

President's Report to Senate: February 24, 2025

I am pleased to present my second report of the year to the Senate, providing updates on key academic and institutional priorities. This report highlights recent achievements and ongoing initiatives that support Lakehead University's academic mission and our shared commitment to excellence.

A Transformative \$15 Million Investment from the County of Simcoe to Expand Lakehead University Orillia Campus

The County of Simcoe has made a transformative \$15 million investment over 10 years to expand Lakehead University's Orillia campus, starting with a \$1.5 million installment this year. This funding builds on the County's initial \$10 million contribution in 2009, which helped establish the campus. The expansion will include a new building to support 10 additional academic programs, new teaching spaces, an Indigenous Learning and Gathering Centre, and a centralized Student Services Hub. These enhancements will allow the campus to grow from 2,100 to 3,500 students, increasing access to education and creating new opportunities for students to succeed in Simcoe County.



Since its establishment in 2006, Lakehead Orillia has significantly impacted the region, increasing university enrolment by 147% and contributing \$328 million annually to the local economy. This new investment will help address regional workforce needs, ensuring students are prepared for in-demand jobs while supporting the long-term economic prosperity of Simcoe County. We are grateful to the County of Simcoe for their continued partnership and commitment to education, which will benefit our students and communities for generations to come.

Lakehead University's 2023-2024 Annual Report: Celebrating Impact and Community Engagement



On Friday, February 7th, a gathering took place at The Outpost to celebrate the launch of this year's [Annual Report](#). The event was a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the impact of collective efforts and to acknowledge the dedication of those who help drive Lakehead's success.

Lakehead University's 2023-2024 Annual Report, *Connecting Communities, Unlocking Potential*, highlights the remarkable achievements of students, researchers, faculty, staff, and alumni. It also provides insight into the socio-economic impact of the university, demonstrating the many ways in which Lakehead contributes to the communities it serves.

The theme, *Connecting Communities, Unlocking Potential*, underscores Lakehead's deep-rooted commitment to community engagement. Founded by communities, for communities, the university's work extends beyond its campuses—creating meaningful change locally, nationally, and globally.



The stories featured in this report highlight the strength of the Lakehead community and the transformative power of the work taking place at the university. The Annual Report is [available online](#), along with an accompanying [video](#) that captures the essence of Lakehead's impact.

Brand-building stories from the annual report are being promoted across digital platforms through a modestly sized paid advertising campaign to ensure Lakehead's success stories reach our key audiences.

Faraz Khorsandi, LUSU President, interviewing *Charles Levkoe and Rachel Portinga*

Grade 11 Preview Day Welcomes 125 Future Thunderwolves to Lakehead Orillia



On Thursday, February 20th, over 125 Grade 11 students from across Simcoe County students signed up to attend Lakehead Orillia's Grade 11 preview day. Students participated in various activities on campus: meeting with professors and staff, attending sessions related to specific programs and student services, and enjoying a meal in the cafeteria! Just over 50% of Lakehead Orillia students hail from Simcoe County, so events of this nature - designed to give students a 'taste of the Orillia campus experience' - are instrumental to future enrolment growth.

Thank you to all the Faculty members who turned out on Reading Week to support this event. Students were so excited to connect with their future professors

English professor Megan Arnott speaks to potential future Lakehead students in the Orsi Learning Commons

Orillia Campus Highlights: Celebrating Wins, Sweet Treats, and Alumni Connections!

There's always something exciting happening at **Lakehead Orillia!**

- **Championship Victory!** The hockey team skated their way to success, winning the championship!
- **Student Appreciation Day:** Hundreds of students enjoyed warm, delicious cinnamon buns as a sweet thank-you for being part of our Lakehead community.
- **Alumni Night:** We welcomed 80+ alumni at the Thunderwolves vs. York game, reconnecting and cheering on our team together!

Stay tuned for more **Orillia Campus Highlights**—there's always something happening! #LakeheadLife #ThunderwolfPride



Lakehead-hosted global youth summit encourages participation, engagement in world issues

Over 30 young people from all over the world (including Botswana, Guyana, Fiji, the Bahamas, Malta) attended the Global Citizenship Summit for Youth Voice, Policy, and Action at Lakehead University's Orillia Campus from Feb. 17 to 21. Focusing on cultural perspectives on global issues (i.e. climate, environment, technology, jobs, peace, etc.), the summit engaged youth to be active participants in our complex, global world. Youth contributed as panel presenters, producing podcasts, participating in focus groups, and authoring reflections and reports on their experiences. They participated in numerous activities on and off-campus, including a visit to Rama First Nation. This summit was organized by Lead Researcher, Dr. Gary Pluim, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education, in collaboration with the Ontario Council of International Cooperation. The Lakehead Orillia campus community rallied to support this summit, with Indigenous Initiatives, Career Services & Co-op, Lakehead International, and Community Engagement & Lifelong Learning all offering programming, connection, and resources. This summit was the culminating event following virtual connections late last year, in which youth exchanged ideas, visions, and perspectives.



Participants in the Global Citizenship Summit visit Rama First Nation

Lakehead in the News

A selection of media highlights.

Simcoe County invests \$15 million in the future of Lakehead Orillia CTV News

Jan. 23, 2025

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/barrie/article/simcoe-county-invests-15-million-in-the-future-of-lakehead-orillia/>

'Remarkable': County putting \$15M toward Lakehead Orillia expansion

Orillia Matters Jan. 23, 2025

<https://www.orilliamatters.com/local-news/remarkable-county-putting-15m-toward-lakehead-orillia-expansion-10118953>

Connection at the heart of LU's 2024 report to community

TBNewsWatch

Feb. 8, 2025

<https://www.tbnewswatch.com/local-news/connection-at-the-heart-of-lus-2024-report-to-community-10205741>

Lakehead University issues 'Report to the Community'

Feb. 7, 2025

TBNewsWatch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvBgWOOzm5E>

Veterinary partnership among LU report highlights

The Chronicle Journal

Feb. 9, 2025

https://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/veterinary-partnership-among-lu-report-highlights/article_bc8b85c4-e5dc-11ef-9e80-173f716b9a63.html

Lakehead University students enjoy some sweet stress relief

CBC News Jan. 24, 2025

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6621770>

Preparations begin for the Lunar New Year in Thunder Bay

CBC Radio Jan. 27, 2024

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6624498>

Lakehead University announces Anishinaabekwe as new Canada Research Chair

Anishinabek News

Dec. 23, 2024

<https://anishinabeknews.ca/2024/12/23/lakehead-university-announces-anishinaabekwe-as-new-canada-research-chair/>

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Gillian Siddall

President & Vice-Chancellor