I want to begin by acknowledging all the great work that colleagues and partners have been doing. This edition will provide another sample of some of the activities. Thank you to all who have contributed to the edition, and particularly to Ina who takes charge of pulling things together.

As a Faculty, we continue to reflect on events and developments within and outside the university. One topic we have discussed is the University of Regina’s Strategic Plan and its theme of sustainability. The Strategic Plan notes that “sustainability is deeply rooted in social justice and is taken to encompass economic, cultural, social, and environmental justice”. The breadth of this definition resonates for Social Work and we, the Faculty of Social Work, have chosen to focus on environmental and social justice. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) has also had discussions relevant to this topic. IFSW’s statement on Globalisation and the environment defined globalisation as “the process by which all peoples and communities come to experience an increasingly common economic, social and cultural environment”. IFSW notes that the profession is particularly concerned about “how the economic and environmental consequences affect social relationships and individual opportunity”. The federation reminds us of the importance of supportive circumstances that include peace and environments free of violent conflict, an equitable social order, and “confidence in a sustainable natural environment which supports life”. IFSW suggests that these ideas are reflected in various international statements such as “the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Declaration on the Rights of the Child”. The IFSW statement acknowledges that poverty, inequity, violence, and environmental degradation continue to exist despite multiple international statements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the International Declaration on the Rights of the Child. The development of a poverty-environment initiative led by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) are examples of responses to these issues and concerns.

Our faculty and staff are also endeavouring to respond to these issues. For example, we have developed a new course Social Work and the Environment: Theory and Practice; and several faculty and staff are involved in hosting a Spring Summer Practicum for children and youth of Saskatchewan’s Syrian community: Refugee Settlement Program for Children and Youth. Over the next few editions, we will be providing stories and articles about some of the initiatives that demonstrate our understanding of the broad theme of sustainability, and our commitment to social and environmental justice.

Our Mission

"The social work program of education, research and community service is designed to prepare students for critical generalist social work practice with diverse peoples. Informed by the principles of indigenization, sustainability and social justice, the social work program encourages students to identify the needs of the disadvantaged, marginalized and oppressed. It supports students in developing the commitment, knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills required to confront structural inequalities, and to empower individuals, families, and communities to realize their full potential."
The University of Regina, Faculty of Social Work joined the rest of the social work community to celebrate the profession's roles, knowledge and skills. Social Work Week events were organized and hosted at both campuses in Regina and Saskatoon.

On March 18, 2016 the Saskatoon campus joined with the SASW Saskatoon Branch, University of Saskatchewan Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM), and the Veterinary Social Work Initiative Committee and hosted a presentation titled, "Pet Ownership Among Marginalized Populations: Implications for Social Workers". The event featured Dr. Michelle Lem who has done extensive work in areas of preventive veterinary care for animals of the homeless and marginally housed in Ottawa since 2003. Dr. Lem's program has been successfully reproduced in other communities and is demonstrating how veterinary care can be leveraged to engage marginalized pet owners in social services and health care for themselves.

This presentation highlighted the importance of animals in the lives of individuals who may be experiencing homelessness or precarious housing situations. Animal companions provide support and help to reduce isolation and loneliness. In addition, animals can be considered "the opening" to their owners accessing important health and social care. At Dr. Lem's clinic, Community Veterinary Outreach in Ottawa, individuals seeking veterinary care for their animals can access support services provided by a social worker working alongside veterinarians. By providing preventive veterinary education and care to the animals of those in need, Dr. Lem states that they "improve not only the health of the animal, but also contribute to protecting public health, support the physical and emotional well-being of their owners or guardians, and engage a vulnerable population in social and health services. We help to maintain a strong and healthy human-animal bond for those to whom that bond may be the most significant relationship in their life".

This presentation is timely given the increased awareness being paid to the multitude of health benefits that animals offer to humans. Social workers practice at the interface of people and their environments and for many people this includes pets. As such, ongoing systemic and ideological change is needed that reflects the social work profession's commitment to the interrelationship of people and animals, and the necessary collaboration of other disciplines in addressing needs.

The attendance and feedback from this event was overwhelmingly positive. The presentation offered opportunities to learn about innovative approaches to addressing individual and community needs. The Faculty of Social Work in partnership with the WCVM and the SASW Saskatoon Branch will continue to host future events related to this topic area.

In Regina, the Faculty of Social Work partnered with Family Services Regina and the SASW Regina Branch to promote the profession of social work by having a research day held on March 23, 2016. This event was opened up by Dr. Judy White, Dean of the Faculty of Social Work, who shared her recent research work on the life stories of 12 women from Labrador, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In her opening presentation, Dr. White encouraged social work to be more inclusive and increase our awareness and understanding of the socio-economic context of the individuals living in the North. She also shared that she has been working diligently with the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, an organization that aims to assist those groups working to achieve social justice and equality for all women - [http://www.criaw-icref.ca/en/](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/en/)
The research day held in Regina also allowed three graduate students to showcase their research work. Michelle Apps, a Masters of Social Work candidate under the supervision of Dr. Randy Johner at the University of Regina, Faculty of Social Work, shared her research title, “A Narrative Inquiry into the Erotic Lives of People with Disabilities.” Michelle’s research work examines the lived experiences of people with intellectual and physical disabilities regarding the access and facilitation of an erotic life. Disability and sexuality research is an under-studied area, and through this research the study aims to shed light on what is often considered a taboo subject, both within academic and non-academic discourses. Results indicate that there are many barriers faced by people with disabilities in regards to accessing and facilitating an erotic life for themselves, including: physical and attitudinal barriers; the complicating role of interlocking oppressions; the (in)accessibility of public and private spaces; and a lack of sexual education.

Susana Prado Becerra, also a MSW student at the University of Regina, presented her research work titled, “The perspective of the clinical caseworkers on the developmental trauma experiences of the youth living in group homes at Ranch Ehrlo.” Based on Becerra’s research work, trauma is a very common problem experienced by marginalized individuals and their families. It has effects on physical health, mental health, and relationships, and it often manifests as problematic behaviours, particularly for youth within the child welfare system. Becerra shared how her work applies Developmental Trauma Diagnosis model and critical realist perspective to offer social workers increased awareness of the needs for youth experiencing trauma and need to engage in interdisciplinary work.

Holly Bressler, a graduate of the University of Regina’s Master of Social Work program, presented her research titled, “Lives Disrupted: Resettlement Stories of Men Leaving War Torn Countries.” Using a narrative, holistic content perspective, Bressler’s work uncovers themes, throughout three men’s narratives who flee war-torn countries and resettle in Regina, Saskatchewan. Each of the men describe harrowing details of their journey complicated by the uncertainty of their futures. All three stories present unique migration experiences. One man, shares his experience fleeing from Burma to Thailand and spending nearly ten years in a refugee camp. Another man escapes Guatemala to Mexico, remaining in exile for several months, while another flees Afghanistan to India for close to seven years. Eventually, each of the men resettle in Regina, Saskatchewan. Each man described the extreme challenges of “starting over.” The three stories illustrate an immense resilience, where the men talk about their experiences of accessing support from family, friends and community settlement services. Stability, in each of these men’s lives is a triumph of success after overcoming the atrocities of war. Telling and sharing these stories of war and resettlement ensure the hardship and struggle of survivors of war are recognized and never forgotten.

The organizers of the social work research day also received feedback from the community participants in Regina, indicating that the event provided an opportunity for thought provoking discussions. Others noted that the event was a chance to learn about current research and opportunities to network with other social workers, as well as staying connected with the University of Regina. The general feedback comment was the expressed desire to organize and have an annual research day to bring the community and students together.
Dr. Bonnie Jeffery is leading a team of researchers from the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU) who have been working with several rural communities to identify the challenges and supports that influence the ability of older adults to successfully age in their communities. The study, Healthy Aging through Walkable Built Environment, focuses on understanding how the human made physical design of small communities affects rural seniors’ mobility.

This study is taking place in four rural Saskatchewan communities: Young, Watrous, Wolseley, and Rosetown. Data collection started in July 2015 and will finish by September 2016. The first phase involved completing detailed audits and assessments of each community to examine physical features such as sidewalks, buildings, and amenities; identifying existing programs; and exploring local programs and policies that facilitate mobility. The research is currently in the second phase which focuses on hearing the lived experience of older adults through in-depth qualitative interviews. The final phase of the study includes qualitative walking interviews with older adults in these four rural communities. This community-engaged study involves a strong team of local community decision makers and policy makers who have helped to guide the direction of the research.

MSW practicum student, Suzanne Le-Claire, has joined the research team to complete her study identifying the supports needed by older adults in Rosetown as well as hearing the perspectives of rural social work practitioners on the profession’s role in supporting healthy aging in place.
Refugee Settlement Program for Children & Youth

As part of the Faculty of Social Work’s response to the recent influx of Syrian refugees in the province, the Refugee Settlement Program for Children and Youth has been developed in partnership with the Regina Open Door Society.

The program objective is to provide members of Regina’s Arabic-speaking refugee community with a safe space to ease the stress of resettlement. Specifically, we aim to create an environment for children where they can simply be themselves, and engage in play and interactive learning.

Under the supervision of faculty members and field instructors, four practicum students (pictured above) in our Bachelor of Social Work degree program lead the activities and participate in various aspects of program development and implementation.

The Spring program began May 21 and runs every Saturday until June 25. The Summer program runs every Saturday from July 9 until Aug 20. Programming is geared for approximately 30 children ages 6-12 years. In addition, we are offering a support group for women to meet, engage in conversation, practice English, learn about Canadian culture, make crafts, and participate in workshops on topics of interest as identified by the women themselves. Mothers who register their children for the settlement program can stay and join the women’s circle!

This program is one way in which we are able to demonstrate our solidarity with refugees in Saskatchewan. As a Faculty delivering social work programs throughout the province, we are committed to serving the needs of refugee populations in this province. It is our goal for this program to continue into the fall/winter, and into the future as a long-term settlement support initiative.
International Practicum Field Education - Rwanda

This fall (2015) an international practicum agreement was signed between the Faculty of Social Work and the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB) in Rwanda. In the spring of 2016, Drs. Randy Johner and Donalda Halabuza facilitated an international practicum experience for five BSW students at UTAB and in the community of Byumba. Students were involved in the S.O.S International Children’s Village located in Byumba and worked with the children and their house mothers. The students utilized diverse art forms in working with the SOS Village children. Students collaborated with UTAB social work students in order to become familiar with the culture of Rwanda and the practice of social work in their country. Drs. Johner and Halabuza assisted the Faculty of Social Work and Anthropology at UTAB in curriculum development and provided special lectures on various topics of interest between the two universities.

The group is planning to host a presentation about their experience on Wed. June 8, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in the Education Building, room 436.14.

For more information contact:
Randy Johner@uregina.ca or Donalda.Halabuza@uregina.ca

BSW students participating in this practicum (SW 348) are:
back row: Paige Breland, Shelley Bunnie, front row: Jenna Corcoran, Madison Maher, Jessica Teichroeb

Shen Kuo Research Exchange Program

Graduate student Michelle Apps is the first social work student to be accepted to the Shen Kuo Research Exchange Program that (as per the website), “showcases research being conducted at the University of Regina (U of R) by graduate students, as well as by graduate students from Chinese universities. This program is designed to provide U of R graduate students from all program areas with the opportunity to present their research to audiences in Regina and in China. The cost of international travel and accommodation in China will be covered but each selected graduate student will be required to contribute $500”. Students must undergo a twofold acceptance process. First, students must submit an application that highlights their academic scholarship and research accomplishments, as well as provide a letter of recommendation from their academic supervisor that supports the content of their applications. The initial applications are first vetted through a rigorous review process; if applicants’ academic and research accomplishments are deemed meritorious, those applicants are invited to present their research to a review panel. Lastly, only ten of the students who present their work will receive an invitation to participate in the Shen Kuo Research Exchange Program. Ms. Apps’ research explores the narrative of specific individuals with diverse abilities who are interested in and/or wish to pursue an erotic life; this pursuit can be of a sexual nature, but it can also include platonic relationships with another person(s). Ms. Apps and her team members (Master/PhD candidates) leave for Beijing China on May 8, 2016 and return May 23, 2016.
As an academic program advisor with the Faculty of Social Work, I’ve been fortunate enough to engage in professional development opportunities with my colleagues in this province through the Advising Association of Saskatchewan (AASK), but also with academic advisors worldwide through the Global Community for Academic Advising (NACADA). Through NACADA, I have attended conferences in Maastricht, Netherlands (2013) and Honolulu, Hawaii (2015). These opportunities to learn and network with others in my profession internationally have been invaluable and have shaped my practice as an advisor. At the University of Regina, we have an increasing number of international students and I think it’s important for advisors to understand the context of education and advising that is experienced outside of Canada. There are also so many unique and diverse perspectives and approaches to advising that are shared during international conferences! Central to my learning has been the ongoing development of my advising philosophy, which incorporates elements of developmental and proactive advising models. Through professional development I have come to recognize that advising is a teaching and learning process, so improving my teaching abilities contributes to my success as an advisor, and in turn, to student success and retention. Because of international professional development, not only have I been given the chance to see new parts of the world, but also to gain insight into how to be a better advisor. And, I’ve been able to share some of what I’ve learned with my colleagues here at the University of Regina.

Submitted by: Amanda Noubarian, Academic Program Advisor, Regina Campus
A brief summary of the history of our SW Saskatoon Campus submitted by Vivian Haskins and Sally Machibroda.

The Decentralized Delivery Model of Social Work education by the Faculty of Social Work was first formally conceptualized in a “Green Paper” on Field Education in 1972. A primary goal of the project was to develop a program for individuals who were already experienced social service workers. It focused on integrating theory and practice through participation in field education or practicum placement opportunities in agencies throughout the province: Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Yorkton, North Battleford. The program used a community development model of social work education. The project was initially supported mainly through funding from the federal Department of Health and Welfare as well as the Donner and McConnell Foundations. According to a University of Regina Program Review document, the program “was unquestionably unique at the time, and it has been imitated in many Schools and Faculties of Social Work in Canada.”

The March 1993 Report of the University Program Review Panel, entitled Looking at Saskatchewan Universities: Programs, Governance, and Goals, highlighted the importance of distance education to students in urban and rural areas. The report noted:

...70 percent of those taking televised instruction could not take university courses without this means. Aboriginal peoples and other disadvantaged groups gain access to university programs that they otherwise could not have taken at all, or at a very high personal cost.

Seven years later, on September 13, 2000, the University of Regina, Vice President (Academic) Office, described the Faculty of Social Work’s commitment to making “the province as our campus”:

Initially the Faculty of Social Work offered programs in three centres: Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. A centre at La Ronge was later opened and subsequently closed. The Regina campus is the home base for the faculty and currently supports Community Education Centres (CECs) in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. The focus of the CECs is undergraduate social work programs although a graduate cohort program was offered on a trial basis in Saskatoon. The University of Regina offers social work programs and courses at other locations within the province through the Off-campus division of the Centre for Continuing Education. In addition, other institutions have contracted with the university to offer University of Regina social work programs (e.g. Gabriel Dumont Institute and Yukon College).

Both the Regina and La Ronge Community Education Centres were closed in the early 1990’s.

Since the above reports were written, much has changed for the Faculty of Social Work. We no longer offer face to face classes at the Prince Campus. However, the Community Education Centre in Saskatoon became a campus. In winter 2000, 162 students were enrolled in face-to-face courses at the Saskatoon CEC, including students in the University Entrance Program, SW Qualifying (now Pre-Social Work), Bachelor of Social Work, and the Certificate of Social Work. Both the University Entrance and Certificate of Social Work programs were subsequently discontinued. The Faculty of Social Work was pleased to offer the full graduate program at Saskatoon Campus in fall 2009. By winter 2016, 212 students were enrolled in face-to-face courses at the Saskatoon Campus, including Pre-Social Work, Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work students. This increase not only impacted student registration numbers, but enhanced our relationship with the University of Saskatchewan, as well as other western universities, through student enrollments via the Western Deans’ Agreement.
The number of distance delivery courses, offered throughout the province, has increased exponentially. As a result, the Faculty of Social Work now offers multiple technology-based course deliveries, such as video conference, online, blended and LIVE streamed courses, each semester. Our Saskatoon Campus also serves as the final examination writing centre for local students enrolled in Centre for Continuing Education online general university and/or social work courses.

The faculty and staff complement in Saskatoon has also changed. In 2000, there were five faculty members and one and one-half administrative positions. By fall 2016, there will be eight faculty members and six administrative staff. The administrative team includes a technology facilitator, an academic advisor, who provides support to MSW students across the province, a practicum placement coordinator, a student services staff member, and the campus coordinator who also provides advising support to undergraduate students.

Saskatoon Campus has had many physical locations, within the City of Saskatoon, during its history. From our humble beginnings in 1974 through to 1998, we were located at various downtown locations. In the summer of 1998, we moved to St. Andrew’s College, located on the main University of Saskatchewan Campus. From September 2007 to March 2016, we were located at the Atrium Building, Innovation Place. Our most recent move was to the Concourse Building at Innovation Place, where we have co-located with the Faculty of Nursing (University of Regina).

For more information on the Faculty of Social Work, please visit us at:

www.uregina.ca/socialwork/
As many of you know, Lois Adams retired from the University of Regina in February 2016. We want to wish her all the best in this new and exciting chapter of her life.

We would like to introduce you to Brad Colin. He has previously worked on campus at Resource Planning, Registrar’s Office, ESL and the Faculty of Nursing.

Please join us in welcoming Brad to the Faculty of Social Work team as our new Faculty Administrator.

The Faculty of Social Work completed a search for two tenure track positions in our Saskatoon Campus. Please join us in welcoming Kara Fletcher and Funke Oba.

The Faculty of Social Work is striving to find opportunities to serve our community and partners better. If you have ideas or suggestions to help us, please forward them to the Dean’s Office by emailing Ina.Kurtz@uregina.ca