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Global Social Justice; Margaret Kisikaw Piyesis, community representative from All Nations Hope Network and Jamie Wallace, Graduate student representative (Psychology PhD candidate).

The pages that follow describe some of the many initiatives of the CRU during the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Please let us know how we are doing and if you have any thoughts on how we can better serve the broader university and community at large.

You can find us at our new, much more convenient location on the main floor of the Classroom building – CL 108. We are next door to the mailroom and across from the computer lab. The CRU's Coordinator welcomes interruptions from curious people who want to know more about the work the office does. If you are looking for a community partner, are wondering how our granting program works, you want to know about the Arts Internship program, or have questions about anything else related to community-campus engagement or research, make an appointment with Gidluck or stop by if you see the light on in her office!



*CRU Coordinator, Lynn Gidluck (left) with Director, Michelle Stewart.
Photo courtesy Brendan Anderson.*

Campus Community Connections

On May 22, 2019, members of the city's nonprofit sector attended an event aimed at providing them the opportunity for "one-stop" shopping for nonprofit programs and services offered at the University of Regina.

"There are a lot of services and programs offered at the university that are geared towards the nonprofit sector. Like any big institution, organizations on campus often work in isolation of each other. And, the University can sometimes feel like an unapproachable and alienating place to many people from the community," says Michelle Stewart, Director of the CRU. "The Community Research Unit is doing our best to try to change this – by acting as a bridge between the university and the community."



The CRU's Michelle Stewart answering questions from community members about community-based research during Community Connections event. Photo courtesy Brendan Anderson.

Participating organizations included Campion College's Engaged Learning Program; the Community Research Unit; Enactus (an entrepreneurship and social innovation club open to all U of R students but led by the Hill School of Business); Adult Education & Community Engagement and Human Resource Development, Faculty of Education; the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School's Master's Certificate in Non-Profit Management; Johnson Shoyama's Graduate School Student Policy Shop; Luther College's Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Studies Network (NVSSN), and the Regina Public Interest Research Group (RPIRG).

Lynn Gidluck is the CRU's Coordinator. She said that the CRU is happy to play the role of "help desk" for people in the community who are hoping to tap into the knowledge, skills, and resources of the university.

"All of the partners that came together for this event share the common goal of wanting to address community-defined needs through their programs, courses, and research," said Gidluck. "While we helped bring the groups together to promote the services and programs the university offers, another goal with this event was to encourage more collaboration on campus. Each of our groups offers something unique, but complimentary. When someone from the community calls us, they should expect we can send them in the right direction-- whether that is for help with community-based research, formal education in nonprofit management or just an occasional skills workshop, or they could use the help of faculty and students as they grapple with problems their organizations are trying to solve."

Special thanks to Yvonne Harrison and Vibya Natana with the NVSSN for taking leadership roles in working with the CRU to organize this event.

Realize. **Learning** your way.

Be a strong community leader.

Toolkit Workshop Series

Toolkit Workshops offered in 2018-19

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Respectful engagement and communication with Indigenous communities | Angela Pratt | Sept. 18, 2018 | Angela Pratt considers herself a “bridge” between Indigenous and non-Indigenous worlds. During this workshop she shared her insights on addressing the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and working with Indigenous communities. |
| Managing Human Resources in the Nonprofit Sector: Understanding the Essentials | Len Daniels and Donna Kane | December 4, 2018 | This session provided a high-level overview around essential aspects of HR management and the considerations to take into account when working with employees. |
| Maximizing your Impact with Social Media | Carbon Marketing team | March 5, 2019 | Participants learned how to be more strategic with social media, the art and science of social media stats and goals, media scheduling, DIY graphics and videos and more. |
| Advocacy: Understanding the Shifting Landscape | Gloria DeSantis & Peter Gilmer | May 21, 2019 | Participants learned about advocacy practice, strategies and tactics, new federal government rules around advocacy, and so much more! |

The Community Research Unit is proud to offer free professional skills-development workshops targeted primarily to people working for nonprofit organizations. All workshops this year had capacity crowds and were well received by attendees. In 2018 we were excited to enter into a partnership with the United Way of Regina, which graciously hosts most of the workshops at their Regina office. In March 2019, we established a Community Advisory Committee to provide direction and support for the Toolkit Series. We would like to thank Alaina Harrison (Inclusion Saskatchewan), Dana Folkersen (Regina Education and Action Against Child Hunger), Karen Jaster-Laforge (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School), Tracy Knutson, STOPS to Violence, Rochelle Berenyi (Carmichael Outreach) and Laura Murray (Regina Food Bank), for their advice, support and time. Check the CRU webpage out for details of the 2019-20 Toolkit Series.

Arts Internship Program

Taya Triffo graduated in June with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Politics and Economics. She is one of the first cohorts of students to participate in the revamped Arts Work Experience Internship program.

As soon as Lynn Gidluck, who is developing and leading this program for the Faculty of Arts, learned how interested Triffo was in local food security, she thought of the perfect placement for her. Food Regina is a network of organizations working together to improve community food security. Gidluck introduced Triffo to Tracy Sanden, who works for the Saskatchewan Health Authority, one of Food Regina's members, and Amber Fletcher (Faculty member from Sociology & Social Studies). Sanden and Fletcher



Tracy Sanden (L) and Taya Triffo (R), reflecting on how valuable the Arts Internship program is for both students and community organizations.

already knew each other because they worked together on a CRU-funded community-based research project.

“The internship really helped me in securing a full-time job after my graduation,” said Triffo. “I was lucky to gain a lot of experience in doing research and then when I did my interview for my job with the Ministry of Agriculture, they felt more confident hiring me because they knew that I had research experience in government and that I knew how to communicate to those audiences.”

“I would encourage anybody to take an opportunity to take an Arts student. The Community Research Unit really works hard

on matching students to organizations and projects to make sure it's a win win for everyone,” said Sanden.

History department head Philip Charrier is one of the program's biggest champions. Three history students will be doing internships in the fall 2019 semester—one who will learn about how to be an archivist by working with the U of R's Archives and Special Collections team. Two others are considering careers in the museum sector. They are looking forward to learning curatorial skills while working with the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

Charrier encourages everyone who advises students to talk to Gidluck about developing strategic partnerships with community partners and finding placements that match their career goals. “Students gain three credit hours towards their degree while gaining practical experience they can put on their resume,” said Charrier. “The internship is a ‘toe in the water’ in comparison to the co-op program, in the sense that it is 8 hours a week for 13 weeks. The Coordinator works very hard to set up a schedule that's not disruptive for students.”

CRU Funded Research Projects

Evaluating Mental Health Realities for 2SLGBTQIAP+ People in Regina

UR Pride proudly serves families and friends of 2SLGBTQIAP+ people living in Regina and surrounding communities. They received provincial funding to run a pilot mental health counselling project specifically addressing 2SLGBTQIAP+ people by providing them with access to a queer-informed clinical counsellor. Funding from the CRU will allow them to integrate a research component into this project.

“Many 2SLGBTQIAP+ service providers and professionals in the province have referred to the mental health realities of 2SLGBTQIAP+ people as a crisis,” says Jacq Brasseur, UR Pride Executive Director. “We are hoping that research on the topic will allow for 2SLGBTQIAP+ organizations and other mental health agencies to secure funding for 2SLGBTQIAP+ specific programming and practitioners.”

The research team will consist of Nuelle Novik (Social Work), Claire Carter (Faculty of Arts) and Suzy Yim (UR Pride Centre).

Strengthening Family Reunification

Saskatchewan has some of the highest rates of child apprehension in the country. It is well-documented that this group of families most impacted by child welfare practices are Indigenous and that these rates of apprehension lead to disproportionate rates of children staying in state care for extended periods of time – including to full adoption and severance of family connection. In practice, this means thousands of families across the province struggle to reunite and during that time of separation many children find themselves in a series of foster homes. Being separated from family and being placed in different homes is understood to produce trauma not only for the children but also the families. If and when families unite the combined impact of stress and trauma can impact reunification. But these are not the only issues that impact family reunification. Ongoing economic and bureaucratic pressures can produce stress for families. The different pressures and stressors can also directly contribute to ongoing contact with the Ministry of Social Services up to and including having children removed again.

The Community Research Unit is proud to help fund a project exploring the pitfalls and challenges facing families after reunification and strategies to overcome these challenges. The YWCA Regina will use the findings to help inform future funding applications and program development. They will also use the results to raise public awareness and community advocacy efforts. Michelle Stewart is the university partner for the project.

Uncovering Hidden Homelessness in Regina

The hidden homeless population in Regina has been one that has evaded the radar of policy makers, program developers and funders. This population is not counted in any homelessness surveys. Very often they are cited as specifically being missed. Recent surveys counted individuals in shelters and those living directly on the street.

Lisa Workman is a tireless advocate on behalf of people living in poverty. While she works for the Saskatchewan Health Authority at Four Directions Community Health Centre, it was in her capacity as a member of the umbrella organization Poverty Free Saskatchewan that she approached the CRU for assistance in putting together a research team and applying for funding to collect information on this vulnerable population.

“We want to give our city’s hidden homeless population a voice and be in a position to demand a better quality of life,” said Workman. “The data will be used by community groups to advocate for services such as 24 hour drop in centres, better housing standards, more frontline services, and anti-poverty measures.”

Ann Perry is Executive Director of Circle Project, an indigenous organization that offers self-development programs and counseling services in Regina and surrounding areas based on the Aboriginal vision of wholeness, balance and healing.

“We were pleased to be asked to work with Lisa Workman and Laurie Clune from the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Regina on this important research project,” said Perry. “And we applaud the Community Research Unit for funding the project and bringing us all together.”

Prior to moving to Regina about ten years ago, Laurie Clune was a community nurse who worked with many homeless people on the streets of Toronto and Thunder Bay. “I’m happy to lend my support to this really strong community team. I’m moved at how passionate they are in trying to make a difference in our community,” said Clune. “With our research we hope to raise public awareness and help influence political will towards accessing funding and opportunities to bring about change.”



Back row, l-r: Ann Perry, Circle Project; Lisa Workman, Poverty Free Saskatchewan; Laurie Clune, U of R. Front row, l-r: Aliyah O’Watch (student researcher, Circle Project) and Elvie Stonechild (Circle Project).

Building Partnerships

When the Research Office reached out to CRU Coordinator Lynn Gidluck to see if she could help them find a community partner for a Mitacs post-doctoral research fellowship for someone in the Faculty of Computer Science, she was happy to help them.

Though the Community Research Unit is funded by the Faculty of Arts, it serves the broader university community. “Many people at the University of Regina are new to our community and lack connections with organizations that could benefit from their research,” said Gidluck. “Dr. Faysal Al-Ageili had a sound application for a Mitacs application and funding from the George Reed Centre. She just needed some assistance in selling the potential of her research to community partners so she could apply for matching funds from Mitacs. I was happy to help bring together an excellent team of people from the Regina Public Library, the Regina Regional Local Immigration Partnership, and the United Way – to work with her and the George Reed Centre.”

“The Regina Public Library is excited to be working with the University of Regina to develop a new language application for tablets and phones that will make it easier for newcomers to our community to communicate,” said Nancy MacKenzie, Manager of Community Engagement and Programming at the RPL.

Not only did the CRU help find community partners for the project, they also worked with the partners on a launch event that garnered media attention and was highlighted by Academic Group in their daily top ten report which features stories and trends affecting post-secondary education in Canada.



L-R: Brenda Rossow-Kimball (George Reed Centre, U of R), Nancy MacKenzie (Regina Public Library), Malek Mouhoub (U of R), Munira Faysal Al-Ageili (U of R), Subhas Maharaj, Pictopages software developer, Josie Vantour (Regina Public Library), Deborah Stevens (Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership) and Lynn Gidluck (CRU).

Another successful “match”:

U of R Team to help meet research needs of The South Central Regional Immigration Partnership

Dalise Hector is Project Manager for The South Central Regional Immigration Partnership (SCRIP), based in the city of Moose Jaw and serving the South Central region of Saskatchewan. Local Immigration Partnerships support their communities by creating systems that invite increasing local engagement in effectively integrating newcomers.

“I attended the Community Research Unit’s Summer Institute on Community-Based Research last August,” said Hector. “I learned about the valuable opportunities the University of Regina could offer our fledgling partnership-organization. Since then, I’ve met with the CRU’s Lynn Gidluck, an avid listener, who took her time to really understand the SCRIP’s needs and goals. She then connected me with a team of academics who have an interest in and experience with research related to community sustainability, Francophone communities, and newcomer integration, among other relevant topics.

The research team recently met with Hector to start developing a research plan.

“This research will enable us to move forward with the important work of having communities and newcomers satisfactorily integrated with each other. I am so thankful for the CRU’s work that has made this research partnership possible,” Hector concluded.



L to R: Christine Massing (Education), Fritz Pino (Social Work), Daniel Kikulwe (Social Work), Dalise Hector (SCRIP). Missing from photo: Jérôme Melançon (La Cité universitaire francophone), Sara Schroeter (Education) and Michael Akinpelu (La Cité).

Community Research & Action Fund

| Year | Project Title | Main Community Partner | Amount Awarded | Project Dates |
|----------------|---|--|----------------|------------------------------|
| 2018-19 | Uncovering Hidden Homelessness in Regina | Circle Project | \$3,500 | April 1, 2019-present |
| | Evaluating Mental Health Realities for 2SLGBTQIAP+ People in Regina | UR Pride | \$3,500 | April 1, 2019-present |
| | Strengthening Family Reunification | YWCA Regina | \$3,500 | April 8, 2019-present |
| 2017-18 | Rest Assured: Changes to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability Program and the Impact on Beneficiaries | Disability Income Support Coalition | \$3,000 | Jan. 19, 2018 to Dec. 2018 |
| | The State of Saskatchewan Trails | Saskatchewan Trails Association | \$2,970 | Feb. 2, 2018 – Sept. 2019 |
| | Should Saskatchewan History be Relunched? A Feasibility Study to Determine a Way Forward | Heritage Saskatchewan | \$3,000 | Feb. 28, 2018 – July 9, 2018 |
| 2016-17 | Rails to Trails Conversion Guide | Saskatchewan Trails Association | \$2,970 | June 20, 2016-April 30, 2017 |
| | Reconciliation and the Media: Building Relations for Better News Coverage | Reconciliation and the Media Committee | \$3,000 | July 21, 2016-Jan. 31, 2017 |
| | After Rehabilitation: Meeting the Long-Term Housing Needs of Persons with Traumatic Brain Injury in Regina | Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association | \$2,997.60 | Nov. 10, 2016-July, 2018 |
| | Farmers, Policy, and Local Food Systems in Saskatchewan: Barriers and Opportunities | Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan | \$2,800.50 | Jan. 20, 2016-March 31, 2017 |

Do you have a great community research project idea? Or would you like to put your research into action? We can help! The Community Research Unit will provide support for non-profit research or action projects that benefit a community of people or the common good. Deadlines for grant applications are November 1st and April 1st.

The Community Research Unit and Action Fund will help community organizations to:

- 1) Start a collaborative community-based research project, OR
- 2) Disseminate research results or put research outcomes into action at the community or organizational level.

Community organizations can apply for funding for a project. For more information and application forms can be found at <https://www.uregina.ca/arts/community-research/Research/funding.html>

About Us

The Community Research Unit is guided by a Board of Directors with eleven members: four community members, three faculty members and one graduate student from the Faculty of Arts, the CRU Director, and two ex-officio members: the Associate Dean of Arts (Research & Graduate Studies) and the CRU Coordinator.

Board of Directors 2018—2019

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lynn Gidluck | Coordinator, CRU |
| Michelle Stewart | Director, CRU |
| Katherine Arbuthnott | Faculty member, Department of Psychology, Campion College, U of R |
| Lisa Brownstone | Community representative, Canada FASD Research Network |
| Emily Eaton | Faculty member, Department of Geography, U of R |
| Alaina Harrison | Community representative, Inclusion Saskatchewan |
| Nick Jones | Associate Dean of Arts (Research and Graduate Studies), U of R |
| Margaret Kisikaw Piyesis | Community representative, All Nations Hope Network |
| Jamie Wallace | Graduate student, Department of Psychology, Campion College, U of R |
| Allyson Stevenson | Faculty member, Department of Politics and International Studies, U of R |
| Dale West | Community representative, Regina Open Door Society |

Our Mission

The mission of the Community Research Unit (CRU) is to enable the Faculty of Arts to serve as a resource for non-profit organizations and communities, rural and urban, and to be enriched in turn by our relationships with those communities. In doing so, the University enhances civic engagement and its own actual and perceived value to the province as well as its capacity to produce high quality and relevant knowledge.

Our Mandate

The CRU functions as a partnership between community-based organizations and university faculty and students. Our mandate is to provide independent, participatory research support in response to needs expressed by community-based organizations to build their organizational capacity and enhance community quality of life.

Community Research Unit Contact Information:

CRU Director: Michelle Stewart, michelle.stewart@uregina.ca; (306) 585-4873
CRU Coordinator: Lynn Gidluck, lynn.gidluck@uregina.ca (306) 585-4084. For more information about the Community Research Unit, visit, <https://www.uregina.ca/arts/community-research/index.html>