

# EDUCATION EXCHANGE

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the first issue of the *Education Exchange Newsletter*. The Faculty of Education at Lakehead University is delighted to share its commitment to Education with the community of educators: current and former students, faculty and staff, education leaders, and many others.

Connecting with current and former students and our education partners is a key focus for the Faculty, and I hope you find the Newsletter interesting and informative. We want you to know what we are doing, about the successes of our students, faculty, and alumni, about our staff commitment, and about how we are looking to the future.

Since the founding of the Faculty of Education some 45 years ago, the Faculty has played a central role in the public education throughout northwestern Ontario through its programs at all levels. With the development of Education programs at the Lakehead University Orillia campus we are now actively participating in the education system in Simcoe County, and look forward to making further contributions in the region.

The Faculty's programs are continuing to evolve, and this year we are introducing our new Master of Education Field of Study in Education for Change, with specializations in Environmental and Sustainability Education, Indigenous Education, and Social Justice Education. These new options

will provide contemporary and innovative program options for students seeking to challenge themselves at the graduate level.

The Faculty is also preparing for the introduction of its innovative new two-year Bachelor of Education program in September 2015. The new program will add

depth and breadth to initial teacher education, helping prepare future teachers for the challenges of modern teaching environments.

As educators we all have a role in shaping the future we want and value by creating and contributing to learning environments that will change our society. I look forward to sharing the Faculty of Education's commitment with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John O'Meara".

Dr. John O'Meara, Dean  
Faculty of Education

***“Connecting with current and former students, faculty and staff, education leaders, and many others”***



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# Updates from our Department Chairs



## Teresa Socha

### Chair, Department of Undergraduate Studies in Education

The Faculty of Education welcomes students to the new two-year BEd Professional Program this fall. We continue to place student learning at the forefront of our decisions, and have created a program that extends the “tried and true” while integrating innovative new programming.

The additional year has allowed us to extend the length of Curriculum and Instruction courses in order to promote the deep understanding of pedagogical content knowledge that is needed for effective teaching. The Faculty has also expanded its programming to include new courses such as “Social Difference in Education,” “Democracy and Education,” and “Environmental Education,” the latter being a required course for all students. In the face of climate change, environmental degradation, and food and water insecurity, we strive to have students become an effective part of the solution to global climate change.

The two-year program will give students double the number of student teaching days, from 50 to 100 days. Based on a mentorship model, all students will complete their first year practica in local schools (i.e., Thunder Bay or Orillia/Barrie), and second year practica in any partnership school board in Ontario. New to the two-year program is an opportunity to complete a 20-day practicum in China during the second year.

Lakehead University’s Bachelor of Education degree is widely accepted across Canada and around the world. Our new two-year BEd program will help to cement Lakehead University’s place in the national and global education community.



## Frances Helyar

### Chair, Education Programs – Orillia

It was my great pleasure, and challenge, to have taken over as Chair of Orillia Education programs in July 2014, after the capable three-year tenure of Dr. Michael Hoechsmann. Since then, our Department has undertaken several new initiatives to enhance the student experience. Teacher candidates have had numerous professional development opportunities to learn more about inquiry-based Full Day Kindergarten and the Ontario College of Teachers, to name only two. A panel of principals and teachers from the Simcoe County District School Board also provided students with insights into the teaching profession.

New communication projects include weekly video messages from the Chair, an Education blog ([everythingedu-orillia.blogspot.ca](http://everythingedu-orillia.blogspot.ca)), a series of videos streaming from the Lakehead Orillia site ([youtube.com/user/LakeheadOrillia/videos](http://youtube.com/user/LakeheadOrillia/videos)) and a Facebook page (“My Teaching Journey”), to connect Orillia alumni with current students.

Faculty members are engaging in professional development, for example to improve their understanding of assessment, and to learn more about interactive white boards. Faculty developed special projects with student involvement, including the creation of e-portfolios and the presentation of Full Day Kindergarten workshops.

The planning of the Enhanced Teacher Education program continues as the September 2015 start date looms. We look forward to launching this new phase of our program!



## Paul Berger

### Chair, Department of Graduate Studies and Research in Education

As the new Chair of the Department of Graduate Studies and Research in Education, I have had the pleasure of overseeing the introduction of the new “Education for Change” field of study in the Master of Education program. We are continuing to offer three ways the Master of Education can be completed—thesis route, portfolio route, and course route—and have added three new specializations: *Indigenous Education*, *Social Justice Education*, and *Environmental and Sustainability Education*. There is great interest in the specializations, which reflect the commitments of faculty and graduate students to move toward socio-ecological justice.

At present there are multiple online courses being offered each term, and we are looking to develop this further, to meet the needs of our graduate students and to keep the program accessible to professionals and those who study at a distance. We continue to offer full-time and flex-time studies, as well as the option for Master of Education students to specialize in Gerontology or Women’s Studies.

Faculty members with active research agendas in a broad range of educational fields mentor our graduate students. Graduate students in both fields, and all specializations, are doing innovative and interesting work, adding to our collective knowledge and making the world a better place. It’s an exciting time to be the new Chair!



## Sandra Wolf Chair, Department of Aboriginal Education

The Department of Aboriginal Education has undergone a number of changes in the past months, including a retirement and departures of individuals who have made significant contributions to Indigenous knowledge. We are working through, and around, these changes as best we are able. We are busy, moving forward, and deeply appreciative of the support we have received.

As we move toward the introduction of the two-year program, we are updating our materials and promoting our programs. For example, the Honours Bachelor of Education (Aboriginal) program is expanding. The “Specialization as a Teacher of Aboriginal Learners Certificate” is open to all Concurrent students who are interested in working with Aboriginal learners. And our Native Language Instructors’ Program (NLIP) allows students to gain provisional certification after their first summer of work, then become fully certified upon completion of the program. This is important, as we are facing a shortage of Native Language teachers in schools throughout the province.

Our Summer NLIP Institute was extremely successful. Spending time with fluent language speakers and Elder Agnes Kabatay from Fort Frances was a wonderful blessing. We spent many hours learning, gathering, and participating in ceremonies. I am extremely grateful to Bruce Beardy for his competence with this program.

We continue to work toward making our programs accessible to students. We have opened up Math and English Language tutoring, to help those who

may be learning in a language that is not their first. To date we have had 11 graduates of the HBED (Aboriginal) program and the impact of each of these students will be large. As research tells us, a significant factor in the success of Indigenous students is their capacity to identify with a teacher.



## Don Kerr Chair, Department of Professional Development in Education

The Department of Professional Development in Education continues to offer a variety of professional development opportunities for students, certified teachers, and those interested in education and classrooms. On campus in Thunder Bay and Orillia, we offer workshops to develop the skills and knowledge of prospective teachers. These include math content

courses and workshops on such things as coaching, student mental health and suicide alertness, Tribes, LGBT youth in the classroom, classroom management, and the use of technologies in the classroom. We also offer a variety of online, non-credit workshops to people around the world who would like additional information on one or more subjects related to teaching.

We continue to run an extensive Additional Qualification program, with online courses that are certified with the Ontario College of Teachers. We offer over 40 courses in a variety of topics, from Special Education, Guidance, Integrating Information and Computer Technology, and various curriculum areas. Each year we also offer Levels 1 and 2 of our Principals’ Qualification Program—with two weeks of in-class work on campus in Thunder Bay at the beginning of July, and two months of video-conferenced classroom time through the school year.

We offer a Diploma program in Teaching English as a Second Language. This program involves 100 hours of classroom learning and 20 hours of teaching and observation in an ESL classroom.

And lastly—for now—we are working on a new online certificate program in “Teaching and Learning through e-Learning.” Look for it in the spring and summer.

Information on all of our courses and workshops can be found on our website at: [lakeheadu.ca/pde](http://lakeheadu.ca/pde).

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# Faculty of Education Alumni Profiles

## What Are They Doing Now?



### Dr. Mindy Carter

**Current Position:** Assistant Professor, McGill University

Graduate of the Bachelor of Education program, 2004, Thunder Bay campus

My first degree is from Dalhousie University, where I studied and received an HBA for acting. The Conservatory-style program had a profound effect on me, and many of my ideas on creativity, the imagination, and classroom community were honed during this time. After I graduated from Dalhousie, I did radio commercials, some television spots and worked for Halifax's Shakespeare by the Sea. However, when deciding whether or not to move with some friends to Toronto to pursue acting, I had the opportunity to volunteer for a year as a teacher in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. I had heard a woman speak about her experiences in this country during the civil war when I was a shy 11-year-old girl, and her story about impacting the lives of others deeply resonated with me.

My time in Guatemala as a teacher was pivotal and transformative. Because of this experience I decided to return to Canada to pursue teaching. Since my family is from Northwestern Ontario (Vermillion Bay, Ignace, Dryden and Thunder Bay), I decided to attend Lakehead for my Bachelor of Education. However, there was a critical difference between my experiences as a volunteer teacher in Guatemala and my practicum in Ontario. Some of the serious concerns I observed led me to pursue my MA in Educational

Studies from Concordia University. When I realized that I wanted to bring my art making into my research and teaching in order to live in the world more authentically, I chose to do my PhD at the University of British Columbia in Curriculum & Pedagogy.

Currently, I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. Combining my background as an actor and director, K-12 classroom teacher and researcher, I feel that I am encouraged and supported to engage in my art making, research and teaching in a reciprocal way. I currently supervise several graduate students, teach undergraduate and graduate courses, and have a research agenda that focuses on Aboriginal Education, Teacher Identity, Arts Based Research and Research Creation. In 2014, my first book, *The Teacher Monologues: Exploring the Identities and Experiences of Artist-Teachers* was published (Sense Publishers).

I feel privileged to have a wonderful partner and two little boys (4 and 6) who help to make my life rich and full. I love spending time hiking, biking, camping and swimming with them. I also run, have a personal yoga practice and read (when I have the time)!

What I loved about my Lakehead experience was that I had the opportunity to do some of my course work in alternative outdoor experiential education settings. I love nature and embodied and informal learning, so, overnight trips, hiking, etc. with my classmates was a highlight.

### Darren Lentz

**Current Positions:** Principal, Hyde Park Public School and Kingsway Park Public School, Thunder Bay

Contract Lecturer, Faculty of Education Native Language Instructors' Program

Graduate of the Bachelor of Education program, 1996 (Thunder Bay campus) and the Master of Education program, 2004

I graduated from the Lakehead Bachelor of Education program in 1996, and the Outdoor Recreation Program and Bachelor of Science program a year earlier. I also completed my Masters in Education at Lakehead, under the supervision of Dr. Tom Puk.

Attending Lakehead provided me with many great opportunities. One very memorable one was participating in the Canada Sea-to-Sea Mackenzie expeditions, where university students paddled the path of Alexander Mackenzie (an explorer who completed the first recorded crossing of North America). Former professor Dr. Jim Smithers (School of Outdoor Recreation) had a great impact on my life. The Northern environment/landscape and its people have impacted me greatly, and shaped both my educational and personal journeys.

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I have worked now in education in the North for almost 20 years. I have worked as a high school technology teacher, a chemistry teacher, and an outdoor education teacher, as well as being an elementary school Vice-Principal and now Principal of two awesome public schools: Hyde Park Public School (JK–Grade 3) and Kingsway Park Public School (Grade 4-8) in Thunder Bay.

I have also worked with First Nations students in Ontario's north, at Sioux Lookout and Fort Hope First Nation. Some of the opportunities I have had there include developing an Outdoor Education program and teaching traditional skills and technology, using an Indigenous curriculum model.

My children Skyler and Alyssa help me enjoy the outdoors, hunting, trapping, dogsledding, skiing, and canoeing. The image of me (on the previous page) shows a birch-bark canoe I built in Kenora last summer. I learned the art of building birch-bark canoes from Elders and builders at Fort William Historical Park, and have had opportunities to build canoes with students and in workshops with educators. The canoe is a great symbol of education, representing the contributions and innovations of First Nations people. Building a canoe allows for learning many lessons around respect, humility, patience, and friendship.

My passion is teaching and learning, and I do this in every part of my life. My suggestion to up-and-coming educators is: grab those experiences wherever you can, and from whom-ever you can. Take the lessons you learn and apply your passion in your own life to guide you on your own journey to happiness!

I always seem to find my way back to Lakehead University education, and now have the privilege of being a contract lecturer of Aboriginal Education, teaching in the awesome Native Language Instructors' program.

## Elise Petitjean

**Current Position:** Grade 2 Teacher, Sunchild School, Cree First Nations Community, Alberta

Graduate of the Bachelor of Education program, 2010 (Orillia campus) and the Master of Education program (online), 2013

I have been working in First Nations communities for the past four years—first in Sandy Lake First Nation, a remote fly-in community in northern Ontario, and now at Sunchild School on a reserve outside of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. I completed both my Bachelors of Education and my Masters in Education at Lakehead University, as well as a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Guelph.

Growing up in Collingwood, Ontario, I had little knowledge of the First Nations communities around me. During my Bachelor of Education program, we were required to take an Aboriginal Studies course and it lit a spark which has changed my life.

When I graduated from the BEd program I knew my job prospects in southern Ontario would be limited, but looking online I saw that there was an abundance of jobs available in northern Ontario. I accepted my first job offer after being flown to Thunder Bay for an interview. Flying to Sandy Lake in an eight-seater plane and landing on a gravel runway was the beginning of my adventure. Living remotely was challenging at times, with limited internet, groceries, and no vehicle or amenities that I had grown accustomed to, but my teaching experience with a fabulous group of kindergarten students was very positive. The incredible northern lights, canoe trips, float plane experiences and lovely roommates also made my year unforgettable.

My drive to complete my Masters degree with a focus on Aboriginal education stemmed directly from my experiences in Sandy Lake. My fiancé



(who also taught in Sandy Lake) and I moved out to Alberta to accept elementary positions at our current school. We have recently purchased our first home: a little 1950's farm house with many old outbuildings. Our two horses live on the property as well.

Working with First Nations students has enabled me to remain a learner, as well as being a teacher. I treasure the amazing bead work, craftsmanship and painting in Sandy Lake, and the drumming, singing and ceremonies I have experienced at Sunchild School. And the kids here make the job. They can bring laughter to any situation; they're very creative and funny, they always make me smile. I am also excited to have developed and coached a grade 1-3 cheerleading team with a fellow Lakehead BEd graduate. We're pretty sure it is the only First Nations cheerleading team in Canada!

Outside of teaching, I am an avid horseback rider and have recently become more involved in competitive trail riding, which involves riding 25-100 miles at a time. It has been an incredible experience to take in the majestic Alberta landscapes.

I would like to say thank you to two especially inspiring professors, Dr. Sonia Mastrangelo and Dr. Ruth Beatty, who had a great impact on me during my time at Lakehead University and continue to inspire my teaching methods.



## Faculty Profile:

# Dr. Hope-Arlene Fennell

*On December 31, 2014, Dr. Hope-Arlene Fennell retired after 45 years in the field of education. Born and raised in Saskatchewan, Dr. Fennell joined Lakehead's Faculty of Education in 1991 and has since made Thunder Bay her home. She describes herself as a "woman who always planned to have a career"—and indeed, she has had a successful one, marked by many changes and the study of change itself. In a conversation about her work, her life, and her post-retirement plans, Dr. Fennell shared some of her experiences and successes.*

## Having a Career and Becoming a Teacher

"Perhaps because my mother was a career woman, it was always assumed that I, too, would have a career. I took the nursing program at the Regina General Hospital, but I knew that nursing wasn't the field for me. Near the end of my program, while conducting a pediatric case study, I visited an elementary school and found myself more involved in observing the teacher than the child I had come to see. During that 'aha moment,' I thought to myself, "This is something I could really do, and enjoy." And so believe it or not, on the way back to the hospital, I got off the bus at the College Avenue campus, found the Associate Dean, and said to him, "Hello, I'd like to speak to someone about becoming a teacher." By the time I left the building, I was registered for courses that met the requirements for a Standard A teaching certificate! By the next fall, I was in a classroom, teaching a delightful class

of year two students. I had an amazing first year teaching, and the most amazing thing about that was that, 10 years later, when those students graduated from Grade 12, they came to my home and invited me to be the speaker at their graduation."

## Working with Exceptional Students

"During my nursing studies I had the opportunity to work with mentally challenged youth and I was very interested in teaching in a school for children with special needs. To do so, I was advised to gain some experience in an ordinary classroom (if there is such a place). After two years' experience I was given the opportunity to teach a class for mentally challenged students who had never attended school. The work was challenging, but most interesting! My students had a wide range of abilities, both physically and mentally. At first, I had no curriculum and few materials to use. With the help of an associate director and teacher aides, I was able to find ways of grouping and working with students to address their needs and to begin challenging them to grow toward their potential as much as possible. I worked to get them integrated to at least some degree with other students. The playground was the first area. While initially there were a few colleagues who were unhappy with the arrangements, gradually, my pupils joined in with more school activities and were viewed more positively. At the end of that year, I sadly bid good-bye to those children who had become such an interesting part of my life. For the next seven years, I worked in a K-6 school in the community where we lived. During those years, I completed my BEd in Teaching Exceptional Children and took a year off to nurture my own son. It was also during that time that I was encouraged to consider graduate studies."

## Teaching in a Hutterite Colony

"In 1978, after taking off some time following the birth of my son, I approached my board about returning to teaching. The director told me that they were looking for a teacher to open the school at the new Hutterite Colony. I began by meeting with the parents to hear their goals for their children's schooling, and they told me that they wanted their children to learn to read, write, and speak English very well. The children, aged 6-15, were lively and energetic, and enjoyed coming to school. I used a conceptual strategy to modify the curricula for language arts, math, the fine arts, social studies, health and physical education and to some extent, science. I was able to borrow books on a ten-day loan from our city library to enhance the school library, and the Board was generous with school supplies. The children became excellent readers and spellers, and were incredible at math. They loved the arts and created many wonderful projects. Since the Colony members were Darius Hutterites (the most traditional and conservative of the Hutterite groups), we were not able to use musical instruments or recordings in the classroom. Our music classes involved singing a capella, which the students

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loved. As the only 'outsider', I felt well-respected by the community, and it was heart-warming to have the opportunity to work among these industrious, cheerful people, even if only for 12 months."

## Teaching K-12

"After a hectic year at the Colony school, the Board asked me to teach music and classroom work in the K-12 school in the nearby community. I was soon at home with my junior intermediate students teaching language arts, math, art, social studies, and music on a six-day time table. I had some excellent school choirs during those years, and students and parents looked forward to our performances at school activities and music festivals. I enjoyed working with colleagues on planning large conventions. During my early years in the school, I was approached by Saskatchewan Education to become a consultant and workshop presenter in the area of teaching and managing multi-grade classrooms, and I gave over 30 presentations and workshops at conventions and institutes around the region over a six-year period."

## Graduate School and Change

"During my years of K-12 teaching, I was granted a sabbatical to pursue graduate studies. I chose an area in curriculum studies related to teaching and teacher development, in which I studied teachers' perceptions of professional development. In it, I explored the relationships between teachers' perceptions of professional development and changes they made in their teaching. This made me realize that research was something I was really interested in, and wanted to pursue further.

When I think about my work, I have always been studying the area of change. If you take a look at my first degree—educating exceptional children—there was a great emphasis there on change processes for individuals. My MEd degree was focused on teachers' strategies and experiences with change in their classrooms. For my PhD, I looked at change and school organizations: how do school organizations implement change? How do they implement policies? What factors positively enhance change and which inhibit?"

## Joining Lakehead University

"I finished my PhD in 1990 and a year later, in the spring of 1991, I saw an ad for a position at Lakehead and applied for it. I have had a great career here. When I arrived, I started a program of research on women in school leadership, for which I received SSHRC funding. I have also been active in graduate supervision from my first day at Lakehead, and have supervised over three dozen graduate student theses, projects, portfolios, and dissertations. I have also greatly enjoyed university teaching. My undergraduate teaching focused on educational law and foundations, and my graduate teaching encompassed administrative theory, educational leadership,



and policy studies. I have also had many administrative opportunities over the years. I served as Practicum Coordinator for a year and was Undergraduate Chair from 1994-2001. I also served on many Faculty and Senate committees through the years, chairing both the Senate Committee for Teaching and Learning and Senate Nominations Committee. I was involved with the development and implementation of the Joint PhD program, and I was able to work on the team teaching the

***"I have always been studying the area of change."***

first two Core PhD courses. I served as Coordinator for the Joint PhD program from 2001-2004. I have spent about a third of my career at Lakehead in administration, and really enjoyed it."

## Plans for Retirement

"I am looking forward to my retirement. I will continue with my writing, and of course music and choir work, which have always been part of my life. But there are three things I'm planning to do in particular. First, I'd like to continue travelling. Second, I want to spend time researching and writing about my family's genealogy. And third, I have an idea for an art project using my husband's ties. I also hope to do some volunteer work in the community.

While I always knew I would have a career, I never expected to have the great opportunities I have had. There is an old adage that states, 'if you love what you do, you never work a day in your life.' In many ways, that sums up my experiences rather well."

# International Teaching Placements in China – *Ni hao, Adventure!*



Patrick Schmidt, Sarah Rice, Anthea D'Souza, Jan Oakley, Olivia Cleaver, and Lauren Kopanski express their enthusiasm about teaching in China.

**I**n May 2014, five new graduates of the Bachelor of Education program had the experience of a lifetime, travelling to China to participate in a three-week volunteer teaching placement at a Maple Leaf International High School in Dalian, China.

Accompanied by Dr. Jan Oakley, International Initiatives Coordinator in the Faculty of Education, the five newly certified teachers—Olivia Cleaver, Anthea D'Souza, Lauren Kopanski, Sarah Rice and Patrick Schmidt—participated in a pilot program in which they taught in a Chinese high school with over 2,800 students who study a Canadian and Chinese curriculum.

The lively academic environment, dedicated students at the school, and various cultural differences made for a fascinating teaching opportunity.

“My experience teaching at Maple Leaf was nothing short of amazing and inspirational,” explained Lauren Kopanski, who taught on the girls’ campus of the school. “Working with students from a different part of the world, who spoke a different first language than me, and within a different culture was a great learning opportunity. I’ve always wanted to teach overseas—to be able to have this chance right out of school was ideal for me.”

The graduates’ responsibilities included teaching two or three classes per day, lesson and unit planning, assisting with grading, and supervising extracurricular activities in China’s largest private international school system.

## **A Successful Pilot Program**

The teaching placements in China were established as part of a pilot program and partnership developed between Lakehead’s Faculty of Education and Maple Leaf International Schools in China. Plans are underway to re-run the pilot program in spring 2015 with a new group of teacher candidates, and in future years to integrate international teaching placements into the two-year Bachelor of Education program.

For teacher candidates, participating in the program gave them valuable practical experience in a new context: one with different challenges than they had experienced in their Ontario teaching placements.

Sarah Rice, who taught Social Studies on the boys’ campus, explained: “Teaching in China taught me a lot about myself and my teaching practice. I had to think about English language acquisition skills as well as interesting lesson plans. Classroom management is also very different than in Canada.

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In China the students tend not to misbehave, but you have to focus on what you can do to make sure they understand.”

Anthea D’Souza, who taught Biology and Chemistry on the boys’ campus of the school, concurred. “This was my first time teaching in a single-sex classroom and teaching students who are English Language Learners. Because of this, my lesson preparations were significantly different from the domestic teaching placements I completed in Thunder Bay Catholic schools.”

**“Teaching at Maple Leaf was nothing short of amazing”**

### Adventuring in China: Travel and Tourism

The group of new teachers also took advantage of the many tourism opportunities in China, one of the world’s oldest civilizations. The group added a week of travel to experience the culture and attractions in Beijing, Xi’an, Dalian and Jinshitan.

“We began by traveling and learned a great deal about China’s vast culture and history,” explained Olivia Cleaver. “Over the course of the month we saw some of the most outstanding places in the world, including the Great Wall

of China, Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Terracotta Warriors ... some of us even ate scorpions while touring on Wangfujing Street in Beijing!”

In addition to the unforgettable tourism, the group learned about the unique benefits that can come from teaching overseas. These include opportunities to start immediately as a full-time teacher and the possibility of career advancement and travel to other parts of the world.

Patrick Schmidt explains: “There is an amazing community of Canadian teachers overseas. Completing an international placement is an unequalled first step towards having your own classroom and delivering your own materials. For myself, completing an international teaching placement was extraordinary, and I predict that it would be an equally beneficial experience for any young teacher.”

# Award-winning Math Educators



## Dr. Ann Kajander: Recipient of the 2014 Margaret Sinclair Memorial Award

**Prestigious award  
recognizes innovation  
and excellence in  
mathematics education**

**F**or Dr. Ann Kajander, winning the Margaret Sinclair Memorial Award was a deep honour, and one that connected her to the vision that Margaret Sinclair held herself for mathematics education.

“In 2005, Margaret published a brief that spoke to the need to develop and standardize the mathematical content knowledge of pre-service teachers,” Dr. Kajander explains. “This work remains extremely important today.”

Dr. Kajander sees the importance of this work in the Faculty of Education, where she witnesses the mathematics anxiety that many pre-service teachers have upon entering the program. She explains that this anxiety is a very real and rational response: “It’s rational because many students enter our BEd program without a conceptual understanding of mathematics, and this makes them feel unprepared to teach it themselves. We need courses that prepare them with not only the pedagogy, but also the conceptual knowledge.”

Dr. Kajander’s years of working with students—to confront mathematics anxiety and give them the tools to be successful educators—is one of the reasons she was nominated for the award, which recognizes an educator in Canada who has demonstrated excellence in promoting mathematics education.

The award was named after Dr. Margaret Sinclair, who was a vibrant and creative tenured professor from York University. It was to be awarded to an individual who “shows an enthusiasm for enhancing the learning environment and novel ways of teaching mathematics, provides opportunities for students to experience mathematics in a significant way, serves as a role model for other teachers, and has had an inspirational influence on students and/or colleagues,” according to the Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Sciences.

Dr. Kajander joined the Faculty of Education full-time in 2004, although she had been teaching as a contract lecturer since 1989. At the time of her appointment at Lakehead, she was teaching across all levels of education: at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary level simultaneously.

Her teaching has been complemented by an ongoing research agenda, including two grant-sponsored projects. The “Kindermath Enrichment Project” was created to introduce young children to mathematical concepts in

fun, interactive ways. Two of her books that came out of this research—*Big Ideas for Small Mathematicians* and *Big Ideas for Growing Mathematicians*—introduced young children to sophisticated mathematical concepts (think fractals, fractions, and infinity) through creative, hands-on projects.

She also founded the two-year “Girls in Mathematics” project, funded by the Mathematics Association of America. This project, with a goal of improving girls’ attitudes toward math, was a mentoring project involving female Thunder Bay students in Grade 6, high school, and in the Bachelor of Education program, as well as female mathematics faculty.

Today Dr. Kajander is working on a longitudinal study with Dr. Jennifer Holm (featured below), assessing the impact of factors such as the Undergraduate Mathematics for Teachers course in deepening teachers’ conceptual mathematical understanding. Dr. Kajander’s latest book, co-authored with classroom teacher Tom Boland, is *Mathematical Models for Teaching: Reasoning without Memorization* (2014).

## Dr. Jennifer Holm Award of Recognition for Mathematics Dissertation

**D**r. Jennifer Holm, Faculty of Education contract lecturer and graduate of the Joint PhD in Educational Studies program, was awarded a Canadian Association of Teacher Education Award of Recognition for the dissertation she defended last year, *Improving Mathematics Teaching through Professional Learning Groups*.

“I was really honoured that my work was seen as important to the field of teacher education,” explains Dr. Holm, who has been in field of mathematics education for 14 years as an elementary school teacher, researcher, and lecturer. “My research investigated the structures that need to be in place in professional learning groups to help teachers improve their practice and support students in their learning.”

As part of her research, Dr. Holm observed a professional learning group of Grade 7-10 math educators who were working to improve students’ transition from elementary to secondary school math.

“From personal experience I know that professional learning groups can be ‘hit or miss,’” she notes. “In this research I asked what it was about this group that worked: what allowed them to take risks with their practice, to be supportive of each other, and to focus on results?”

The award was given to Dr. Holm by the Canadian Society for the Study of Education last May.



## Encouraging Wellness through the Arts:

### Dr. Pauline Sameshima, Canada Research Chair in Arts Integrated Research

**H**olism. Sustainability. Wellness. These are themes that run through the diverse research of Dr. Pauline Sameshima, Canada Research Chair in Arts Integrated Research.

Drawing intimate connections between the arts and our personal and collective well-being, Dr. Sameshima explains that her research—in which she explores topics as varied as dementia, student identity, cervical cancer, methamphetamine addiction, blending the arts and the sciences, and yoga—is about wellness in a holistic sense.

“Looking through all my research projects, I’m really looking for wellness: integrating the body and the mind and the spirit to sustain ourselves. We all work so hard; I’m focused on the sustainability of people through arts integrated research,” she explains.

### Transforming Space through Art

Integrating arts into research can have transformative effects—sometimes, quite literally.

The creation of three new art galleries on the Thunder Bay campus was the result of Dr. Sameshima’s goal to bring the arts into conversation with the sciences, encouraging cross-disciplinary collaboration.

The gallery spaces, located at various points across campus, showcase artwork done by students, faculty, alumni, staff, and others connected to the university.

“My hope is that when perceiving these beautiful and challenging exhibits, people will see ideas from different perspectives and have their thinking about the world, research, and their own artistic expression changed,” she explains.

The juried galleries are an ongoing project and submissions of all kinds are encouraged (e.g., photography of wood-working, multimedia, painting, three-dimensional sculptures and other forms accepted). Submissions are accepted through the <http://galleries.lakeheadu.ca/> website.

### Identity, Health, and Integrating Body and Mind

With a broad goal of drawing attention to the power of the arts in interdisciplinary ways, Dr. Sameshima’s work has led her to work collaboratively with individuals in health and education fields, using art “to explore some of the complex social problems we face today,” she explains.

One of her recent projects involved working with individuals with dementia and mapping their personal journeys. This research, done in collaboration with other researchers



and members of the Alzheimer’s Society of Ontario, resulted in the creation of a series of large canvases that feature road signs selected as indicators of the dementia journey stages (Noticing, Avoiding, Accepting, and Learning).

The canvases present data gathered through focus groups, highlighting quotations that speak to themes of courage, vulnerability, and joy.

Dr. Sameshima has also been involved on other collaborative research projects relating to health and identity, including working with Anishinaabek women in a cervical self-screening study and working with pre-service teachers to develop cloaks that revealed their “inside” and “outside” teacher identities.

Most recently, she has been focused on integrating body, mind and spirit through a 500-hour yoga certification course.

“Yoga teachings are one of several ‘original sources’ of teaching we can draw from,” she explains. “The teachings are 5,000 years old. Integrating eastern and western thinking is a powerful, holistic way of bringing us toward wellness, which undergirds all of the research I am involved in.”

*Dr. Pauline Sameshima joined Lakehead’s Faculty of Education as Canada Research Chair in Arts Integrated Research in November 2012. She teaches graduate-level courses in Arts-Integrated Research Approaches that explore multi-modal creative arts practices, including narrative and poetic inquiry, dance, drama, and music in research. For more information on her arts-based research projects and goals as Canada Research Chair, visit her website at [www.solspiré.com](http://www.solspiré.com).*



## Remembered: Dr. Mary Clare Courtland

**D**r. Mary Clare Courtland, a passionate lifelong learner, researcher and teacher, passed away peacefully on October 24, 2014.

Mary Clare joined the Faculty of Education in 1984 as an Assistant Professor, was awarded tenure in 1988 and promoted to Professor in 1993. She served as Chair of Graduate Studies and Continuing Teacher Education from 1993 until 2000.

Mary Clare established a reputation as a leading scholar in language arts and children's literature, co-editing a widely cited collection of scholarly articles, along with many other scholarly contributions. She collaborated actively with colleagues across the country on a number of successful research projects, collaborations being the form of scholarship she enjoyed most.



During her tenure as Chair of Graduate Studies during the 1990s, Mary Clare led the enhancement and revitalization of the Master of Education program. During this period she also led the development of the multi-university Joint Doctoral Program in Educational Studies, a significant milestone in the development of the Faculty of Education's scholarly capacity.

Throughout her career Mary Clare was an active graduate supervisor in both the Doctoral and Master's programs. She was a supportive, patient, and thorough mentor who guided many students through the sometimes challenging process of undertaking the necessary revisions and editing required to bring dissertations and theses to completion.

Mary Clare was a person who spoke her mind, but her contributions were made in a collegial spirit. Her commitment to the Faculty of Education was genuine and deeply felt. Her contributions to the Faculty were many and varied, and she will be missed by all of us who knew and worked with her.

### From Mary Clare's former students

**Laurie Leslie:** "With Mary Clare's sudden passing, I find myself overwhelmed with gratitude for her many trusts, teachings, and kindnesses. Mary Clare practiced generous scholarship daily. Offerings of community, through food and wine, were graciously extended. Mary Clare collected us—displaced academics, professors and students, alike. She gave us space in which to commune, in which to belong and feel valued.

I embrace Mary Clare's passion for social justice education. This she demonstrated through the picture book and novel collections lovingly researched and yearly purchased for our Education Library, through committed leadership of the St. John's Ambulance Dog Therapy Program, and through considerate scholarly inclusion.

Mary Clare went beyond just modelling rigorous research and academic responsibility. She introduced me into her extensive circle of colleagues, family and friends, and extended similar generousities to each of her graduate students. She brought us together. Her presence lingers. The assurance that her legacy must and can continue is deeply comforting."

**Ismel Gonzalez:** "Mary Clare was my supervisor for my Master's and my PhD studies. During this time, she became a colleague, a mentor and a friend. Mary Clare was an exemplary supervisor. I would not have been able to accomplish so much in my academic career without her guidance and support.

Mary Clare was also a long-time member of the Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada (LLRC). As Lindsay Moffat, first vice-president of LLRC noted, Mary Clare was 'a dedicated and passionate literacy teacher, teacher educator and researcher, and a mentor to graduate students and to her colleagues across the country. She published widely, wrote and co-edited several books and for the past eight years worked with a group of literacy researchers across Canada on SSHRC-funded curriculum development projects. Mary Clare will be missed by so many of us in LLRC—it is hard to imagine CSSE without her wit and humour."

**"She was a mentor,  
an inspiration,  
and a dear friend."**

**Ashleigh Crooks:** "How do we begin to say goodbye to you, Mary Clare? One Tuesday afternoon, your dearest friends and beloved family members held tightly to one another as we listened to beautiful memories and inspiring tales from your past. We heard stories of a woman who courageously became a doctor with two young daughters at home, of a beautiful friend who cooked countless meals for friends and students alike, of a fearless educator who fought to be heard, and of a loving, passionate mother and grandmother, who gave everything she was to her family and her friends.

To me, Mary Clare was a mentor, an inspiration, and a dear friend. She is the woman who bought me "The Arrival" and personalized it with a note in the front. She is the woman who made it okay to be a single mom. And she was a friend, an educator, an author, an editor, a scholar, an advocate, a visionary, a graduate and doctoral supervisor, and so much more."