

2019/2020 URAA President's Report

Delivered by: Monica Deters, URAA President
September 16, 2020

Highlights from the past year

- Supported the University Advancement and Communications Team's programs such as:
 - 2019 Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards which were held in October of 2019 at Evraz Place.
 - The 2020 Awards have been rescheduled to Spring 2021 and will be a virtual format due to the pandemic. We have once again a selection of outstanding recipients and award winners. URAA is pleased to have two of our board members participate in the review and selection process.
 - Mature Alumni (3 sessions) this past spring that ended up being virtual and offered on Zoom. This included a session on Exercise and the Brain, Getting to Net-Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Mid-Century, and The Economics of Cannabis.
 - Unfortunately, there was no session this spring for Young Alumni.
 - The Slam Dunk Event for Cougar Basketball was also hosted in conjunction with their Alumni Groups in January. This was an Alumni and family event which preceded two basketball games against the University of Brandon. 276 people were in attendance for this event.
 - An Alumni event was held in Calgary in November of 2019 in conjunction with CFL Grey Cup festivities, most other branch/chapter events were cancelled as they typically take place in the Spring. We are looking forward to the "new normal" as we realize the engagement we have by hosting virtual events and alumni programming.
- Continued support of a number of scholarships with a total number of scholarships created by the Alumni Association numbering 10.
- We also made a significant contribution to the Student Emergency Fund in light of the COVID-19 situation of \$10,000.
- We have oversight of the Alumni's Affinity partners that include BMO MasterCard and TD Monnex home and auto insurance, Canada Life life insurance.

- We have also been engaged in the University's search for a new President as well as in their search for a new Alumni Engagement Asst. Director
- We would also like to wish Diane Mullen the very best as she transitions into her retirement. Diane was a wonderful asset to us at the University and will be truly missed by the URAA. We also like to welcome Marc Butikofer as he takes the Alumni portfolio under his wing from strictly development. And a couple of new additions to the alumni team at the University, Jacqueline Onagi and Lisette Marion.
- We are also thrilled to have with us today the new Associate Director of Alumni Engagement, Sarah Fiderko. Sarah is on her third day in the position and we are so excited to be able to work with her and to bring a fresh set of ideas and perspectives to the University and the URAA.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as URAA President and as a Board Member. I am excited to sit on this new Board as they engage in new ideas and act on new initiatives. We are very fortunate to have had all of our current Board Members commit to returning and they bring with them a lot of great, fresh ideas and passion for the URAA. The future is in great hands. I also would like to welcome the new slate and wish them nothing but the best and am looking forward to becoming Past President and assist with the URAA on an "as needed" basis.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed our progress slightly and put some of our plans on hold for the time being, the transition to virtual has allowed us to engage some of our alumni across the Country and world, which is very positive.

As my movement to Past President transitions Bert Yakichuk off of the current Board, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bert for all he has done and the passion he brought to the URAA. We are very fortunate to have had his involvement and we are very thankful for his dedication and commitment throughout the years. I also would like to recognize and thank three members who contributed greatly to our board during their time with us. Patricia Thomson (who left to focus on a post-graduate degree) and Scott Nicholson (who left to focus on a career change). I also would like to thank Cary Wessel for all of his assistance and involvement with the Board over the past year. He has been a wonderful asset and we will miss him.

It has been a great experience being your President and I wish the new slate nothing but the best and I will continue as Past President and help with the ongoing business and community involvement of URAA.

You will hear more from our incoming President later on in the program.