Survey targets Western’s workplace culture

BY ADELA TALBOT

A survey meant to determine whether Western provides its employees with a positive work environment will be available to staff and faculty Nov. 19- Dec. 7.

The WE Speak faculty and staff survey will provide an opportunity for those employed by Western to share their views about the day-to-day work experience on campus.

“It will form an information base for developing local and organizational-wide improvement plans,” explained Jane Parkinson, a senior facilitator in Learning and Development at Western and project leader for the survey.

Survey questions will focus on subjects such as work engagement, workplace safety, communication and collaboration, involvement in decision-making, individual and team recognition, respect and opportunities for learning and career advancement.

Three open-response questions will also allow participants to share ideas of how to improve the workplace and feedback on Western’s Strategic Plan.

“We need everyone – or as many people as possible – to participate. In order to see our strengths and areas of improvement, we need good, quality information. High participation will give us an accurate picture. A small percentage will give us a limited picture,” Parkinson explained.

“In order to develop an action plan, to improve the experience for everyone, we need the voice of everyone.”

Responses from the survey will go toward not only improving the work environment at Western, but also informing the university’s strategic plan as it undergoes review and renewal. It will also serve as an indicator, down the road, for measuring progress.

Parkinson added the survey is confidential and participation is voluntary.

“We are working with an external survey firm and the survey firm does all of the analysis and reporting – we won’t see any individual results, only the aggregate results,” she said.

The overall results, she said, will be shared with the Western community, while department- and faculty-specific results will be shared with the head of each department, and discussed internally.

The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete and will be distributed by email.
WESTERN ENGINEERING DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES
Gilles Patry, president and CEO, Canada Foundation for Innovation. Driving Innovation in Canada. 12:30 p.m. SEB, room 3109.

PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY COLLOQUIUM
Sajeev John, Department of Physics, University of Toronto. Light Trapping and Solar Energy Harvesting in Thin Film Photonic Crystals. 1:30 p.m. P & A, room 100.

PUMPKIN DROP
This fundraising event will include dropping a 1,400-pound pumpkin from 100 feet in the air by crane to raise money to support programs aimed at poverty reduction, and raising awareness in the university and London community. Smaller pumpkins will also be available for people to smash with a baseball bat, in return for a donation. Visit uwo.edu.ca. 2 p.m. UC Hill.

LEARNING SKILLS PRESENTATION
Successful Time Management. Register at sdc.uwo.ca/learning. 2:30-3:30 p.m. Western Student Services, room 3134.

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON MIGRATION AND ETHNIC RELATIONS COLLOQUIUM
Co-sponsored with Hispanic Studies, Dr. Restrepo, Spanish, Comparative Literature, and Latin American and Latino Studies, Assistant Vice Provost for Diversity, University of Arkansas. The Cultural Politics of U.S. Latino Education: Reflections from the New South. Contact Belinda Dodson bdodson@uwo.ca. 4:5-5:30 p.m. SSC 5220.

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES
Margaret Trudeau. Exploring Mental Health Issues. Free admission. Presented by the Faculty of Health Sciences with support from the Office of the Registrar and the Office of the President. 5:6 p.m. Alumni Hall.

JAPAN DAY
Department of Modern Languages and Literature, The Japan Foundation, The Consulate General of Japan, Japanese Language Program at Huron and Western Japanese Culture Club present Feel the Wind. Free admission. 7 p.m. Western Film, UCC.

DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ARTS, ARTLAB
Free Association. An exhibition of 13 emerging artists working in a variety of styles and mediums. Free admission. Runs until Nov. 16. 6-8 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ARTS, ARTLAB
Dig it. A juried show with a pure focus on the media arts. Free admission. Runs until Nov. 22. 6-8 p.m.

// FRIDAY
DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC
Aaron Hodgson, trumpet. Introducing our newest full-time colleague, performing new works he has commissioned.

von Kuster Hall. 12:30 p.m.

APPLIED MATHEMATICS COLLOQUIUM
Jia Li, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Alabama, Huntsville. Fighting Malana with Mathematics: Modeling of Mosquitoes with Transgenes or Genetically modified Bacteria. 2:3-3 p.m. Middlesex College, room 204.

DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY AND CELL BIOLOGY SEMINAR
Steven Lavolette, Western. The Role of Cannabinoids in Fear, Paranoia and Schizophrenia. 12:30 p.m. MSB 282.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR AUDIOLOGY RESEARCH DAY
1-4 p.m. Elborn College, suite 2262.

PSYCHOLOGY COLLOQUIUM SERIES
Nicholas Turk-Browne, Princeton University. Statistical learning in the mind and brain. 3:4 p.m. UCC, room 37.

EARTH SCIENCES COLLOQUIUM
Jissu Jin and Phil McCausland, Western. Using fauna to determine the location of the equator in North America during the Late Ordovician. 3:30-4:30 p.m. B&B 0153.

KING’S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

WOMEN’S / MEN’S VOLLEYBALL
Waterloo at Western. 6 p.m. / 8 p.m.

WOMEN’S HOEYK
WindSOR at Western. 7 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
Spanish Film Series. Hidalgo la historia jamas contada. 7 p.m. UCC 84.

DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC
American clarinet virtuoso, Robert Spring, opens the Western University Clarinet Day 2012 with his signature show-stopping performance of 19th century and contemporary works. Admission charged. 8 p.m. von Kuster Hall.

// SATURDAY
WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
Brock at Western. 3 p.m.

MEN’S VOLLEYBALL
Guelph at Western. 7 p.m.

// MONDAY
LEARNING SKILLS PRESENTATION
Optimize Lecture Learning. Register at sdc.uwo.ca/learning. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Western Student Services, room 3134.

THE CHINESE PROGRAM AT HURON
Anyone wishing to speak Chinese and meet people who study Chinese is welcome. Email hwu11@huron.uwo.ca. 12:30-1:30 p.m. International Lounge, Huron.

// TUESDAY
SENIOR ALUMNI PROGRAM
Hannah Fraser, Entomology, Program Lead, Horticulture, Ontario Ministry of Food and Agriculture. What’s the stink about Stink Bugs? The impact this accidental import from Asia has on Ontario agriculture. 9:30 a.m. McKellar Room, UCC.

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSIOLOGY AND PHARMACOLOGY
J.A.F. Stevenson Memorial Lecture and Research Day. Jean Schafier, Washington University School of Medicine. Unexpected regulators of metabolic stress. Visit uwo.ca/pharmacy. 4-5 p.m. LHSC, University Hospital, Auditorium A.

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
Italian Film Series. Sedotta e abbandonata. (Seduced and Abandoned). 7:30 p.m. UC 84.

// WEDNESDAY
TOASTMASTERS CAMPUS COMMUNICATORS
Build your confidence in public speaking. 9119 toastmastersclubs.org. Contact Donna Moore, dmoore@uwo.ca or 85199. 12:1 p.m. UCC club, room 1478.

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
La Tertulia. Anyone wishing to speak Spanish and meet people from different Spanish-speaking countries is welcome. Email tertulia@uwo.ca. 4:30 p.m. UC 205.

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
Comparative Literature Research Forum. Càlin-Andrei Mihăilescu, Comparative Literature, Western. Erosophy at Dawn. 11:30 a.m. UC 288.

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
German Film Series. Kebab Connection. 6:30 p.m. UC 207.

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
Arabic Film. The Syrian Bride. 7 p.m. UC 84.

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// THURSDAY
STAFF AND FACULTY CAMPUS FLU CLINIC
No appointment required. Bring your Health Card. 519.661.3003. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Student Health Services, UCC.

DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC
Canadian Portraits – a program celebrating the work of contemporary Canadian composers by Les Choristes and Choral. 12:30 p.m. Paul Davenport Theatre.
Personal attacks and political squabbling — whether heard in the House of Commons or during one of the recent U.S. presidential debates — are symptomatic of poor partisanship, the kind that deters the general public and stands in the way of democracy.

This is a significant problem, one that must be addressed sooner rather than later, said Michael Ignatieff, former leader of the Liberal Party of Canada and senior fellow with the Department of Political Science at Massey College, University of Toronto.


“Democracy can be damaged when politics becomes the politics of enemies, as opposed to the politics of adversaries. This is applicable in Canada and it’s applicable in the (United) States. Canada and the United States are different, but let’s not play innocent here.

“The tactics of negative advertising that various parties have used have done our political system a lot of harm.”

And Ignatieff would know. He was at the centre of what many consider one of Canada’s nastiest federal elections in 2011.

Elected his party’s leader in May 2009, Ignatieff served in the position only two years. He resigned as leader following the 2011 federal election when he not only lost his own seat, but the party’s status as the Official Opposition. In the Liberals’ worst showing in its history, the party won only 34 seats, a distant third behind the Stephen Harper-led Conservatives and Jack Layton-led NDP.

Ignatieff will speak on how bipartisan attacks and advertising tactics plague politics, particularly during election campaigns, pitting one party against another, failing the electorate, the system as a whole and accomplishing little in the end.

“We need to respect the difference between an enemy and an adversary. An enemy is someone you want to destroy and an adversary is someone you want to compete with in a fair fight. All democracies have to manage to understand that,” Ignatieff explained.

“We need to think seriously about whether in the House of Commons, party discipline is reducing the number of free votes in the house, reducing the independence of Members of Parliament. Party discipline is making it more difficult for MPs to represent their constituents fairly and adequately, more difficult to represent their own conscience, and all of that may not be good for democracy.”

Perhaps along those lines, he declined comment on current issues facing the Liberals today.

“The party is in the middle of a leadership race federally and provincially and the last thing I want to do is get into that,” he said. “It’s up to members of the party to sort that out.”

Poor voter turnout is evidence a system in which parties view one another as enemies, as opposed to adversaries, is failing. If it continues, young voters, such as Western students, will have no desire to vote or engage in politics, he added.

“Four out of five Canadians age 18 did not bother to vote in the 2008 federal election. So our political system is turning people off. I don’t want a day to happen when we hold a federal election in Canada and no one shows up. But it’s conceivable given the current trends,” Ignatieff said. “We’ve gone from an 80 per cent turn out in a federal election in 1960 to just over 60 per cent in 2011. That’s not a good number and we need to get people back in. But people get turned off by excessive negative, relentless, take-no-prisoners partisanship.

“I don’t want a politics where we treat fellow citizens as enemies.”

IF YOU GO
Centre for American Studies/Canada-U.S. Institute lecture
Michael Ignatieff
Us and Them: Enemies and Opponents in Politics
4:30 p.m. Nov. 8
Spencer Engineering Building, 1059.

BY ADELA TALBOT
**Commentary**

**Adapt. Evaluate. Modify.**

Working toward de-stigmatizing mental health

At night, the Faculty of Health Sciences welcomes Margaret Trudeau to Alumni Hall for her talk, Exploring Mental Health Issues. This event is part of our ongoing commitment to raise campus awareness about mental health issues — an implicit promise to Eric Windeler, who spoke at Western in 2011 on behalf of The Jack Project, named for Eric’s son, Jack, who took his own life while at Queen’s University in 2010.

Jack didn’t ask for attention to himself in the note he left, but he expressed the hope that others in need would be helped. It’s hard not to be permanently affected by The Jack Project — the question is, what to do?

This week, just days before the Trudeau lecture, I reached for a shirt and tie in my closet, as I always do, and there in the back was the green T-shirt — Stomp on Stigma — Western Wears Green — Mental Health Awareness. The last time I wore it, I shook Eric’s hand and thanked him for sharing his experience with us.

The damn shirt has been there, untouched, for a year. Sometimes when you’ve got your head down, day-to-day, you forget your plans and your promises.

In my eighth year as an administrator at Western, helping students with mental health challenges and students under stress remain the most complex and difficult tasks of my job. Academic counselors across campus report significant increases in student difficulties over the past five years. In the Faculty of Health Sciences, we try to be leaders in promoting health on campus and in the community.

In the past, we directed considerable attention to exercise and nutrition, and maintaining a balance between work, play and enjoyment in the lives of students, staff and faculty. Not enough emphasis on mental health.

But that is changing. Events such as The Jack Project and the Margaret Trudeau lecture help to raise awareness as we attempt to promote mental health in balance with physical health or, perhaps more accurately, their deep linkages which contribute to our overall wellbeing.

Eric saw the potential in Western to be a leader on issues of mental health because of its size and location. Indeed, there are many individuals and groups across campus working to assist our students and staff, help our students in need and raise awareness about the services available at Western.

Through Campus Community Police Services; the Office of the Vice-President, Resources and Operations; Office of the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Students); Student Housing; Student Health Services; Student Development Centre; Psychological Services; Indigenous Services; Learning Skills Services; University Students’ Council; Teaching and Learning Centre; Communications and Public Affairs Department; and the Safe Campus Advisory Partners committee, there are administrators, case workers, residence managers, residence counselors, senior leaders in residence, wellness coordinators, social workers, psychotherapists, doctors, nurses, psychiatrists who are all part of a comprehensive team ensuring mental health is a primary concern at Western.

These experts understand the complex challenges facing our students, some at high risk; they are professionally prepared to provide a wide range of services to students in need.

Our staff also understands students are experiencing unusually high levels of stress. Our role is to help students to focus on balance between their academic responsibilities, social life, physical activity — to look after themselves. Homesickness, assignment and midterm anxieties, roommate problems, poor food choices and eliminating fun activities and exercise when time is limited all create problems for our transitioning first-year students.

Recently, I thought I would address these problems head-on before midterm exams by providing a forum for first-year students to de-stress. I called it Keeping Your Health in Mind; sent out e-card invitations; and, solicited our faculty and student leaders to share their experiences and talk about strategies to help students cope with the stresses of university.

More than 20 senior students volunteered to lead the session. Not one first-year student showed up. Lesson learned.

A student stressed out over midterm exams has no time to talk about stress — who wants to talk about private issues like homesickness with strangers? Back to the drawing board.

We have to create stronger peer networks for students who feel stressed and unbalanced. We have the facilities, services and expertise to promote wellness in our student population. We have outstanding exercise programs, intramural sports opportunities, club activities and cultural programs. We must encourage more students to de-stress through these opportunities, eat properly and get enough sleep.

In the area of mental health, Western can be a leader if we continue to adapt to student needs and continuously evaluate and modify our programs and services accordingly. We have a large team of trained professionals and many other staff and faculty who care about our students’ wellbeing.

We have to continue to de-stigmatize mental health issues.

Margaret Trudeau’s lecture will do its part in stomping out the stigma. But we must remind ourselves to keep the green T-shirt out of the closet.

**IF YOU GO**

Margaret Trudeau delivers the 2012 Faculty of Health Science Distinguished Lecture, entitled Exploring Mental Health Issues, at 5 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 1 in Alumni Hall. Admission and parking are free. (Parking available in Springett and Arthur and Sonata Lattest Health Sciences Building parking lots.)

Kevin B. Wamsley is an associate dean (Undergraduate Programs) in the Faculty of Health Sciences and a professor in the School of Kinesiology.

The Way We Were: 1946

Contributed by Alan Noon (anoon@uwo.ca)
Old friend takes over as new chancellor

Following his installation as Western’s 21st chancellor at the university’s 300th convocation last week, Joseph Rotman sat down with Western News reporter Adela Talbot to discuss his new role and the challenges facing postsecondary education.

To this day, Rotman fondly recalls and credits a Philosophy class – taken more than five decades ago – and a professor on campus for instilling in him not only a solid values system and way of thinking, but most importantly, a love of learning. It’s a relationship with Western that has helped define a man considered one of Canada’s most prominent businessmen and philanthropists.

How do you view your duties as chancellor and what do you hope to contribute to Western during your term?

The ceremonial procedures, which because of the (convocation) experience I had yesterday and today, I find very meaningful. I, therefore, look forward to participating in these, because connecting with the students was an incredibly meaningful interaction for me. It was much more than I would have expected. I hope to provide some assistance to the president, in providing advice in areas where there are difficult situations – whether it be with political situations or student situations. I think I’ve had a great, broad experience in many areas, and with a lot of grey hair, you get a little bit of wisdom. I think I can be a little bit of help to him.

I would love to reinforce, in whatever way I can, the culture people refer to as ‘the student experience’. I happen to be a great beneficiary of that and I made reference to that in my remarks yesterday (at convocation). But if there are things I could do that would help enhance and improve it – as good as it may be – I will do them. The student experience to me is critical because it is my humble opinion a positive experience creates a positive attitude to being here, which leads to an interest in learning.

Finally, I hope I am able to find areas within the university where I can assist in attaining greater international excellence, recognition and positioning, as we have done already with the (Rotman) Institute of Philosophy. A perfect example of this is my interest in the area of the brain, and I know Adrian (Owen) and Mel (Goodale) from the Brain and Mind Institute, and have offered to be of assistance to them in developing their institute as an international entity in a global context.

What challenges do you feel universities today are facing?

There’s obviously the financial situation. The importance of ensuring every student who is qualified has a position is absolutely critical. First and foremost is ensuring there is aid, loans, fellowships and scholarships – I don’t care what we call them – that help students who have the capabilities, to ensure they can attend.

Universities are facing the challenges the world is facing – the rate of change, the degree of change, which is occurring. The problems that are out there, that I referenced in my remarks (economic crisis, the poor state of the job market, new shifts and developments in technology), make everything you do more important in terms of finding the right answers.

What do you hope to accomplish as chancellor?

First and foremost is ensuring there is aid, loans, fellowships and scholarships – I don’t care what we call them – that help students who have the capabilities, to ensure they can attend.

“What I tried to emphasize is the increased importance of understanding universities are the source of the solutions to these problems.

I don’t think, historically, we have, as a country, fully appreciated that. The Americans do, and they draw on their academics in every aspect of business, government, more so than we do here in Canada.”

What advice do you have students who are still here, or just joining the campus community?

I’ll give them the same advice I gave to my son – have fun. I think it’s important the student body knows I feel very honoured to have been nominated and recommended to serve. I feel it a great pride to be in this position and I will do my best for them.

PHOTOS BY PAUL MAYNE // WESTERN NEWS

Students beamed brightly as Western celebrated its landmark 300th Convocation last week featuring the installation of Joseph Rotman as the new chancellor as well as honorary degrees being bestowed upon four exceptional Canadians.

“Western is a company of people who are still here, who are still connected as an alumnus, and how those connections helped build up his career. I think there is a pure self-interest in remaining connected because of the relationships, but also the kind of relationships that a university will bring to you. I talked about being partners with a university – in particular areas of business, you have problems you would never have anticipated, that no one in your organization has any appreciation for, and no experience in. Where to go? Why not go to your alma mater? If they’ve got 10 experts, it’s not a bad place to look.

I truly believe – this is my own personal value system that my father taught me – that this university transformed my life. And one teacher left with me the value system, the thinking system that has stayed with me forever, and is still with me. I think there’s a bit of an obligation and I tried to tell that to students. It’s hard when you’re starting out, to feel an obligation (to give back to your university) but I truly believe that there is one.

Aside from your first-year Philosophy class experience, what is your favourite memory or experience while at Western?

I had many good memories, such as the friendships I developed. I learned to love opera here. We lived in a rented house on Central Avenue. There were four of us and every Saturday afternoon, because two of our roommates were very much into opera, we put our four radios across the front of our living room to create stereo and the four of us would sit and listen every Saturday afternoon to Texaco at the Metropolitan Opera. Out of that, I learned to love opera and I still do.

What advice have you for students who are still here, or just joining the campus community?

I’ll give them the same advice I gave to my son – have fun. I think it’s important the student body knows I feel very honoured to have been nominated and recommended to serve. I feel it a great pride to be in this position and I will do my best for them.

INSIDE TODAY

Revisit the words of wisdom offered by five honorary degree recipients to the university’s newest graduates at Western’s 300th Convocation last week. Pages 6-7.
On Dec. 13, Western News will publish its annual Newsmakers edition honouring those members of the Western community who made 2012 a year to remember on campus and beyond. As part of that issue, we are turning over the cover design to you.

We want a design, in your medium of choice, that captures the Western community this past year. Beyond that, you are limited only by your creativity and size of our front page. Winner will appear on the Western News cover; entries will be showcased in an online gallery.

Send entries to newseditor@uwo.ca by Nov. 22.

Autumn Convocation 2012
PHOTOS BY PAUL MAYNE // WESTERN NEWS

“DO WHATEVER YOU CHOOSE TO DO TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. ERRORS WILL BE FORGIVEN, SHORTCOMINGS ACCEPTED, BUT BUILD, YOU MUST.”

BEVERLEY MCLACHLIN
DOCTOR OF CIVIL LAW, HONORIS CAUSA

“"-

You may have an obligation and a responsibility to preserve and protect this institution in order to allow it to thrive. Many, if not most, of the world’s problems will be solved by research, thinking, analysis and policy development at universities. Your involvement creates the virtuous cycle, whether it comes from your using Western or your feelings of responsibility to Western.”

“"
There’s an ancient Zen Buddhist practice, to
approach each day as if we were beginners.
To adopt an elitist attitude robs us of doing the work.
I don’t mind thinking of myself as a beginner and, I hope, you
don’t mind my thinking of you as beginners.

Beginnings are full of promise.”

“LIKE MANY THINGS IN LIFE, THIS (ACADEMIC) JOURNEY HAS NOT FOLLOWED A VERY DIRECT ROUTE. IF YOU FOLLOW THE NON-LINEAR ROAD, REMEMBER NOT TO TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY AND JUST ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES.”

SONIA LABATT
DOCTOR OF LAWS, HONORIS CAUSA (LLD)

“Be persistent. Don’t be afraid of failure. Remember that the most
successful people have had disappointments
and have bounced back. Success doesn’t come in a straight line. Finally,
enjoy life. It’s a gift and I’m confident the best is yet to come.”

ARTHUR LABATT
DOCTOR OF LAWS, HONORIS CAUSA (LLD)
Western, Fraunhofer partnership answers ‘The Why’

BY JASON WINDERS

TOBIAS POTYRA was coming to North America. But the Fraunhofer Institute of Chemical Technology manager of operations just didn’t know where.

However, what brought Potyra and his company to Western, and its Advanced Manufacturing Park (AMP), will not only be celebrated next week, but hopefully resonate at the university for years to come.

Nearly two years ago, Potyra was a member of a team looking for a partner in lightweight composites research for the German company. Europe’s largest application-oriented research organization. They had hopes of building a Fraunhofer Project Centre (FPC) for Composites Research in North America, which Potyra would lead.

To that extent, the company had flirtations with a handful of U.S. universities, as well as one Canadian, but nothing ever clicked. They had reached, if not a dead end, at least a fork in the road.

“We were like, ‘OK, what should we do now?’ In the U.S., it doesn’t work. In Canada, going somewhere far away from the automotive hub, which is Detroit, was not the way we wanted to go,” Potyra said. “We were convinced we wanted to be in local proximity to our clients.

“So, we were a little bit disappointed, discouraged. Then this new opportunity came up and we thought ‘This is a great opportunity.’”

That “opportunity” surfaced as Potyra’s team attended a composites conference in Troy, Mich. There, they first heard the name Andy Hrymak, Western’s Faculty of Engineering dean, only a few months on the job when Fraunhofer called.

Following the conference, the Fraunhofer team made its way to London for its first conversation about the proposed partnership. Potyra had to fly home, and missed the meeting. But the delegation, now headed by Frank Henning, FPC deputy institute director, made the trip and was relieved, even excited, about what they found at Western.

“The opportunity was exciting,” Hrymak said of that first encounter. “The question was, what working model made sense and would fit with all the stakeholder needs. We had a workshop within six months and, at that point, it was clear in my mind.”

Next week, Western and Fraunhofer will celebrate the culmination of that opportunity with the launch of the Fraunhofer Project Centre for Composites Research at Western. An event will bring together representatives of those involved in making Potyra’s opportunity a reality under the roof of the centre’s AMP location.

“It’s a day long in the making and one full of hope for the country, community, company and university.

Together, Western and Fraunhofer will focus on developing lightweight composites at this testing-ground facility through full industrial-scale trials.

Germany, and particularly Fraunhofer, has become a world leader in lightweight construction. Fibre composites are finding increasing application, particularly in the automotive sector. Some of the applications include automotive underbody shields, parts of the body structures of a car, closures such as tailgates and doors and seat structures. There are also applications for the solar and wind turbine industries.

Hrymak said the centre will provide platform technology for real-time, industrial part development using – as well as developing – composite materials and manufacturing processes. The focus of the centre is advanced manufacturing, which means highly precise in-line quality controlled manufacturing of high-performance composites in a suitable scale.

“But Western, we answer ‘The Why’ – why does this solution work – to create sustainable know-how,” Potyra said, stressing this is research with real-world application.

“Making, say, one space shuttle is great, hand-making it fibre by fibre,” he said. “But making 100,000 parts a year that all look the same with the same properties, that’s the challenge.”

This joint venture, the first comprehensive initiative between a Canadian university and an institute of Fraunhofer, will hit the ground running. Two contracts are already signed; two are near signing, Potyra said. And the facility is already looking to add staff.

“It will be insane in terms of workload coming up,” said Potyra, who celebrates one year in Canada this month. “It’s very exciting.”

“We wish that there were more hours in the day,” Hrymak echoed.

Western was a natural fit for the company, given the university’s pre-existing expertise in surface science as well as desire to partner on composite materials. It’s an openness for innovation that enticed the company.

“We have found a very good, very reliable partner in Western,” Potyra said.

The partnership opens doors not only for industry, but for faculty research and student opportunities in the classroom.

“We see this project centre as a bridge,” Hrymak said.

As the centre develops prototype parts and processes for industry, questions will arise. Enter Western. “Those kinds of fundamental questions will go back to the academics. Faculty and graduate students will then answer why certain things happen,” Hrymak continued.

Graduate students will get hands-on training with the equipment – much of it unique to Canada, even North America – allowing them to put their research into industry context. Undergraduate opportunities are being developed for co-ops and internships.

Potyra said the German government is supporting a six-month internship opportunity for German undergraduate students; he hopes to develop a similar program, working with the various funding agencies, for Canadian undergraduate students to study in Germany.

“It is very unique, not only setting up the centre here, but it is this very holistic approach,” he said. “It’s going to be a real hub for composite technology. It’s not only that we have a nice big machine. It’s supported from undergraduate, student life, teaching and industry. All angles you might look onto this facility with, they are all supported.”

“Everyone is excited we can move something, create something that is, in the end, unique for Western.”
Among the highlights of the centre, at least among the visual highlights when one walks into the $10 million facility, is the state-of-the-art hydraulic press with a maximum clamping force of 2,500 tons.

Western Engineering Distinguished Lecture Series
Dr. Gilles Patry, President and CEO, CFI

Thursday, Nov. 1 - 12:30 p.m. - Spencer Engineering Building, Rm. 3109

Please join us as we welcome the President and CEO of Canada Foundation for Innovation. Dr. Patry will present “Driving Innovation in Canada.”
Some collecting and refurbishing of computer parts from Western has led to six complete systems being donated to local families through the Salvation Army. Checking out the new systems are, from left, Western’s manager of fire safety Frank Faroni, City of London fire inspector Colin Toth and Salvation Army public relations director (Ontario Great Lakes division) Perron Goodyear.

Project puts rebuilt tech into new hands

BY PAUL MAYNE

YOU CAN PROBABLY label this a ‘by the way’ project.

City of London fire inspector Colin Toth is friends with Western’s manager of fire safety Frank Faroni. With Western in Toth’s coverage area, the pair talk regularly about work. But a simple ‘by the way’ conversation has now led to the start of Project Comp-U-Give, a program matching up community members with refurbished computer systems.

“I was doing this on my own a year and a half ago, me and my family, and we’ve given away 10 computers,” said Toth, a former IT technician. “We were taking computers in, but it was going slow and I wanted to get more traction, so I spoke to Frank. With his connections, he pulled some strings on his end and Western came on board with refurbished computer systems.

“I was doing this on my own a year and a half ago, me and my family, and we’ve given away 10 computers,” said Toth, a former IT technician. “We were taking computers in, but it was going slow and I wanted to get more traction, so I spoke to Frank. With his connections, he pulled some strings on his end and Western came on board with refurbished computer systems.

“My dad was the one who got the ball rolling in from across campus. But a simple ‘by the way’ conversation, it came up between us. At Western, we go through bins of computers, so I thought maybe there’s a possibility, if we get approval … Who knows?”

Four months later, the pair had six fully operational computers, wiped clean by Western and reloaded with software by Toth, which were donated to families through the Salvation Army this past month.

There was no incentive for this project beyond the ability to help the local community.

“I just felt it’s something to do to give back. It feels good, it’s just nice to help,” said Toth, adding he’d love to see similar projects take off in other university communities.

“We want to do a lot more. I want this idea to go across southwestern Ontario. It’s for the betterment of your local community.”

For Sherry Rowland, program director at the Salvation Army (London Village), it was an easy ‘yes’ when approached by Toth.

“We have families who have access to our programs here that we know would benefit tremendously from something like this. We spread the word and started to get calls about it and everyone is so excited. It has really snowballed,” Rowland said. “It takes just one person to bring this all together and we all get excited. It’s the community helping the community.”

Faroni emphasized the tremendous support from ITS in getting this project launched. Once they got the OK, all the pieces started rolling in from across campus.

And the appreciation of the folks getting the computers was incredible, he said. One woman he spoke to was thrilled to be getting a new computer.

“One mom was so happy, she’s going to hide it away and give it to her kids on Christmas, if she can keep it hidden that long,” Faroni laughed.

Hoping to get the word out even more across campus, Faroni hopes to build up an inventory of computer parts at Western to continually feed Toth and the families in London.

“We want to reach more people and see if we can do this more often,” Toth said. “There are always departments upgrading their systems, and while they may not be valuable any more for that specific department, for home and personal use it’s a huge win for us.”

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IF YOU GO

If you would like more information about Project Comp-U-Give, or would like to donate, contact Western’s manager of fire safety Frank Faroni at firesafety@uwo.ca.
Student chalks up success story

BY PAUL MAYNE

MARC QUIRION CAN tell you how small, everyday occurrences can steamroll into something much bigger than expected.

The Western Faculty of Education student unexpectedly came across just such an incident, which has since flourished into a website with submissions from New York and Tennessee to Alberta and B.C., to even as far away as England, Paris and South Africa.

What could it be, you ask? Chalk art.

“I walking to class during my undergraduate studies at the University of Waterloo and I saw that someone had written, ‘You are beautiful’ in chalk on a lamppost,” said Quirion, adding it made him smile a little but, more importantly, made him think.

“I thought it was such a simple gesture someone made, yet it has the opportunity to put a smile on so many other faces as they walk by. Whoever wrote that short message took 30 seconds out of their day and I would imagine I wasn’t the only person to walk by and appreciate it.”

Quirion saw the potential in using chalk as a medium to spread some smiles and to create some art while not harming anything.

Along with friend Mike DiPietro, Quirion bought the domain name chalkthoughts.com, just over five months ago and has been enjoying the experience ever since.

The site invites visitors to share their thoughts in chalk, from anywhere in the world, and then post them for all to see. Favorite quotes, lyrics, thoughts and drawings on everything from sidewalks and street signs to boot docks and guardrails fill the pages of the site, now boasting a couple hundred images.

“There has never been a time where we have doubted our efforts or the time spent on the website,” he said. “This project has been a great experience and it is a great hobby for us at this point that we enjoy working on together.”

While initially populated only by Quirion and his friends, that changed a few months after launch when they received their first random submission.

“This was huge and we were both ecstatic,” Quirion said. “Someone from another part of the world had seen our website and decided they had something to share, too. It was an amazing feeling and it still excites me when we get someone who emails us with a picture that they took with our website in mind.”

With a growing library of chalk art, random thoughts and inspirational quotes, Quirion said it’s encouraging to know that people are on board with his project and want to be part of it.

“You can also find some touching pictures, like the one at the Terry Fox monument in Thunder Bay,” he said. “All it says in chalk, at the base of the monument, is ‘Our Hero.’ It may only be two words, but it is a very powerful image.”

Quirion even received an email in response to that photo saying how it made the writer tear up.

“When I read that email, it really encouraged the idea of chalkthoughts.com for me. I knew the idea, and the work we have put in, does indeed strike a chord with people,” he said. “A simple saying written in chalk, paired with a fitting background, can have a lasting emotional impact on people.”

From its humble beginnings in May, to almost 2,000 visitors each day now, Quirion said his website has taken on a life of its own. But with schooling taking front and centre, chalkling must now be a secondary activity. Or not.

“I still find myself chalkling every opportunity I get,” Quirion said. “I carry chalk in my car, my backpack and I always make sure to put some chalk in a Ziploc bag for when I walk the dog or go for a run. You never know when you will see something that inspires you, or a cool spot to leave a message for the morning commuters.”
Award recognizes ‘enormous effort’ by Western team

Jim Galbraith, Western Grounds and Recycling supervisor, right, settles in for an interview during a gala celebrating the Ontario Business Achievement Awards (OBAA) Wednesday night in Toronto. Western won the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario (ICAO) Corporate Governance Award.

From trade shows to weddings to cultural festivals, this program offers the unique skills you need to launch your career as an event coordinator, account representative, corporate meeting planner or many other exciting career opportunities.

The win highlighted dozens of Western's sustainability efforts, which have demonstrated excellence in leadership, awareness and education for initiatives such as the creation of the President's Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability (PACES), residence recycling awareness nights and the introduction of a new environmental and energy manager position.

In January, the award selection committee paid a visit to the short-listed organizations. They arrived on campus for a first-hand view of current initiatives.

Jim Galbraith of Facilities Management took the group through the recycling process featuring battery collection and e-waste; Mary Quintana Lopez of Facilities Management led a tour of lighting advancements in the University Community Centre; and Mike Gaylard of the Department of Engineering took the review panel up to the green roof of the Cladette MacKay-Lassonde Pavilion.

"I am delighted to see the efforts of Jim Galbraith and his team recognized in this fashion," Kulczycki continued. "They take a great deal of pride in ensuring our campus not only looks beautiful, but that we operate in an environmentally sustainable manner."

The ArteMusea Festival returns to Museum London on Nov. 8 with a 10-day art show and sale of traditional and contemporary works of art as well as a two-day Wearable Art Sale. The second annual festival opens with the free preview night at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 8 and continues until Nov. 18 during museum hours. The Wearable Art Sale features jewelry, purses, scarves, shawls, hats and clothing by local artisans. The sale takes place 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 17 and 12 p.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18.

The festival includes the works of many members of the Western family including Patrick Mahon, David Merritt, Kim Moodie, Edgar Yanez Zapata, Duncan de Kergommeaux, Antje Laidler, Anemaree Plint and Thelma Rosner.

The ArteMusea Festival is a special project of the Volunteer Committee to Museum London. All funds raised are for the purchase of works of art for Museum London.

eLife, a new high-profile, open-access biomedical journal, has just been launched with Western professor Jody Culham on its Board of Reviewing Editors. Culham, a professor affiliated with the Brain and Mind Institute, the Department of Psychology and the Graduate Program in Neuroscience at Western, served as a reviewing editor for one of the first papers to be published in eLife. eLifeSciences.org.

Hospitality Services received a $30,000 grant from the Broader Public Sector Investment Fund: Promoting Ontario Food, a fund administered by the Greenbelt Fund, with funding provided by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Hospitality Services’ now-funded project will increase the use of Ontario food on campus and set a standard for measuring future local food purchases. The goal is to identify opportunities to increase Western’s local- and sustainably-sourced food in collaboration with suppliers.
Adventure changes student’s heart, attitude

BY PAUL MAYNE

SHE WAS LIVING in a hostel on a beach in Sydney, Australia with only $12 to her name. This wasn’t exactly the plan Kelsey Vicary had in mind following her Bachelor of Music degree from Western. But the 23-year-old said that experience, among other adventures in her travels, has made her stronger and brought a different feel to her work, as she pursues her master’s degree in vocal performance.

“I was totally separated from my support network asking myself, ‘How will you support yourself and face new challenges?’” said the Niagara Falls native. “I wouldn’t trade those experiences for anything, even though I had zero money at one point. When you are travelling, you are meeting people all the time. It’s a constant stream of new; everything is new.

“To be able to keep up with the pace of that, it changes the way you come back and deal with the old.”

Growing up, she had always been motivated to pursue singing. There was never a doubt in Vicary’s mind she was going to sing for a living. However, one new thing Vicary had to face upon graduating in 2010 was hearing the word ‘no’ from admissions people when it came to applying to graduate school.

“I had no idea how competitive it was going to be and I was really heartbroken over this,” she said. “In hindsight, I was feeling pretty arrogant about it and this was a huge reality check. I really needed to look at myself and ask if I could handle this.

“And, at the time, the answer was no.”

Working as a server at Palasad in London at the time, a co-worker was also having doubts regarding her program at Fanshawe College and tossed around the idea of taking a trip. One night, on the way to the movies, the two brought up the idea of Australia as a destination.

Without hesitation, they were off. “It was totally an impulsive decision and it turned out to be the best decision I’ve made,” Vicary said.

After initially choosing Melbourne, Vicary admitted the two “didn’t budget that well!” and she worked as a server for five months to earn enough money to head out across the continent, settling in Sydney, where through a network of new friends, she got another job as a server.

There were some definite moments where it was really tough to be away from her family, and friends knew she needed music back in her life, encouraging her to apply to grad school back at Western.

“Being away for a year, Western had exactly what I was looking for,” she said, adding while nervous to begin her master’s degree in Vocal Performance, there was also disappointment.

“You go away and see the world and you come back and nothing here has changed. But I had changed,” she said. “You can’t possibly be the same person when you’ve had so many experiences.”

Not only the beaches of Australia, but Vicary was able to experience southeast Asia on her way home. Some questionable night trains, harrowing bus rides up winding mountain roads and speedboat adventures along the Mekong River were just a few of the quests she conquered along the way.

Vicary is hopeful these life experiences will translate to her singing, as she is in the midst of auditions for the Young Artists Program at numerous opera companies across Canada and the States. Admittedly, the nerves are there.

“If you stop and think about it, then yes, you do get nervous, because it’s hard to be in front of people that are judging you. But it’s what I love to do and that helps me in these situations,” Vicary said.

“The best part is when you are dealing with artists, especially other artists that are choosing people, they want to see someone who loves to sing and are ready to work and bring that joy into the room.

“People want to work with someone who has that perspective, I think … I hope.”

Vicary is also preparing for her role in Mozart’s Cosi Fan Tutte at the Paul Davenport Theatre this February and is thrilled her music career has returned to where it initially began.

“Life is great,” she said. “I realized when I went away that if I find a way to work singing into my life somehow, I’m going to be just fine. That’s what travelling taught me, you have to be open to and ready for any experience that comes along.”

PAUL MAYNE, WESTERN NEWS

Having $12 to her name and living in a hostel on an Australia beach couldn’t be further away from her music career at Western. But Kelsey Vicary said her travel experiences have added to her studies as a master’s student (Vocal Performance) at the Don Wright Faculty of Music.

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In 1971, at age 22, Margaret Trudeau became the youngest First Lady in Canadian history, when she married then-Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau. For her adult life, Trudeau has suffered from the debilitating effects of her bipolar condition. Now, after seeking medical treatment that has given her life balance and happiness, she advocates strongly on mental health issues, helping people overcome the stigma of mental illness that often prevents sufferers from getting help.

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USC wants more collaboration; Western ready for it

BY ADELA TALBOT

WESTERN’S UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ Council (USC) desires a more collaborative relationship between the student government and senior administration to address student needs. But this vision, at least according to the USC’s top official, isn’t exactly representative of the current situation.

USC President Adam Doerksen sees a climate of rivalry between the USC and university administration over which party is best suited to provide certain services to students.

While the USC has yet to detail the specifics of its complaint, rolled out last week in a public address by Fearnall, Western officials said they are always open to student comments.

Up to this point, Fearnall explained, the established relationship between the university and USC has been one of competition over collaboration.

“We recognize everyone has the interests of students at heart, but there have been some challenges in bringing student input to the right tables,” he said.

And while John Doerksen, Western’s vice-provost (academic programs and students), said specific concerns have yet to be brought to his attention, he stressed the university’s commitment to working collaboratively with all student groups to best meet student needs.

“Given Western’s focus on the student experience, it’s really important for us to do the best we can and to understand what students are looking for in structuring the services we provide,” Doerksen said.

The university will continue to work together with the USC and the Society of Graduate Students, Doerksen continued, adding the students’ voice will continue to be heard and heeded.

Recent examples of the university’s response to students’ needs and desires include the inclusion of their input in the development of the university’s Strategic Mandate Agreement, requested by the province, and the creation of more study space in various buildings on campus.

Gitta Kulczycki, Western’s vice-president (resources and operations), said she, too, has yet to hear specific concerns from the USC.

“We work with our students a lot and have regular meetings with student leadership. They sit on a number of committees and have every opportunity to come and meet with us,” she said.

“Clearly, our students are at the heart of what we do. If there are particular concerns, I need to understand them.”

In regards to specifics, Fearnall cited the USC Peer Support Centre, which provides peer support for students on a range of issues including mental health, sexual violence, women’s issues, ethno-cultural needs, LGBT and food support.

“Peer-to-peer support is a niche that the USC is able to service really well, but we have often thought of ourselves as providing professional support as well,” he said.

“There is a far greater chance that the university will be able to provide professional services to meet student needs. We want to make sure that both parties are building on strengths so that the network of support for students continues to grow. The main challenge is to determine who is responsible for professional support services on campus and how fees that maintain these services are being governed.”

Expressing a desire for the USC to play a larger role in determining which services to provide and how, Fearnall said the USC will move ahead with plans to hold a summit where student presidents from each faculty can voice the needs of students. The USC will release a document afterward, outlining the results, Fearnall said.

There are also plans for student surveys in various mediums next term that will allow students to identify what services they need and want to see on campus.

“We will also look at the agreement between the USC and Western. We will look at that document to see if there are things we can add, to see if there are things we can enhance. We want to look at a coordinated approach to providing student support services and to figure out what service levels students expect,” he said.

“The Principles of Collaboration and Commitment (in the agreement) could be strengthened by adding more specific language about the venues at which student priorities are heard and a more detailed breakdown of what each party sees as its role in providing support for students.”

A challenge to keep in mind is there are limitations of a one-year term for USC executive members.

“We realize this process is about the continuum,” Fearnall said. He noted previous councils have had successes with plans and proposals that were set into motion before their time.

“It’s certainly important to consider, as we move forward, there will be lots more analysis and lots more to do after our group is done. We are just laying down the foundation of the USC, being a strong, student-focused advocacy group and we are doing our best.”

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Ira Basen is a long-time CBC Radio journalist. He has produced several award-winning documentary series, including Spin Cycles and News 2.0: the Future of News in the Age of Social Media. He has created programs such as The Inside Track and This Morning and taught at Ryerson, McMaster and the University of Toronto. He is currently the CanWest Global Fellow in Media at Western.

The Clissold Lectures commemorate the life and work of Edward Clissold (1833 - 1915), one of London’s most important early editors and journalists. Clissold retired in 1910 as editor of the London (Ontario) Advertiser after 33 years on its staff. The lectures are made possible by a bequest from Edward Clissold’s grandson, Robert E. Blount.
The sun was shining and moms and dads were beaming as Western celebrated its milestone 300th Convocation last week. Visit flickr.com/groups/western/pool/ to see photographs from the two-day celebration.