

## Spotlight on Emilia Veltri Professional Services Coordinator

Anyone who knows Emilia Veltri can vouch for her being a “people person,” known for the meaningful connections she makes with others, and her life-long love of teaching mathematics. Hailing from Italy, Emilia is an alumnus of the Faculty of Education’s Bachelor of Education program and has come full circle in her career. After completing a Masters degree and teaching for many years at schools locally and internationally, she returned to the Faculty of Education as Professional Services Coordinator, working with teacher candidates. With retirement on the horizon, Emilia shared some of her history, highlights of her career, and future plans.

### Love of Teaching and Math Developed in Childhood

“I believe my love of teaching mathematics came from my Dad. He didn’t have a lot of formal education, but he really loved math! My family moved to Canada from Italy in the early 1960s, and he learned to speak and write English then with his kids. I always enjoyed math and my parents told me I was good at it. And I can remember teaching him calculus while I was learning it in high school. We’d have races to see how quickly we could solve problems! In retrospect I think my Dad was brilliant, but he didn’t have the opportunities I had with education.

When I was awarded my BEd degree from Lakehead my father was in the audience, and when I came back from the stage to connect with my parents, he was crying because he was so proud of me. He always said, “Teach – it’s the most honourable profession.” And now that I look back on my career, I can say that teaching is, without a doubt, a very rewarding job. I’m lucky to have worked as a teacher for many years, and to have worked with teacher candidates for many years as well.”

### Great Mentors, Learning and Growth

“After graduating from Lakehead Teacher’s College in 1973, I landed my first teaching job in Hearst, Ontario, teaching Math in French. It was Dr. Gerry Vervoort, my Lakehead professor and mentor in Linear Algebra and Math Methods, who encouraged me to take the job. It was a good job but it didn’t last very long, because the Lakehead District School Board offered me a job in 1974 and I came back to Thunder Bay to teach at Lakeview High School [now St. Ignatius High School]. I remember there was a major strike that first year, we were out on strike for three months. It was wild! I didn’t have a good understanding of what we were picketing about, and the public was outraged, but it was an interesting introduction to that job.

My department head at Lakeview High School was Roger Mowbray. He was a dedicated and talented teacher who began

# EDUCATION EXCHANGE

NEWSLETTER



Emilia (centre) with friends/colleagues. From left to right: Dr. Tanya Kaefer, Dr. Laurie Leslie, Dr. Wayne Melville, Lucas Johnson, Dr. Teresa Socha, and Dr. Alex Lawson (front right).

the Thunder Bay Boys and Girls Club here in northwestern Ontario. I was 21 years old, and he gave me the freedom to make mistakes, try things out, and learn.

After teaching for a few years, I moved to Eugene, Oregon to complete a Masters degree, continuing my studies in math. I also had the opportunity to work in a junior high school in Corvallis. When I came back from Oregon I had the good fortune of landing a job at PACI [Port Arthur Collegiate Institute] with another fabulous department head: Gord Ellis. When these fantastic mentors come into your life, it is a wonderful opportunity to learn, and grow. I am grateful to them, and all the amazing colleagues with whom I have worked over the years.”

### “Magical Years” in the Netherlands

“A new chapter began in my life when I moved to the Netherlands in 1980. That’s where I met my husband, Wayne Fletcher. We were both teaching at an international school in the province of Limburg. And once again, it was Dr. Gerry Vervoort who encouraged me to pursue this, because the Netherlands is a hotbed of constructivism in mathematics. Living there, I would attend lectures at Utrecht University and continue to learn.

We were in the Netherlands for five magical years, during which time we travelled widely. We learned that Dutch people are great travellers: they’re often looking to escape the wet northern European climate. But although it’s wet there, there are the most beautiful clouds and great bike path systems. During my very first week I did a bike tour of Friesland in northern Holland, which was beautiful.

Teaching there was special and memorable because I was teaching at the Grade 7/8 level. That’s not my area of expertise but I really, really enjoyed that age group – my students were very loyal, and very focused on social justice. And I’m still in touch with some of them! It’s always a joy to hear from former students, some of whom now have their own children and grandchildren.”



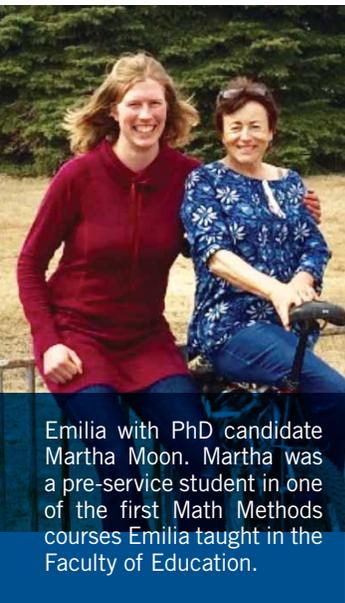
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## Returning to Thunder Bay and Beginning Work at Lakehead

“Wayne and I came back to Thunder Bay to be near family, and we were both lucky to get teaching jobs shortly after we returned. I went back to PACI, and later on to other high schools, teaching math. Life was good.

It was 1988 when I began part-time work at Lakehead, helping out with a unique program that invited high school students, from the Manitoba border through to Wawa, to study Math, Science, and Technology at the University. I was working with Dr. Frank Allaire (a recent retiree of Lakehead University) and we developed the math curriculum for that program. It was a win-win for the students and Lakehead: the students got a scholarship from the Ministry of Mining and Natural Resources and had a chance to study here, and we had a wonderful opportunity to work with young people who went on to pursue their studies at Lakehead.

I also began helping Dr. Gerry Vervoort teach his Math Methods courses in the BEd program, and participated in a “class swap” with Dr. Jim Haines. The swap involved me teaching his Math Methods course at the university while he took my Grade 10 applied math class at Westgate CVI. Through this experience I had the opportunity to do some micro-teaching with pre-service Education students. I invited them to come to my other classes at Westgate, where they observed me teaching and gave me feedback, and then I did the same with them. We all learned so much, and the kids loved having those young teachers at the back of the room!”



Emilia with PhD candidate Martha Moon. Martha was a pre-service student in one of the first Math Methods courses Emilia taught in the Faculty of Education.

## A Couple of Career Highlights

“I’ve had many career highlights, but two that stand out are the Math Olympics through my involvement with the Ontario Association of Mathematics Educators and the student clubs started at Hammarskjold High School while I was the Chair of the Student Services Department.

It was Gerry, Wayne, and I who started the Math Olympics in Thunder Bay about 20 years ago, and it’s still going strong. Hosted by NWOAME (Northwestern Ontario Association of Mathematics Education), the Math Olympics is an annual competition where students from local schools compete in math activities like group problem solving or relay competitions, and the winners go on to compete provincially. In 1996, Wayne and I had the privilege of coaching the team that went on to win the provincial championship. Last year Wayne and I were the coaches as well: it was so fun and gratifying to see the student excitement around math!

Another highlight for me was the student clubs started at Hammarskjold. We had the opportunity to start some wonderful programs, including a breakfast club and an after-school homework club that included dinner. Those clubs were important for some of our marginalized students from lower socio-economic classes. We also started a “Volunteer Club” at the school, which was attended by students who were on the “fringes,” socially speaking. We’d raise money for good causes by doing things like paid coat checks at dances, or selling Persian doughnuts or popcorn at school events. It was good for all of us, and it felt like we were making a difference.”



Emilia, with retired friends Dr. Laura Lolehawk Buker (left) and Dr. Karen Reynolds (right).

## An Ending and a New Beginning

“After I’d put in over 25 years of teaching and was thinking about the end of my career, a new opportunity opened up when Dr. Alex Lawson, a math professor in the Faculty, invited me to meet with her. We instantly connected over our shared love of math. Shortly thereafter, I was teaching math education at the Faculty, alongside Alex, who was a real mentor to me, and another good friend, Wendy Steinstra. The three of us would spend hours talking math: how nerdy is that? I think it is pretty cool that Heather Wark and Susan Desjardins, two students who were in my classes when I was a high school math teacher, are now working with Dr. Lawson.

A couple of years later I was offered the position of Professional Services Coordinator. After 25 years of teaching, it was a joy to be on the other side, working with pre-service teachers and outstanding professionals such as Linda Strey, Dr. Teresa Socha, Dr. Wayne Melville, Dr. Tanya Kaefer, Dr. Jan Oakley, Dr. Laurie Leslie, and the dedicated faculty advisors. I want to name so many more people, such as the excellent support staff in the Undergraduate Office! This work has been a perfect fit for me. It’s a privilege to work with students at Lakehead because I know that even when they’re in challenging situations, their heart is in the right place: they want to be teachers, they want to help children, and they want to learn. And any time learning is involved, it’s a good life.”

## Thinking about the Big Picture

“When I think back on my career and my time at the Faculty of Education, the first thing that comes to mind is the people. It’s all about building positive, trusting relationships with people. When you do that, anything is possible.

It’s also heartening for me to see the Education program reaching out to remote communities, like Pelican Falls and Pickle Lake, and offering student placements there. Making these connections is so important: we owe it to our province to help support the schools in remote communities. It’s part of being socially responsible educators.

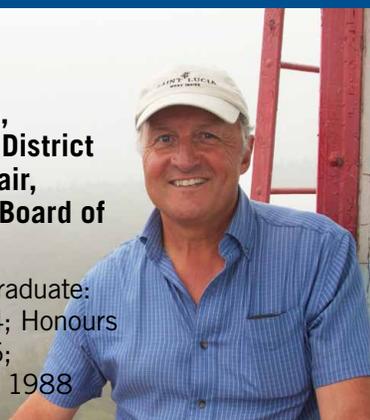
When I retire I plan to continue learning, do volunteer work and travel, while staying in touch with friends, colleagues, and students who have been so memorable throughout my career. It’s wonderful to have made these strong connections, and I’ve been very lucky.”

*Emilia Veltri lives in Thunder Bay with her partner, Wayne Fletcher. Their daughter, Carmen, is a medical doctor in Edmonton, and their son, Carl, is a Physics student at the University.*

## David Tamblyn

**Director of Education,  
Superior-Greenstone District  
School Board and Chair,  
Lakehead University Board of  
Governors**

Lakehead University Graduate:  
Bachelor of Arts, 1984; Honours  
Bachelor of Arts, 1986;  
Bachelor of Education, 1988



Lakehead University has always played a prominent role in my life.

My father, William Tamblyn, was the University's founding President and Vice Chancellor, so growing up with Lakehead was almost like having another sibling. As a child, I would often tag along with my father, attending events such as ribbon cuttings and winter carnivals. I vividly recall a student protest in the late 1960s outside the front of our home on Selkirk Street that ended abruptly when the paddy wagon arrived.

Perhaps that last memory has had a lasting impression because when I attended Lakehead as a student I became actively engaged in student politics as editor of the student newspaper, *The Argus*. From the experience I gained working at the paper I had the great pleasure of assisting my father and Dr. Harold Braun in the layout of *A Northern Vision*, celebrating Lakehead's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

As a proud alumnus and donor, I have served on Lakehead's Board of Governors for seven years as a member, as Vice-Chair, and currently as Chair. It is very rewarding to be part of the legacy that was started when my father, and a group of like-minded individuals, envisioned a university to serve the needs of Northwestern Ontario. From our humble beginnings as the Lakehead Technical Institute on Cumberland Street, the University has grown into a full-fledged comprehensive institution offering a broad range of degree and diploma programs.

I was born and raised in Fort William and my life and career has been rooted along the north shore of Lake Superior. My career with the Superior-Greenstone District School Board (SGDSB) began in Schreiber, Ontario, where I was a classroom instructor teaching French and Special Education. Following that, I taught Grade 7 in Terrace Bay before being appointed Principal of the two community schools. Next, I moved into the role of Superintendent of Education, and I am now in my sixth year as Director of Education of the SGDSB.

As a Director of Education, one of my priorities is to follow through on the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Our school board is working closely with First Nations communities in our district to indigenize the curriculum so that their culture is represented in the hallways and the classrooms of our schools. We have recently introduced Ojibwe language programming in both elementary and high schools, as well as land-based activities where students can take part in canoe trips, work on trap lines, or learn the science behind traditional medicines. In my role as Director and Chair of the LU Board of Governors, I have a unique opportunity to strengthen the pathways leading to a post-secondary education for our Indigenous students. I'm also a proud member of the newly established William G. Tamblyn Legacy Society, named in honour of my father, which recognizes donors who make gifts in their wills to ensure Lakehead University's future stability and sustainability.

I have been fortunate in my career to have developed lasting friendships, some of which began during my time in Lakehead's Faculty of Education 30 years ago. These friends are now colleagues I work with in schools, on Northern Ontario Education Leaders' boards, or on the Council of Ontario Directors of Education. Being a part of the academic community in Northwestern Ontario is rewarding, particularly with the many connections I have made over the years.

In addition to education, one of my great passions is sea kayaking. For over 25 years, my family and I have lived in Rosspoint, Ontario, a north shore village and gateway to adventure tourism. My wife and I are the owners/operators of Superior Outfitters Coastal Kayaking Adventures, which offers guided sea kayaking trips on Lake Superior. Taking people out on the lake and teaching them about the area is something I love to do, and is another way I stay connected to this exceptional region.



## Manal El-Azmi

**Grade 3/4 French Immersion  
Teacher, Lester B. Pearson  
Elementary School, North York,  
Ontario**

Graduate of the Bachelor of  
Education program, 2015 (Orillia  
campus)

Lakehead University gave me the tools I needed to take my love of teaching and apply it in a real-world setting. I graduated in 2015 and began a one-year French Immersion LTO (Long-Term Occasional) position in the fall. Following this, I was offered a permanent French Immersion teaching position with the Toronto District School Board, where I am working now.

My first year of teaching was in an inner-city school teaching Grade 3 French Immersion. Every day was a challenge, but that first year taught me a lot about myself, what I can handle as a teacher, and how to adapt to different circumstances. It also made me realize that while kids are kids, no matter where they are in the world, some have it much tougher than others in terms of the circumstances of their lives. As teachers, we need to take that into consideration.

After my first year of teaching I transferred to a school closer to home, teaching Grade 3/4 French Immersion. I love what I do and am so grateful to have the opportunity to be a teacher!

The advice I would give to aspiring teachers in the Bachelor of Education program is to never lose hope. Try and try, until you succeed. While the Education program is tough and demanding, it is simply preparing you for what is to come next in the field. No-one wants to see you succeed more than your professors, so seek their guidance and assistance. Ask questions and explore your options.

One of the options I explored through the Education program was the international placement opportunity, which gave me a

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chance to teach in China and experience a different culture. When I graduated I had one goal in sight: to teach. So I kept my options open, including international teaching, and teaching in the private sector. I am very happy to have ended up where I am now, and my experience at Lakehead was such a positive one that I am thinking about pursuing the Master of Education program!



## Adrian Meissner

### Director of Operations, The Boundless School

Graduate of the Bachelor of Education program, 2006 (Thunder Bay campus)

I am proud to be Director of Operations at The Boundless School ([www.theboundlesschool.com](http://www.theboundlesschool.com)) in the Ottawa Valley, where wilderness is woven into an Ontario-accredited high school curriculum. Our “school yard” is an amazing 600-acre property, just upstream of one of the world’s white-water canoeing

meccas in Lower Madawaska River Provincial Park. We’re an independent school, and a registered charity, that offers outdoor and experiential education programs for teens who, for whatever reason, aren’t succeeding in the mainstream educational system. We blend education, outdoor adventure, and mental health support to engage, motivate, and inspire our students.

From September to June each year, we run a co-ed Boarding School for teens aged 15 and up. During those months students live, work, and play in an engaging experiential learning community. We offer outdoor activities like white-water canoeing, camping, hiking, and ropes courses. Students earn credits while doing things like cooking their own food, writing poetry while gazing out over beautiful valley lookouts, making crafts, participating in jam sessions, and building community while learning. In the summer months we run a lot of short-term, adventure-based programs, from five days to two weeks long. We offer credits at various levels in leadership, outdoor education, English, Philosophy, and co-op.

One of the things I love most about The Boundless School is that it’s an incredibly ambitious organization with lots of opportunities for teachers to use their creativity to build a unique curriculum from the Ministry’s curriculum expectations. Seeing students succeed, and catch up with their schooling, is so rewarding. Our teachers are highly invested in students’ learning, and the amazing environment and engaging programming sets students up for success.

I began work at The Boundless School in the summer in 1998 as an intern, then joined full-time after completing my BEd degree at Lakehead. Since then, I’ve worked in virtually every role in the organization. This work suits my lifestyle very much, as there are many opportunities to get out in nature with the students, friends, and family in the hills and waterways of the Madawaska Valley. I was drawn to Lakehead because of its outdoor recreation community, and my work today allows me to continue enjoying a diverse, rich lifestyle. Whether its cross-country skiing in the winter or paddling on the river in the warmer months, my job is never the same for two days!



## Meghan Jewell

### Kindergarten/Grade 1 teacher, Agnew H. Johnston School, Thunder Bay

Graduate of the Bachelor of Education program, 2004; Master of Education, 2010 (Thunder Bay campus)

After completing my undergraduate degree in 2004, I headed north to begin my career as a teacher in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, where I taught Grade 3. I loved my four years with the Keewatin Patricia District School Board. The professional development, amazing mentors, and supportive administration gave me a confidence that has stayed with me throughout my career.

I returned to Thunder Bay in 2008 to pursue graduate studies, working with Dr. Alex Lawson with a focus on early Math education. I love doing research, and had many opportunities to become immersed in different projects in the Faculty of Education. These included:

- identifying promising practices in urban Aboriginal education (with Dr. Lisa Korteweg);
- working as a Graduate/Research Assistant in Primary Mathematics (with Dr. Alex Lawson) and as a Graduate Assistant in Literacy (with Dr. Mary Clare Courtland);
- contributing to the research and writing of Dr. Alex Lawson’s book, *What to Look For: Understanding and Developing Student Thinking in Early Numeracy*; and,
- working as a Smart board Instructor and a Math Games Instructor (for the Department of Lifelong Learning).

I was very fortunate to work with many mentors during my time at Lakehead University. In particular, Dr. Alex Lawson had a huge influence on my career, especially in Math Education. Her support, patience, guidance, and instruction were beyond what I could imagine. Another person who really supported my learning was Dr. Paul Berger, whose classes pushed me to see the world through different “lenses.”

Soon after completing my graduate studies, I began a permanent teaching job at Agnew H. Johnston, a dual stream (English and French Immersion) school in the Lakehead Public Schools. During my time there I have taught Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5, and am currently teaching a Kindergarten/Grade 1 split with an incredible team of educators. We work hard to create a calm and caring classroom for our students. From gentle lighting to an individual, child-centered pedagogy, we aim to meet the needs of every child and ensure they feel loved, safe, and confident.

Anyone who knows me as a teacher knows that I love teaching Math! My program incorporates math games, stories with math, authentic problem-solving, and fun math activities. My first goal is to make my students believe they are mathematicians, and realize that math is attainable and fun. Many of my students have continued this passion for math, and believe they want to be mathematicians when they grow up. This is what education is all about – instilling confidence and a passion for learning in the next generation!



# Searching for Life Beyond Earth:

## NASA Director James Green Visits Lakehead University

**I**n our lifetime, we will likely see people walking on the surface of Mars."

That was one of the exciting predictions made by Dr. James Green, Director of Planetary Science Division of NASA Headquarters, who spoke to a large group of high school students at the Faculty of Education in March as part of a University-wide Research & Innovation Week.

Dr. Green has executed several successful space missions in his career, including the landing of the "Curiosity" rover on Mars. He said the most exciting part of working for NASA is that new scientific discoveries are happening all the time.

"Fifty years ago, everything we knew about the universe came from looking through the end of a telescope. Today planetary scientists are making huge progress all the time, with more revolutions about to come. It's an amazing time for researchers studying the origins of life!"

### Real-Life Science Fiction

Dr. Green was a consultant on the 2015 film *The Martian*, which tells the story of an American astronaut who became stranded alone on Mars in the year 2035, and began growing potatoes to survive. While *The Martian* was a science fiction movie (based on a novel of the same name), Dr. Green explained that it has been discovered that crops could, in fact, be grown on Mars.

This was shown by NASA's rovers, which landed on the surface of Mars, drilled holes into it to scoop out samples, then returned the samples to Earth for analysis. The samples revealed some surprising discoveries about the "Red Planet," he explains.

"We were absolutely shocked after drilling below the surface on Mars. First of all, while Mars normally looks red to us, when you get below the topsoil, it's actually grey. It's a completely different planet than what we're used to! And when we brought those samples in and tested them, we found that there is carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorous and sulfur all in there. In other words, the basic building blocks of life are there."

He adds that the soil has nitrates in it which acts as fertilizer, making it possible, under the right conditions, to grow food on Mars. It is also believed that there are underground aquifers on the planet, and a huge buried glacier to explore. In upcoming years, this exploration could take place, in person, through a manned mission.

"We have the technology to do it, to send a crew of six people to Mars in a rocket. We are building our infrastructure so that in the 2040s we can likely do sorties down to the surface, and we will see humans walking around on it, exploring the geological record of Mars to tell us the history of the planet."

### Life beyond Earth, and the Search for Habitable Planets

Another intriguing prediction Dr. Green made was that "in the next 10 years, we will answer the question: are we alone [in our solar system]?"

He noted that while we have not found life beyond planet Earth, planetary scientists have developed the capability to model how planets have evolved since their birth and what may happen to them in the distant future. They are also focused on the search for habitable planets, which must contain energy, organics, and water.



"We are looking for Earth-like planets, well beyond our Sun," he explains. "So far, we have found a lot of Earth-sized planets, but nothing yet Earth-like – meaning, having atmospheres and oceans."

He explains that Earth sits right in the middle of the "habitable zone," which is at such a distance from the sun that water can exist in solid, liquid, and vapour forms. Over time, the sun's radiant energy is slowly becoming more intense, he notes, meaning that habitable zones are moving further away from the sun (and planets closer to the sun might have been in the habitable zone at some point, billions of years ago).

This type of exploration is still in its infancy.

"What counts as our "neighbourhood" extends about 200 light years around us, and what we have searched, to date, might just be considered as 'going around the block' in that neighbourhood. We have much, much more to explore, and we are only getting started. As we continue to look in our neighbourhood and beyond, I believe, we're going to find Earth-like planets." He predicts that discovery will be astounding.



Katherine Drake and Marlee MacDougall

## Volunteer Teaching Placements Begin in the United Kingdom

### Lakehead Partnership Agreement Launched with UK-Based Recruitment Company

In May 2017, BEd graduates Katherine Drake and Marlee MacDougall will travel to England to participate in the pilot program of a new partnership established between the Faculty of Education and Responsible Reliable Recruitment, a United Kingdom-based company.

The newly certified teachers will complete a three-week volunteer teaching placement at a school in Dagenham, a suburb of East London, England.

Plans are underway to integrate UK-based teaching placements into the two-year Bachelor of Education program, starting in 2018. These alternative placements will give select teacher candidates in the BEd program a chance to experience teaching in the UK, and possibly a route toward a permanent position as a teacher in England. Currently, Canadian-trained teachers are in high demand, as the UK struggles with a teacher shortage.

#### Professional Development in a New Context

The May 2017 placements will take place at Robert Clack School and All Saints Catholic School in Dagenham. At the schools, Katherine and Marlee will have an opportunity to teach, develop lesson plans, and assist with grading, while gaining a taste of the UK school system.

“The UK holds so many opportunities for growth and learning as a teacher and a long-term learner,” Katherine says. “I have always been fascinated with British history and culture because my family comes from England, and I want to learn all I can about it. The opportunity to teach in the country my grandparents grew up in was an opportunity I could not pass by!”

Marlee adds that she is looking forward to “gaining new teaching experiences, learning from an entirely different educational system, and sharing ideas and practice strategies with British educators. I’m excited to learn how the British system differs from the Canadian system, and

how the curriculum is implemented. And, as a Music major, I’m hoping to see some different music programs that highlight classical training, as well as more popular music.”

Katherine and Marlee will also take advantage of the opportunity to travel and take in some cultural highlights. Katherine, a self-described history buff, says she is excited to experience the historical sights of England, see a show at the Shakespeare Globe, and travel, post-placement, up to the Scottish Highlands.

Marlee explains she’ll take advantage of some unique cultural offerings as well: “I have tickets to see the London Philharmonic Orchestra perform the *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* soundtrack alongside the movie. As a Harry Potter fan and music teacher, this experience will be very exciting!”

*The Faculty of Education is pleased to work with Responsible Reliable Recruitment to allow Katherine and Marlee, and future BEd students, an opportunity to experience teaching in the UK.*

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*“We included Lakehead University in our will because we believe in the transformative power of education.”*

– Dr. Bill Heath, Professor Emeritus, Lakehead University  
– Ms. Betty Heath, Lakehead Alumna





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# Graduate Student Conference Showcases Vibrant Culture of Research

Dr. Julia Ostertag, Keynote Presenter

The Faculty of Education’s annual Graduate Student Conference took place in February, highlighting some of the diverse research work taking place in the Master of Education and PhD programs.

Exploring topics such as mindfulness, community art, marketplace ideologies, and Indigenous connections to land and water, graduate students presented on a range of thought-provoking research areas reflecting current issues and possibilities in the educational field.

The day began with an inspiring keynote presentation by Dr. Julia Ostertag, alumnus of Lakehead’s Bachelor of Education/ Outdoor Ecological and Experiential Education program (2005) and current researcher/educator based in Gatineau, Quebec.

In her talk, entitled “Teaching, Researching, and Tripping in the School Garden: Stories from an Arts-Based Research Metissage,” she shared stories from her arts-based PhD research that took place on campus at the University of British Columbia.

In her research, a series of art installations were developed in a campus garden and teacher education building. The installations, entitled “Threads Sown, Grown & Given,” included an art-inspired outdoor classroom, compete with rows of “desks” sown with flax seeds that were plotted in a rigid grid in the soil, and cedar frame “walls” filled with pole bean plants. Canvas “windows” were hung that juxtaposed the garden/classroom, depicting images of historical school gardening in difficult contexts, such as Nazi Germany and the North American residential school system.

As Dr. Ostertag explains, “the project revealed insights into our complicated relationships with land and teaching in the context of settler colonialism and the increasingly neoliberal academy. For example, as the outdoor classroom grew ‘unwieldy’ and ‘wild,’ anxieties surfaced in some participants about the need for order and control. Mapping out the land into a rigid plot reflected the ways we have traditionally thought

about land management and classroom management, but as the research project literally grew and evolved, new material threads and conversations emerged about how a ‘teacher’ doesn’t need to be the familiar, solitary human figure in the front of a classroom, but can be various human and more-than-human entanglements together.”

Her thought-provoking talk, drawing out relationships between land and teaching, set the tone for an enriching day of graduate student presentations.

## Graduate Student Conference Presenters and Topics

Gemma Romano: *Sustainable happiness: Exploring the impacts of sustainable living on individual happiness*

Melissa Twance: *Lessons from land and water: Indigenous connections to the Mazinaabikinigan at Agawa Rock*

Elizabeth Boileau: *Understanding children’s relationship to insects*

Varainja Stock: *A transformative pedagogy rooted in place: What can we learn from artists in the community?*

Allison Whately-Doucet: *How might an examination of the influence of marketplace ideology on schooling lead to strategies to ameliorate contentious parent/teacher interactions?*

Antonio Redfern-Pucci: *Diplomas for sale: The implications of how universities recruit students*

Muga Miyakawa: *Mindfulness in education: Some ethical considerations*

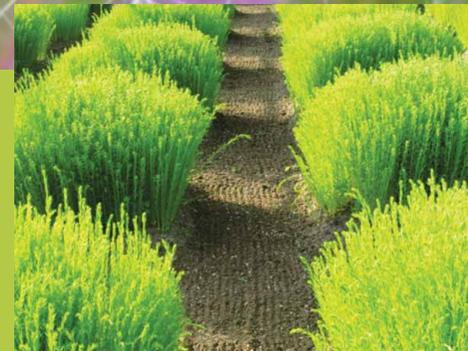
Keri-Lyn Durant: *What about death education?*

Laxmi Pathak: *Tensions of dwelling between two worlds: A personal journey*

Holly Tsun Haggarty: *What is taken to be real?*

## Poster

Anna Heaps: *Return to learning in the classroom: Knowledge and experience of in-service, secondary teachers on mild traumatic brain injuries*



Over time, the flax grew unwieldy, revealing anxieties about a loss of order or control.



The outdoor classroom of Dr. Julia Ostertag’s research featured flax seed “desks” plotted into a rigid grid.



Gisella Scalse has been working at the Education library since 2002, and in Thunder Bay libraries since she was 14 years old.

# Transforming the Education Library A Learning Commons for Collaboration

*“Libraries are moving away from being storehouses of books and are moving toward being spaces where people come together and collaborate.”*

Many libraries today are undergoing a transformation, and the Education Library is no exception.

Gisella Scalse, the Education Librarian at the Faculty of Education since 2002, explains that this transformation sees the traditional model of the quiet, “no talking” library give way to a vibrant and dynamic Learning Commons, characterized by different types of spaces that allow students to configure their own learning needs.

“The emphasis of the Learning Commons is to create a more welcoming and collaborative space where students can work together and use the library’s resources to explore, learn, analyze, and ask questions, and have assistance in using those resources,” she explains.

## A Vision of Collaboration

While the process of reorganizing the library into a Learning Commons is in its beginning stages, Gisella explains that it will involve opening up space for group work, creating new centres for learning, streamlining existing collections, and creating new collections.

“The front area of the library will feature our more highly used collections and offer tables for collaboration, alongside casual seating. That will be the first thing you see when you walk in: spaces for collaborative work. This is important for the group-work model that is used in the Bachelor of Education program.”

In the proposed new floor plan, the existing service desk will be reconfigured and the front area will be available for student seating. The shelving and collections will be reorganized and relocated towards the middle and back area of the library. Individual study carrels and tables will continue to be available at the back of the

library, and the area with computers and printers will remain in place.

## A “Makerspace” for Creative Learning

The new layout will also afford room for a library “Makerspace.”

The idea for a Makerspace (“Maker Space”) emerged from a focus group held last November with Professional Year BEd students, who talked about the importance of having an area where they could create, invent, construct, and explore with equipment and materials for high-tech and low-tech projects.

“Makerspaces” are spaces where people with shared interests gather to work on projects using equipment or other materials. Popular in schools and public libraries, Makerspaces began in the science and computing fields, featuring equipment like 3D printers and laser cutters. Over time they expanded to include other materials, such as supplies for crafting, sewing, and other DIY (Do-It-Yourself) projects.

“The Makerspace of the Education Library will feature equipment and materials students need to engage in the ‘maker culture,’” Gisella says.

“They can work with circuitry or explore other scientific concepts they’d like to teach. There will be an area with a few computers dedicated to testing out coding or gaming, and there will be opportunity for using the space for creative projects like working with the Ellison and Silhouette cutting machines, fabric, paper, and other crafting materials. This will make it possible for Lakehead students to come into the library to learn, create, and explore the concepts that they will be teaching as part of the Ontario curriculum.”

## More than a Storehouse of Books

An ongoing task of all libraries is to continually update and streamline their collection of resources. In the Education Library, outdated books are donated to Better World Books, a social enterprise that distributes used books to developing countries. Other books are given away, for free, to students.

The ongoing work of streamlining collections reflects the transformation of libraries into multi-purpose spaces for

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creativity, exploration, and learning.

“Libraries have moved away from being just storehouses of books,” Gisella notes. “They are moving toward being spaces where people come together and collaborate – and this is a goal of the Education Library.”

*The Education Library is open to all community members, not only students, staff, and faculty at Lakehead University. Alumni and members of the community are welcome to come in and use the library and many of its resources. For more information, visit <https://library.lakeheadu.ca/education>*

## Education Library

### Some Highlights of the Collection

The Education Library features journals and indexes, curricular resources, media collections, and of course educational books of all kinds. Some of the most-used library holdings include:

**Children/Young Adult Literature Collection:** The children and Young Adult (YA) literature collection is the number one used collection in the library. It features titles written by Canadian authors and authors from other countries, as well as many award-nominated books on children’s issues, such as challenges children may face in relation to their culture or families, and affirmations of diversity.

**Indigenous Resource Collection:** The Education Library, along with the holdings of the Chancellor Paterson library, has an excellent and unique collection of resources to support the Indigenous programs on campus. The Education Library’s Indigenous materials support the Faculty’s NTEP (Native Teacher Education Program) and NLIP (Native Language Instructors’ Program).

**Teaching Kits:** This collection features “hands-on” teaching materials that can be used in support of teaching the Ontario curriculum. The kits include novel sets, big books, posters, puppets, and teaching materials for topics such as poetry, Aboriginal literature, and mathematical manipulatives. Teachers and teacher candidates can sign them out of the library for use in the classroom.

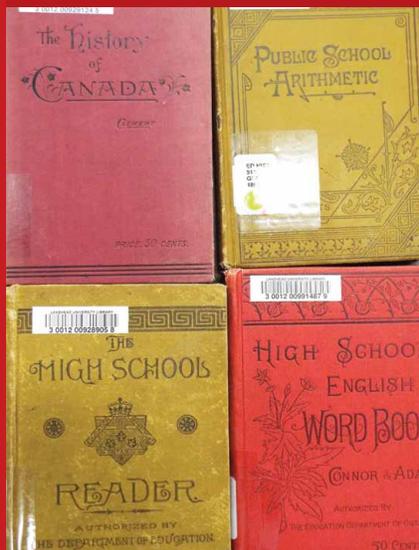
**Online Journals, Databases, and Videos:** The library provides access to many online resources for teaching. These include subscriptions to databases with teaching resources such as TumbleBooks & Bookflix (children’s ebooks); Curriculum Resource Centre, AtoZMaps Online; OPHEA Elementary and Secondary Curriculum Resources, Education Source, and ERIC. The library also provides access to over 50,000 electronic journals, and has subscriptions to video streaming databases such as NFBCampus, Kanopy, and Criterion Collection, which features more than 25,000 documentaries, art house films, and indie films.

**Textbooks: Ministry Approved and Historical:** In the library holdings are textbooks currently approved for use in Ontario classrooms, as well as historical provincial textbooks that are over 150 years old.



The rich children’s literature collection is the most used collection in the library.

The library has an extensive collection of Indigenous materials.



Old Ontario textbooks, dating back to the 1860s, are part of the library holdings.



# AMPA

MARCH 12, 2017



## Representing Lakehead at the OSSTF Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly

Ashley Johnston (middle, in red) and her peers from Ontario Faculties of Education bring greetings to AMPA

Each year, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) organizers, members, and staff invite teacher candidates from Ontario university Education programs to their most important meeting of the year: the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA).

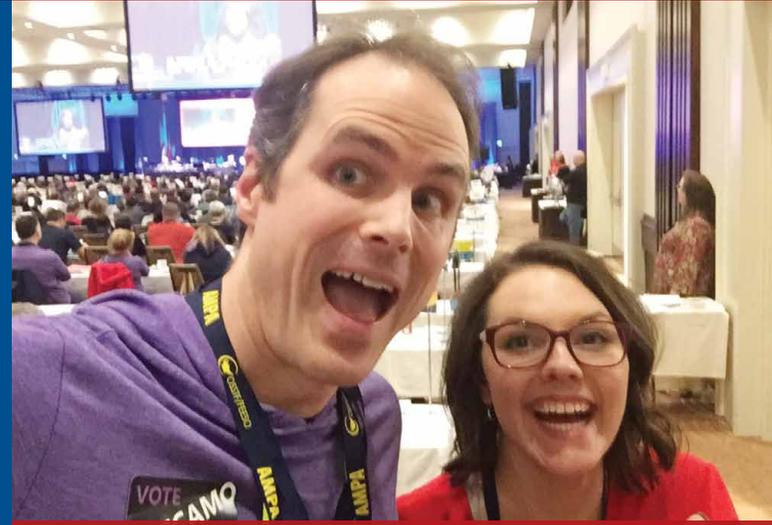
This year, Ashley Johnston, a BEd teacher candidate in the Intermediate/Senior program, was invited to attend AMPA as a guest, and to learn more about the OSSTF.

For Ashley, the March 10-13 weekend in Toronto was an excellent opportunity to engage in many critical conversations about the future of teaching in Ontario, alongside 10 other teacher candidates from across the province.

"My role at AMPA was to represent Lakehead's Faculty of Education for Intermediate/Senior teacher candidates," she explains.

"I was there to get a better idea of the work OSSTF does for people in the field (including teachers, Student Support Professionals, Early Childhood Educators, University Sector Workers, and more). There were many highlights of the weekend, including meeting Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter, and the President of OSSTF, Paul Elliot. I was also able to witness the process of how delegates pass motions, vote on policies, and adopt a budget. As a future teacher, it was a very valuable weekend to learn details about our union and how their decisions affect future, present, and retired teachers and education workers."

Matt Roy, Faculty of Education Lecturer and Faculty Advisor, also attended the meeting, representing Occasional Teachers from the Lakehead District School Board. He says the meetings "represented democracy in action."



Matt Roy and Ashley Johnston at AMPA, during a Q&A session with Minister Hunter.

"Anyone who loves the grassroots nature of democracy would get a thrill out of seeing the action of this meeting. We were 600 people strong in a single ballroom, debating and voting on the future directions of our union. I'm constantly proud of how progressive, forward looking, and compassionate AMPA is. It's about democracy and collectivism in action – working together to create a better education system for all."



## Keri-Lyn Durant Wins “People’s Choice Award” in Three-Minute Thesis Competition

Faculty of Education PhD candidate Keri-Lyn Durant won the “People’s Choice Award” at Lakehead’s inaugural “Three-Minute Thesis” competition, held as part of the University’s Research & Innovation Week in March.

Her presentation, entitled “Applied Theatre and Death Education: Theatre for Meaning,” won by popular vote of the audience, which was comprised primarily of graduate students and supervisors from across the University.

In her three-minute talk, Keri-Lyn began by speaking about the importance of death education in a culture that tries to deny or suppress it.

“From cradle to grave, from womb to tomb, you can trust that you’re going to die – it’s the universal inevitability. But rather than acknowledge death, many of us prefer to exist in a state of denial, or defiance, insistent that death doesn’t lurk around every corner.”

Noting the absence of this curricula in schools, she explains that education addressing death can help us to live more presently and be more comfortable with its inevitability.

It can also acknowledge the lived reality of students who are grieving or expecting the death of someone close to them, which is an estimated 10-15% of students at any given time.

### Applied Theatre for Death Education

Keri-Lyn draws on applied theatre as a means to realize death education.

“Applied theatre is active rather than passive,” she explains. “It is theatre developed to affect positive change while transforming the spectator into what Brazilian director Augusto Boal called the ‘spectactor’ – a person who is involved in acting out responses to difficult situations or social injustices.”

Applied theatre breaks down the “fourth wall” (the imagined wall that separates a performer from the audience) and involves all people in the performance. Using applied theatre for death education can help to make death normative, she notes.

“As spectactors, we create meaning together, actively engaging and acquiring new collective and individual knowledges. The ‘rehearsals’ help us have more authentic and empowered realities. Bringing our relationship with death into the foreground contributes to a positive experience with both it, and with the precious life that precedes it.”

*Congratulations, Keri-Lyn, on winning this award!*



## Welcome Bryanna Scott!

**Program Coordinator, Aboriginal Education Department**

Bryanna Scott has joined the Faculty of Education as Program Coordinator in Aboriginal Education. She brings to the position a number of years of program management.

A Métis educator and writer, and Lakehead alumnus (Master’s of Public Health, Honours Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Arts in Sociology), Bryanna was previously President of the Thunder Bay Métis Council (MNO) and Manager, Student Life and Indigenous Initiatives at Confederation College, supporting and advancing the learning of students and faculty with a specific interest in Aboriginal student success. She is also a current student in the joint collaborative PhD in Education program.

Bryanna is from Fort Frances, Ontario. She has a nine year old daughter, a member of Lake Helen First Nation.

In her new role, she is gearing up for the Faculty of Education’s summer Native Language Instructors’ program, which begins in July.

*Welcome, Bryanna!*





## Faculty News and Awards

### AWARD-WINNING PRINCIPALS

#### Alumnus Darren Lentz Named as One of Canada's Outstanding Principals of 2017



**Darren Lentz**, Kingsway Park/Hyde Park Public School Principal, has been named as one of Canada's Outstanding Principals of 2017.

Darren is a graduate of Lakehead's Bachelor of Education program (1996) and Master of Education program (2004), and is known for his dedication, professionalism, and enthusiasm. He has taught for the Faculty in several programs. He is currently a lecturer in Aboriginal Education and the Native Language Instructors' Program, and also teaches Additional Qualifications courses. In addition, he teaches Outdoor and Hunting Certification courses.

"I am honoured to be named as one of Canada's Outstanding Principals of 2017; to me, this award represents the many strengths of our outstanding team in this school community and within Lakehead Public Schools," he says.

This prestigious award is well-deserved recognition for Darren's achievements. Congratulations, Darren!

#### Alumnus Letizia Tremonti Named Principal of the Year by the Catholic Principals Council of Ontario



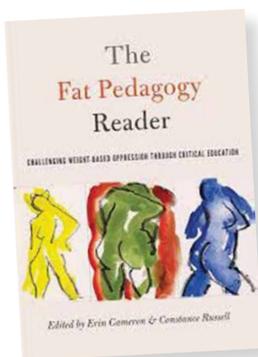
**Letizia Tremonti**, Principal of St. Martin School in Thunder Bay, was named Principal of the Year by the Catholic Principals Council of Ontario and selected by her peers as the Outstanding Principal this year.

Letizia is a Faculty of Education Bachelor of Education alumnus, who graduated with First Class Standing in 1986.

In a press release, she stated: "There have been many wonderful moments over my 31-year career but being nominated for Principal of the Year by my colleagues is one of my greatest moments. It has been an absolute honour to work with such a dedicated, committed, and outstanding group of individuals." She adds that the students are the reason why, "after all these years, it is still a pure joy to go to school."

Congratulations Letizia on this award, recognizing both your commitments and achievements!

#### Fat Pedagogy Reader Wins Another Award



A recent book by Connie Russell, a professor in the Faculty of Education, and Erin Cameron, an Education PhD alumna and assistant professor at Memorial University, has won a second award! *The Fat Pedagogy Reader* (2016, Peter Lang) has been given a 2017 Society of Professors of Education Outstanding Book Award. Focused on addressing weight-based oppression in formal and informal educational settings, the book has been called "essential reading" and "a vital and needed piece of scholarship."