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ALUMNI COUNCIL CHAIR'S MESSAGE

By: Adam Carpenter, Chair, Algoma University Alumni Council

Almost 10 years ago I graduated from Algoma University. I remember being excited, motivated, and nervous about the next stage in my life. I had acquired the skills required to begin a career in the business field and wanted to put the theory into practice. Today, looking back on my career thus far, I use far more of the knowledge gained in the classroom as I ascend the corporate ranks. Board meetings, business presentations, responsibility of business direction, strategy, and leading staff. I look back on the case studies completed in class and appreciate the value Algoma U as an institution bestowed upon me. I am proud to say I am an alumnus of Algoma University when business competitors and partners ask.

I recently was invited to be a judge for the Northern Ontario Business Case Competition where Algoma U hosted other universities in a competition of business knowledge. The event is, in my opinion, the best event the university offers to showcase not only the calibre of the institution, but the calibre of the students who will be moving into the working world. I was more impressed by the students showcasing their learned skills from four years of education, then I was by the celebrity judges.

I feel confident that these students will represent Algoma U well as they begin their next life chapter.

"Celebrating Institutional Pride" is the theme for this issue of *Algoma U Today*. A loose definition of institution is "an established official organization having an important role in the life of a country" and pride as "a feeling or deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements, the achievements of those with whom one is closely associated". I read the stories of our alumni, look back on our award winners, and see the next graduating class knocking on the doors of the wider world. Our alumni are taking leadership roles in our communities, provinces, and country, and I take satisfaction in their successes through our alumni bond. I encourage you to reach out to your Alumni Association and share your stories. I look forward to our growing group of alumni, showcasing our talent and shaping the future of our country.



ACTING PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

By: **Dr. Celia Ross**, Acting President and Vice-Chancellor, Algoma University

This spring, Algoma U celebrated its largest graduating class ever as 264 students earned their degree and became our newest alumni members. Some of these students graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work or a three-year Bachelor of Arts in Community Development from our campus in Timmins, and this coming October, Bachelor of Business Administration students will graduate in Brampton. Congratulations to all Algoma U 2017 graduates!

Today's graduates need to be resilient, as the job market is changing quickly; many jobs that have been with us for generations are threatened by

automation, and new professions are developing, calling for new skills and talents. University graduates need to face this changing world with creativity, imagination, and innovative thinking.

Universities too need to change and adapt. Looking forward to September, Algoma University is excited to welcome the first students in our newest degree program, a four-year Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. Building on our academic strengths in biology and geography, this program responds to the increasing need and desire for environmental literacy. It also incorporates practical experience, as

third-year students will receive course credit for a required internship during which they will have the choice of working at several federal or provincial ministries, at government sector labs or at private sector organizations that focus on environmental science.

As Algoma U changes and adapts, we are guided by our **Algoma University 2016-2021 Strategic Plan**. One initiative coming out of this plan is the creation of a Learning Commons. The main floor of the Wishart Library is changing quickly; it is one of the busiest and most productive areas of the University now, as students benefit from its group work areas, the presence of the Library Help Desk, the ITS Help Desk, numerous computer stations, and the English Writing Lab in this bright, welcoming space. Over the coming year, we will continue to develop this hub of learning. The lower floor will remain a quiet floor housing our books and remaining paper periodicals – now few in number as we have moved to electronic access to a wide variety of journals and government documents.

Algoma's Strategic Plan also focuses on Anishinaabe Inendamowin – Anishinaabe Thought. Together with regional Anishinaabe communities, Algoma U offered our second "Taking Care of Land" Symposium in May. Experts and community members joined to explore the inclusion of cultural and traditional practices of land management, planning, and use in Northern Ontario. We hope that from this type of collaborative learning, new courses will emerge to respond to the needs of Anishinaabe communities.

Recently, the Board of Governors has opened the search for Algoma University's next President and Vice-Chancellor. As we move forward institutionally to respond to the rapid change that characterizes our age, we also look forward to welcoming our next leader. Your continued support, as alumni, as current or retired employees, as members of the broader community, sustains us as we strive to provide our students with the knowledge, skills and tools they will need to thrive in tomorrow's world.

Dr. Celia Ross,
Acting President and Vice-Chancellor

ART EXPRESS'D: JESSIE BUCHANAN'S CROSS-CANADA JOURNEY

By: Meaghan Kent

Studying at Algoma University was a life changing event for **Jessie Buchanan**. While earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Algoma U, Buchanan was exposed to a plethora of skills and theories in the field of art, but also began a spiritual journey toward understanding her cultural heritage. From 2006 to 2010, Buchanan began her spiritual awakening, which today, continues to influence her work.

From Southern Ontario, Buchanan chose to study at the University based upon the opportunity to connect with her Ojibwe heritage as well as with the arts culture of Northern Ontario. She took elective courses with Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig (SKG). *"Grand Chief Eddie Benton-Banai helped me embrace my heritage and identity as a First Nations person. Through the Shingwauk courses, I became really connected to Anishinaabe spirituality, which I still follow and practice today,"* she says.

It was during her time at Algoma U that her work began to be informed by her Ojibwe heritage. She continued this work at the Toronto Art Therapy Institute, where she developed her own art therapy models that contributed to the



literature on helping heal First Nations communities. Today, her artwork is often remarked as being Canadian, inspired by the Woodland style and is used as a way to *"discover, revitalize, and celebrate Ojibwe traditional culture, language, and spirituality"* and *"to capture the ineffable quality of spirit (mantiouwabi)"*. She draws upon spiritual connections to the land. Buchanan's work is also often inspired by the ruggedness of Lake Superior, which she was first exposed to while studying at Algoma U. She frequents Lake Superior Provincial Park annually with her family to camp and paint. Her related paintings are sold within the Agawa Bay Visitor Centre in the summer months.

It is for such uniqueness that Buchanan was selected as one of three Canadian contemporary artists to showcase her work at the Winnipeg Art Gallery's (WAG) Canada 150 coast-to-coast-to-coast exhibit, titled Art Express'd/Art Exprime. After a nation-wide search, Buchanan was chosen to travel across Canada's three territories in a 20-foot metal shipping mobile art studio, making stops in Inuvik, Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Churchill, and the Rankin Inlet. Her artwork was installed in the mobile shipping container, depicting her vision of Canada and the diversity of the northern landscape. *"My vision for the project was a mobile art studio that represented the Canadian north and all of its diversity but also its traditional cultures and stories that reflect the landscape and the people that live up north."*

The other two artists did the same, travelling different routes, with stops made in each of Canada's provinces.

Besides showing off their artistic creations, the artists engaged with community members in a variety of workshops, inspiring others to get involved in art and to also share their ideas of Canada. Artwork created from these workshops was then added to the travelling exhibits.

Buchanan's travelling exhibit, titled "Voices of the Landscape", featured prominently two-dimensional acrylic paintings. Artwork created answered "How do you understand yourself as a Canadian?" and "Do you feel connected with your land and/or environment?" She also used her mobile studio to bring attention to the beauty and the struggles of northern communities.

"It is such an honour to be selected for this project. I believe it will help me on my own journey of growth; artistically, personally, and spiritually. I am always wanting to celebrate Canada's First Peoples and what better way to do that than through the arts!"

Although Art Express'd/Art Exprime allowed Buchanan's artwork to reach a national level and gain plenty of publicity, she was most happy to be able to continue her spiritual journey and celebrate her Anishinaabe heritage through art, which first began in the art studios at Algoma U.





In photo from left to right: Dr. István Imre, Dr. Jennifer Foote, Dr. Brandon Schamp, Dr. Pedro Antunes, Bob McDonald, and Dr. Isabel Molina.

ALGOMA U LAUNCHES NEW ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

By: Nadine Robinson

When Algoma University set out to create a new program to attract students from across the province, they went about things differently. They flipped the question and asked what problems need to be solved, and built a program around that. The result is the impressive new Honours Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science program, which by nature, is multidisciplinary, focuses on experiential learning, and draws on the strengths of place.

“The environment is one of the biggest concerns people have these days,” said Dr. Pedro Antunes, Associate Professor, and Canada Research Chair in Invasive Species Biology. *“We’re too many people on the planet, facing issues such as climate change and resource management, which impact environmental quality, the economy, and our lives. This program helps students understand the links between people and the environment, preparing them to, for example, deal with and connect issues from food security to toxicology, cancer biology, and waste management.”*

Students will have a number of core courses and electives bridging biology, chemistry, geography, and geology, melding in Indigenous knowledge in natural resource management, ethics, environmental law, among others.

Experiential learning is another differentiator for the program, as it not only has a number of courses with labs where students get hands-on experience in areas like toxicology, analytical chemistry, ecology, and pollution, but there is also a significant internship component.

“We have established partnerships with a variety of companies, government labs, and not-for-profits where students will not only gain work experience, but will work to fulfill specific objectives... from understanding solar panels and their links to climate change, to the management of natural resources such as invasive species prevention and control. This linking of our students to our community benefits everyone.”

In addition to labs and the internship, Antunes believes that the field studies component is important. *“Where field studies are disappearing at other universities, it is something that we really value here. You need to get out*

into nature to understand it.”

“Algoma University is the perfect place for an Environmental Science program because we are uniquely situated at an intersection of forests, lakes, rivers, and industry,” added Dr. Jennifer Foote, Associate Professor, Department of Biology. *“We have great Environmental Science faculty doing high-quality research including invasive species research in terrestrial and aquatic systems, plant ecology and biochemistry, bird behaviour, and GIS characterization of forests.”*

The ability to be involved in research is also important for students. *“Students get to know faculty and benefit from many opportunities to get involved in research projects including volunteering, part-time jobs, full-time summer employment, internships, and in labs,”* said Foote.

Antunes adds, *“The thesis option further prepares students, and gives them independence to apply the scientific method and everything that they’ve learned. Many of our students have been successful in being published in peer reviewed journals, which prepares them for graduate studies, and makes their application stand out from others.”*

“All of these government labs were put here for a reason... the Sault is an ideal place for Environmental Science studies. Building on the natural environment that surrounds us here, and the First Nations’ traditional knowledge in the use of environmental resources, we layer on occidental knowledge, and leverage partnerships with related organizations to provide students a first class experience, to prepare them for grad school or the work world.”

CBC’s Radio’s Quirks and Quarks’ Bob McDonald visited campus in March to launch the program, and lauded the new program and its vital importance.

“There is a huge demand for qualified personnel with expertise in environmental science,” said Antunes. *“Environmental health and human health are inextricably linked, and Algoma U is now poised to leverage its strengths to become the place where people come to study the environment. We’re proud of the Environmental Science program that we’ve built to ensure that students leave here prepared to tackle big problems with big ideas.”*



From left to right: Brendan Fera, Alecia Finateri, Sarah Nadon, Kyle Snape, Anastasia Zagordo, Reshma Jose Pullambra, Leon Barbeau, Leah Hodgson, Christine Caron, Derissa Vincentini and Homan Al-Ani. Absent from photo: Tuesday Verslype.

BIOLOGY CLASS OF 2017 DESTINED FOR SUCCESS

By: Meaghan Kent

Pharmacist, physician, veterinarian, paleontologist, dentist, researcher, and lawyer. These are just some of the ambitions of this year's graduating honours biology students. With bright careers ranging across the disciplines of medicine, science, and the social sciences, this year's biology students might be the most diverse in the history of the program.

The group of 11 students impressed faculty, staff, and the public at the annual Honours Biology Thesis Poster Presentations in early March, where they presented their high-calibre research but also spoke of their big career ambitions. Thesis topics covered everything from marine life to soil, plants, and birds. Aside from conducting field research, analyzing the data, designing a poster display, and defending their thesis, students were also encouraged to seek out financial support to help fund their thesis. Six were generously supported by the prestigious Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) Student Research Award scholarships. Thus, many were in fact paid to conduct their thesis, despite it also being a requirement of their degree.

"This year's graduating cohort of students have shown an admirable work ethic and have done truly impressive research with faculty members of the Biology

Department in the context of their honours thesis course. Our students have applied to graduate school, law school, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and medical school," adds Dr. István Imre, Associate Professor in the Department of Biology and course instructor for the honours thesis class.

The Class of 2017 credit their professors and the personal attention received in the program for their success. For Sarah Nadon, who will be attending Bora Laskin Faculty of Law at Lakehead University in the fall, Dr. Jennifer Foote helped guide Nadon toward academic success after a rocky start to her undergraduate career. *"At Algoma U, I received personalized academic planning from someone who knew my strengths and weaknesses as not only a student but as an individual... I can say that if I was at a larger university I would have never received this kind of personal treatment from a professor. Dr. Foote is one of the reasons I decided to apply to many of the graduate programs as well as to law school. Thanks to her I completed an honours thesis, something I never thought I was capable of doing."*

Alecia Finateri, who has plans to earn her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine, has Dr. Pedro Antunes and Dr. Brandon Schamp to thank. *"I was able to go to them with questions about professional school and they would always offer me great advice... What I appreciated most from them is that they challenged me and allowed me to think for myself rather than give me the answer, which I think*

will greatly benefit me in vet school."

The group also feel the hands-on research opportunities that have highlighted their four years at Algoma U have aided their already strong applications to graduate schools across Canada. Christine Caron, who will begin her Masters of Science in Pathology at Western University this fall and hopes to one day become a physician, enjoyed working with Dr. Isabel Molina during her undergraduate days. Last summer, her hard work was rewarded with a funded trip to San Diego, California, conducting cutting-edge research on corn for Molina. Anastasia Zagordo accompanied Caron on the trip. Zagordo has applied to dentistry school.

Leah Hodgson, who has aspirations of being a pharmacist, believes the varying interests of this year's biology students can be attributed to the general scope of the biology program. Students are able to pursue their own interests and will not be limited in career opportunities after graduation. *"I think the biology program is really great in that it covers a broad spectrum of topics, which leaves the door open for a lot of post-graduate opportunities. Rather than being committed to a narrow discipline, with this degree we have the option to pursue anything from medical school to research in ecology."*

This year's honours graduating class proves the opportunities really are endless with an Algoma University degree.



Algoma University's Statement on Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and Beyond...

Issued February 2, 2017

Algoma University has a special mission, as articulated in the Algoma University Act (2008), 'to be a teaching-oriented University' and 'to cultivate cross-cultural learning between Aboriginal communities and other communities, in keeping with the history of Algoma University College and its geographic site', the site of the Shingwauk Indian Residential School from 1874 to 1970. In relocating to the Shingwauk site in 1971, in partnership with the Keewatinung Anishinaabe Institute, Algoma embraced a commitment to working with Anishinaabe and other Canadian communities, Indigenous and Non-Indigenous, regionally and nationally, with affinitive ties to the site, to achieve the true realization of Shingwauk's Vision of the Teaching Wigwam.

Longstanding members of our Algoma University community have helped us to understand how the Residential School Survivor community and their dedication to supporting one another has helped us grow as an institution and as a community. Despite many challenges over many years, we have moved forward together and have much to celebrate, including: the establishment of the Shingwauk Project in 1979; the

first Shingwauk Reunion in 1981, and the many Reunions and annual

Gatherings continued since; the First Nations/Canadian Cross-Cultural Development Policy in 1991; the CSAA/AU Partnership Agreement, and the Covenant with the Shingwauk Education Trust in 2006; the development of Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, and Algoma's Charter of Independence in 2008; and the bequest of the project and research legacy of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation in 2012.

Today, Algoma University's Board of Governors, with the support of its many partners, but notably the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and the Shingwauk Education Trust, proclaims its profound support for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action...and beyond.

This statement of support has been guided by our Anishinaabe partners. We have thought carefully about how over the years our Anishinaabe partners have helped the University take shape, about the role and connection our University (in partnership) has had through the TRC process, and about our unique position and responsibility moving forward.

During the Shingwauk Gathering and Conference of 2012, Algoma University was pleased to join in partnership with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and the Shingwauk Education Trust in unveiling two special plaques declaring our shared site as a national memorial to all the children who

attended Residential Schools in Canada. Our commitment in 2012, as articulated so eloquently on those plaques, was as follows:

"In keeping with the spirit and intent embodied within the Shingwauk site, the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association, Shingwauk Education Trust, and Algoma University hereby designate these lands as a National Memorial to all those who attended one or more of the many Residential Schools across Turtle Island. We hold a special place in our hearts for those children who never returned home. May their memories live on."

Over the years, we were privileged to have hosted the Truth and Reconciliation Commission several times. Both Dr. Marie Wilson and Senator Murray Sinclair, leaders of the TRC, appeared as keynote speakers, as well as senior staff and special guests, at Gatherings in 2012, 2014, and 2015. In 2016, Algoma University presented Senator Sinclair with an honorary doctorate. At that ceremony, Senator Sinclair spoke of the important role our University will play moving forward:

"Algoma University is a place we should all be proud to be connected to. It has been one of the first institutions that has reached out to engage with the Survivor community, because it is located in a building that used to be a residential school. It, among all the universities in this country, has a strong connection to that residential school past. But it also has a strong role to play in showing the way to reconciliation to ensure that the Survivors in this community (are) involved

The Seven Grandfather Teachings, commonly shared guiding principles of the Anishinaabe:

Nibwaakaawin (wisdom)

Zaagidiwin (love)

Mnaadendamowin (respect)

Aakodewewin (bravery)

Gwekwaadiziwin (honesty)

Dibadendizawin (humility)

Debwewin (truth)

in what this institution does ... and if this institution can show the rest of this country, then we will all be proud of it.” (Sinclair, May 30, 2016)

Today, Algoma University officially proclaims our support for the Calls to Action... and beyond. We pledge to our partners that we will continue to work with you to bring Survivors and those affected intergenerationally to our campus to continue the work of healing and reconciliation through the educational work that you started initially through the Keewatinung Institute, and formally with us in 1979 with the Shingwauk Project.

We will adhere to our recently approved Strategic Plan, which prominently features the Seven Grandfather teachings of Nibwaakaawin (Wisdom), Zaagi’idiwin (Love), Minaadendamowin (Respect), Aakode’ewin (Bravery), Gwayakwaadiziwin (Honesty), Dabaadendizawin (Humility), and Debwewin (Truth). We will position Anishinaabe Inendamowin (Thought) as one of the key strategic priorities for the institution.

During 2017, a year marking the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation, in collaboration with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association, we will install a museum exhibition throughout the main floor (third floor) of Shingwauk Hall to commemorate the history of the Shingwauk Indian Residential School and the Survivors. (Call to Action: Museums and Archives.) This will bolster our capacity to provide public education on

the history of the Shingwauk site and the larger national Residential Schools and colonial contexts. (Calls to Action: Commemoration.)

Since the signing of the Covenant with the Shingwauk Education Trust in 2006, Algoma University has been working with Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig, a sister institution on the Shingwauk site, to further Anishinaabe control of Anishinaabe education. We offer the first and only full university degree in an Aboriginal language in Canada, the Anishinaabemowin degree. With Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig, we are working towards an Anishinaabe Studies degree and other specialized programming around Anishinaabe issues. We pledge to continue to work closely with Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig towards the true realization of Chief Shingwauk’s “Teaching Wigwam” vision. (Calls to Action: Language and Culture.)

Algoma University will continue to develop programming using advisory committees with significant Anishinaabe membership and including significant Anishinaabe content, such as our Community Economic and Social Development degree and our Bachelor of Social Work. In 1986, a community committee, the Aboriginal Education Committee, started the development on campus of what is today a full range of support services for Anishinaabe students. We will seek continual improvement of these services, including supports for transition into the workplace. As well, we will bolster our capacity to engage in research and education that supports

healing and reconciliation. We will build on our significant archival and library collections and we will hire a research chair in Healing and Reconciliation. (Calls to Action: Education.)

We will review our policies and practices through an UNDRIP lens (United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). (Calls to Action: Settlement Parties and UNDRIP.)

We will use our influence to support local, regional, and national efforts across different sectors to realize true reconciliation. We have both the grassroots and scholarly expertise and experience to assist many others in their efforts to address the Calls to Action and beyond. (Calls to Action: Education for Reconciliation.)

Through the work of the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, we pledge to support all parties interested in honouring the children who never returned home and in supporting their families. Our ongoing efforts to commemorate and memorialize can also inform others’ work toward those ends (Calls to Action: Commemoration.)

Most importantly, we pledge to go beyond the Calls to Action and to work with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig to define what this will mean for us.

Chi-miigwetch.
Our thanks.



Annie MacDonald

CESD PROGRAM PROVIDING UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

By: Marc Capancioni

As the only undergraduate degree of its kind in Canada, the Community Economic and Social Development (CESD) program at Algoma U provides a unique opportunity for students to take part in public engagement while making positive changes – both locally and around the world.

This fact is perhaps most evident during the placement segment of the program. In their final year of study, students complete a three-month assignment at a community organization. The importance of the experience gained can't be overstated.

Take, for example, **Annie MacDonald**. She spent her placement assisting Syrian refugees in the newcomer settlement services program at the Sault Community Career Centre. Between January and March 2017, the CESD student provided support for the centre's language for work initiative, which delivers linguistics training to newcomers.

"Working with refugee families was a wonderful experience," said MacDonald. "Gaining language skills helps refugees get meaningful employment in the community. It's important to empower people to help themselves."

Learning what refugees went through to get to Canada was particularly eye-opening for MacDonald. *"They've been through so much," she said. "The placement allowed me to do a lot of self-reflecting and develop more empathy for people who are less fortunate."*

Being part of a university program that provided this type of opportunity was especially special for MacDonald, who plans on using the experience gained while studying at Algoma U to continue helping others after graduating. *"It's important to support communities in building strong networks and connections," she said. "Solving community problems as a whole is a core component of the CESD program, and it's something I hope to be involved with throughout my career."*

Kali Burnell would certainly agree. After graduating from a community worker program at a Southern Ontario college, she began working at a youth crisis shelter in downtown Toronto. Wanting to get further involved in community and social development, Burnell enrolled in the CESD program at Algoma U and headed north a few years ago.

"The program offers a well-rounded education, including research, economics, social welfare and policy," she said. "That's what drew me to Algoma U. Coming here also allowed me to explore Northern Ontario."

For her placement, Burnell was a caseworker at the Indian Friendship Centre and Sault Ste. Marie Courthouse. In this role, she interacted with and provided support to Indigenous peoples caught up in the justice system.

"Helping individuals navigate through such a complex system was a great experience," said Burnell. "I was able to offer support, services, and referrals to help people transition out of the criminal justice system."

After graduating, Burnell plans on pursuing a career in youth justice. *"I'd like to work in the system to advocate for alternative rehabilitation strategies*

within youth correctional and detention centres," she said. "This would encompass restorative approaches, diversion programs, and alternative rehabilitation methods within these institutions to seek a more meaningful approach to individual and community healing."

No doubt, the experience and skills Burnell gained at Algoma University will help make this goal possible.



Kali Burnell

DR. SHEILA GRUNER: THE LINK BETWEEN ALGOMA U AND THE COLOMBIAN PEACE ACCORD

By: Nadine Robinson

Understanding and defending the voice of those often unheard in development projects became a passion for Dr. Sheila Gruner during her undergraduate studies while on a semester abroad in Colombia. She was in Colombia in 1991, when special territorial and jurisdictional rights were entrenched in the constitution for Indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples. Now, as an Associate Professor at Algoma University in Community Economic and Social Development (CESD), Gruner is coming full circle. She has been invited to work with the Ethnic Commission for Peace and the Defense of Territorial Rights in Colombia, as an academic and technical expert, working towards the successful implementation of the Havana Peace Accords, signed in November of 2016.



Four years of peace dialogues between the Colombian government and guerilla groups culminated in the Havana Peace Accords, aimed at ending the longest standing internal armed conflict in the Americas.

“Neither the government nor the guerillas represent Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities who have their own territorial authorities. After their rights were recognized in the 1991 Constitution, including the collective titling of millions of hectares of land, paramilitary violence escalated, linked to economic and territorial interests, leading to the displacement of people, with extremely high numbers of civilian victims,” said Gruner. *“When the peace talks started in 2012, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian organizations advocated for their own representation and formed the Ethnic Commission for Peace and Territorial Rights, which resulted in the historic inclusion of the ‘Ethnic Chapter.’”*

Canada, Switzerland, and Ecuador have been asked to accompany the Ethnic Commission and provide technical and political support for the implementation of the Accords, specifically in relation to the Ethnic Chapter.

“This is exciting and important for Algoma U given our special mandate, and Canada’s experience with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which situates us to learn from and support the implementation of the peace accords,

and foster links between grassroots communities. We’re also making links for our students and furthering educational and research exchanges as this unfolds.”

During her sabbatical, Gruner lived in Colombia and worked as a visiting professor and researcher in Bogota, at La Javeriana University in the Department of Environmental and Rural Studies, Masters of Rural Development, and at the Observatory for Ethnic and Campesino Territories. She worked with groups during 2014-2016 that lead to the formation of the Ethnic Commission in March 2016. In 2016, Gruner also released a book she edited on Indigenous and Afro-Colombian contributions to peace, written by social movement leaders and academics (including herself).

“The recent visit of Charo Mina Rojas (a representative of the Black Communities Process and the Ethnic Commission) to Algoma University for an International Women’s Day talk on Indigenous and Afro-Colombian women arose in the context of this work. Students heard how women have been crucial protagonists for peace and for alternatives to development, and how women, especially racialized women, are disproportionately affected by Colombia’s unrest.”

Gruner works with the Ethnic Commission, liaising with Canadian ministries and civil society organizations

in Canada, towards ensuring that underrepresented voices are heard in Colombia.

“Canada has a free trade agreement with Colombia, and Canadians need to know how trade and development interests are playing out in Colombia’s conflict. Development is increasingly linked to violence and displacement and we need to find ways to address this. Pressure from Canadians helps raise visibility towards ending the violence, senseless deaths, and human rights abuses that are falling under the radar.”

Gruner encourages Canada and the international community to: (1) recognize the Indigenous and Afro-Colombian historical cultural, territorial, and constitutional rights; (2) support alternatives to development that have strong environmental grounding and include community consultation; and (3) emphatically support the peace process and the Ethnic Chapter specifically.

“Reconciliation, restitution, and reparations in face of historic injustice are imperatives across the Americas. I will continue to work with students, activists, academics, and others committed to decolonizing practice and pedagogy, to support peace and development alternatives in Colombia, Canada and elsewhere to help give a voice to those who have been unheard.”



ALGOMA UNIVERSITY GRAD WINS DOVE FELLOWSHIP

By: Meaghan Kent

Walpole First Nation grad **Brantee Ermatinger** recently received exciting news that she has been awarded a prestigious DOVE Fellowship from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. The fellowship, valued at approximately \$48,000, will help fund her Master of Arts in Linguistics from the American post-secondary institution, and cover living expenses while completing her graduate program.

Ermatinger enrolled at Algoma University after completing a two-year general arts and sciences diploma from Lambton College in Southern Ontario. Before earning her diploma, she became involved in a grassroots Ojibwe language immersion program within her community, which piqued her interest in learning her tribe's language. The program, however, was basic in nature. *"It didn't give me any grammatical*

structure to understand precisely what I'm saying and what they're precisely saying to me. It didn't help me to understand any grammatical rules or nuances in Ojibwe."

From there, Ermatinger enrolled in the three-year Bachelor of Arts in Anishinaabemowin program at Algoma University, where she has learned the grammar and structure of the Ojibwe language. She graduated at the 2017 June Convocation ceremony.

While studying in Sault Ste. Marie, Ermatinger became interested in the study of linguistics, the structure and science of languages.

But even then, Ermatinger never considered further pursuing the study of linguistics. It took some convincing from Professor Howard Webkamigad, a professor at Algoma U who has his Master of Arts in Linguistics, for Ermatinger to see the value in such higher learning.

The more Ermatinger researched linguistics, the more interested she became. Plus, with very few other

Ojibwe people classified as linguists in North America, she realized her language was severely understudied and underrepresented.

In the winter, Ermatinger visited the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis to explore the possibility of studying in the United States. *"There were lots of enthusiastic young people in the language here, which was really exciting for me. It was nice to connect with other people who are learning the language and speaking the language."*

Ermatinger then applied to the program. Within only a few days of applying, she received a phone call from the program's director, accepting her into the program.

After her acceptance, Ermatinger was notified that the University of Minnesota was nominating her for the prestigious DOVE (Diversity of Views and Experiences) Fellowship, a graduate-level grant awarded to students who promote diverse views, research, scholarship, and creative excellence. Each graduate program is only allowed to nominate two students for the fellowship each year and the Institute of Linguistics hadn't had a DOVE Fellowship student in many years.

Much to her surprise, Ermatinger received notice shortly after stating she was a successful candidate for the DOVE Fellowship. The \$48,000 award will cover her living allowances, travel expenses, tuition, books, health coverage, and more. *"I'm very honoured to be awarded this fellowship. It's nice – for the first time in a long time I don't have to work two jobs and be a fulltime student. I don't have to have the added stress. It's nice to not have to worry and to just concentrate on my studies and research."*

While pursuing her masters, with the intent of later earning her doctorate, Ermatinger will be examining psycholinguistics. *"Psycho-linguistics is an area that has very little information from the Ojibwe people or the Ojibwe language. I think by studying it, it will not only help with my tribe and our people, but also with other tribes to create and welcome more diverse views."*

Before beginning her formal studies in September of 2017, Ermatinger will be participating in a paid six-week research institute program this summer at the University of Minnesota.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE CREATES CAREER SUCCESS

By: Rick McGee

Effective leadership skills **Mohmmad Alanbary** cultivated as an Algoma University student now serve him well as an achievement-focused graduate.

The 27-year-old completed a Bachelor of Computer Science degree in 2016. He also earned a Certificate in Law & Justice at Algoma U.

Subsequent career successes are following two tracks in his native Saudi Arabia. Only two months after graduating, Alanbary secured an IT Procurement Analyst position with the Saudi Telecom Company (STC). One of the country's largest corporations, STC is a major worldwide provider of technology services for businesses and organizations.

The alumnus also heads a thriving business created while he attended Algoma University.

"SSD (for Saudi Self-Development) is the name of the company established in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario," he said. "It seeks to empower Saudi individuals to achieve success in different industries. SSD acts as a mediator between our community and organizations that offer self-development in people of high standing."

Alanbary subsequently shifted company operations to Saudi Arabia. The venture's current priority is called the Saudi TOT Project. SSD enjoys a 90 per cent success rate based on participants' exam results, assignment marks, and attendance records. Positive media coverage has resulted because the project helps those involved share knowledge.

"I always say that destiny brought me to Algoma U in January 2013," the personable young professional recalled. "It was a great experience and I learned a lot. I had heard that Sault Ste. Marie is a small town and that you would never be someone important if you moved there. But my time there proved that's not the case at all. I had many opportunities to prove that I could make changes within my own community and within the Canadian community. What I saw and experienced in the Sault was far different from what I had been told!"

By taking full advantage of the University's benefits and life in the larger community, Alanbary flourished.



"Most of the classes contain approximately 30 students," he explained. "You can discuss your ideas with the professor and share your own knowledge with others in the same class. Dr. Julian Hermida is my idol at Algoma U. He inspired me in my academic studies. I have a Certificate in Law and Justice because of him. And Dr. Yi Feng was one of those who inspired me in my computer science studies. My programs opened many doors for me, not only in the computer field. I finished university and I found myself doing what I had learned."

Participation in student government significantly enhanced Alanbary's development. Peers elected him as the Algoma University Students' Union's international representative.

"Through that responsibility and by working with other students and staff, I gained great experience," he said. "The Algoma U environment allowed me to make an impact by making changes when I found myself obligated to put issues on the table and solve them. I learned when people believe in you, you should be their voice and help them. Algoma U taught me knowledge, confidence, and leadership."

A memorable event took place in 2013 when the Saudi flag joined more than 40 other national colours flying at the Sault's Civic Centre.

"This sends a message that international students are part of this community," Alanbary noted. "When I came to the city, people welcomed me. They think that my

culture is part of their culture. That's why I love Sault Ste. Marie."

In 2015 the Saudi embassy honoured Alanbary by electing him President of the Saudi Students' Association of Sault Ste. Marie. In that capacity, he represented the embassy and the Saudi Cultural Bureau in the area.

The grateful grad is already looking forward to a future visit. *"I need to return and say hi to all of my friends and people who made me a successful person. Algoma U has done a lot for Mohmmad. I think this is the time to give back!"*





Dr. Alice Ridout would like to sincerely thank those who sponsored 15 copies of each book, to be held in the library for all to access. Algoma Read sponsors include: The United Steelworkers Local 2724, Dr. Richard McCutcheon and members of the Departments of History and Philosophy, and English and Film.

COME READ WITH US!

By: Nadine Robinson

Long before contemplating a doctorate in English, teenager **Alice Ridout** was launching her professional tennis career in England. With England's infamously soggy weather, Ridout turned to books to pass the endless rain delays before and during games. Ironically, it was her time during those rain delays, and not on the court, that would define her career.

Once sidelined from professional tennis by an injury, Ridout returned to school and was drawn to English. "I could not quite believe that I could get a university degree in something I enjoyed so much!" Ridout said. "I love that reading enables you to see the world from different perspectives... and to live a whole range of lives vicariously in different places and times."

Now an Assistant Professor at Algoma U,

Ridout wants to share her love of books with the community and students through her brainchild program Algoma Reads: "In a nutshell, Algoma Reads is an amped up book club to expose participants to contemporary Canadian books, and then have the opportunity to meet and engage with the authors about their work."

She stresses that Algoma Reads is for everyone: "You don't have to attend Algoma University to take part in Algoma Reads. You may choose to round out your summer reading list with one of the books and then come to campus to meet the author. Or maybe a high school student will want to reach ahead and take the class, read the five books, and meet their authors for university credit. Perhaps a parent, sibling, or grandparent may want to read a book or two with a current student and then take part in the conversation together. There is no fixed way to engage with the books nor the authors, we are simply offering the space for discussions and learning to take place."

Five books have been selected for the program from the CBC Canada Reads shortlist, including: Madeline Ashby's *Company Town*, Andre Alexis' *Fifteen Dogs*, M. G. Vassanji's *Nostalgia*, Katherena Vermette's *The Break*, and Sheila Watt-Cloutier's *The Right to Be Cold*.

The program started with a community book club held on campus this past spring, in preparation for the fall's public lectures and an Algoma Reads-related course.

Ridout hopes that Algoma Reads may also attract students who never thought about studying English to the program. "English teaches critical thinking, how to formulate opinions based on fact, and articulate yourself effectively. These are skills the world needs more of." Ridout pointed out the irony of how often people ask, "What can you do with an English degree?" when the nation's top job is currently occupied by an English graduate. In today's changing job market, the question is not 'what can do with an English degree?' so much as 'what can you do without an English degree?' All university graduates need strong writing and communication skills in a job market where it is likely they will have to have several different careers over a lifetime. English courses give students those crucial transferable skills."

Ridout, her colleagues, as well as community and student volunteers have put countless hours into the Algoma Reads program to make it a success. "I've always felt that we should aim high, because even if you fall, you still end up a bit higher than when you started."

(This is not surprising from Ridout considering that even when a professional tennis career was ruled out for her, after spinal surgery, she played tennis at the University of Toronto and earned a place in U of T's Sports Hall of Fame.)

"Yes, Algoma Reads is ambitious, but our students and this community will rise to the occasion to read, think, discuss, and learn about themselves and others through these books. Inspired by Chief Shingwauk's vision, we will gather for intercultural, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational discussions. Come read with us!"

Join the Algoma Reads Facebook group or contact algoma.reads@algonau.ca for more information.



SCHOOL PRIDE CARRIES DUO-SPORT ATHLETE TO SUCCESS

By: Meaghan Kent

On September 4th 2016, Aksel Pollari's car was packed, ready to make the trek to begin the next four years of his life at a bigger post-secondary institution in Southern Ontario. Feeling apprehensive about studying in lecture halls larger than his hometown of Echo Bay, Ontario, he decided at the last minute to stay closer to home, studying at the less-intimidating Algoma U.

"Something felt right about Algoma University. I had friends who went to Algoma U, I knew the coaching staff. It seemed more welcoming. Plus, I could still live at home, be with my family, and do all of the outdoor things I do every weekend. I wouldn't have to give up my lifestyle for school."

On the first day of class, Pollari walked into the Registrar's Office in Shingwauk Hall and enrolled.

"The longer I'm here, the happier I am," he says. *"I am really glad I made the decision to go to Algoma U."*

Since making the life-changing decision, Pollari has committed to the Algoma

Thunderbirds, being one of the only duo-sport student-athletes to compete in the 2016-17 season. In his rookie year, Pollari competed on the cross-country running and wrestling teams and had favourable results. With running, he had the second highest finish at the OUA Championships for the men. In wrestling, Pollari finished in fourth place at the OUA Championships, just narrowly missing out on the podium and a chance to compete at the U Sports Championships. Such performances earned him the accolades of Rookie of the Year, Coaches' Award, highest Academic Achievement Award, as well as the coveted Male Student-Athlete of the Year Award.

These achievements wouldn't have been possible had he gone to a larger university. *"There are so many opportunities here. Just in sports, the fact that I got to play on two teams in my first year is quite a big deal. Here, my coaches have really ensured that I am happy and get to do whatever I want. They really took a chance on me."*

In fact, Pollari had not competed in the sport of wrestling since his freshman year of high school. *"I did really well in wrestling in Grade 9 but didn't compete after that. I was more focused on running and track and field. So the fact that [Head Coach] Trevor Manchester let me wrestle on the team with almost no experience*

and then developed my athleticism in only a few months to a fourth-place finish is quite incredible. No other school would have ever let me wrestle competitively or even practice with the team. They wouldn't have even considered me. I owe everything to Trevor for giving me this opportunity and really pushing me to be the best that I can be."

Pollari's enthusiasm for Algoma U runs deeper than athletics. In class, Pollari is enjoying his coursework, crediting his professors for cultivating a keen interest in science. So much so that he recently declared his degree in the Honours Bachelor of Science in Biology program. *"I'm really enjoying my biology classes, but I also really like the other subjects I have been able to take. In my first year, I was exposed to political science, psychology, forensic science, law, and more. It's been really great. And in every class, the professors have been extremely helpful and really supportive of me as an athlete. It's great being in such small classes where I can talk to my professors."*

Plus, studying on a smaller campus has its perks too, he says. *"Some of my friends at bigger universities have to walk 30 minutes to their next class. That's not the case here. It's only a two-minute walk from my wrestling practice to class, or from the gym to the biology lab. It's really convenient."* On Thursdays, Pollari notes the convenience, when he juggles nine hours of classes and three hours of practices from 7:30am until 11:00pm at night. *"I'm pretty sure I couldn't make this schedule work at a bigger campus,"* he adds laughing.

Over the summer, Pollari will continue training with both teams as well as running his own business, Yardworx. Come the 2017-18 season, he is hoping to improve upon last season's finish with an OUA Championship medal in wrestling.



GRADUATING BBA STUDENTS COMPETE IN ALGOMA U'S 11TH ANNUAL BUSINESS CASE COMPETITION

By: Marc Capancioni

Understanding the theory behind a subject is good. Adding real-world experience is better.

This is the philosophy behind Algoma U's Northern Ontario Business Case Competition. The 11th annual event was held March 30, 2017.

During the competition, fourth-year students in the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program compete in teams. In the morning, each group is given an issue related to a company, and they have just a few hours to come up with solutions and present their findings to a panel of judges. The process is repeated in the afternoon.

The competition is the brainchild of Cathy Denomme, an Associate Professor and Chair in the Department of Business and Economics at Algoma U. She wanted to establish a forum to help students better prepare for the high-stress environment of the corporate world.

"What better way for students to showcase what they've learned than to go out in the community and tackle a business issue," said Denomme. *"It's a great opportunity for students to take part in a high-stress exercise that will help them after they graduate."*

Since forming in 2006, the Northern Ontario Business Case Competition has grown considerably. This year's forum featured 16 teams, the largest crop yet. There were nine squads from Algoma U's main campus and two from its Brampton campus, two from Laurentian University,



Crowned champions, Algoma University team comprised of, from left to right: Kazi Faisal Atahar, Mitchell Marinovich, and Anna Stilin with competition host & Business Professor, Cathy Denomme.

and one from Nipissing University. For the first time ever, there was also cross-border representation from Lake Superior State University, which fielded a pair of teams.

"We've expanded to include schools throughout the entire region. It's good for the students to compete against different universities. The forum helps build relationships, which is always a good thing. It's a great networking opportunity."

Held at Algoma's Water Tower Inn & Suites, the 2017 Northern Ontario Business Case Competition featured three high-profile visiting judges: Nicole Verkindt, Graham Sherman, and David Segal.

Nicole Verkindt is the founder of Offset Market Exchange and the newest Dragon on Next Gen Den, the online spinoff of the hit CBC television show *Dragons' Den*.

Graham Sherman co-launched Tool Shed Brewery, and his product is now sold in more than 1,000 locations in western Canada.

David Segal, founder of DAVIDsTEA, grew his operation from a single store in Toronto to a \$200-million retail powerhouse.

"We bring in judges who the students can relate to," said Denomme. *"The students really enjoy it, and so do the judges."*

Along with the visiting judges, several local evaluators from the corporate world were also on hand for this year's event. Andrew Ross, Manager of Enterprise Services for the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation, was one of them. He has been involved in the competition as a judge for nearly a decade and sees it as a way to give back while networking with aspiring entrepreneurs.



"The Business Case Competition is a win-win for everyone involved," said Ross, an Algoma U business graduate and former Chair of the University's Alumni Council. *"The forum helps students as they embark on their careers after graduating, and it also gives the local business community a chance to interact with people who will soon be entering the workforce."*

What makes the Algoma U Business Case Competition exceptionally special is that all the judges are from the business world, not academia, said Donna Hilsinger, who has co-chaired the event since it was first established more than a decade ago. Also interesting is that the University's second-year and third-year BBA students help plan and run the event, she added. *"It's great to work with students and organizers to create an event that's unique to Northern Ontario,"* said Hilsinger. *"I'm honoured to be a part of it."*

The winning team from the 11th Annual Northern Ontario Business Case Competition was comprised of Kazi Atahar, Anna Stilin, and Mitchell Marinovich from Algoma University. They tackled a business case focused on a social media platform and another related to a grooming product for men.

"It was a long day but a lot of fun," said Marinovich, who specialized in business accounting and, after graduating, will be working towards his Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation. *"We had a great team, and we worked very well together. It was a great opportunity to work under pressure and show what we can do."*

Two teams tied for second place: Carly Banchiu, James Benzing, Mary Kawa and Chris Toulouse (Lake Superior State University) and Kiersten Briscoe, Ryan Dubeau, and Trevor Rainville (Laurentian University).

The 2017 Annual Northern Ontario Business Case Competition was made possible with support from Algoma University, Algoma's Water Tower Inn & Suites, Northern Credit Union, Millworks Centre for Entrepreneurship and Starter Company, Algoma University Alumni Council, Community First Credit Union, Arthur Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, BDO Dunwoody LLP, Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG), Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario, McDougall Energy, RBC Wealth Management, Algoma University Students' Union (AUSU), Primerica, Dumanski Office/Compass Imaging, and Capavi.





Education is an investment



TD Award established for Algoma U's new Environmental Science program

Written by: Marc Capancioni

What do banking and the environment have in common? As far as TD is concerned, a lot.

"A prosperous economy and healthy environment go hand in hand," said Nicole Vadori, the bank's Senior Manager of Corporate Environmental Affairs. *"The two are connected. We all depend on resources from nature, and to ensure the availability of natural resources for future generations, we need to consider the environment."*

With this adage in mind, TD recently invested in Algoma U, providing a \$100,000 donation during the school's Essential Elements Campaign. In September 2017, the University will begin offering a four-year Honours Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science degree. To help enhance the new program, the bank's investment is being used to create the TD Award.

"We're very happy to see this program come to life," said Vadori. *"It will prepare students for environmental job opportunities. We're excited to help grow the next generation of environmental leaders."*

The Environmental Science program at Algoma U lines up perfectly with TD's commitment to the environment. More than a quarter century ago, the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation was established to support community organizations in delivering grassroots green initiatives across the country. Since then, the bank has continued down the path of sustainability and is now considered to be an industry leader in the field.

Today, TD has a team solely focused on carrying out its environmental strategy, which is embedded throughout the bank. The team also undertakes green initiatives in a few key areas. One focus is reducing the bank's energy consumption by using a number of methods, such as developing more than 130 small-scale solar power generating sites and certifying over 200 TD locations to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

Another focus is buying renewable energy credits and carbon offsets, which address greenhouse gas emissions from staff travel, building heating, and electricity, across TD's global footprint. With this activity, TD became the first North American-based bank to become carbon neutral in 2010.

As part of this journey, TD is working to further its positive impact on the environment by helping to cultivate the next generation of green trailblazers across the country. That's precisely the goal of the bank's recently-established TD Award at Algoma U.

"In today's landscape, there's a need to equip emerging environmental leaders with the necessary skills to make a positive impact in the world," said Vadori. *"The more environmental leaders you can prepare, the more these specialists can bring their skill set to other sectors and the bigger the impact there will be."*

Vadori herself is a prime example. Educated as an engineer, she worked as an environmental consultant before joining TD as a senior manager in its environment division. *"Education opens doors to opportunity,"* she said, adding that the new Environmental Science program at Algoma U will provide solid job prospects for its graduates.

The TD Award is being used to provide a \$3,000 entrance scholarship to a full-time student enrolled in Algoma U's Environmental Science program.



for a lifetime



As a young child, Moyra (Hughes) O’Pallie, her brother, and their mother emigrated from Ireland to Kirkland Lake, Ontario where her father had found work in the gold mines. With the industry’s boom-and-bust cycle there were economic downturns over the years. Growing up as the second eldest of 11 children proved to be challenging but memorable for her.

Recalling the support her family received during those lean years in northern Ontario, O’Pallie has found the means to return the favour and help others. Whether volunteering at her church, being a member on the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library, Retired Teachers of Ontario, and several municipal committees, she has served her community well over five decades.

Most recently, O’Pallie established a bursary at Algoma University. *“There are students who want to get ahead, but financially are unable to do so”, she said. “If I can help out in some way, I’m happy to do so”.* In 2017, the Moyra & Edward O’Pallie Bursary was established after her husband passed away. Ed, a staunch Saultite, was a furrier who operated *“Furs By O’Pallie”* on Queen Street for 30 years. *“He would have loved to see this,” she said. “Seeing students succeed would have put a smile on his face”.*

The Moyra & Edward O’Pallie Bursary is an endowed award, meaning the capital donation is invested, and the interest gained ensures the annual allotment continues over a long term. It assists a first year student enrolled in any program in either full or part-time studies. To be eligible, candidates must demonstrate they have a financial need.

“It’s nice to see some young people get a break,” said O’Pallie. Education is dear to her heart. Moving to Sault Ste. Marie in 1966, she graduated from Algoma University College, and later received a Master of Arts in Education from Northern Michigan University. O’Pallie’s teaching experience involved all elementary grades in several Ontario cities, as well as a stint in the United States. She was a vice-principal and principal for several years. She is very proud of her younger sisters who followed her. *“We have six teachers and two nurses in our family—we are blessed.”*

Since retiring in 1992, O’Pallie spends time walking, cycling along the hub trail, upgrading Internet skills, travelling, and enjoying summers at the family ‘gathering place’ in Brimley. *“The family is scattered over Canada and the USA, so annual celebrations are special. This is a beautiful community,”* she said. *“I enjoy living here. The Sault is a great place and I’m happy to be able to give back--it’s about stewardship”.*



Above: Moyra (Hughes) O’Pallie

Alumna Gives Back And Establishes Endowed Bursary at Algoma U

Written by: Marc Capancioni



CONNOR FLOOD: SILICON VALLEY BOUND

By: Rick McGee

Algoma University alumnus **Connor Flood**'s career trajectory took a giant step forward in March.

That's when the 22-year-old accepted a Solutions Engineer position with Facebook. He will be based at the social media juggernaut's campus in Menlo Park, California. The city is among several San Francisco Bay Area communities that form the world's foremost technology hub.

Flood will complete requirements for a Master of Mathematics, Computer Science degree at the University of Waterloo this summer, and then enjoy some downtime before heading west.

"The job with Facebook is a dream come true and I'm really excited about getting started in September," the 2015 Bachelor of Computer Science Dean's List graduate said.

"It's quite remarkable. For a long time I've wanted to be working in that area. I definitely didn't expect to be doing this so early in my career. It's one of those jobs that I'd thought I might be able to work up to with a few more years' experience. To be able to start with a company like that is really fantastic. Silicon Valley is the home of innovative companies, ideas, and projects."

The unassuming high achiever saw Facebook's headquarters first-hand during a late-winter visit for a series of face-to-face interviews.

"I really enjoyed the atmosphere there. What I liked most was that even in the actual work environment which is very open, everyone seemed happy to be there and really nice to talk to. It had an exciting vibe to it. It just made me that much more excited to receive an offer from them after having a tour of the main campus."

The opportunity presented itself after a multi-step process that had begun months earlier, Flood continued.

"I started preparing in the latter part of 2016. Much of the interview process revolves around your programming abilities. There was a lot of preparation, study, and practice involved in getting ready for the technical stages (that included multiple online, telephone, and in-person sessions). After much preparation, I applied online to Facebook in February."

"The position I accepted peaked my interest because it's not a typical software engineering job. I'll spend half of my time coding and the other half communicating with Facebook clients directly. I'll be working alongside other companies to help find technology solutions to meet their needs, especially as it relates to their advertising platform. Some of the interviews emphasized marketing and business, with the need to demonstrate the kinds of social skills required."

While he is focused mostly on the near future these days, the winner of numerous academic awards hopes to eventually pursue another professional interest.

"This past fall I was a sessional instructor for Waterloo and it was a great experience," Flood enthused. He became one of the youngest in the school's history at the age of 21 when he started.

"I come from a family of teachers, so it's in my blood. Once I'm comfortable with being in California and the new job, I'll definitely be looking for other sessional instructor opportunities, possibly teaching one course per term. It's something I've become quite passionate about."

Also to be enjoyed, of course, is the fabled California lifestyle. *"The warm weather will be an appreciated change,"* the Sault Ste. Marie native chuckled. *"I might have to buy some more shorts."*

As he contemplates the life-changing adventure ahead, Flood also looks back with gratitude. *"The support I've received has really been astonishing and quite overwhelming."*

And, it turns out, doing his undergraduate studies at Algoma U proved to be a wise decision.

"The opportunities that came from attending a small university were unique," he noted. *"It was a little bit easier to stick out and be adventurous. I used the small school to my advantage, not disadvantage."*



BOBBY KARMAKAR: A LIFELONG LEARNER

By: Jessica Ferlaino

There were a number of factors that influenced Bobby Karmakar's decision to attend Algoma U at Brampton. After completing an advanced diploma in Business Administration – Human Resources (co-op) from Centennial College, Karmakar embarked on a university degree.

Initially focussed on a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) with a Human Resources Management specialization, after taking a number of marketing electives he made the decision to specialize in both Human Resources Management and Marketing. Karmakar also holds a certificate in Professional Writing from Centennial College and a certificate in Creative Writing from The University of Toronto, School of Continuing Studies.

Karmakar reflected on his decision to enrol at Algoma University, *“When I was in my last semester of college, I just turned 20 and my mom and step-dad, who live in Brampton, were the ones that said to go to university since they believed I would have more opportunity if I obtained a degree alongside my college diploma.”* They also believed Karmakar was too young to enter the job market and he agreed.

Intimidated by the size of larger universities in the Greater Toronto Area, for Karmakar, Algoma University seemed like a perfect fit. After speaking with Richard Belton, an Admissions Advisor from Algoma U at a university fair, Karmakar attended an open house at the Brampton campus and the rest, as they say, is history.

Karmakar, who has resided in Toronto his whole life, frequently travelled to Brampton on the weekends to visit his mother and step-father. Algoma University was the right size and it was

ideally located for Karmakar who still finds time to visit the campus, as he works nearby.

Karmakar serves as the Administrative and Membership Services Coordinator for The Downtown Brampton Business Improvement Area (BIA). *“Working in a BIA, especially in the area where I went to university, is such an exciting opportunity to not only represent being an Algoma U alumni but to be able to prove that with my degree, I am able to demonstrate my experience within our district as a whole.”*

“When I did cases and wrote marketing or business plans for evaluations, I found it exciting and fun. Now, I’m able to actually implement that at my workplace with my team and collaborate just like I did in school,” acknowledged Karmakar of how Algoma University prepared him for his career.

Karmakar recounted his experience representing Brampton at the 10th Annual Northern Ontario Business Case Competition as one of his most memorable moments. He also paid tribute to several professors and classes that helped him to find both academic and professional success.

Looking to the future, Karmakar continues to grow his professional network and hopes to become a published author. Karmakar also has high hopes for Algoma University. He would love to see continued expansion of both campuses and the addition of continuing studies, which served him well in his professional development.

Karmakar refers to himself as a lifelong learner and shared, *“Attending Algoma U not only enhanced me, but also made me more aware of my capabilities, and crafted me with different and more tools in my skillset both in my profession, as well as a person. That journey is one I will never forget and also one to remember as I continue to learn.”*

Karmakar described his experience at Algoma University as, *“An inclusive and challenging journey that was worth every moment. I wouldn’t have had it any other way. Okay, maybe there could have been things that would have been done differently, but I’m a big believer in things happening for a reason. My experience was one of them, and led to securing my current employment position,”* where he continues to proudly represent himself and Algoma University.



TAHNEE CARABALLO: THE PRIDE OF A COMMUNITY

By: Jessica Ferlaino

Tahnee Caraballo is a graduate of Algoma University's Law and Justice program and is currently preparing for the third year of her Juris Doctorate from the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law at Lakehead University.

At first, Caraballo wasn't sure university was where she belonged. She applied to both Sault College and Algoma University and was surprised to receive acceptance to both. She recalled, "I didn't want to go to a bigger university. I'm kind of shy at times and the smaller atmosphere, being able to talk to your professors really appealed to me."

The decision to begin her academic journey at Algoma University was deeply rooted.

"My gram, which is my mother's mother, her father was Dan Pine who was a traditional healer and is well known throughout the community. Through my Papa Pine, I am related to Chief Shingwauk who is my great-great-grandpa, so it just made sense to go to Algoma U because it had ties to Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig and I wanted to stay close to home," noted Caraballo of her decision to enrol at Algoma University.

For Caraballo, it was about more than just attaining an education. She expressed, "I don't want to say I didn't know who I was, but it kind of made me

come full circle as to this is who I am, this is where I come from, so it kind of just added that extra sense of accomplishment just by going to Algoma U."

Caraballo, who questioned her ability to study at the university level, was quickly reassured by her professors. Caraballo credits the support of Dr. Kelly DeLuca, Dr. Julian Hermida, and Professor Don Jackson, referring to them as "the best" and "second to none" for the role they played in her confidence and academic success.

In addition to succeeding academically, Caraballo was active in student life as a member of the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association (SASA). Her involvement afforded her the opportunity to, as she shared, "Connect with culture a bit more and seek out my identity as a person. I made my first jingle dress and I did my first beading." Caraballo also completed all the coursework for Anishinaabemowin.

Recently, Caraballo was one of four speakers invited back to Algoma University to participate in an Anishinaabe Alumni Panel. "I really love Algoma U and I would do anything for them because without them, I wouldn't be where I am today, so it was a very honorable experience to take part in and something I was very proud of."

"Algoma U is the perfect gateway to do more with your life," she acknowledged of the personalized education she received at Algoma University. "You come out a stronger person academically, personally, and professionally and the possibilities after you graduate are endless and I want students to know that makes it worthwhile and fulfilling."

Caraballo intends on returning to Sault Ste. Marie after completing her law degree to practice Indigenous law. "Focussing on Aboriginal law is very important to me because I feel like I owe it to the Aboriginal peoples in Canada and of course my own community. I feel like my community is depending on me to make a positive change and I don't want to let them down."

Through her studies, Caraballo continues to actualize her true potential, proudly representing herself, her family, her community and Algoma University, exemplifying great responsibility, strength, and the capacity to succeed in all of her endeavours.

COLLEEN ROSE: COMING FULL CIRCLE

By: Jessica Ferlaino

It has been more than 20 years since **Colleen Rose** graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) from Algoma University College and began her career with the military. Now, decades later, her academic journey is coming full circle as she has been selected for sponsorship and will soon begin her Master of Business Administration (MBA).

Rose, who graduated in 1995, currently serves as the Comptroller at Royal Military College (RMC), an institution she intended on enrolling in as a student years ago. When asked why she chose Algoma University College, Rose responded, *"I didn't necessarily want to attend Algoma. I was enrolled in the military and went off to do my basic training in Chilliwack, BC, that summer."*

She continued, *"I had applied to Algoma, Laurier and I think the University of Ottawa, and then I applied to RMC. I was going to go to RMC and I was intent on doing that. I went and did my basic training that summer, passed and then quit and came home and went to Algoma."*

Rose was very active in campus life. She served as an executive member of the Algoma University Students' Association (AUSA) and was employed on campus.

"I started in first year and right away I worked with Cindi Elgie as an Assistant in the Liaison Office," Rose recalled. *"I applied to be in the reserves and it took me a full year and a bit to transfer into the reserves, so by the middle of second year I was going to school full-time and I was working with the reserves part-time and I was also helping Cindi out."*

"In second year, I went down to four courses but I was still considered a full-time student, so I knew right from the get-go that I was going to be there for a fifth year. It was in my fifth year that Cindi went on maternity leave and I was hired full-time to take over her responsibilities as the Liaison Officer."

If it wasn't for the flexibility and understanding of her professors, individuals like George Gekas, Pelham Matthews and Dave Galotta, it would



ALGOMA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF CANADA

have been an impossible feat for her to maintain her grades and uphold her various responsibilities.

"You really are noted as a person, not a number," Rose acknowledged. *"Whereas at larger universities, you're just a number because you're just one more student in their class, the small atmosphere at Algoma certainly lent itself to being more like a family environment."*

Rose had the chance to visit Algoma University several years ago and was *"truly overwhelmed by the growth"* she witnessed on campus. She was impressed by how far the institution had come, though she never questioned its potential.

Much to her surprise, Rose will have the opportunity to walk the halls of a university as a student once again. *"I'm a Logistics Officer, so I've been trained in military supply, finance and transport, all of the logistical aspects of it and I never thought that I would go back to school to further my education at all,"* she shared of her MBA sponsorship opportunity.

Though she expressed some apprehension about returning to school, Rose is confident that Algoma provided a strong foundation for continued achievement in the MBA program and beyond, as she takes her already successful career to new heights.



CHECKING-IN WITH ALGOMA U's ALUMNI FAMILY

By: Nadine Robinson

When **Brad Lloyd** packs for a trip these days, he's not travelling light. As the International Admissions Advisor for Algoma U, on the road for three-four weeks at a time, Lloyd stocks a compliment of maple candies and Canadian souvenirs for the partners he works with, not to mention Algoma University give-aways for prospective students. Most recently, Lloyd has also packed a few Algoma U keepsakes in case he crosses paths with alumni, a trend that he hopes will continue.

"I like reaching out to alums, hearing what they're up to now, and they like to reminisce about their time at Algoma U," said Lloyd. *"Sometimes they contact me*

in advance, or I reach out to them, and others seek us out at events."

Before arriving in Africa this spring, Lloyd used Facebook to contact Robert Totime, a 2013 Algoma U graduate of the Law and Justice program, now living back in Ghana. *"We met at a restaurant in Accra and Robert introduced me to the local cuisine, a spiced chicken dish with jolo rice. Then I was invited to his parents' home where he talked a lot about travel, including Robert's father's travels as a diplomat abroad."*

Later, when faced with a layover in Seoul, Korea, Lloyd contacted Anthony Carchidi, a 2013 Honours Sociology graduate who teaches English as a Second Language in primary schools in Korea. *"We talked about our favourite professors over a true Korean barbecue. Of note, Anthony mentioned Dr. Deborah*

Woodman and how she was an important mentor in his life."

Lloyd also attended Algoma U for three years and completed his Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography at Laurentian (when Algoma University College was an affiliate of Laurentian). Following that, he continued on to earn a graduate diploma in Primary Education from University of the Sunshine Coast, in Queensland, Australia.

Lloyd's travels have taken him to Dubai, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Ghana, Indonesia, and Zimbabwe, among other countries.

On his first trip, at an education fair, Lloyd met a parent of a former student from the Brampton campus, who sought out the Algoma U table to say hello. *"It was so nice to meet him, and hear that his son has now gone on to Saint Mary's University for an MBA. When you're telling prospective students about the differentiators of Algoma U, and the quality education, it's rewarding and reaffirming to hear from graduates' parents."*

The fact that professors and support staff at Algoma University know the students is one of the recruiting points Lloyd speaks to, and he himself is proof of the community feel and the relationships that are built on campus, that can last a lifetime.

"We hope to continue to build the relationships that we have with alumni around the world, as we build partnerships with other universities, and attract more international students. We want to hear what interesting things alumni are up to."

Working in education, Lloyd is the first to admit that travel in itself is an education: *"Other cultures, foods, landscapes, the relationships you can build, and what you can learn about yourself... it's so important. At the end of the day, life is about the connections we make with people and places, so I hope to continue to travel and meet more fascinating people, and I hope that includes more Algoma U alumni."*

At the end of his travels, Lloyd's luggage is always much lighter, having distributed the maple goodies and Algoma U pennants. He always hopes he'll be packing a unique bottle opener to add to his collection back home, alongside a new addition for his growing collection of photos with alumni around the world.



TROUBLED YOUTH TURNED LEADER

By: Meaghan Kent

A struggle with drugs and alcohol and a lack of Anishinaabe identity contributed to **Quinn Meawasige's** troubled teenage years. Addiction and trouble with the law forced Meawasige into a treatment centre for four months, where culture was placed at the forefront of rehabilitation.

Upon recovery, Meawasige became heavily involved in his community and First Nations advocacy, beginning with advocacy against the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) in 2009. From Serpent River First Nation, Meawasige became the youngest elected member of the Serpent River First Nation Band Council. Today, he is the male youth representative for the Union of Ontario Indians, and a member of the Ontario First Nations Young People's Council. He also served on the Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council and was a delegate for the North American Indigenous Peoples Caucus on the United Nations Global Indigenous Youth Caucus. These groups consist of First Nations youth from

across the nation who advocate, lobby, and meet with government officials, including the Ontario Premier.

Meawasige credits his stint in rehab for his upward trajectory from his troubled youth days. *"At that point in my life, I had no culture. I had nothing,"* he begins. *"When I was at this treatment centre, they did cultural activities and ceremonies every day and every week. Every day they started with a sharing circle, a smudge, and talking with Elders. And it was through that that I realized I don't want to be involved with drugs or alcohol. I want to be involved with my community. It was important for me to get involved with youth... Since I had this experience of positively turning my life around, I had to get out there and help others. I had to tell them they're not alone."*

And since his troubled days, Meawasige has dedicated the last eight years to helping vulnerable youth. Currently, Meawasige is advocating for the importance of communities, healthy living, and water issues. All of these issues, he argues, centre on empowering First Nations youth through positive dialogues and education.

In 2015, Meawasige relocated to Sault Ste. Marie to attend Algoma University's Honours Bachelor of Arts in Community Economic and Social Development (CESD) with a minor in Anishinaabemowin.

Although he was apprehensive about earning a degree on the site of a former residential school, Meawasige has come to embrace the education, and understands that Algoma U is working in collaboration with Shingwauk Kinomaage Gamig (SKG) to fulfill the vision of Chief Shingwauk's teaching wigwam. The University is also helping him on his own journey of reconciliation. *"I came here to honour [Shingwauk's] vision. Because of Algoma U and SKG, I can now go home and speak some of my language. I'm learning my language here,"* he adds proudly. *"I can baby talk conversations with the Elders. Some of them are so excited and I'm so excited because there are only a handful of language speakers left in my community. I'm here to honour those lives and to show that they weren't lost for nothing. There's learning that is happening here that is benefiting myself, my people, my community. Algoma U is important. If I didn't come here, I wouldn't have a certain understanding about the urgency of what we have to do."*

Meawasige estimates that within five to 10 years, there will be no one in his hometown community that speaks his native language of Ojibwe fluently.

In the Sault, Meawasige has continued his activism centred on water issues. He helped organize an awareness march, which included over 200 participants, and has been a part of various conversations around the important issue.

For his continued support of First Nations youth, as well as his support of water issues in the region, Meawasige was recently awarded the Great Lakes Honda Community Driven Award. The accolade is awarded to a post-secondary student in Sault Ste. Marie who shows leadership, helps shape his or her community culture by volunteering, and motivates and inspires others.

ALGOMA U: MUCH MORE THAN ACADEMICS FOR BRYAN EVANS

By: Rick McGee

Exemplary work habits and a deep-seated passion for everything about Algoma University made **Bryan Evans** the perfect choice for a Service Excellence Champion award introduced last year. The 23-year-old — who is both an alumnus and a current student — received a plaque for the honour during on-campus Employee Recognition Day ceremonies in August 2016.

“I was very humbled and honoured to receive the award,” Evans said. “It was a surreal feeling. It was a once-in-a-lifetime thing. I’m a behind-the-scenes guy. I’m shy. Being in the spotlight is not my cup of tea. I’d rather do the work.”

The award recognized a total commitment to customer service while he was employed in the George Leach Centre. As a GLC Worker/Weight Room Attendant from 2015 until the spring of 2017, Evans helped community and University users of the fitness centre and other recreational features to benefit fully from their experiences.

That employment opportunity, as well as an earlier placement in the Physical Plant department, came about through a Work Study Program administered by Algoma U’s Financial Aid Office.

“Bryan is an exceptional individual,” said Mark Kontulainen, the University’s Athletics and Recreation Director. “He is so personable, caring, and hard-working. He was probably the best student assistant we’ve ever had. He’s very diligent and always goes the extra mile. We received a lot of very positive feedback about him from both internal and external members. He always knew everyone’s name, and he always made them feel comfortable and welcome.”

For his part, Evans thoroughly enjoyed every minute on the job.

“For the past year, I worked in the evening, spending much of my time behind the front desk in the reception area,” he said in April. “Among my duties, customer service was the number one priority. GLC members pay to use the equipment and facilities. Staff are here for them. I’d answer people’s questions, process memberships, and do whatever else needed doing.”

The position allowed Evans to work in very familiar surroundings.

“I’ve been a GLC member since 2007. My father Derron is a longtime member and he started taking me there when I was 14. So I know a lot of the people. The sense of belonging there is really important to me.”

Evans has also achieved academic success in multiple disciplines during his time at Algoma U.

He began studies in September 2011 and by 2016 held honours degrees in geography and sociology, as well as a GIS (Geographic Information Science) Certificate. He is now working on a Certificate in Business.

“Having a hometown university fits right in with my values,” he said. “I love Algoma University in so many different ways. I love the small community. I enjoy going to a class and knowing everybody’s name. And you get the one-on-one interaction with the professors. You can’t put a price on that in my opinion. Algoma U has been the perfect fit for me. I’m very proud of this place. Algoma U has been

everything I thought it would be and much more.”

Such sentiments extend across the family. Derron Evans graduated from Algoma U’s Bachelor of Business Administration program in 1991. Meanwhile, Bryan Evans’ brother Eric Evans will enrol in the Accelerated Computer Science program after completing a chemistry degree at the University of Windsor.

Key influencers on Evans’ academic successes include Dr. William Osei, Professor and Departmental Chair, Geography and Geology.

“He was the first professor to really have a huge impact on me. His teaching style and passion for the subject really spoke to me. Dr. Deborah Woodman (Sociology) is another wonderful person and an outstanding professor. She was always there for me.”

And Evans will continue to be there for Algoma U when his student days end. He plans to remain closely connected as an involved and supportive alum.



A MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI OFFICE

Why did you choose Algoma University?

It's a question that I often ask our students and alumni. Of all of the options that you had to choose from – why Algoma U? It's a fair question and one that provides some very interesting answers.

For students from Sault Ste. Marie and area, you expect to hear, “I wasn't ready to leave my family and friends”, “It's cheaper, I can live at home and save money”, or “I love the Soo”. All great answers but there has to be more – and there is.

Why would students from another part of the world choose to come to Sault Ste. Marie to live in a country that is completely foreign to them? Why come to a part of the world that actually has four seasons, to study at a small campus, by comparison to others in our province, in our country and certainly to other post-secondary institutions around the world. *Why indeed?*

Often the reasons why students come are very different from why they stayed, and what they think on reflection after having completed their education at Algoma University. Whatever you want to call Algoma University – small, personal, close to home or far away – there is a very unique experience that you get here. The stories in this issue speak to that – in fact the stories in every issue speak to that.

There is a real sense of pride and accomplishment that alumni feel when they think back about their days at Algoma U, how their university education prepared them for their futures. I hear this all the time. Sometimes those futures were what they had envisioned when they enrolled at Algoma U. Sometimes their futures take completely different paths. Whatever that path may be, their time at Algoma U prepared them for that journey largely due to opportunities and experiences that they received here, that they wouldn't necessarily have experienced anywhere else.

I hope you enjoyed reading this sampling of our students, alumni, faculty, and supporters, and that you experienced through their stories what Algoma University means to each of them. Amazing really – you can't help but feel a sense of pride in each of their stories.

We have just proudly welcomed a new group of alumni into our family. Each graduate has their own experience and memories to share. Each one feels a tremendous sense of accomplishment that “they've done it”, “they made it through and have the degree to prove it”. They will remember people who had a profound impact on their lives, the special friendships they made, the opportunities that they had, the help they received, and the skills that they will take with them as they embark on the next phase of their lives.

For those of us who have been here to support you in your academic pursuits, we feel our own sense of pride in your accomplishments. We love to hear what you have been doing since you left Algoma U. We love to have you come back. We love when you get involved, share your experience, knowledge and financial support to help other students, who are following in your footsteps. We love to celebrate your success.

We have a lot to be proud of – it is what makes Algoma University special and unique and a great choice.

For more information, contact Bev Teller, CFRE at 705-949-2301, extension 4125 or email: bev.teller@algomau.ca

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Algoma University ALUMNI

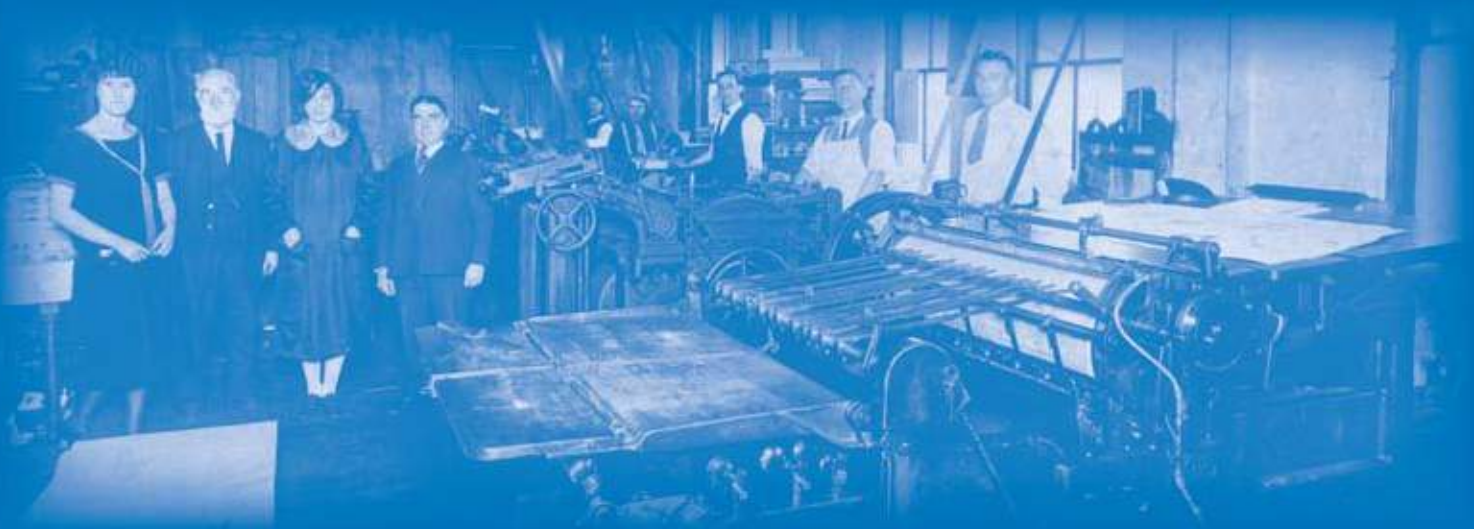
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