



President's Report to Ogimaawin Indigenous Education Council

December
2023





Office of the President

Updates on Presidential Initiatives and Activities

Orillia Expansion

I am delighted to share that the County of Simcoe has ratified its commitment of \$15 million for the expansion of the Orillia campus. The University will receive approximately \$1.5 million annually for the next 10 years. This commitment recognizes and lends further momentum to discussions about increasing enrollment and program offerings with our external partners in Simcoe County and internal communities across both campuses of Lakehead university.

Discussions about increasing enrollment and program offerings with our external partners in Simcoe County and internal communities across both campuses of Lakehead University are continuing. Specifically, we are reviewing current enrolment, student demand and planned programming to inform ongoing discussions related to Lakehead's expansion.

Collaborative DVM

In August, Guelph submitted a Request for Substantive Change to their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Program to the American Veterinary Medicine Association/Canadian Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education. Developed collaboratively with Lakehead, this is the first milestone required towards the development of the Collaborative Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Program.

In November, we received approval from the Council on Education for the additional student cohort at Lakehead. Development of the academic program and site selection is continuing through the work of a number of joint working groups.

Gichi Kendaasiwin

Over the past few weeks, I have continued to meet with several Indigenous community leaders.. Our discussions have focused on building strong, Indigenous-led partnerships and identifying opportunities for joint advocacy for the Gichi Kendaasiwin Centre. We recently had the opportunity to meet with the Honourable Patty Hajdu, local Member of Parliament and Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, as well as Minister Responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario. During this meeting, we advocated on behalf of the Gichi Kendasaawin Centre. We are planning a brain-storming session with Lakehead Indigenous faculty and staff to reset the conceptual framework for the Centre.



Delegation from Rainy River First Nations

Building upon the MOU signed between Rainy River First Nations and Lakehead University last June, I hosted a delegation from Rainy River FN led by Chief Marcel Medicine-Horton from November 9-10. The focus of the visit was to discuss land-based activities and education and any and all ideas in providing reciprocal learning opportunities while honouring their guardianship of The Mounds. Meetings were held with Deans and/or representatives of each of the University's Faculties.



Hosting Canada's Chief Public Health Officer and President of the Public Health Agency of Canada

Lakehead University recently had the pleasure of hosting two distinguished guests, Dr. Teresa Tam, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, and Heather Jeffrey, President of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

A highlight of their visit to our Thunder Bay campus was a roundtable discussion with our students in Senate Chambers. This session provided a rare and valuable chance for students to engage directly with these federal public servants, exploring career opportunities within the Federal Public Service through a lively Q&A.

Additionally, Dr. Tam and President Jeffrey were taken on a tour of our campus, where they met with Dr. Christopher Musquash at the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research, and with staff at the Centre for Education and Research on Aging and Health. These meetings fostered good discussions and showcased the university's commitment to impactful research and its outcomes in vital areas, particularly in health challenges in northern and Indigenous communities.

Overall, the visit was an engaging and informative experience, strengthening the connection between academic endeavors and the federal public service.



Strategic Dialogue with Minister Jill Dunlop to Explore Lakehead's Multifaceted Regional Impact Park

I engaged in a constructive one-on-one discussion with **The Honourable Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities**, at Queen's Park on October 17th. Our meeting encompassed an array of vital topics, from Lakehead's influential role in Northwestern Ontario and Simcoe County to Lakehead's contributions to economic development and educational accessibility in Ontario. We also delved into ways the Province can bolster Lakehead's pivotal role within the communities we serve, and beyond.



Queen's Park Event about Ontario's Advanced Manufacturing

At a gathering of the Province's University Presidents at Queen's Park on October 16, I participated in an event called *A Plan for Prosperity: Fueling the Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain* which delved into the synergistic opportunities between government, stakeholders, and universities to advance the manufacturing sector throughout Ontario.

Fueling Ontario's Advanced Manufacturing at Queen's Park Lobby Day

Dr. Shannon Zurevinski, an Associate Professor in Geology and Lakehead's NSERC Representative, recently represented Lakehead University at the Council of Ontario Universities' event at Queen's Park. The event, *Fueling the Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain: From Critical Minerals to Electric Vehicles and Beyond*, provided a platform for universities to highlight the profound impact of research on economic development.





OUF 2023

Lakehead University, once again, pulled out all the stops to host another exceptional booth at the 2023 Ontario Universities' Fair at Toronto's Metro Convention Centre.

I had the pleasure of meeting the team that put up our booth and spent hours and days meeting prospective students and their parents, answering questions about Lakehead, and helping present our university as a valued opportunity and choice for many who never considered pursuing their post-secondary studies in places like Thunder Bay and Orillia.

Pictured at right are several of our hard-working Lakehead ambassadors with **Minister Jill Dunlop** who stopped by our booth for a visit.



Open House at Lakehead Orillia

On Saturday, November 4, 2023, more than 275 people attended the Fall Open House at the Lakehead Orillia campus.

Prospective students and their supporters met with faculty, staff, and current students to learn about academic programs, co-op, admissions, residence, student life and more.



APLU designated Lakehead an Innovation & Economic Prosperity University

In recognition of its strong commitment to economic engagement, today the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) designated Lakehead University as an Innovation & Economic Prosperity (IEP) University.

Lakehead University is now one of over 80 higher education institutions designated as an IEP university and only the second university in Canada to ever receive the distinction.

This designation acknowledges North American public research universities working with public and private sector partners in their cities, states, provinces, and regions to support economic development through a variety of activities, including innovation and entrepreneurship, technology transfer, talent and workforce development, and community development.

Lakehead received the IEP designation after an independent panel reviewed the university's application, a process that began in 2017, including an internal review and analysis of its economic engagement activities conducted with outside stakeholder input.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Lakehead University President Dr. Gillian Siddall, left, unveiled a plaque with Dr. Andrew P. Dean, Lakehead's Vice-President, Research and Innovation; and Ellen MacKay, Director, Innovation Development, on Friday, Nov. 3.



Lakehead University hosting Indigenous Veterans Day ceremony and exhibit

Lakehead hosted an Indigenous Veterans Day ceremony and exhibit opening on Wednesday, Nov. 8 in the Agora – with speakers from the University and invited guests. The exhibit, which will be on display Nov. 8-10, features photos and artifacts from the World Wars.

Lakehead University has been honoured to host the Indigenous Veterans of Treaty 3 Exhibit on campus for the past two years.

This year, Lakehead was excited to announce, in partnership with the Native Veterans Association of Northwestern Ontario, Treaty 3 Indigenous Veteran Exhibit, Thunder Bay Museum, and the City of Thunder Bay, a new chapter of Charles “Willy” John’s vision.

The late John founded the Native Veterans Association of Northwestern Ontario. He was an Ojibway of the Red Rock Band located at Lake Helen Reserve near Nipigon.

John was a veteran of the Second World War. His dream of forming an organization of Native veterans became a reality when a founding meeting took place on November 11, 1988.

Native veterans and families came across Northwestern Ontario and participated in a Remembrance Day service on Mount McKay in Fort William First Nation. Some of the images from that original ceremony will be on display. The above partners will be working together to create a permanent and portable exhibit in the coming year that they hope will be shared throughout the region to commemorate the important contributions of Indigenous veterans.



We would like to acknowledge the entire team that brought the original project together: Beverley Alto, Graphics Design, Digitization Lead, Web Gallery; Greg Quachegan, Researcher, Contact, Web Contributions; Owen Zoccole, Researcher/ Writer, Artist, Web Contributions; Stan Alto, Team Leader, Editor, Webmaster; Brian Walmark, Project Consultant; and David-Michael Thompson, Research Developer & Project Manager.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Chair on Truth and Reconciliation invited to speak in Norway and Sweden

Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Equimau, Lakehead's Chair on Truth and Reconciliation, was invited to participate in discussions with the Finnish Government and the Sami Nation as they opened their Truth Commission, *Saamelaisten totuus-ja sovintokomission aloitusseminaari* (no translation).

During the visit in September, she travelled to Tromso, Norway, and Stockholm, Sweden, to participate in conversations with members of the Sami Nation in both countries, Canadian Ambassadors to Norway and Sweden, Truth Commissioners from both countries, as well as Sami, Norwegian, and Swedish Scholars, and members of the Church of Sweden. There, she learned the similarities between discriminatory events in Canada mirror discriminatory events in Norway and Sweden. Norwegianization and Swedification mandates in both countries served to sever Sami language from the Indigenous population, interference in the transmission of cultural values, access to jurisdictions and authorities over lands, medicines, reindeer, and children were very similar to the Canadian Indigenous experience, and the establishment of the "Truth" Commissions were going to be handicapped by similar paternalistic thinking and governmental dictates.



Dr. Wesley-Equimau participated in a conference called *Truth and Reconciliation Processes in Stable Democratic States: Who, How, and What Happens After?* to explore what the Canadian context could offer the Nordic experience. She encouraged the nascent Truth Commissions to broaden their mandates, employ deep listening strategies to Sami Nation history and contemporary desires, and to let go of the need to control, limit, or dictate truth commission outcomes.

Dr. Wesley-Equimau has been invited to speak at a conference in Taiwan in December hosted by the Council of Indigenous Peoples on Truth and Co-existence.

These invitations are a great honour and she, the representative of the lead Lakehead University and Canada, has taken on rebuilding nation to nation relations with Indigenous peoples, sharing how. Canada and Lakehead have embarked on a generational process to help Indigenous peoples to thrive and ensure that truths are acknowledged and never forgotten.



Lakehead University's Homecoming Weekends

This year's Alumni Homecoming Weekends were the biggest event of the year. From socials and reunions to health and wellness sessions and sporting events, Homecoming Weekends offers something for everyone.

Lakehead Orillia's weekend kicked off with an Alumni Board dinner on the Friday night, with about 40 alumni and friends gathered for a Pub and Games Night that evening, enjoying 'Minute to Win It' games and a live band. Events continued throughout Saturday, with five simultaneous Escape Rooms on the Orillia campus hosted by faculty and staff. About 30 Alumni competed to solve the interdisciplinary "Degree Dilemma"!

Saturday evening saw 90 alumni and guests gather for our annual *Lakehead Celebrates* dinner — an event that was hosted in Orillia for the first time ever and, going forward, will alternate from campus to campus each year. Awards were presented in various categories, and our new President Dr. Gillian Siddall was recognized as an Honourary Alumni.

Lakehead Thunder Bay's weekend began with a Kick-Off Party hosted by our local Thunder Bay Alumni Chapter at Goods & Co. Market, where alumni and friends enjoyed an evening of camaraderie, entertainment, food, and giveaways. Homecoming Weekend also marks the kick-off to the Thunderwolves Hockey season at Fort William Gardens. Following a stellar '22/'23 year, the community partook in an afternoon Street Party that included live music, games, food, and much more at Fort William Gardens.



President Siddall was made an honorary Lakehead alumnus at the Lakehead Orillia Alumni Homecoming Dinner. To her right is Paul Popo-Ola, Lakehead Alumni Board Vice-President, and to her left, Dr. Linda Rodenburg, Interim Principal, Orillia Campus.



*On September 14, over 200 Lakehead alumni gathered to cheer on the Blue Jays, taking part in an alumni event that saw people gather from numerous universities and colleges across the region. Many thanks to event organizer **Jacquie Kent**, pictured here with Lakehead Orillia Principal, **Dr. Linda Rodenburg**.*



Truth and Reconciliation events throughout September

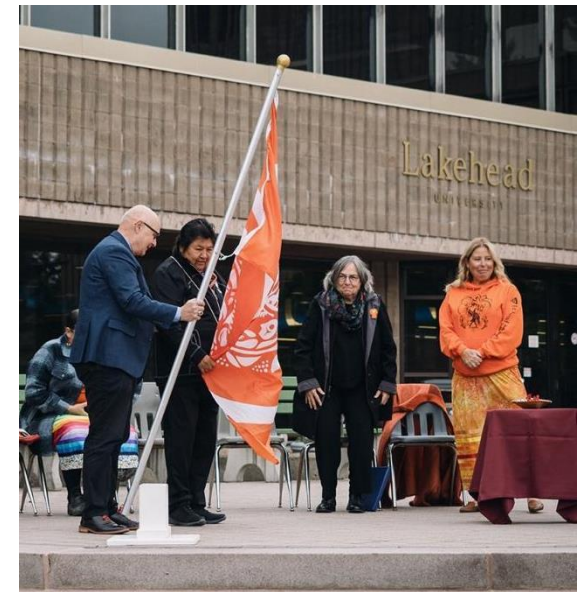
Organized by the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Lakehead University hosted a series of Truth and Reconciliation-themed events in September that honoured survivors of residential schools along with their families and the children who didn't return home.

In Thunder Bay, Lakehead University representatives raised a National Truth and Reconciliation flag on Thursday, Sept. 7 on the steps outside the Agora.

The Survivors' Flag is an expression of remembrance, meant to honour residential school survivors and all the lives and communities impacted by the residential school system in Canada.

Each element depicted on the flag was carefully selected by survivors from across Canada, who were consulted in the flag's creation.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Lorne Clifford, Director of Security Services at Lakehead, and Elder Catherine McGuire, raise the Survivors' Flag outside of Lakehead Thunder Bay's Agora

Career Services & Co-op

September and October were busy for the Lakehead Orillia Career Services and Co-op team, as we welcomed new members and welcomed students to campus. Some highlights included "Seeking Employers" on October 4, an event which included 20 employers who participated in speed networking. Hosted in partnership with County of Simcoe and City of Orillia Economic Development, this informal, discussion-based evening saw 23 students preparing to graduate this year connecting one-on-one with employers to explore careers available in Simcoe County.

Career Services also led a workshop for students from Georgian College and Lakehead University in Day 2 of the Manufacturing & Innovation Summit (MIS) on October 17. This innovative opportunity is the first attempt by Research & Innovation and Career Services to collaboratively organize an extracurricular field trip on career and industry exploration for students at Orillia campus, and it was a great success.



Lakehead Orillia Athletics and Recreation

Outdoor Rink Upgrade

Orillia Athletics & Recreation was pleased to share that its outdoor rink has been upgraded with a sport court surface to support activity year-round. This was completed, in part, with the assistance of a gift from the estate of the late President and Vice Chancellor Dr. Fred Gilbert, someone who valued the importance of athletics within a university experience.



Lakehead Orillia Wall of Fame unveiled

Orillia Athletics & Recreation also unveiled a new feature mural in Simcoe Hall showcasing student-athletes and promoting athletics at Lakehead. The mural includes a section for the Lakehead Orillia Athletics Wall of Fame.

During Homecoming, the department announced its first inductee, Lakehead graduate **Breann Sharma** (pictured at the event).

Read more about Breann's accomplishments on the [Orillia Athletics & Recreation website](#).



David Johnston's fireside chat at Alumni Association's AGM

The Right Honourable David Johnston headlined a fireside chat at the Lakehead University Alumni Association's annual general meeting on October 2 in Lakehead Thunder Bay's Agora. His visit included a lunch with several internal and external community guests in the Office of the President.

Canada's 28th Governor General discussed his most personal and timely book to date, *Empathy*, written with author Brian Hanington with a foreword by The Honourable Rosalie Abella.



Released in January, the book describes the challenges currently faced by countries around the world. As the world stumbles through the most severe pandemic of the last century, threatened by teetering economies, torn by political division, separated by unequal access to resources, and wrestling with issues as diverse as racism, gender, cybercrime, and climate change, the nations that best adapt and prosper are those in which empathy is fully alive and widely active. Written for a post-pandemic world, *Empathy* is a book about learning to be empathetic and then turning that empathy into action. Based on Johnston's personal experiences, the book explores how awakening to the transformative power of listening and caring permanently changes individuals, families, communities, and nations.

Johnston is chair of the Rideau Hall Foundation, and advisor at Deloitte and at Fairfax Financial Holdings. A graduate of Harvard, Cambridge, and Queen's universities, he was president of the University of Waterloo, principal of McGill University, and dean of Law at Western University. Johnston is the author or co-author of more than 30 books. He holds honorary doctorates from 36 universities. A Companion of the Order of Canada, he was born in Sudbury, Ont., raised in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., and now lives with his wife, Sharon Johnston, near Ottawa.



Alumni Association President **Yolanda Wanakamik** moderated the fireside chat with the former Governor General on the topics, stories, and themes in his latest book, *Empathy*.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Local and Global Partnerships

Career Services & Co-op

The last few weeks of October and the beginning of November were busy times for the Orillia campus' Career Services and Co-op team. On October 19th, an Education Student Networking & Career Fair took place at Heritage Place, connecting students with 14 employers in the education sector including public, private, and municipal organizations.

On November 1st, The Career Fair and Career Skills Cafe at the Orillia campus brought employers from a variety of local industries together with students seeking part-time, summer, co-op, and full-time employment. In addition to connecting with employers, students participated in activities allowing them to explore interview techniques, health & wellness during the job search, intercultural competencies and their role within workplaces, leadership opportunities, and resume & cover writing skills.

Research and Innovation Summit

As part of the Regional Manufacturing Partnership Alliance, Lakehead University sponsored and participated in the [Manufacturing Innovation Summit](#) held on October 16th and October 17th in Simcoe County. Alongside 150 participants, faculty, staff, and students connected with local manufacturer and participated in breakout sessions to learn how to innovate companies by empowering employees.

Indigenous Initiatives on the Orillia Campus

On September 5, the Lakehead Orillia's Indigenous Initiatives Coordinator hosted the TRC Survivors Flag Raising for the Orillia campus.

[Click here for media release...](#)

On September 27, Lakehead welcomed Elder Ernie Sandy for an Elder-in-Residence Tipi Talk & TRC Calls to Action session. Elder Ernie shared a brief history on Canada and knowledge on Truth and Reconciliation. Following this learning opportunity, participants engaged in a TRC Calls to Action activity (planned by Student Affairs) near the tipi and sacred fire. This was coordinated for the audience of students in the Introduction to Education course and Orillia Student Affairs Team; along with the Lakehead community.

[Click here for media release...](#)



Canada invests in Thunder Bay projects to clean up and protect the Great Lakes



The Great Lakes are essential to the health and well-being of millions of Canadians, natural ecosystems, and the economy. Protecting them is critical. The Government of Canada remains committed to restoring water quality and ecosystem health in these treasured waters.

On October 10, **the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services**, announced on behalf of the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, \$663,500 in funding under the Freshwater Action Plan for six projects that will support region-specific actions to restore water quality and ecosystem health:

- \$230,000 for **Lakehead University** to restore riparian and coastal habitat for fish and wildlife in the Thunder Bay Area of Concern, as well as build features to filter stormwater before it reaches Lake Superior.
- \$108,500 for **Lakehead University** to implement the Thunder Bay Area of Concern Wildlife Habitat Strategy and facilitate community engagement.

These are two of 24 projects recently funded under the Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative, part of the Government of Canada's Freshwater Action Plan to protect and restore freshwater bodies of national significance. Canada aims to complete all actions to clean up 12 of 14 remaining Canadian Areas of Concern by 2030, complete all 14 by 2038, and meet Canada's phosphorus load reduction targets for Lake Erie by 2039.

These local projects will help to advance Canada's commitments under the Canada–United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and the Canada–Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning (CELL) Programming

Initiated by CELL in partnership with Parks Canada, CELL's "Phragmites Youth Action Project" has enabled 83 Simcoe County high school students to participate in an incredible program combining a 'reach ahead' classroom experience with hands-on experiential learning in the field. This program, made possible with grant funding from the Green Shovels Collaborative administered by Invasive Species Centre, extends the reach of Lakehead's Ontario Youth Naturalist Program (OYNP) for Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) students. Students from Patrick Fogarty CSS, Nantyr Shores SS, Stayner CI, and Georgian Bay DSS together worked to eradicate 662 m² of Phragmites from Georgian Bay Islands National Park, which is equivalent to 1.5 NBA Basketball Courts! This result triples the initial target of 175 m².

[Click here to watch the video...](#)

Well over 100 people are currently attending the fall iteration of Third Age Learning Lakehead (TALL): "Living a Different Way: The Future of Communities". The series, which opened with a talk from Lakehead's own Dean of Science and Environmental Studies, **Dr. Todd Randall**, covers topics such as creating sustainable communities of the future, NIMBYISM, rethinking seniors' housing, housing future generations, and integrating the global movement of people.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)

International Initiatives on the Orillia Campus

Lakehead University International's Orillia office took part in various orientation-related activities as this semester began, including the New Student Welcome, Lakehead-Georgian Orientation day, and the Campus and Community Fair. Staff not only made students feel welcomed, but also provided information on immigration matters, health insurance, services and programming, and various opportunities to connect on both the Orillia and Barrie campuses.

Some highlights of the latter included a Scout Valley Hike (Sept 22), an International Student Social with **James Aldridge** (Sept 25), a Mid-Autumn Festival event (Sept 29), as well as daily drop-in and immigration advising hours.



Academic Excellence

High-impact clinical and sustainability research projects awarded with CFI grants

The Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) has awarded a total of \$811,056 for six research projects at Lakehead University through the John R. Evans Leaders Fund (JELF). The infrastructure grants will supply researchers with the equipment and space needed to advance holistic forest management, evaluate climate change, and further develop low-dose digital x-ray technology.

Canadian Foundation for Innovation, John R. Evans Leaders Fund (JELF) Awards 2023

Total funding: \$811,056

Dr. Adam Algar, Department of Biology, "Laboratory for Physiological Macroecology", \$119,591

Drs. Nathan Basiliko, Seung-II Lee and Ashley Thomson, Faculty of Natural Resources Management, "Research Infrastructure for Multitrophic Studies of Boreal Forest Landscapes", \$174,996

Dr. Gautam Das, Department of Physics, "Microscope, and Trace Gas Analyzers (Nitrous Oxide and Ammonia) for Photonics and Bio-Photonics Research Facilities", \$166,892

Dr. Apparao Dekka, Department of Electrical Engineering, "Design and Development of Powertrain Technologies for Heavy-duty Electric Transportation Applications", \$100,017

Dr. Ebrahim Rezaei, Department of Chemical Engineering, "Laboratory for Climate Change Mitigation and Air Pollution Control", \$124,986

Dr. Alla Reznik, Department of Physics and Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Physics of Radiation Medical Imaging, Scientist, Thunder Bay Regional Health Research Institute, "Low-dose Direct Conversion Radiation Medical Imaging Detectors", \$124,574

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Lakehead University's first Master of Nursing graduates look ahead to a bright future

Katelyn O'Connor is grateful for the lasting friendships she formed over the last two years while studying in [Lakehead University's Master of Nursing \(MN\) Program](#).

O'Connor is in the program's inaugural graduating class, along with five other students who completed their MN studies in the Nurse Practitioner specialization in the summer. Graduates participated in a celebration over the weekend in the Faculty Lounge with O'Connor as the valedictorian.

The celebration also included four graduates of the Master of Public Health program's Nurse Practitioner specialization and three graduates of the Nurse Practitioner Certificate Program.

Lakehead's MN program offers two streams - Advanced Nursing (AN) and Nurse Practitioner (NP) specializations. The NP specialization is part of a nine-university-provincial consortium, where all Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner students learn together.

Lakehead's Master of Nursing program provided O'Connor and her classmates with the foundation, the essential knowledge, and the skills required for nurse practitioners in the workplace.

November 12-18 was [National Nurse Practitioner's Week](#).

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Katelyn O'Connor, far right, poses for photos with other graduates.



Engineering student selected for Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships talent program

Lakehead University engineering student **Joshua Jansen** has been selected in a highly-competitive contest to be a delegate at the Canadian Council for Public Private Partnerships (CCPPP)'s Annual Conference as part of the 2023 Next Generation Talent Student Program.

Jansen, who is a third-year Civil Engineering student in Lakehead's Faculty of Engineering, is one of just 12 talented post-secondary students from across Canada selected to take part in the CCPPP Annual Conference taking place on November 13 and 14 in Toronto.

"I have always strived to continuously learn and improve myself, and this exceptional opportunity will enable me to understand much more about Canada's infrastructure sector, explore career options available in this field, and build my professional network."

Next Generation Talent student delegates participate in a pre-conference orientation session and attend keynote speeches and provocative panel discussions on challenges and opportunities in the field of P3s from notable leaders.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)





Lakehead University PhD student finished third in an oral presentation on lasers

Lakehead University PhD student **Varsha** recently earned third place for her oral presentation at the Canadian Association of Physicists at the University of New Brunswick.

Her research focuses on the development of a mid-infrared laser (2-micron). This type of laser can be used to detect trace gases such as carbon dioxide and in health care for precise cutting into biological tissues.

Varsha, who is in the third year of her PhD in Chemistry and Materials Science, spent roughly six months on this experiment and prepared for the conference over a few weeks this summer, including five to six hours in front of her group members.

Varsha developed a pulsed laser at 1567 nm using a mixture of gold nanorods and polyvinyl alcohol in aqueous solution as a saturable absorber in aqueous form, which makes it different from other lasers. This laser will be used as a pump source to develop another laser at 2 microns.

The laser at two microns will be used to detect any form of gas with an absorption band near two microns.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)



Department of History members recognized for *Rosies of the North* historical website

Creators of the [*Rosies of the North website*](#) documenting the experience of women workers at the Canadian Car and Foundry plant at the Lakehead during the Second World War have been honored by being inducted into the City of Thunder Bay's Women's History Month exhibit.

Based on a National Film Board documentary directed by Kelly Saxberg, the website provides a comprehensive repository of interviews and archival documents related to the women who produced military aircraft at CanCar. Led by Department of History faculty members Saxberg, Ron Harpelle, and Nathan Hatton, the website features the work of current and former undergraduate and graduate students involved in the Department's public history program, including Shylin Henits, Katie Green, Laura Polcyn, Ximena Gerón Fonseca, and Bryson Irvine.

Further information can be found at the [Women's History Month exhibit](#) and the [induction announcement](#).



Appointment of New BRI Research Chair

The Biorefining Research Institute (BRI) is pleased to announce the successful appointment of **Dr. Seyedrahman Djafaripetroudy** as BRI Research Chair in Lignocellulosic Material Development in September 2023.

Dr. Djafaripetroudy has an extensive research background, an exemplary track record, and a strong academic foundation that encompasses forest operations and research topics related to biorefining processes. His contributions to both the Faculty of Natural Resources Management and BRI will include spearheading innovative research initiatives in the field of smart cellulosic material fabrication, covering high-performance and multifunctional-based nanocomposites, gels, and polymers.

In addition, Dr. Djafaripetroudy will teach one undergraduate and one graduate course, with a focus on NRM and BRI-related subjects. To support his research endeavors, he will fully utilize the cutting-edge and advanced laboratory facilities at the BRI.



Social Work Prof Wins Education Award

Dr. David Tranter, Associate Professor in the School of Social Work was named the 2023 recipient of the Ontario Principal's Council Outstanding Contribution to Education Award.

In receiving this award, he joins past recipients including The Honourable Murray Sinclair, The Honourable James Bartleman, The Honourable Roy McMurtry, and astronaut Chris Hadfield. The annual award is presented to the "individual or organization who has made an outstanding contribution to education in Ontario through their positive impact on Ontario students or programs for students".

In selecting Dr. Tranter for the award, the Ontario Principal's Council award includes a \$1,000 donation to the charity of Dr. Tranter's choice. He selected Thunder Bay's *Roots to Harvest*.

The award ceremony took place at the Ontario Principal's Council Annual Awards Dinner on October 20 at Niagara-on-the-Lake.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)





Lakehead University researchers secure more than \$650,000 in SSHRC grants

Five research projects at Lakehead University received more than \$650,000 in funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

SSHRC is the federal research funding agency that promotes and supports research and training in the humanities and social sciences.

Dr. Tamara L. Varney, Professor of Anthropology, is receiving an Insight Grant for \$376,413 over four years. She and a team of researchers across Canada continue to investigate the mystery of how and why so many Royal Navy sailors suffered from lead poisoning while based in Antigua during the late 1700s and early 1800s.

Dr. Aislin Mushquash, an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Lakehead University, and her PhD student Angela MacIsaac are receiving an Insight Grant for \$99,349 over three years to research the relationships between trait victimhood and interpersonal stress and trauma.

Dr. Beth Visser, Interdisciplinary Studies and Psychology, and **Dr. Lori Chambers**, Gender and Women's Studies, are co-investigators in the study.

Dr. Gary Pluim, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead Orillia, received an Insight Grant of \$51,961 over four years to research a collaborative experience of teaching critical, decolonial global citizenship to Canadian and Ethiopian education students.

Dr. Pluim and co-investigator **Dr. Leigh-Anne Ingram** from the Faculty of Education at Lakehead are collaborating on the research project with Dr. Solomon Belay Faris at Addis Ababa University.

In 2022/23, Lakehead University received more than \$2 million in assistance from the Research Support Fund to support the indirect costs of research, which includes costs for supporting the management of intellectual property, research and administration, ethics and regulatory compliance, research resources, research facilities, and research security.

[Click here to read the media release and full list of recipients...](#)



Dr. Chris Mushquash Receives 2023 Canada Gairdner Momentum Award

Dr. Christopher Mushquash, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Mental Health and Addiction, was honoured for his work in Indigenous-led mental health and substance use research with the 2023 Canada Gairdner Momentum Award. The prestigious award was presented to Dr. Mushquash at the Gairdner Awards Gala ceremony in Toronto on October 26.

Dr. Mushquash is Vice President of Research at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC), Chief Scientist at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Research Institute (TBRHRI), a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Mental Health and Addiction, Professor at Lakehead University and NOSM University, and psychologist at Dilico Anishinabek Family Care.



In his work, Dr. Mushquash investigates Indigenous mental health, substance use, trauma, and general mental wellness. He partners with communities, government and academia and uses evidence-based approaches in alignment with First Nations values to ensure his research and its outcomes are culturally — and contextually — appropriate for people in First Nations, rural and northern communities.

Established in 1957, the Gairdner Foundation's annual awards recognize and celebrate researchers from around the world for their excellence in fundamental research that impacts human health. Over the years, 402 awards have been presented to people from more than 40 countries and of those awardees, 96 have gone on to receive Nobel Prizes. Dr. Mushquash is one of two recipients of the inaugural 2023 Canada Gairdner Momentum Award, which recognizes exceptional early- to mid-career researchers whose research has a significant impact in the health field now and in the future.

Ahead of the Awards Gala, which was held as part of Gairdner Science Week 2023, Lakehead University and the Gairdner Foundation hosted a celebration in CASES on October 6 to honour Dr. Mushquash on receiving this prestigious award. Representatives who spoke about the impact of Dr. Mushquash's research included Dr. Gillian Siddall, Dr. Andrew P. Dean, Dr. Janet Rossant, Gairdner Foundation President, and Dr. Rhonda Crocker Ellacott, President & CEO of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.



Lakehead University graduate student wins prestigious \$150,000 Vanier Scholarship

Lakehead Civil Engineering PhD student **Tristen Brown** has been awarded the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship, one of the most prestigious national awards for doctoral students.

Brown will receive \$50,000 per year for three years to support his doctoral studies.

As a PhD student and graduate research assistant in Lakehead's Department of Civil Engineering, Brown is currently undertaking research tackling innovative solutions to overcome the ongoing housing challenges for Indigenous communities throughout Canada subjected to extreme climate conditions.

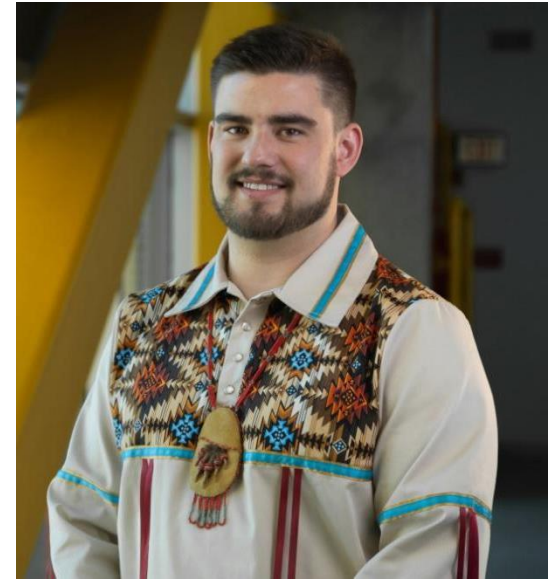
Brown began his studies at Lethbridge College in Alberta before joining Lakehead University via its unique college transfer program for engineering students.

He went on to achieve a Bachelor of Civil Engineering and a Master's degree in Civil Engineering before beginning his doctoral studies.

Dr. Ahmed Elshaer, Brown's PhD supervisor, praised his exceptional contribution to the work of the Structural and Wind Engineering Research Laboratory at Lakehead.

Across Canada, 166 doctoral students will receive a total of \$24.9 million in support through the Vanier Graduate Scholarship that is jointly funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

[Click here to read the media release...](#)





Entrepreneurship and Innovation

***Ingenuity* collaboration brings inaugural “Hack it: Thunder Bay” Competition**

CityStudio Thunder Bay, in collaboration with Confederation College and Ingenuity at Lakehead University, proudly presented the winners of the inaugural 'Hack It: Thunder Bay' competition. Instead of hacking computers, students joined forces to hack a crucial challenge: how to enhance communication and engagement between the City of Thunder Bay and its young adult population.

Throughout the course of a week, student teams enthusiastically tackled this challenge, crafting two-page proposals and compelling video presentations. Emerging victorious was "Youth Connectors," a group of talented business students from Lakehead University, with their innovative proposal for an engaging mobile app and the establishment of a youth council to connect with young adults. The winning team received exciting experiential rewards, including Thunderwolves tickets, Thunder Bay Country Market vouchers, and tickets for dining and bowling.

The next phase of this initiative involves presenting these creative ideas to the City of Thunder Bay's Corporate Communications team, with the aim of transforming these concepts into reality.