International experience recognized

BY ANGELA HECK
For The Bulletin

In a world of increasing globalization, U of M students can now receive recognition for incorporating international perspectives into their degree programs or by pursuing co-curricular opportunities with an international focus.

Starting this February all graduating students are eligible to apply for the Citation in Internationalization (CII) which will be noted on their transcripts as of the spring 2012 Convocation.

Before students can receive the citation however, their activities will have to be documented. This is where the faculty and support staff come in.

“As with any initiative, the first step for us is to promote awareness of the citation [in internationalization] within the university community,” said Tony Rogge, director, International Centre for Students. “Faculty and support staff need to know that students will be asking them to verify their involvement in internationally-focused programs and activities as part of the citation process. People will need to know what the students are asking about.”

The CII is wide in scope, taking into account knowledge, skills and competencies that can be acquired through formal courses, student exchanges or study abroad programs, volunteer and co-curricular activities with an international focus.

“The citation offers students an opportunity to receive a formal acknowledgement of their efforts to develop a more global perspective in the course of their studies. Many U of M students are interested in internationalizing their university experience. I think that the citation is a wonderful way for them to receive some recognition for those efforts!” said Karen Grant, vice-provost (academic affairs).

Program registration first step to CII

In order to identify which programs and activities will be recognized, Grant is inviting faculty and administrators involved in international courses and initiatives to register their activities with the coordinator of the citation. To facilitate this process, application forms are available online along with a frequently asked questions page.

“In today’s world, having a faculty for interdisciplinary approaches to learning and having the ability to work effectively in an intercultural or cross-cultural environment will become increasingly important life skills that will pay dividends long after a student has graduated,” said Rogge.

CII program registration

To have your international programs or activities included in the Citation for Internationalization, contact the coordinator Breanne Gulboche by email at breanne.gulboche@umanitoba.ca

Visit the website for information:
> > www.umanitoba.ca/student/cii.html

Tenth annual Elde

BY MARIANNE MAYS WIEBE
The Bulletin

This year’s Elders and Traditional Teachers Gathering at Mijisii Agamik (Bald Eagle Lodge), or Aboriginal House, took the themes of water and fire to convey traditional teachings of women and men in Indigenous cultures.

Elders and teachers told stories of traditional teachings over the two-day event held on November 25 and 26.

Water and fire

The day with the water presentations. In Indigenous teachings, the water vessel is that which carries life, Mary Morin (Metis) said, and this is why women are traditionally associated with water. Through birth, she said, “we are all related; we all come from the same place. This is why women are sacred and must be respected.”

Morin explained that the circle-hem of the skirt, traditional Indigenous attire for women, demonstrated a connection with the moon, circling the earth, and the heart and womb.

For too long, she said, women have been afraid to share, to tell their stories and to explain the traditional women’s teachings. “Now it is time to speak again about things that have been sealed. The moon is a doorway, letting in a little light.”

“Women are strong,” she continued, “but during our moon time we feel weak because we are losing our life flow.” During this weak time, she added, we must start to ask others in our families, “Could you do this for me now?”

Morin also spoke about women as the keepers of the water and of the water spirits. “Everything has a spirit,” she said. “We must take care of the water.”

Levinia Brown (Inuit) told the crowd that each individual culture is important, “each is so unique,” she said.

Storm: ‘It feels like there is fire in us break through that wall’

Elder-in-residence Florence Paynter at the event.

Philanthropy that’s personal: Trailblazers in everyday places

BY STEPHANIE FEHR
For The Bulletin

Students and researchers aren’t the only ones blazing trails at the University of Manitoba. Faculty and staff support cutting-edge learning and research environments through their work every day, their achievements on the job and also through their charitable contributions to areas they are passionate about.

Rejeanne Dupuis is one of those people. As an architect in physical plant, she is responsible for capital projects like the Tache Hall redevelopment and ART Lab. These projects will transform the Fort Garry campus and give new opportunities to artists, musicians and theatre practitioners to develop their skills and hone their craft.

“I believe in the value of the projects that I work on and the importance for continued growth of the university,” says Dupuis. “I work directly with faculties to ensure their needs are identified and understood by the project team.”

In addition to facilitating these projects, Dupuis has also given gifts to support the Tache redevelopment and the School of Art. “I chose these funds because I work with the faculty and staff who will eventually live in these buildings and I can see the great need that they have for improved teaching and research spaces,” she says. “There is a lot of appreciation for the support they receive.”

And for Dupuis, supporting the university is more than just business; it’s personal. “My family and I are all alumni and I hope that my daughter will become a U of M student one day.”

What advice does Dupuis have for others considering a charitable gift to the University of Manitoba?

For Dupuis, supporting the university is more than just business

“Choose a cause that has a special significance to you or a family member and contribute what you can. I think that it’s common to assume only large contributions will make a difference when every gift counts,” she says. “I have personally participated in project cost saving efforts where we carefully scrutinize seemingly small items. Those small items make a difference to the people that need them and they all add up.”
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Referring to the 1939 Indian Act — she “policies that had no face,” with someone else making decisions for you — Brown continued, “Growing up, I had no culture.”

Living on the edge of a Northern town as part of a large family with an Indigenous mother and a white father who was also an RCMP officer, she said, she often felt she fit nowhere. It was only later that she started to reclaim her own culture.

Elder in residence and Anishinaabe woman Florence Paynter spoke about mentors she had and a conference she attended in Australia on Indigenous culture.

She had been instructed by a mentor to offer a piece of cloth to the water (a custom often practiced in spring) when she went. She felt it as burden. The conference was 400 miles away from the water but she slipped away to Sydney for a couple of days. Upon offering the cloth, she suddenly felt lifted — but exhausted at the same time.

“My sisters and teachers had prepared all of it,” she said. “All I had to do was carry it.”

She was so tired that she found a bench and slept. As she slept, she dreamed. In her dream, an Aboriginal man came dancing out of the water. He came back four times, Paynter said, as when bringing a gift.

She said her body lifted and she awoke when she fell back down. “There was no one around but me,” she said.

“Pick up that life, stand up and talk about our losses, the interruption of our people and cultures. Pick up that bundle. It is your sovereignty as a First Nations person.”

Through the remainder of her time in Australia, she said, she realized that this was no mainstream conference. All participated in an activity that showed the effects of colonization. The activity was done, she said, so that all could share “an understanding and compassion for what it was we almost lost.”

Our treaties, she continued, were done with the peace pipe, the bowl and stem, to signify all of creation.

“And it was done in the presence of all creation. The intent of the treaties was to be able to keep the spiritual component of ourselves. We all share this earth, living in partnership. It was peace we were looking for, to be able to share, but not to give ourselves up.”

All three women also affirmed that the partnership of female and male, of water and fire, was significant.

The men presented next, including Terry Wasteste, from the Dakota tribe, Dave Courchene Jr., who is Anishinaabe, and the youngest of the three, Colby Tootooosis, a Cree youth. (A second report on the men’s presentations will appear in the upcoming issue.)

The next morning was spent in sessions “looking to the future” of both fire and water teachings.

Moments historic and moving

The annual gathering is now in 10th year. Reflecting on the time since she began her position, Kali Storm, longtime director of Aboriginal Student Centre (ASC), delivered an emotional address.

After working at this for many years, she said, and “hitting (one’s) head against the wall of the ivory tower, it finally feels like there is someone with an ice pick on the other side [to break through that wall]. It feels like someone is listening, like there is finally someone who is going to help us do that.”

Her comments introduced President and Vice-Chancellor David Barnard, who was also awarded a traditional ribbon shirt by centre staff to recognize his leadership in promoting a strong Indigenous rights and education agenda at the U of M.

“It’s so important that this kind of education be part of the university,” continued Storm, just before Barnard came up to receive his shirt.

“ prone someone who is going it help

Top, Carl Stone, advisor at the Aboriginal Student Centre (ASC), welcomes audience to panels; below right, President David Barnard is embraced by Kali Storm at presentation of ribbon shirt; Kali Storm, surrounded by ASC staff, addresses audience.

We give these [ribbon shirts] not just for nothing, eh,” ASC staff member Carl Stone, added droolly.

The recognition has followed a historic apology by the president on behalf of the U of M for its role in the educational system during the Residential Schools era.

Barnard noted in his thank you remarks that there remains much distance to travel. “Reconciliation is more than words; it is about actions and results,” he said.

“We want to work together to ensure all Indigenous students have a home at post-secondary institutions such as the U of M, we need to ensure education is positive transformative force that lifts individuals, families, cultures and communities.”

He announced a Circle of Sharing, at which “we will talk about the university’s apology and the needed steps toward reconciliation,” he said. “We want to ensure the future success of Indigenous students and graduates.”

The Circle of Sharing takes place on December 12 at Migizii Agamik.