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ALUMNI COUNCIL CHAIR'S MESSAGE

By: Patrick Murray, Chair, Algoma University Alumni Council

It is my sincere honour to begin my role as the Alumni Council Chair. I have been a member of the Alumni Council since 2011, serving in a variety of roles, most recently as the Vice-Chair. I am extremely proud to be an Algoma University alumnus and have continued to be actively involved because Algoma U is and will always be home.

Whether for networking opportunities, career advancement, engaging in recruitment and reputation activities for the University, or providing input and support to help shape the educational experience for future students, it is important for alumni to stay connected to their university. It truly is a lifelong relationship, and one that I value very much.

I recently had the honour of presenting the Algoma Wall of Fame award to the 1972 Provincial Gold Medal Alpine Ski team. The team (Don Shushkewich, Norman Coulter, Paul Saarinen, and Tim FitzGerald) had no shortness of stories and exciting tales as they gathered together 46 years later to celebrate their great achievements. Their story, thought lost forever, is one of many that connects our past, present, and future and provides an inspiration to many.

No matter where you end up, you will always have a home at Algoma University. Connecting these stories keeps these memories alive and instills the pride that we as alumni have in our school. The pride not only grows on campus, but throughout the community as the Algoma U symbol can be seen all over the city. I can't count how many alumni I pass daily, who are continuously doing amazing things in their careers and in their communities. Our alumni are no longer isolated from those local to Sault Ste. Marie but can be found worldwide. And although the distance is growing, the connections grow stronger as our alumni base grows, and our stories are shared.

I encourage you to reach out to your Alumni Association and share your stories, so they too can be heard. Every minute a new memory is made. Help us ensure that they will never fade. Come out and support the University's activities and recapture those memories as we witness new great memories being made. I look forward to seeing many faces, both new and old, as the Thunderbird pride grows.

MEET ASIMA VEZINA: PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

By: Dr. Nadine Robinson

The words “believe” and “inspire” adorn the wall above Asima Vezina’s desk. Vezina joined Algoma University as President and Vice-Chancellor in October of 2017. Along with the decorative words that embody her leadership style, she brings over 25 years of experience in education and administration to this new role.

“Leadership is about inspiring others to genuinely believe in the vision, the organization, and themselves. My goal as a leader is to bring those words, ‘believe’ and ‘inspire’ together, mobilizing people’s and organization’s strengths toward our vision. Amazing things can be accomplished when people are engaged, energized, and ready to take positive and collective actions that make a difference.”

Education is another word that has defined Vezina’s life.

“Even as a child, I wanted to be a teacher and coach. I was helping in kindergarten classes when I was in grade 4 and I was coaching sports by age twelve; and in my earliest memory scrapbooks, my mother wrote that teaching was my career choice.”

Vezina began her teaching career in Timmins, Ontario. Throughout her career, Vezina recalls that she was always drawn to the challenging teaching opportunities, and helping those succeed who had stopped believing in themselves. “My father instilled in me that we all bring gifts and strengths to the table and to never judge by appearance or life circumstance. He taught me that education is the great leveler, so early in my career as a secondary school teacher, I learned to focus on students’ strengths, interests, and talents, especially in the most vulnerable, to re-build confidence and reach high levels of student success. I carry this same philosophy with me into the university system.”

She also spent 15 years as a Superintendent of Education with the District School Board Ontario Northeast and the Algoma District School Board. As well, she worked for the Ministry of Education as a Provincial Lead within the Leadership and Implementation Branch of the Student Achievement Division.

Vezina, herself, is a lifelong learner and holds a Master’s in Educational Leadership from Nipissing University, and is currently completing a leadership PhD program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University



of Toronto. In September, Vezina will begin learning the Ojibwe language as her embodiment of the University’s special mission of cross-cultural learning, and as a window to the history and culture of the area and Algoma University.

“Over the past several years, through my work on the University’s Board and now as President, I have come to deeply appreciate what a truly unique and special place Algoma University is, and how important we are to the social, cultural, and economic success of this community. I believe fully in our potential to be reputed as a world-class post-secondary institution, and I feel truly blessed to be in this position, serving my community.”

Since having local elders teach her and take her under their wing, Vezina has also become an advocate for truth and reconciliation, and was the lead author of the Algoma University *Statement on Truth and Reconciliation: Calls to Action and Beyond*.

She is also a passionate advocate for youth mental health, and was a founding member of the Algoma Model.

Including a quick jaunt in Australia, Vezina wasn’t sure where her career would take her, but the goal was always to retire in the Algoma region. Luckily, the stars aligned early on, and she’s

thrilled that her husband Mitch, and their two children, Eric and Emilie, can turn to the outdoors she grew up in for family quality time, exercise, and fresh air.

“The outdoors was a big part of my life growing up. My Canadian-Irish dad (a veterinarian) and my Pakistani mother (a nurse) met at the University of Guelph, fell in love, married, and came north for work. We had a beef farm in Desbarats, which was a lot of work... We also had a lot of fun too, my two brothers and I, learning to value community and neighbours and to respect and live off the land that my parents fell in love with.

“When I look for balance in my life it is always about getting outside. We love hiking, skiing, fishing, hunting, checking the trap line, and picking berries. I also love cooking wild game, and make a mean ‘beaver stew’ on a wood stove at our camp.”

When not at the University or posting about one of the many University events on social media, Vezina finds inspiration in spending time with her family (including a cat and a yorkipoo), visiting her camp close to the Mississauga River, listening to jazz, blues, and country music, exercising, fusing East Indian flavours with local wild meats, and following in her mother’s active community volunteerism footsteps.



WHAT BONSAI AND ALGOMA U HAVE IN COMMON: AN INTERVIEW WITH ACADEMIC DEAN DR. DONNA ROGERS

By: Dr. Nadine Robinson

A seasoned academic and administrator, **Dr. Donna Rogers** began her role on February 1, 2018, as Algoma University's new Academic Dean. Born in Toronto, she packed up her books and her bonsai and headed north, leaving Brescia University College, an affiliate of Western University in London, Ontario, where she served as Vice-Principal and Academic Dean since 2013.

"I feel like I'd done what I set out to do there and was ready for a new challenge," said Rogers. Rogers has also held positions at Pennsylvania State University, Middlebury College, and Dalhousie University. She chose Algoma U for its size and its surroundings, its people and its possibilities.

"Penn State had over 50,000 students, and it's very hard for students to not feel like a number when you're that size," said Rogers. *"Algoma U is good at*

individualizing education, making sure students are names, not numbers... and part of my mandate is engaging with students and that's important to me."

Rogers is happy to join a smaller community, allowing her to be closer to the beauty that surrounds us. *"I like the winter and appreciate the sense of grounding and calm and connectedness I get from nature. It brings me a lot of happiness. I also love my visits to Toronto but it isn't where I want to live. The Sault reminds me of happy times from my childhood at our grandparents' cottages."*

Her new home in the Sault with her husband offers views of nature, and the steel plant. *"Our view is the Sault, and it reminds me of my blue collar roots hailing from Scottish coal miners. Our house choice itself was constrained by the number of books we have,"* said Rogers with a laugh. *"We have a lot of books!"*

Some of the books relate to Rogers' research and education, including her doctorate in Hispanic Languages and Literatures from the University of Toronto, a Master of Arts in Spanish from Western University, and an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and Latin

from the University of Waterloo. Yet Rogers did not get her high school diploma.

"We're a story of increasing success, our family," said Rogers. *"Both my parents were high school dropouts. My mother was a professional figure skater, and my dad had a glass business. All avid readers, they taught us that education was important, but to find the path that worked for us. So, I talked my way into university at age 16."*

It's important to Rogers that students know that everyone's story is different, and that once you figure out what you want, to go for it. *"Don't assume that the path to success is straightforward,"* said Rogers. *"My own trajectory was unusual and unexpected... and yours might be too."*

Outside of the office, Rogers was stalled on a knitting project for over a decade and credits the interview process with Algoma U for reigniting her passion after hearing about the knitting club from students. *"Cables after Whiskey is the pattern name, and it is proof that some things can't be done while multitasking... they require specific attention."*

Another activity she enjoys is bonsai, the Japanese art of producing small trees mimicking the shape and size of full size trees. *"I choose plants that have managed to thrive in harsh conditions, and then nurture them to be unique and strong,"* said Rogers, recognizing the metaphor with Algoma U mid thought. *"Beauty and strength come out of stress, and keeping it small creates something really beautiful. I enjoy the challenge of figuring out how I want something to grow and then planning what needs to be done to get it there."*

Rogers also loves to travel, be it for language research in foreign archives or for the pleasure of getting to know a new language, food, and culture.

Aside from her goal of working herself out of a job at Algoma U by helping to nurture the University's next leaders, Rogers has committed to learning Anishinaabe. *"Language is a portal into culture and understanding people's experience, and that's important to me here."*

Rogers is fluent in Spanish, English, and Catalan, and can *"stumble along"* in French, Italian, and Portuguese, not to mention some Romanian.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGINEERS TO LEARN AND EARN IN SAULT STE. MARIE

By: Dawn White

Northern Ontario has long struggled with youth outmigration, an ageing population, and fluctuations in employment. Young people sometimes believe there is little opportunity for them to stay local, pursue an education, and secure a well-paying job in their field of choice. Algoma University and Laurentian University have partnered to change this perception in the field of Engineering.

In the fall of 2018, Algoma U will welcome its first cohort of students into the Pathway to Engineering program. Students will study for a year at Algoma U in Sault Ste. Marie, then transition to the Bharti School of Engineering at Laurentian University for years two, three, and four. Students can choose from pathways in mechanical, mining, or chemical engineering.

The Bharti School of Engineering at Laurentian University is at an exciting time in its development. This fall, the school will open its Clifford A. Fielding Research, Innovation and Engineering Building. The building boasts collaborative research and development space, innovation and commercialization space, as well as four labs in which students can complete their capstone projects.

The Pathway to Engineering program is further enriched by students having the opportunity to return to Sault Ste. Marie for work experience during their course of study. Algoma (Steel) has been an active partner in the project, and has committed to provide four 12-month paid work terms in the Sault for qualified Engineering students. This means that for students who pursue an Engineering degree that includes co-operative education, they may spend two of their five years in Sault Ste. Marie.

The Pathway to Engineering program exemplifies the power of partnerships in northern education. As students begin to progress through the pathway program, Algoma U plans to share stories of their success, highlighting those who were able to remain in the north and pursue their dream of becoming a professional engineer. This new partnership will foster a stronger northern economy as the next generation of highly skilled workers bring their innovation and creativity to the workplace across Northern Ontario.



Laurentian University
Université Laurentienne
BHARTI SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
SAULT STE. MARIE

Algoma
UNIVERSITY



Shown above is Laurentian's new Clifford A. Fielding Research, Innovation and Engineering Building, opening in the fall of 2018.

Bottom photo: Staff and faculty from Algoma U and Laurentian U, along with community members come together to discuss the launch of the Engineering pathway.

APPLICATIONS SOAR AT ALGOMA U

By: Meaghan Kent



Algoma University expects to see an increase in students on campus this fall. After two consecutive years of enrolment decline, the University is boasting a record high application increase in first choice applications, up almost 47 per cent from last year, the highest in the province.

Brent Krmptich, the Director of Enrollment Management, credits the overall 21 per cent increase in applications to a refreshed marketing campaign, as well as a new recruitment strategy. *“Our new branding is really effective,”* he says. *“It’s been well received internally at the University and externally, in our community and across the province.”*

The new campaign, unveiled in the fall of 2017, and designed with the help of Toronto-based marketing agency SOS Design Inc., focuses on the emotional reasons to attend Algoma U, rather than the functional reasons. *“The new campaign focuses on the experiences students will have here, rather than just what they’ll get, like a single room in residence. We also focused previously on the fact that we are the smallest university in the province. But we never really spoke to what that meant. Now we do.”*

The branding is a big departure from the University’s traditional colours of red, white, and grey. While these colours are still incorporated in the marketing scheme, new vibrant, bold colouring is packing a punch with the younger demographic. Yellow, pink, turquoise, and purple are key in the new advertising.

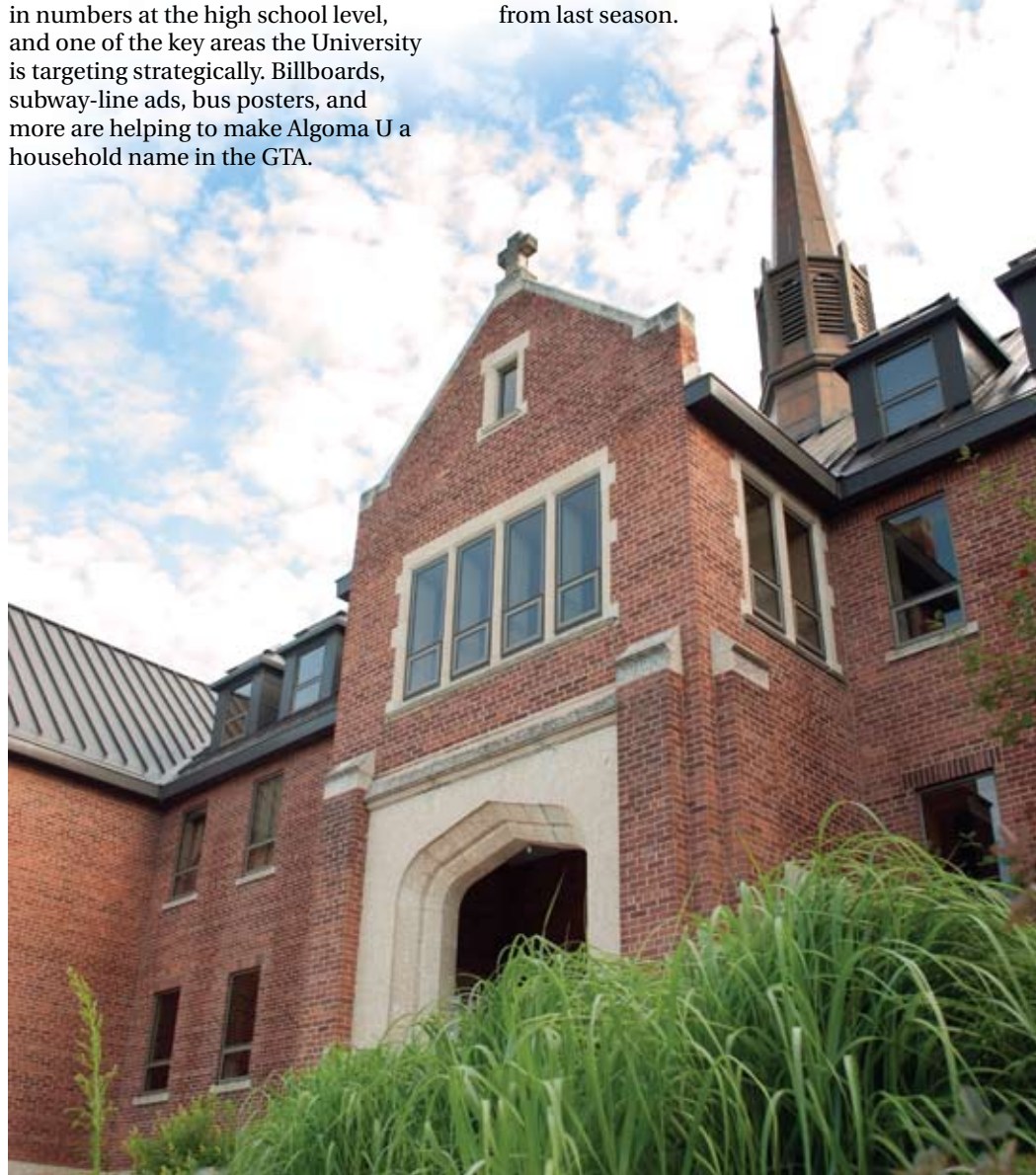
These colours are accentuated with clever word pairings, such as *“Real. Impact.”*, *“Thunderbirds. Rule.”*, *“All. In.”*, *“All. Welcome.”*, *“Heritage. Honoured.”*, and *“Suite. View.”* – a play on the guaranteed single room in residence.

A larger recruitment team and reimaged recruitment strategy are also contributing to the overall increase of applications, says Krmptich. *“We have a very energized recruitment team. Their charisma and excitement for Algoma U is really connecting with prospective students.”* This past season, Algoma U added an additional recruiter to serve the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). *“With the help of this extra hire, we’ve been able to talk to more students and families about the option of choosing Algoma U and attending school in Northern Ontario.”*

The majority of the increase in applications came from the Toronto area, one of the only regions in the province that continues to see sizeable growth in numbers at the high school level, and one of the key areas the University is targeting strategically. Billboards, subway-line ads, bus posters, and more are helping to make Algoma U a household name in the GTA.

Locally, the University saw an increase in applicants from the Algoma district, up 15 per cent from last year. *“We’re really happy with this increase locally, especially given that there are fewer students in this region. We’re working hard to make Algoma U the first choice post-secondary institution for Algoma district students. We want more students to stay and learn in their own backyards.”*

Coinciding with the record-breaking application increase, is the number of students taking part in the University’s campus tour program. Offering a travel stipend for those coming from out of town, including up to two nights’ accommodation, and gas, bus, or plane reimbursement, more students are visiting campus than ever before. Since the recruitment season kicked off at the Ontario Universities’ Fair in September 2017 – where the University also saw an increase in student attraction to Algoma U – Algoma University’s campus tours have witnessed a 121 per cent increase from last season.





In photo from left to right: Brad Lloyd, Kazi Faisal, and Paul Quesnele.

SHARING THE ALGOMA U EXPERIENCE

By: Meaghan Kent

From Sault Ste. Marie, to Toronto, to Ottawa, to Bangladesh, and back again, Algoma University alumni are working around the globe, sharing their post-secondary experiences with prospective students in hopes that they too will one day be Algoma U students.

In Sault Ste. Marie, a team of four alumni work together to make Algoma U a household name in Ontario and abroad. Their goal is to make Algoma U the first choice school for students in the Sault, but also across the province. They draw upon their own lived experiences at their alma mater to entice students to make the jump to study at the University.

"When I'm on the road recruiting, I'm really focusing on the personal interactions that set Algoma U apart from the rest," says **Paul Quesnele**, the Recruitment Co-ordinator. Quesnele has been working for the University for over a decade, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Law and Justice and a Human Resources Certificate. *"When I was a student, I was taught by the late Ontario Court Justice*

James Greco. Over the course of the class, I had been participating a lot. At one point, he asked me to prepare a full debrief and lecture for our class on a case we had been studying. He handed over the reigns to me as an undergrad in my third year and let me teach... I remember he also called me after my exam to tell me that I had earned the highest mark in the class. He called me because he was proud of me. He also wrote me an amazing reference on his official letterhead. It was amazing to have that. That's what Algoma U is like. I tell students you can have experiences like that."

For **Heather Douglas**, the Domestic Recruitment Officer, and a 2016 graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Biology program, she focuses on her worldly experiences when speaking with future students. *"Algoma U is a Northern Ontario school and that is very endearing for many reasons. But Algoma U is also a gateway to the world. When I was at Algoma U, the first job I got was in Michigan, which led to a job in Florida, which led to another job in Pennsylvania. I did an exchange in South Korea, which led to a job overseas. Algoma U is set in Northern Ontario, and has this small, community-orientated vibe, but it opens up into all of these veins and can take you anywhere in the world."*

In Brampton, Ontario, two Algoma grads are championing for Algoma U at Brampton. **Jamal Muckett-Sobers** and **Amanda Thomas** are the first point of contact for those interested in earning a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree at the offsite.

Muckett-Sobers, who holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a minor in Biology and was a shooting guard for the Algoma Thunderbirds men's basketball team, moved to the Sault from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). He can relate to those who are apprehensive about relocating to Northern Ontario for a degree. *"I had those apprehensions, too,"* he says. *"But once I moved to the Sault and got settled in, I had a great time. I never thought I would have the experiences that I did at Algoma U. From playing ball, to the one-on-one interactions with professors, and the friends I made, these are all reasons why I chose to work at Algoma U after graduation."*

Thomas, who studied at the Algoma U at Brampton affiliate and graduated in 2013, is a big supporter of the University's programming in the Southern Ontario locale. *"I saw the difference Algoma University was making in many people's lives, including mine. Like me, many*

students are able to obtain a degree regardless of what stage of life they are in – working full-time, family obligations, etc. The accessibility of the Algoma U at Brampton BBA is a big point of interest for mature students.”

Together, the team of recruiters, who travel across the province in concert with each other in the fall and winter months, promote their experiences as the Algoma U experience. They highlight the emotions and feelings they had as undergraduate students, drawing upon the incredible and often once-in-a-lifetime opportunities they had, which set their degrees apart from those earned at other universities.

But recruitment efforts go beyond the Ontario borders. Alumni are working and volunteering around the globe to build a name and reputation for the institution. **Brad Lloyd**, the International Recruitment Officer, who has been with the University for over five years and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Geography, has been fortunate enough to travel to foreign countries to entice international students, including those in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the United Arab of Emirates, Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Indonesia.

While Lloyd highlights his own experiences at Algoma U, he also draws upon the attractiveness of Sault Ste. Marie. *“I’m not just highlighting Algoma U per se, I also have to highlight being Canadian and being a Saulite and what that means. So when I’m talking to students, I’m focusing also on what you can do here – from skiing on campus, snowboarding at Searchmont Resort, snowshoeing, swimming, camping, hiking, there’s really no limit on what you can do here,”* he adds.

Accompanying Lloyd to various fairs is recent Finance and Economics graduate **Baffa Yusuf** and BBA graduate **Kazi Faisal**. Both Yusuf and Faisal volunteer their time abroad in their home countries of Nigeria and Bangladesh, respectively, recruiting prospective students, sharing their experiences as international students studying at Algoma U.

Yusuf, who served on the Algoma University Students’ Union as President and Vice-President and partook in a short-term study abroad in Finland, speaks to prospective students about the opportunities for growth. *“During my years at Algoma U, I enjoyed working*

for students and being around students. Algoma U had a lot of opportunities for personal and professional development, and I wanted to explore everything. I also felt that professors were very interested in learning about my background and things that motivate me. It became so easy to build interpersonal relationships with staff and professors that I have come to see a few as mentors and role models. This unique experience carries a lot of value, and it’s something that I would want current and prospective international students to experience.”

Faisal also had similar experiences as Yusuf at the University and was heavily involved in student life. While recruiting, he tries to break the myths that exist about international students studying in Canada and the accessibility of the education. *“I heard that it’s really tough to communicate with university professors and get help from them.*

However, I had the opposite experience here at Algoma U and I found my professors were friendly and willing to help. I also heard that it’s really hard to make friends in university abroad but at Algoma U, I found everyone so very friendly and helpful! It’s one of the advantages of going to a smaller university.”

Other University officials – also alumni – frequent Japan, Korea, China, and Pakistan yearly, building relationships with other schools for transfer agreements and study abroad partnerships.

While their travel schedules often have them longing for home-cooked meals and the comfort of their own bed, one thing is for certain with the recruitment road warriors: their love for Algoma U runs deep.

In photo from left to right: Domestic recruiters, Heather Douglas and Taylor Jaehrling.





Michael Kendall, MD



Nadine Paul



Ryan Pietrzakowski, O.D.

FROM BIOLOGY TO DOCTORS: ALGOMA U GRADS IN THE HEALTH SCIENCES

By: Rick McGee

Algoma U student success stories often lead to impressive postgraduate sequels elsewhere, and many begin with a degree in biology.

Michael Kendall, MD received acceptance letters from three Ontario medical schools when he concluded his studies in 2013. He chose Western University's Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry and completed its Doctor of Medicine program in 2017.

Dr. Kendall will finish his family medicine residency requirements through Queen's University next year.

"I chose medicine as it's a career that involves the application of cutting-edge science to sometimes complex individual human circumstances," he said. *"It places huge emphasis on the interactions between biological, psychological, and social issues."*

Algoma U served as an excellent stepping stone, the Sault Ste. Marie-raised physician continues.

"I chose Algoma U primarily because of

the small class sizes and low student-teacher ratio. Smaller class sizes allowed me to shine."

Remaining in his hometown offered other advantages, too.

"Being close to home let me save for later. I knew going into undergrad studies that it wouldn't be my last degree and I wanted to excel early."

Dr. Kendall emphasized that two Algoma U faculty members in particular, contributed greatly towards his accomplishments.

"I volunteered in Dr. Brandon Schamp's lab throughout my degree and worked with him to secure funding for an Undergraduate Student Research Award through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. This allowed me to do paid research over the summer."

"I also took almost every course Dr. Dave Brodbeck offered. He often spends much time after classes teaching about everything from psychiatric drugs to some of the more advanced statistical tests. He taught me a lot about statistics early on, thus facilitating a much deeper understanding of scientific literature."

Practicing in the Sault is among options now under consideration for Dr. Kendall.

Earlier this year, **Nadine Paul** was accepted into veterinary medicine at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow in Scotland. The University of Guelph is another potential destination.

Paul began undergraduate studies at Ryerson University in Toronto. An exceptional student, she earned a U Sports Academic All-Canadian award while playing varsity women's hockey.

But big city life had its drawbacks, she said.

"I'm from a small town (Trenton, ON) and didn't enjoy living downtown with all the hustle and bustle. I decided I wanted to finish my degree somewhere more quiet and quaint. I did some research and found Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma U. I decided to transfer and finish my degree there."

"I had the experience of a lifetime in the Sault. One of the main reasons that attracted me is that Algoma U is a nice, small school. Everyone knows your name and the teachers know you personally."

Paul graduated from Algoma U in 2016 and then followed up with a year of additional studies.

The city's Hiawatha Highlands Conservation Area provided an outdoor lab for some of her course work.



Jessica Wilson, MD

"I really, really love birds and did an interesting thesis project on Ovenbird vocalization with Dr. Jennifer Foote," she continued. "I really look up to her and she's been one of the key factors in me being able to get this far in terms of my studies. I even presented my work — which I was truly proud of and quite vested in — at the North American Ornithological Conference in Washington, DC."

That experience solidified Paul's interest in becoming a veterinarian, concentrating on avian medicine.

Another Algoma U alumnus, **Ryan Pietrzakowski, O.D.** (Doctor of Optometry) is now practicing in Sault Ste. Marie.

After receiving his degree in 2012, he attended the widely acclaimed Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago and graduated in 2016.

Looking back, Dr. Pietrzakowski recalled selecting Algoma U for undergraduate studies *"because of the opportunities it offered me both in and out of the classroom. The science and technology facility at the University was brand new, and the small class sizes allow a very personalized approach to education. The idea of having very modern laboratory equipment and learning to use it from a very qualified professor instead of a teaching assistant really appealed to me."*

This alum also valued ecological science classes in the city's surrounding forests that allowed students to study theories introduced on campus.

"Being able to apply what was taught in a classroom with hands-on activities supports a great understanding and is what helped build the knowledge base I needed to succeed following graduating from Algoma U."

Dr. Pietrzakowski appreciates the support of many, including Dr. István Imre, who served as both a professor and an adviser, and Dr. Arthur Perlini, then longtime Dean of Algoma U.

"They went far beyond what I would have expected of them in order to prepare me for the next step in my academic career. The ability to reach out to a support system when I needed it made the application process much more straightforward for me."

Similar factors led **Jessica Wilson, MD** to Algoma U where she began her long post-secondary journey.

"I initially chose Algoma University because it was close to home and offered small class sizes," the 2012 Algoma U graduate said. "I found the small class sizes conducive to my learning and I thrived in this environment."

A prestigious Natural Science and

Engineering Research Council of Canada Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarship helped Dr. Wilson complete a Master of Science degree in Nutritional Sciences at the University of Guelph in 2013.

"From there, I proceeded to medical school at the University of Toronto where I graduated in June 2017," she continued. "I am currently completing postgraduate training in family medicine at the University of Toronto. I will be completing this degree in June 2019."

Dr. Wilson also hopes to do an extra year of residency training in Care of the Elderly.

Thereafter, she would like to complete some family medicine locum positions in a rural setting before settling down in a non-urban area to join a family medicine practice.

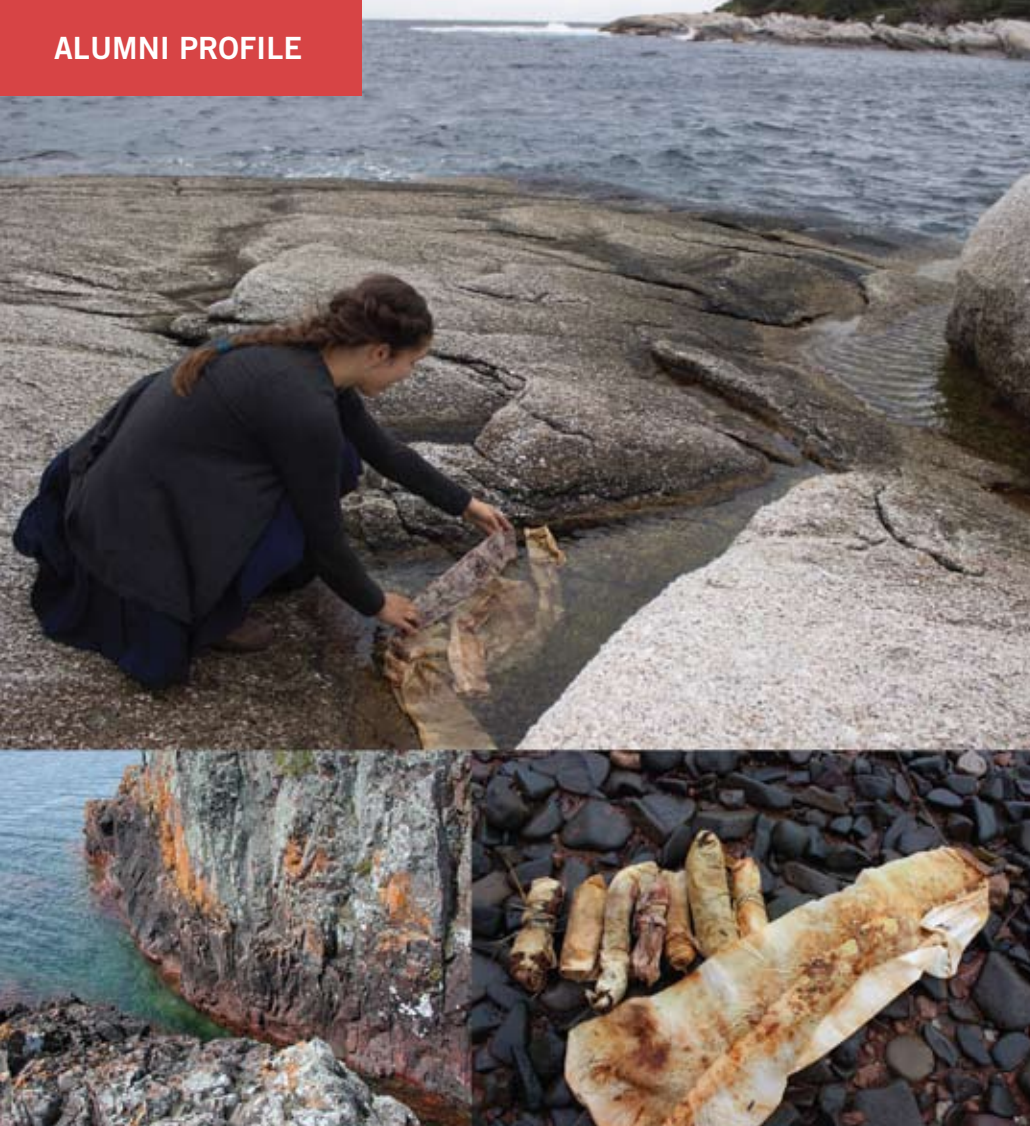
"My Algoma U professors provided me with the skills required to critically analyze scientific literature which has helped throughout my studies," Dr. Wilson said. "They also helped as mentors throughout my time at Algoma U. I was given numerous opportunities to complete research to better understand the scientific process. Dr. Brandon Schamp provided me with numerous opportunities to complete research and projects within his lab. He was a wonderful mentor throughout my time at Algoma U and I learned a great deal in his classes."

"In addition to this, I found Algoma U's focus on Indigenous practices invaluable throughout my training as a physician as I have a better understanding of how to approach this patient population to provide the best medical care possible."

Personal circumstances have greatly influenced Dr. Wilson's academic and career goals.

"Growing up in rural Northern Ontario, I experienced living in a medically underserved community," she observed. "I was without a family physician for much of my childhood and often travelled to Toronto for specialty care."

"My upbringing made me appreciate the vast differences in care between urban and rural centres, and I quickly learned to appreciate the unique role of family physicians. Seeing how family physicians approach patients holistically in order to understand how the patient's experiences shape their illness is a concept I connect deeply with."



INSPIRED BY WATER: ALGOMA U VISUAL ARTS GRAD ALICIA HUNT PURSUING MASTER'S DEGREE

By: Marc Capancioni

Call it a way of life. For **Alicia Hunt**, the beauty of seas, rivers, and lakes has always been an inspiration and draw.

She grew up in Mission, B.C., located on the Fraser River. Hunt and her family later moved to Abbotsford and often vacationed on Vancouver Island.

In the late-1990s, the Hunts spent three years living in Northern Ireland, where Hunt's parents worked with children at a reconciliation centre and primary school. Their home was on the Irish Sea, and the family was able to observe the ever-changing coastal weather.

Simply put, the Hunts have always lived near water. This experience has inspired Hunt as an artist.

When she was finishing high school, Hunt began looking for a university with a suitable Visual Arts program. The location of the school also needed to be a good fit for her family. Positioned at the heart of the Great Lakes, Sault Ste. Marie was a perfect match.

In typical Hunt fashion, they moved, this time heading east and settling in Sault Ste. Marie. *"My family says that travel and moving are in our blood,"* said Hunt. *"We really liked the size and feel of the city. After living in Western Canada, which is more temperate and rainy, we were impressed with the beauty of Northern Ontario's distinct four seasons."*

The atmosphere and structure of Algoma University also helped draw the Hunts. *"I was looking for a school with small class sizes and a great interdisciplinary Visual Arts program,"* she said.

Hunt enrolled in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program in 2008. Two years later, her brother, Matthew, began studying French and Math. In 2012, her sister, Selina, signed up for the Community, Economic,

and Social Development program.

"We were delighted by how friendly Saultites are," said Hunt. *"We enjoyed places like Whitefish Island and the waterfront boardwalk. Lake Superior had me in awe."*

While in Sault Ste. Marie, Hunt instructed studio classes at the Art Gallery of Algoma. She graduated from Algoma University in 2012 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Her art practice was rooted in themes of place and community.

"I am very grateful for my experience in the Visual Arts program," she said. *"Professors Noni Boyle, Tom O'Flanagan, Andrea Pinheiro, and Annie King each made me feel supported and challenged. Through continued interaction with them following graduation, I decided that I wanted to pursue graduate studies for two reasons – to become better equipped to teach art and to focus more deeply on my studio practice."*

In September 2018, Hunt will be entering her second year in the Master of Fine Arts program at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University (NSCAD), located on Halifax Harbour. Hunt is a recipient of the Joseph Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship, a competitive research grant from the federal government's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Hunt is thriving in the coastal community. With water being a big part of her upbringing and history, it's natural that her project is related to the ocean and coastlines. Hunt's research is concentrated on the cultural geography of Nova Scotia through the lens of organic materials, specifically seawater and soil. With a focus on how attachment to place helps construct individual and collective identities, it will result in an outdoor textile-based exhibition.

Hunt is an Artist in Residence at Red Clay Arts Centre on the Bay of Fundy in the summer of 2018. She'll also have a solo exhibition at the Anna Leonowens Art Gallery in Halifax. These types of experiences are significant for an art career.

After graduating, Hunt plans on teaching and maintaining her art practice.

Wherever she ends up, it's safe to assume it will be on a lake or ocean. *"It continues to be vital for me to live near water and spend a great amount of time outdoors, researching and making art,"* she said.



THIRD IN CANADA: BRONZE AT AU NATIONALS

By: Marc Capancioni

History, on both the individual and global level, is generally remembered in terms of key dates, decisions, and events. For **Bryce Davis**, there are two days that he and his family won't soon forget.

The first one was filled with sadness. In 2016, after a successful high school wrestling career, Davis decided to retire from the sport and pursue a college diploma in his home state of Michigan.

The second day, two years later, was filled with joy and excitement. In February 2018, following his return to the mat, Davis earned a bronze medal at the U Sports Wrestling Championships.

The stark contrast between the two days is the result of Algoma University. After making the decision to retire from the sport, he was recruited to the school's varsity wrestling team. In his second season with the club, not only did he place third in the national championships but he was also awarded the tournament's R.W. Pugh Fair Play Award.

The accomplishment was noteworthy for Algoma U, as it marked the school's second national medal since joining U Sports in 2013. Davis was also the Thunderbirds' first male student-athlete to earn a spot on the national podium.

For the freestyle wrestler, the feat was even more special, as it took place at the George Leach Centre, which hosted the 2018 U Sport Wrestling Championships. "Being able to capture bronze at my home gym was a great experience," he said. "It's something I'll never forget."

Even more remarkable for Davis is that he was able to compete in front of his

family. His parents, grandparents, aunt, uncle, and four cousins were present for the entire tournament. They made the trek north to Sault Ste. Marie to cheer him on.

"We have a really close family," said Davis, who hails from Fenton, Michigan, just north of Detroit. "It was great to share the experience with them. I got to hug everyone after the match. It was an unreal experience."

Although Davis' fiancé, Lauren Robertson, was unable to make it to Sault Ste. Marie for the tournament, she watched his matches live on FaceTime. "I got to speak with her and see her online after my matches, which was awesome," said Davis.

For his podium finish at the national championships, he credits his family for their years of support. Davis also thanks his coaches, Trevor Manchester and Allan Middleton, for their guidance and encouragement. "They dedicate a ton of time, and I really appreciate everything they do."

Manchester, the Thunderbirds' first-ever Head Coach, sees Davis' bronze medal at the U Sports Championships as a highlight of the season. "Bryce is one of the hardest workers I have ever had the pleasure of coaching," he said. "Winning Algoma University's first men's national medal is a culmination of all the time and effort that he and the rest of the team put into the sport."

Currently in his second year of Algoma U's Psychology program, Davis has three years of eligibility remaining in university wrestling. Winning a bronze medal in 2018 "ups the ante for next year," he said. "My plan is to work hard and do the best that I can do."

On the education front, after graduating, Davis plans to use his degree to start a

career in counselling, perhaps in a school environment. "I like helping people and assisting them with a life plan," he said. "Wrestling teaches a lot of self-discipline, and I want to help transfer that skill to others."

Davis' journey to Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma University has been a great experience for him so far. The journey has also been a blast for his parents.

"Our first time in the city, we fell in love right away," said his father, Jerry Davis. "We loved everything about the community – the waterfront, the University, and the people."

At the 2018 U Sport Wrestling Championships, mom and dad got to re-experience the community's warm nature. "We yelled a lot during Davis' matches, so people knew we were his parents," said Jerry. "Tons of people shook our hands and thanked us for our son attending Algoma University. It was very welcoming."

Bryce's mom, Chandra, was also impressed with the community's warmth. "From the first time we came to Sault Ste. Marie, we couldn't have felt more welcomed," she said. "And the staff at Algoma University gives a lot of support and encouragement. It's a great place."

The Davis family has since developed a special bond with the Thunderbirds wrestling program. When they were in Sault Ste. Marie during the American Thanksgiving last year, Chandra and Jerry cooked a turkey dinner for the team. At every tournament, the couple also brings food for the student-athletes to munch on between matches.

In fact, the bond between the family and Algoma U is so strong that the Davis' are actively promoting the school's wrestling program in their home state of Michigan, where the sport has a large following. "We're spreading the word," said Jerry, adding that he hopes it leads to more U.S. wrestlers heading north to Sault Ste. Marie in future years.

In the meantime, watching their son excel in the sport and succeed in life brings a smile to mom and dad's face. "We tell all of our children that, when they commit to something, to give 100 per cent, and that's exactly what Bryce is doing," said Jerry. "We couldn't be more proud of him."



Pauline Danquah and Bushra Asghar

BUSHRA ASGHAR AND PAULINE DANQUAH: LEADERS IN THE MAKING

By: Jessica Ferlaino

Bushra Asghar and **Pauline Danquah** come from different places and had different motivations for attending Algoma University, but both have proven to be great leaders, finding common ground in their programs of study and their engagement on campus.

Born in Saudi Arabia, Asghar and her family lived in Pakistan for five years until immigrating to Mississauga, Ontario. Having lived in an urban city most of her life, she yearned for the opportunity to experience life in a smaller northern community. Enrolling at Algoma University to study Political

Science with a minor in International Relations afforded her that perspective.

Danquah came to Algoma U from Brampton, Mississauga's neighbour to the north, to pursue a degree in Political Science and Law and Justice. She wanted to escape the distractions of city life to focus on her studies.

Both women have come into their own at Algoma University.

One of the ways Asghar and Danquah overcame the challenges of being away from the comforts of home was through their involvement on- and off-campus. Their lives converged through their involvement with the Algoma University Students' Union (AUSU).

Asghar, who is the outgoing President, will leave the role in the capable hands of Danquah for the 2018-2019 academic year. For Danquah, it is an opportunity to "make a difference for students at Algoma U." She hopes to use her experience and the skills she has developed to inspire change on campus.

"My experience thus far has been nothing but growth and great learning experiences," said Danquah. *"Algoma U, so far, is preparing me for my future,"* which she is very excited for.

Asghar completed her studies in April 2018. *"My experience at Algoma U has been life changing to say the least, and not in a cheesy way. It has made me the advocate that I am. It has helped me to grow profoundly, academically, professionally, and personally."*

Next year, Asghar will begin graduate studies at the London School of Economics. Whether this leads to a career as a diplomat, academic, or a role in the public service, she is well on her way. Danquah also aspires to be a diplomat or a lawyer, but first looks forward to graduating in 2020.

Regardless of where their paths take them academically or professionally, Asghar and Danquah represent the value of an Algoma University degree and the personal growth and achievement that can take place on campus.

A PROJECT OF HEALING AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH EDUCATION

By: Rick McGee

Powerfully evocative portrayals of life in other times will soon command attention in the central entrance area of Algoma University's Shingwauk Hall.

A soon-to-be completed exhibition will illustrate life at the former Shingwauk Indian Residential School (including its predecessor, Shingwauk Home on the same site, and Wawanosh Home for Girls formerly located five kilometres away).

The residential school closed in 1970 and the building became the new home for Algoma University College the following year.

The installation of three distinct galleries will conclude the first stage of a long-term, multi-phase project initiated by the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC) at the behest of the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and Algoma U.

More than \$450,000 in federal government Museum Assistance Program funding has supported the project to date, beginning with photo identification in 2011.

Conceived under the theme of **"Reconciliation Through Education,"** the dynamic exhibition helps audiences learn about the difficult lives vulnerable children endured at Shingwauk Indian Residential School and at similar institutions across Canada.

Krista McCracken, Archives Supervisor for the SRSC and Algoma U, has worked on the project from inception.

"We are really telling the narrative of the site itself, focusing on the history of the Shingwauk Indian Residential School, but also on Survivors' resilience and current Anishinaabe student success," she said.

"Plans are being made to unveil the exhibition this summer. We want a strong launch during the annual Shingwauk Indian Residential School Gathering reunion during the August long weekend."

Archival photographs, portraits of residential school Survivors, and their testimonies are the basis of the compelling exhibition. Residential school Survivors reviewed all elements before completion to ensure cultural appropriateness. Overall, the work seeks to transform *"colonized space into one of*



healing and reconciliation."

"Beyond this summer, we will be developing a robust educational tool kit to go with the exhibit," McCracken noted. *"We already see over 1,500 visitors per year at the Centre, all the way from the elementary school level to professional development groups. We will also use the exhibit as an educational tool for current Algoma U students, as well as post-secondary students from other schools."*

Additional grants are being sought to further expand the exhibition along the hallway, into the Shingwauk Auditorium and through the foyer leading into it. Placing elements on the University's front lawn is anticipated, too.

Survivors moved by the progress achieved to date include Chancellor and alumna **Shirley Horn**, who lived at the Shingwauk Indian Residential School as a child.

"The exhibition is a dream come true," she said. *"It is stepping into the twenty-first century from the historical past. It is part of the process the Children of Shingwauk were discussing for a long time. This helps the building reflect the whole story and the lives of some of those who lived in the residential school. This helps to move toward reconciliation."*

Ottawa-based **Trina Cooper-Bolam**, is the exhibition's lead designer. She has worked extensively on curatorial aspects, as well.

"The exciting thing about this exhibition is that, unlike previous exhibits brought to Algoma University, it's permanent – allowing for a high level of integration. For example, we have been able to incorporate responsive lighting and embed digital media. When you walk into the space, elements respond to your movement."

At the same time, the building's corridors and low ceilings introduced some unique challenges and constraints.

According to Cooper-Bolam, *"Our response to these and other spatial limitations has been to layer voices, experiences, and stories. Every effort has been made to honour Survivors' wishes to make visiting the exhibition a transformative journey."*

"We [the curatorial and design team] have worked hard to reflect what Survivors want to see in the space and how they want it to be experienced by visitors. The idea of reclaiming a former residential school and turning it into a place of healing and reconciliation is the most amazing thing."



Rendering of the Aboriginal Institute - view from the St. Mary's River.

AN ONTARIO ABORIGINAL INSTITUTE: A NEW ERA FOR SHINGWAUK KINOOMAAGE GAMIG

By: Rick McGee

New opportunities for growth and enhanced collaboration between Algoma University and Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig (SKG) are emerging from public policy changes to post-secondary education in Ontario.

Since 2008, SKG has partnered with Algoma U to offer a three-year Bachelor of Arts in Anishinaabemowin and other culturally relevant courses. A new Anishinaabe Studies program has recently received approval by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

Game-changing legislation passed by the province in late 2017 recognizes nine Ontario Aboriginal Institutes — including SKG — as constituting a “*unique Indigenous pillar of Ontario's publicly supported post-secondary education and training system.*”

“*Algoma University's special mission is to provide 'cross-cultural learning between Aboriginal communities and other communities,'*” said Algoma University President and Vice-Chancellor Asima Vezina. “*Based on Chief Shingwauk's original vision of a 'Teaching Wigwam,' our Covenant with the Shingwauk Education Trust [SET] and our partnership with Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig form a shared commitment to this vision. We are excited that Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig is now recognized as one of nine Aboriginal Institutes in the Province of Ontario. This places our*

partnership in a unique position for both institutions to co-lead truth and reconciliation efforts and cross-cultural programming in Ontario, Canada, and worldwide.

“The opportunity for all Algoma University students to take courses at the Aboriginal Institute will provide resources and Anishinaabe expertise unlike anywhere else in this country. This will lead to significant partnerships with First Nations' researchers from across the country, and will support Algoma U faculty and students engaged on issues of importance to Anishinaabe communities. We look forward to this next phase of Algoma U's history.”

The Aboriginal Institutes have well-established histories of collaboration with universities and colleges in offering Anishinaabe instruction and services.

The act establishes an Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council with authority to approve the granting of degrees, diplomas, and certificates by the institutes, and their use of the term “university.”

In 2017 the province announced first-time funding totalling \$56 million over three years for the institutes “*to expand their capacity and strengthen their role.*”

“That meant we really needed to move forward as an institution to recognize the change in the environment,” said Bud Wildman, a past Algoma University Board of Governors Chair, hired by SKG's board as a part-time advisor. As a former Ontario cabinet minister, his responsibilities included Native Affairs.

“So we had to renew our relationship with Algoma U and Algoma U has been very supportive. President Asima Vezina has been very, very committed to Anishinaabe education and to reconciliation.”

A newly developed SKG 2018-2022 Strategic Plan sets out ambitious goals for enrolment growth and expansion of its partnership with Algoma U.

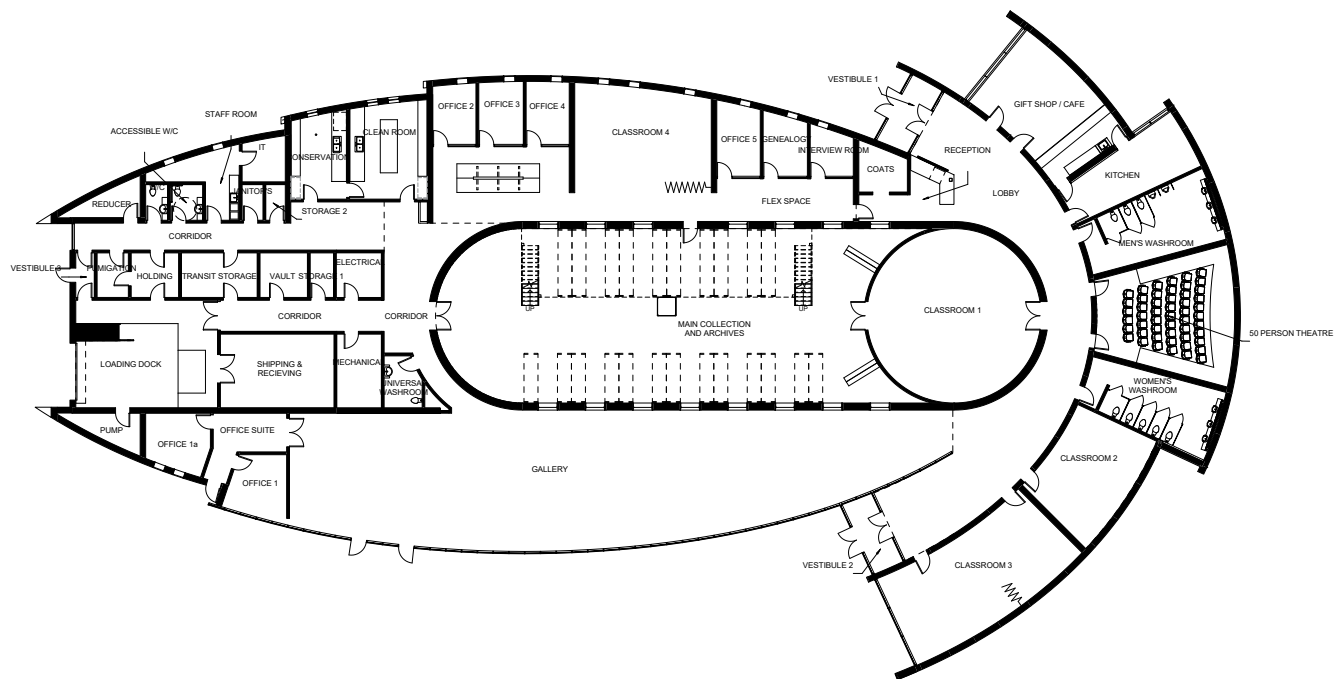
The Institute's leadership wants to see SKG become an independent, degree-granting university [named Shingwauk] by “*2020 at the latest.*”

SKG will become part of a \$12,000,000 Anishinabek Discovery Centre (ADC) to be ready for occupancy in January 2019. The new quarters are currently under construction on the south side of Queen Street East. The federal Post-Secondary Institution Strategic Investment Fund contributed \$10.2 million to the Shingwauk Education Trust for the initiative.

Shaped like a traditional Anishinaabe lodge, the 19,179-square-foot, one-level structure will accommodate inter-related post-secondary education, archives, cultural spaces, and event hosting facilities under one roof.

Rendering of the Aboriginal Institute - view from Queen Street.





Shingwauk Indian Residential School Survivor, Algoma University Elder, former Algoma U Board of Governors member, and current SKG board member, Shirley Roach, is very happy about the Centre. *"I am very happy about this Centre. I think we can say now that we are following the vision of Chief Shingwauk. He envisioned education for us as Anishinaabe people, to be able to work in conjunction with non-native peoples. I went through living in that residential school for seven years, which caused a lot of pain and a lot of trauma which will always be with me. I am really, really happy about what's going on and that Algoma is willing to work with us 100 per cent in achieving this and working together with us to have our own Anishinaabe university. We are accomplishing what Chief Shingwauk wanted us to become."*

The Centre will strengthen SKG's profile as an emerging leader in Anishinaabe education.

"We are already providing some land-based education as outside-of-the-classroom teaching for students," said Mitch Case, SKG's Director of Student Services.

"These programs help make students feel welcome and ensure they're having a culturally appropriate experience. This also helps them to gain skills that have been lost through the generations."

Participants in fall workshops learned about the safe handling of game meat and how to cook. Other instruction focused on processing and taking care of hides.

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and the University of Toronto have been impressed by SKG's efforts and are learning from its successes to develop similar courses.

Algoma U Librarian and Archivist Ken Hernden was seconded to help develop and activate the ADC project. His professional skills and involvement in related work over more than a decade make him a key contributor.

"The design concept involves the main archival collection being in the central oval core of the building," he said. *"There will be a glass teaching lodge shape over the top of that and everything will be positioned organically around that main collection. A gallery overlooking the [St. Mary's] river sweeps around it and two of the five classrooms are directly integrated into the archives area."*

"The Centre's archival reading room and the vault area are probably as large as the classrooms. It's important to remember that the ADC is organically part of Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig's teaching and research mission: it provides a unique space on campus for preserving and using Indigenous knowledge, which will support faculty, students, and the public."

Archival content from near and far will grow over time, Hernden continued.

"The collection-building focus is Indigenous-created knowledge and information. So it could include, for example, the records of First Nations'

communities and political treaty organizations. These communities and organizations have governance structures and deliver services and these are documented in records of all types — paper, digital, reel-to-reel tape, and other formats. This is an opportunity for Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig to extend its archival expertise, equipment, and facilities to support communities and political treaty organizations with records management, cataloguing, digitization, conservation, reference, and other related services."

Information created by Indigenous individuals, groups, movements, and other organizations is also of interest. And Centre staff would like to work with scholars of Indigenous issues from across Canada whose research may not have a permanent home.

"The archive will have national significance once we begin to collect more and more things because there is no real repository for such items. As an Indigenous Institute, Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig's archive has a natural mission to work with First Nations."

Besides teaching the next generation of learners, the ADC will foster new research and will help launch new programs not yet considered or in early development.

"The state-of-the-art Centre is going to do something you just can't buy," Hernden concluded. *"It's topical, it's timely, and it's important to Canadian society."*

GATHERING AT THE RAPIDS POW WOW

By: Meaghan Kent

The annual **Gathering at the Rapids Pow Wow**, held the first weekend in March at the George Leach Centre, is a two-day event which celebrates Anishinaabe culture through a variety of traditional and contemporary events. The pow wow has become one of the largest in the region, hosting thousands of guests annually from across North America.

Besides dancing, including the traditional jingle and chicken dances, the pow wow also features Indigenous vendors from across the Algoma district, selling Indigenous arts and crafts and homemade delicacies.

The pow wow was first conceived by the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association (SASA) and is made possible each year by generous sponsors and volunteers.



CHALLENGE. ACCEPTED.

WAASMOWIN-MNIDO: OVERCOMING ADVERSITY THROUGH EDUCATION

By: Jessica Ferlaino

Education saved **Waasmowin-Mnido's** life. Education empowered her to overcome negative perceptions, systemic inequalities, historical traumas, and patterns of violence to reach her potential and achieve her goals.

From a young age and throughout her life, Waasmowin-Mnido has been confronted by adversity. Being raised by a residential school Survivor was impactful on her development. And going in and out of the child welfare system, there was no sense of safety, consistency, and support.

Determined to walk her own path, Waasmowin-Mnido found solace and strength in education. Ignoring the naysayers who told her she wouldn't amount to anything, education became

the greatest tool in her arsenal.

Even when the child welfare system was no longer an option for Waasmowin-Mnido, who found herself homeless at the age of 15, education remained a priority. High school was her greatest achievement and having succeeded, she had her sights set on university.

"Months before I graduated, I met with a school counsellor to get support in applying for post-secondary. I wanted to be a teacher, but my counsellor informed me that I did not have the grades and should consider social work, as it is a better career option for someone like me: First Nation."

Waasmowin-Mnido earned a Child and Youth Worker diploma at Sault College and planned to transition to Algoma University. While some encouraged her to pursue employment, her goal was to earn a University degree.

Not only was Waasmowin-Mnido accepted into university, she thrived. She took advantage of available resources

and support services including the visiting elder program, smudging, feasts, gatherings and pow wows. Most importantly, she learned to ask for help and her professors were there to support her. She put in the work and it paid off.

After graduating, Waasmowin-Mnido continued her education, obtaining her Master of Education from York University. She has been employed in the fields of social work, education, and policy. Once afraid that she would be dead by the time she was 30, today she works for the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR).

Recently, Waasmowin-Mnido was invited back to the Sault Ste. Marie campus as a speaker at the Anishinaabe Alumni Panel. The campus, just like her, had grown but welcomed her with a sense of familiarity. It provided her an opportunity to share her story with current students, proving the power of education, the will to persevere, and the support of community.



Education is an investment

How in the name of sustainable future do you attract young professionals to Northern Ontario? Likewise, how do you retain the ones already living there?

The way Joseph Meating sees it, a key component is to have a thriving university that continues to pump out graduates. Having lived and worked in a number of Canadian cities over the years, he has seen what a post-secondary sector can do to bolster a community.

"My experience has been that, wherever you are, to have a university that's doing great things generates a ton of spin-off benefits," said Meating. *"From culture to the economy, to have a vibrant university in Sault Ste. Marie is a huge asset."*

Born in New Brunswick, Meating moved to the Sault in 1980 to work at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre. In 1995, following a large downsizing, Meating lost his job. A year later, he and five other laid-off workers from the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) used their skills and knowledge to start BioForest Technologies Inc.

Initially, the company provided consulting services for monitoring and maintaining forest health related to insect infestation. In 2001, the firm began a collaboration with CFS to develop, register, and market a new natural-product insecticide. Along the way, to help foster growth, BioForest utilized Algoma University.

Whether partnering with the school's Biology department to conduct research projects, or offering jobs and co-operative education placements to graduates and students, they have worked together on a number of initiatives over the years. One project saw the University and BioForest undertake research to evaluate new chemistries for protecting trees from insect and disease pests. The lab study was supported by the Industrial Research Assistance Program from the National Research Council Canada.

"That project was a wonderful experience. It was a great demonstration of a corporate-academic-government partnership. It was a pleasure to work with the students, professors, academic staff, and representatives from the government funding agency."

To help generate opportunities for more students, Meating recently established several scholarships at the University. *"I've been a student myself and know it can be financially burdensome. Algoma U and Sault Ste. Marie have been good to me, and I wanted to give back."*

Over the past two decades, BioForest and Algoma U have grown together. When the company first started in 1996, it had seven staff. At that time, the school consisted of little more than one campus building. Today, the University includes the Convergence Centre, which boasts state-of-the-art laboratories, dedicated to science-based teaching and cutting-edge research.

Meanwhile, BioForest currently has 30 employees. Besides its main facility in the Sault, the company has offices in Toronto, Montreal, Chatham, Massachusetts, Missouri, and in Finland. Of the firm's 16 staff in the Sault, five are Algoma U graduates. *"It's great to have access to that talent. It's also great to be able to attract external talent and help bring local graduates from other universities back home."*

BioForest was purchased by a Quebec-based company in 2015. Meating remains active in the operation as a consultant and advisor. For helping his firm grow and succeed over the past two decades, he tips his hat to Algoma U. *"The University is a tremendous asset for Sault Ste. Marie. There's a ton of interesting things going on there, which provides a great opportunity for everyone."*

*Above (left to right):
Algoma U alumni, Meagan Gjos,
Meghan Rains, Kyleigh Seabrook,
Mark McKenna, Adriana Kairiss,
Mike Pratt and Dylan Turgeon
stand with Joseph Meating,
BioForest Technologies Inc.*

Creating Opportunities for Algoma U Students and Alumni

Written by:
Marc Capancioni



for a lifetime

Algoma University and the Algoma Highlands Conservancy (AHC) have plenty in common. Both embody the “Naturally Gifted” tagline of Sault Ste Marie. Both have programming for environmental education. Both have hidden gems and countless unsung success stories. And both are helping post-secondary students.

The AHC recently created a new annual scholarship for a student in their fourth year of studies in the University’s Biology or Environmental Science program. Preference will be given to students who are enrolled in upper year courses focused on ecology, conservation, environment, and evolution, and who maintain a minimum average of 80 per cent in their previous year of study.

“One of the AHC’s missions is outdoor education, so we thought we’d offer a scholarship to help someone in that line of work,” said Bob Beggs, Treasurer of AHC. *“We also offer school kids programming on conservancy lands, from grade school through high school, to get their hands dirty and learn about the lands that surround us. Like Algoma U, we offer education to students in outdoor classrooms, as science is best taught in the field.”*

Beggs teaches part-time at Algoma U in the Business and Economics Department, and he believes strongly in AHC’s core value of preserving the natural environment for future generations to enjoy. Many other AHC members are also educators and understand the financial burden post-secondary education can place on students. *“Our board members were all students once, and some of us are educators, so we know the struggle. If our scholarship can help a student and promote conservation and education of the Algoma Highlands, everybody wins.”*

Unbeknownst to many in the region, the AHC currently owns 3000 acres of land near King Mountain, at Robertson Lake Cliffs, and at “Norm’s Cabin” on Bone Lake.

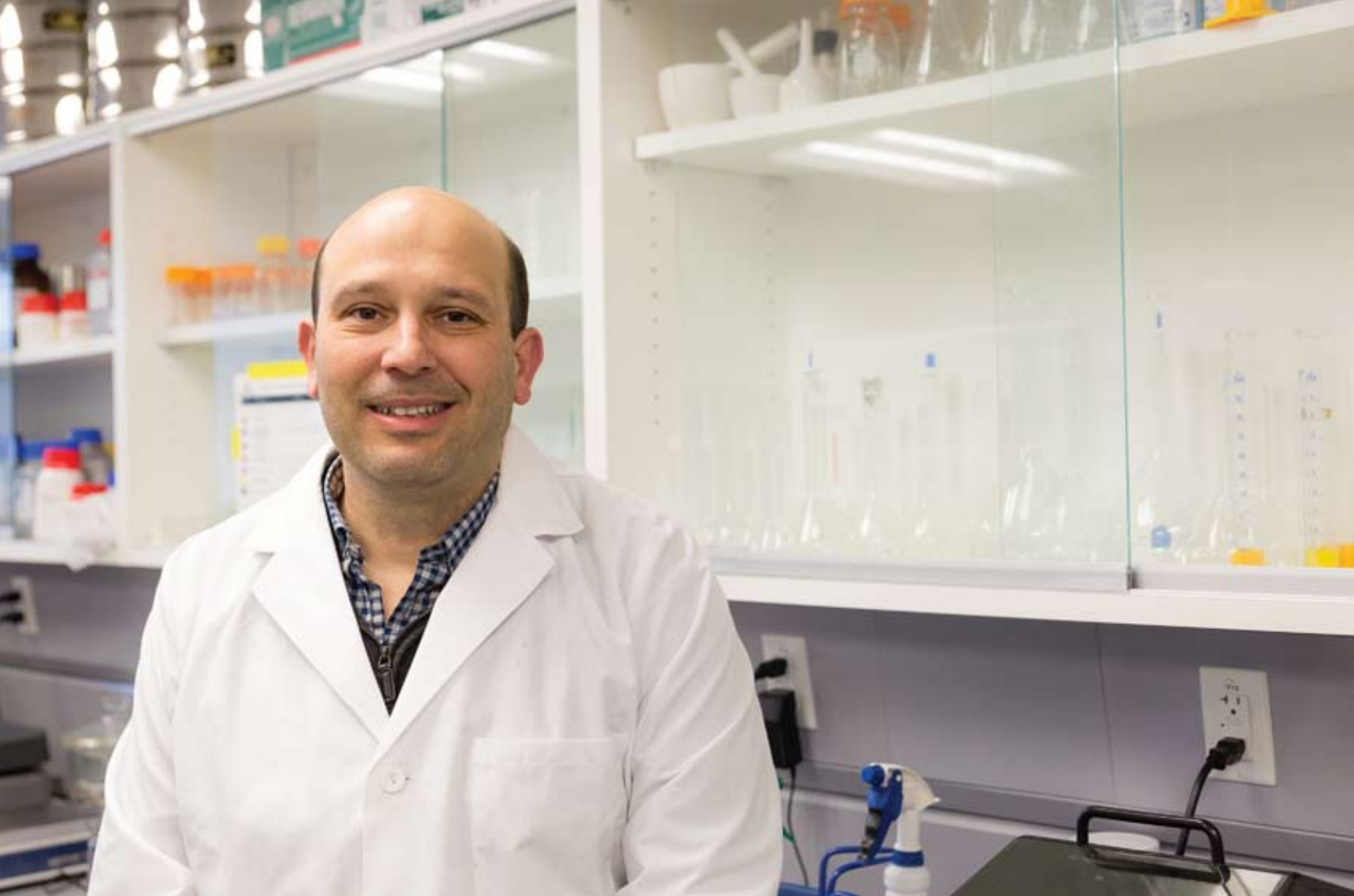
“It’s from these lands that we focus on our four core principles of conserving the Algoma Highlands, improving environmental education and research, providing silent-sport recreation, and ensuring sustainable forest management. By purchasing the land, we ensure that it won’t be developed, and will be conserved for future generations to enjoy. Everyone is welcome to use our trails and lands in responsible, low-impact, recreational ways. We attract many bird watchers, wildlife photographers, hikers, mountain bikers, and skiers, among others... Though many don’t know they are enjoying AHC lands. An appreciation of the outdoors improves our quality of life, and conservation is up to everyone. Going to a city park is fine, but to truly appreciate the nature that surrounds us, you need to get out and experience it. It’s free and we want people to use it.”

Beggs is hopeful that the AHC scholarship will foster an appreciation for conservation. *“Perhaps someone hearing about this award will also learn about hiking Robertson Lake Cliffs to see the gorgeous fall colours, or the accommodations available at Norm’s Cabin for the adventurous, or the cross-country skiing or snowshoeing at the base of King Mountain. Maybe they’ll donate, or want to get involved with our work. At a minimum, they’ll gain a new appreciation of Algoma Highlands Conservancy lands.”*



Algoma Highlands Conservancy Fosters an Appreciation for Conservation with New Scholarship

Written by:
Dr. Nadine Robinson



Dr. Pedro Antunes, Executive Research Lead/Professor - Department of Biology, and Canada Research Chair in Invasive Species Biology.

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

By: Rick McGee

Value-added learning, long a staple of Algoma U's academic programming, is growing even more important as a contributor to student and institutional success.

That reality is reflected in the recent establishment of an Office of Research and Innovation.

This new presence on campus emerges from the University's 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. One of its five strategic objectives calls for "A culture of research and innovation that leverages existing strengths and produces an exceptional student experience while contributing to the sustainability of the community and region."

Dr. Pedro Antunes became the office's Executive Research Lead in January 2018 with a three-year mandate. A professor in the Department of Biology, he is also

a Canada Research Chair in Invasive Species Biology.

"Pedro's role is to promote and grow research and innovation at Algoma University," said President and Vice-Chancellor Asima Vezina. "This includes the management of research funds entrusted to us by funding organizations. Our partnerships with Natural Resources Canada's Great Lakes Forestry Centre (GLFC), the Ontario Forest Research Institute (OFRI), and other local organizations are invaluable to the University experience that students get at Algoma U as they represent unique and tremendously rich research training opportunities."

Dr. Antunes has enthusiastically embraced his new responsibilities and the pluses stemming from an enhanced commitment to research and innovation.

"It's very important that students learn in an environment that allows them to be hands-on so that they learn by trial and error," he said. "That is experiential learning. Attached to it, there is an

inquisitive process in doing research that is very important in developing critical thinking skills.

"Employers are looking for thinkers well equipped to solve problems, while demonstrating leadership. That comes not just from what we think of as traditional teaching and learning in a classroom, but through answering questions using various research methods."

The Office of Research and Innovation's immediate priorities have focused on upping the numbers of: externally funded grants; papers and citations; students in remunerated research positions; research chairs; public and private sector partners located on campus; and, research events that attract external talent.

Many Algoma U programs include a capstone thesis course. Through it, students work closely with professors to conduct research. In fact, students themselves often become published researchers before they go on to graduate programs.

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“In some cases, students are fulfilling thesis requirements with faculty who are receiving external funding,” Dr. Antunes noted. *“This creates the right environment for excellence in undergraduate education. When they graduate, students are well prepared for employment or graduate studies. They have not only the theoretical component of their degree but also hands-on experience using state-of-the-art techniques.”*

The important learner-centred benefits don't end there, Dr. Antunes emphasized.

“I think there's something even more profound here. By conducting research, our students have the opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge and the literature for future students.”

Algoma U faculty and the larger community also stand to gain much from larger investments in research and innovation.

“The innovation piece is very important, as well, in the sense that we are working alongside private sector companies, public organizations, and not-for-profits,” Dr. Antunes said. *“Each professor has specific expertise and every company has challenges. The Office of Research and Innovation exists to amplify existing talent and expertise at the University by having in place internal supports that enable access to a larger number of external grants either for fundamental or applied research projects. So, when industry is seeking to establish in our community, they can be assured that there is a critical mass of problem-solvers in many areas here — the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences. Consequently, funding ends up coming to the area and doesn't remain solely at the University.”*

“We're serving faculty, students, and the community as a whole and more often we'll want that to happen through the leveraging of funds between the University and the private sector. For example, we have established a growing network of organizations that work with us on providing student opportunities. Newly designed internship courses are strengthening these relationships and it is our hope that they will contribute to advance the innovation agenda of these organizations and of Northern Ontario.”

Tiffany Gallivan is the office's Accounting and Grants Officer. She liaises with researchers and agencies, providing budget support for grant applications. Other duties include reviewing grant contracts and submissions sent to the President's Office for final approval, preparing monthly reports on all projects in process, and completing financial reporting and invoicing requirements.

Office staffing will increase by two more positions in the near future. The team will work in articulation with the Dean's Office to further enhance and promote research activities across programs.

A five-person Research Advisory Committee with representation from all faculties, the library, and the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre provides guidance and recommendations to help advance the University's research agenda.

“Everything points to growth and we see a lot of activity,” said Dr. Antunes. *“It's very exciting. Over the past year, dozens of Algoma U students (the majority of them in fourth year) have been funded by external research grants; many have published peer reviewed papers and presented at conferences. We are also seeing a greater number of grant*

applications. The Office of Research and Innovation will be setting targets to continue tracking success.

“Algoma University has something very unique. The University is built beside two large government labs — the Great Lakes Forestry Centre, and the Ontario Forest Research Institute — that have an incredible number of scientists working there and infrastructure. They have been very supportive to Algoma University in helping us to expand, primarily in the sciences.

“Some of our faculty work with their researchers on projects. There's access to greenhouse facilities and access to analytical equipment. OFRI has amazing greenhouse facilities. The ability to grow plants is second to none there. And many of our students do research at its arboretum over the summer months.”

Many Algoma U students are able to work at the GLFC and OFRI during their studies and after graduation. There is also important two-way access to infrastructure, talks, and events.

“A big part of my focus right now is on strengthening these partnerships,” Dr. Antunes continued. *“Sometimes the public doesn't know that some of the facilities available for research at these labs are absolutely unique in North America. You can literally come to Sault Ste. Marie and do research you couldn't do anywhere else in North America.”*

Fortunately for Algoma University and the community, support for the partnership runs both ways.

“Natural Resources Canada – Great Lakes Forestry Centre has had a long-standing and fruitful relationship with Algoma University,” said Dr. David Nanang, NRCan-GLFC's Director General and a member of Algoma U's Board of Governors.

“Together, we are looking forward to strengthening our partnership in order to enhance student training, graduate job opportunities, and foster improved linkages on research of relevance to the natural environment. NRCan-GLFC is also striving to expand its partnerships with other academic and research institutions that will ultimately create a virtual centre of scientific excellence in research and innovation to address environmental and social challenges facing Northern Ontario and beyond.”



At THRIVE Child Development Centre from left: Kelsey Dugas, Tina Newell, Kate Lawrence, Justine Slewidge, and Jenny Maguire.

ALUMNI SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH DIVERSE ABILITIES

By: Meaghan Kent

THRIVE Child Development Centre is more than just a brightly coloured painted building in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Inside the walls is a staff cohort whose cheerful demeanour matches the bright blue, green, orange, red, and purple hues found throughout the centre. The team devotes their hours to supporting the needs of children with diverse abilities and their families within the Algoma district.

Among those working at THRIVE, are seven Algoma University graduates who are committed to improving the lives of those residing in the north. **Sara Bates, Kelsey Dugas, Jamie Kirk, Kate Lawrence, Jenny Maguire, Tina Newell, and Justine Slewidge** are proud alumni of the Sault Ste. Marie post-secondary institution, who credit their alma mater with providing them with the necessary

skills and networks needed to obtain meaningful work in their fields, and make a difference among those in their community.

“I have Algoma U to thank for my job,” says Tina Newell, who graduated from the University’s Honours Bachelor of Social Work program in 2014. *“I had to do a 700-hour placement in my last year and I did it here. Within two weeks of graduation, I started working here and that’s all because of my placement and the connections I made here.”*

Newell is a social worker at THRIVE who’s case load deals with children who are eight years of age and younger. Many of her clients are Indigenous and Newell feels prepared to work with this population due to her degree’s programming focus. *“Some of our clients*

come from Indigenous backgrounds and it often requires us to use a different perspective and approach when working with these families. Having taken classes in the social work program with both an Indigenous and anti-oppressive focus allowed me the opportunity to learn various cultural components and practices. It's also helped me to be more critical and self-aware when I'm interacting with clients or families from diverse backgrounds."

For Kate Lawrence, the Professional Services Manager for Early Childhood Education, who oversees the onsite inclusive preschool and the early learning resources, her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology degree has been crucial in her role and helping her secure a promotion. "I graduated from Sault College's Early Childhood Education program and started working at THRIVE almost immediately. But I wanted to move up into a management position and those management positions required a degree in a related field." While working full-time, Lawrence studied part-time at Algoma U, and graduated on schedule to secure the management position she is currently working in.

Lawrence is thankful that she never had to leave the Sault or her family to pursue a university degree. "I had a family. I had a husband and kids so I wasn't able to just pick up and go to university," Lawrence adds. "The [diploma-to-degree] program that was offered was fantastic. I was able to get almost half of my degree because of my Sault College credits, so I didn't have to start right from the beginning... Plus a lot of the courses were available in the evening or late in the afternoon. There was a lot of availability in the courses I needed to take without jeopardizing my employment. It was a really good fit for me."

Both Kelsey Dugas and Justine Slewidge, Honours Bachelor of Arts in Psychology graduates, credit the guidance they received from Algoma U faculty and staff as being instrumental in their career paths. After graduating from Algoma U, both attended graduate school at the advice of their faculty.

"Algoma U presented the opportunity to me for the Master of Social Work program at Grand Valley State," begins Dugas, who is a social worker and Coordinated Services Planner. "I always knew I wanted to do the counselling piece and work with children. I also knew I didn't want to get

my PhD, so I talked to my faculty about what I should pursue that fit within my interests. That's when they talked to me about Grand Valley State, which is a cohort program. My faculty were amazing, especially in my fourth year. They were great role models and I trusted their advice."

Slewidge, who is an occupational therapist, discovered the career with the help of faculty and then Student Services Advisor, Karen Hudson. Knowing that she didn't want a repetitive job and wanted to work with the public, Slewidge spoke to her mentors for advice. That's when she discovered the field of occupational therapy. "The staff and faculty were very helpful through the application process. Both Drs. Dwayne Keough and Deborah Woodman were references applying to my Master's in Occupational Therapy. What I really appreciated was that the faculty weren't 'forcing' you into a certain stream of psychology. They were asking you what you want to do. This approach really helps ensure that you're really going to love your career path. I love working with children and their families at THRIVE."

A single course at Algoma U opened Jenny Maguire to the field of speech and language pathology. "I took an intro to communications disorders in my undergrad and that is what led me to become a speech and language pathologist." Maguire is a speech and language pathologist who provides services to children ages six and under and travels to Desbarats, Thessalon, Bruce Mines, and Blind River to work with THRIVE clients and their families.

Despite having graduated from the University years ago, the Algoma THRIVE cohort are still feeling the after effects of attending the Sault Ste. Marie post-secondary institution.

For Slewidge, attending her hometown university was more affordable and provided her with the opportunity to continue with graduate school after convocation. "I received a substantial amount of funding through Algoma U which offloaded a lot of financial stress going into my master's program. I received the Algoma University Gold Award of Excellence entrance scholarship, as well as other bursaries, which covered approximately half of my tuition fees. Without this financial aid, I am not sure if I could have completed my master's immediately post-graduation."

Last year, Newell applied to earn her Master's of Social Work from the University of Windsor. She was nervous about applying since the application required references from her professors at Algoma U, and she hadn't been in their classrooms in over three years. "But I managed to get a hold of them. They remembered me and could recall my work ethic in class. They helped me get my acceptance into Windsor. It definitely pays to go to a smaller university where people know you and you're not just a number."

While THRIVE works tirelessly to support children and their families in the north, Algoma U is working hard to educate students and prepare them for the workforce. Christianne Monico, Chief Executive Officer of THRIVE, agrees. "Algoma University does not only turn out fantastic students but dedicated professionals as well. THRIVE is honoured to employ so many great people who have chosen a career in supporting children and youth with diverse abilities across the Algoma district. Algoma University has blessed our THRIVE Child Development Centre team with several staff who are devoted each and every day in supporting our children and families to reach their personal extraordinary!"



CHAMPIONING LAW: JAMIE CARROLL'S JOURNEY TO BECOMING AN ATTORNEY

By: Jessica Ferlaino

When **Jamie (Sammon) Carroll** set out in pursuit of a degree, the choice was clear. Having grown up in Sault Ste. Marie, attending Algoma University would allow her to remain part of the close-knit community she loved while pursuing a quality education.

“Algoma U sounded like the perfect place to do that. The University has a small student population relative to other universities, which I very much appreciated because it leads to greater intellectual stimulation and development.”

She decided on history as her field of study, hoping that it would satisfy her seemingly insatiable interest in the subject. Little did she know that a class outside of her major would have a profound impact on her future.

“In my first year of study, I took Introduction to Law, which I was rather unenthused about having to take. However, from day one, Dr. Julian Hermida had me hooked on law. He made the class so engaging that I added Law and Justice as a second major, beginning in my second year.”

During her time at Algoma University, Carroll achieved both academic and athletic success. She was a member of the curling teams that medaled at the Ontario College Athletics Association (OCAA) Championships four years in a row, winning a gold medal, two silvers, and a bronze.

After graduating, Carroll earned her Juris Doctor from Ave Maria School of Law, an institution that she found comparable to Algoma University in terms of class size and its emphasis on critical thinking. She

served as Associate Editor and Executive Articles Editor with the *Ave Maria Law Review* and spent time volunteering with the Fresh Coast Foundation, a non-profit organization.

“Algoma University helped me to grow not just as a student, but as a well-rounded individual set to succeed in any environment.” She also learned, *“that there is always time and energy to spend on helping others who are less fortunate while advancing your own personal growth.”*

Today, Carroll is a licensed attorney in Florida and the Assistant Director and a professor in the Advanced Critical Thinking Department at Ave Maria School. Thankful for the opportunities she has had, Carroll has embarked on a new and very exciting chapter as a wife and as a mother. If her past is any indication, she is sure to shine in her new roles.





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