



Employee Awards 2016

MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY
Bella Concert Hall
Taylor Centre for the Performing Arts

August 24, 2016



The Board of Governors would like to take this opportunity
to honour the employees of Mount Royal University
for their continued high level of service to the community.

Master of Ceremonies
David Docherty

Distinguished Faculty Awards
Jeff Goldberg

Distinguished Teaching Award
Charlie Webber

Long Service Awards Recognition
David Docherty

Retiring Employees Recognition
David Docherty

Distinguished Staff Awards
Duane Anderson

Distinguished Administrator/Manager Award
Jeff Goldberg

Effective Team Awards
Steve Fitterer

Closing Remarks
David Docherty

A light reception-style brunch will be provided in the lobby
and adjoining rooms (main and second levels) following the ceremony.

Join us in the Library at 1:00 p.m. for the
Mount Royal Library Retirement Recognition program.

We would like to express a special thank you to all award nominators.
Your thoughtful submissions provided the rich content
for this program, the videos and the Employee Awards event.



Memorial Tribute

As we celebrate the past and present members of our Mount Royal community,
please take a moment to remember those who passed away this year.

Simon John (Nobby) Clarke

Linda Giem

Sandra Hodgins

Douglas Lauchlan

Valerie Louise Parrish

Nancy May Robinson

Carolyn Tavender



Long Service Employees

We thank these dedicated long service employees who have reached
a significant milestone in their employment with Mount Royal.

10 years

Laura Adamo
Kerri Alderson
Deb Bennett
Ganesh Bhandari
Keith Black
Julie Booke
Charmene Brewer
Patrick Carmichael
Kristen Chappell
Juan Chappell
Karen Christiansen
Scott Cressman
Luisa Cruz-Milette
Ronak Dave
Nancy Doetzel
Craig Eyre
Alan Fedoruk
Cynthia Gallop
Tracy Garrick
Naomi Grant
Heather Hanley
Mark Hiebert
Charissa Hovdebo
Karla Karch
Vance Koberstein
Ben Kunz
Ben Kusi-Sekyere
Gillian Lebel

Lynda Martin
Kathy Mok
Roderick Montague
Patty Moore
Susan Pajewski
Aida Patient
Monica Pauls
Tracy Powell
Ben Prowse
Dawn Rault
Brian Reinsch
Glen Roberts
Jane Roberts
Luz Rodriguez
Tatiana Rogasevskaja
Eric Scott
Carole Simpson
Janey Sondergaard
Cliff Spyker
Tracey Stock
Kelly Sundberg
Dedre Toker
Paul Varella Connors
Carlos Videla Rico
Michal Waissmann
Anthony Wallace
Aaron Williams
Val Wynnyk
Connie Young

15 years

Catherine Allan
Heather Ansari
Yaw Asante
Tamarea Bauer
Bonnie Blankert
Debbie Brown
David Clemis
Julie Cormack
Dana de Guzman
Pamela Downie
Wendelin Fraser
Shelley Fried
Brian Guthrie
Jamie Hutchison
Shoba Ittyipe
Berry Kebede
George Koszegi
Gerry LaBute
Elizabeth Lennox
Aubrey MacPhail
Jason Martin
Patricia Mascaro
Alain Morin
Dana Naldrett
Ludmila Nazarewycz
Michael O'Toole
Geoff Owens
Bill Paterson
Verna Raab



Long Service Employees (cont.)

Heather Russell
Sue Rutherford
Tammy Sherrow
Shauna Snow-Capparelli
Jonathan Stade
Jeff Suderman
Sarada Tadiparty
Susan Taylor
Wilfred Taylor-Cole
Pamini Thangarajah
Shelly Thompson
Mario Trono
Patsy Valenzuela
Debbie Way
Joyce Woods
Ruben Yumol
Patricia Zehner

20 years

Calvin Aubin
Shauna Bouvier
Margaret Brown
Bill Bunn
Lee Easton
Doug Eley
Janine Falck
MaryAnn Farebrother
Allan Gruber
Janice Jones
Alnoor Kassam
Rafik Kurji
Indy Lagu
Chad London
Maria-Jesus Plaza
Stanley Ross
Randy Schroeder
Sharon Smulders
Carolyn Sterenberg
Norm Vaughan
Roberta Wallace
John Warkentin

25 years

Jim Dyck
Laura Fenniak
Diana Fletcher
Vicki Goodfellow-Duke
Anita Hibbard
Kelly Kaur
Margy MacMillan
Lynn McMurdo
Sue Rupertus
Cathy Smey Carston
Robert Sykes

30 years

Monica Baehr
Pamela Bannister
Deborah Bridge
Wade Lorentzon
Sherry Reid
Kelly Wells

35 years

Marc Chikinda

40 years

Rollie LaHaye

EA

Retirees

Lloyd Ash
Maureen Bedard
Trish Blaker
Sandie Cheney
Sue DeLuca
Paul Dornian
Terry Dowsett
Mary Ewanicke
Pat (Patricia) Falk
Carole Gray
Heather Haddow
Julia Hartley
Wenhua He
Marlene Kingsmith
Irene Langille
Rowena Liu-Poon
Jan (Janet) Lovestone
Karen McCarthy
Sheldon Nadler
Eva Newman
Izak Paul
Lesley Renton
Duane Schaffer
Sita Shangi
Martha Taylor
MaryAnn Wiebe
Janice Wotske



Mount Royal Library Retirement Recognition

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Library Retirement Recognition Program, celebrating retiring Mount Royal faculty, staff and administrators.

The program was developed to provide a lasting and meaningful tribute to employees. Retiring executive members of the Students' Association of Mount Royal University are also honoured for their dedication and hard work on behalf of students.

Each retiree chooses a book or an audiovisual item to be added to the Library's collection in his/her honour. Each book includes a bookplate with the retiree's dedication explaining the special significance of the item. This statement also appears in the Library's online catalogue. All items are available to the Mount Royal Library borrowing community.

We thank all retirees for their thoughtfulness in selecting their items and welcome all employees to join us in the Library today at 1 p.m. for this year's presentation, following the Employee Awards reception.



Distinguished Staff Awards



Craig Baskett

There are times when Craig Baskett feels like a proud parent in his role as Program Administrator for the Transitional Vocational Program (TVP) in the Faculty of Continuing Education and Extension.

The TVP offers both a full-time employment program and part-time classes to help adults with developmental disabilities develop employment and life skills.

"You get to see students grow, develop and make the successful transition to adulthood. There are a few bumps along the way, but they're getting jobs and getting around the city independently," says Craig, who joined Mount Royal University in 1998 as a part-time instructor.

"Some move into their own places, a few buy their own places. Some get married and have children. You think about what their lives would have been like 40 or 50 years ago," he says, explaining that previous generations with cognitive impairments were often institutionalized.

"It's testament to the work done before me in community inclusion. They're now full citizens."

In the nomination package for a 2016 Distinguished Staff Award, TVP student Peter Holmen writes that Craig is "happy, caring, teaching, helpful."

Craig sits on the organizing committee for Big Bob's BBQ, an annual fundraiser for the TVP, with proceeds going to student bursaries. He also volunteers for his community association, travels to Spanish-speaking countries to polish his language skills and loves to hike, run and generally spend time outdoors.



Linda Walker

When stressed-out students arrive at Student Counselling Services feeling anxious or homesick, troubled or in crisis, Linda Walker's friendly face is one of the first they see.

Her warmth, compassion and patience immediately put the students at ease. Linda, an Administrative Assistant at Student Counselling, has the same calming effect on her colleagues.

"She is astute at recognizing when someone is hurting or scared, and she has been successful in identifying students in crisis on many occasions," writes Janet Miller, Chair, Student Counselling Services, in a letter nominating Linda for a 2016 Distinguished Staff Award. "Linda received especially high accolades last year from her faculty colleagues for her role in assisting a MRU staff member who was in a significant crisis."

As a front-line worker, Linda greets students, answers their questions if she can, brings them a glass of water and allows them to decompress in a quiet room. If needed, she'll book them in with a counsellor — immediately if it's a crisis.

Linda describes Mount Royal's free counselling service as both "remarkable" and "part of the learning process."

A native Albertan and grandmother of six, she lists walking and cycling among her favourite activities. Linda has always had a passion for helping others. Before joining Mount Royal in 2007, she worked in a similar administrative role at the Calgary Learning Centre.

"It's very rewarding to help someone in distress and then see them feeling better," she says.



Pam Jonnson

One staff member supports 16 full-time faculty members, 17 contract faculty and 661 students in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

That single person is Pam Jonnson, Administrative Assistant to the Chair. "It keeps me hopping," she says.

Pam is well-suited to juggling multiple demands. Before joining Mount Royal University in 2009 as a front-line worker in Student Counselling Services, she spent eight years with the Faculty of Education and Sport Health and Physical Education Department at Vancouver Island University. Before that, she ran a daycare in her home.

"It taught me flexibility and patience to accommodate everyone's needs," she says of working with children. "My approach is to have mutual respect for everyone... and to see the strengths in each person."

Those interpersonal skills came in handy when she joined the very diverse Department of Sociology and Anthropology in 2014.

She continues to hone her skills with professional development workshops, such as Safe Space Training and conflict resolution.

Pam has a "strong commitment to promoting social equality on and off campus," writes Irene Shankar, Associate Professor of Sociology, in a nomination letter.

The 2016 Distinguished Staff Award winner volunteers widely and has been known to quietly hand gift cards to students in need, among other private random acts of kindness.

Pam recharges her batteries by spending time in nature with her family.

EA

Distinguished Faculty Awards

(full-time credit)



Cari Merkley

To describe Cari Merkley as a librarian doesn't quite tell the whole story.

At Mount Royal University, librarians are part of faculty, so she's also an associate professor — an academic librarian who teaches and does research.

A 2016 Distinguished Faculty Award winner, Cari received her Master of Information Studies degree from the University of Toronto in 2005. She worked in the University of Alberta's Academic Library Internship Program before joining MRU in 2007.

Cari describes her job as "pretty varied." "I might educate a class of first-year nursing students on critiquing sources," she says. "I often do one-on-one teaching or, sometimes, it's responding to panicked emails."

In essence, her work is to help students and faculty develop their information literacy skills, finding and critically evaluating the best and most trust-worthy sources.

She's responsible for selecting resources — books, videos and journals, many of which are online — for the general education, nursing and midwifery departments.

"There's a lot of information in the area of health," she explains. "How do you find information that's appropriate for a health professional? How does it guide your practice? How do you make informed choices?"

"Cari's support of our students is outstanding, and our program is better because we have her," writes Deborah Mansell, a faculty member in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, in her nomination letter.

A self-described "voracious" reader and urban explorer, Cari is currently devouring the Maisie Dobbs mystery series and anticipating an upcoming trip to Ireland.



Irene Shankar

By combining hot-button social-justice issues with her expertise as a sociologist of health, gender and social inequality, Irene Shankar spurs her students to become active, engaged citizens.

For example, Irene and her students in a feminist theory course discussed how what they learn can't just be theoretical — that they must also take action. Within two weeks, the students raised \$3,500 for Doctors Without Borders. Her students have also collected toys for homeless children at Inn From the Cold and refugees helped by the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society.

Nominated four times for her exemplary teaching, Irene received a Champion Award from the Students' Association of Mount Royal University in 2013 and is now a 2016 Distinguished Faculty Award winner.

An assistant professor in the Sociology and Anthropology Department who joined MRU in 2009, Irene holds a PhD from the University of Alberta. She will be taking a year-long sabbatical in 2016/17 and using it to write up two studies — one on how pregnant women made sense of health messages during the H1N1 flu crisis and another on how universities react to sexual assault on their campuses — and to begin a new project on childhood vaccination.

Irene spends as much time as she can with her young daughter exploring Calgary.



Kevin O'Connor

Kevin O'Connor began his teaching career in the Yukon, where he was “put into the dumping ground of dumping grounds”: a special education class with a wide range of ages, psychological issues and cognitive disabilities, including fetal alcohol syndrome.

“It was a huge learning curve,” says Kevin, an assistant professor of Education and a 2016 Distinguished Faculty Award winner. The subsequent 13 years of teaching in the North taught him about the value of experiential learning, the importance of “place” and the need to involve community partners. And it launched him on an academic path, in search of a more holistic model of education.

Those lessons informed his PhD in education at McGill and his job as a senior policy advisor on Aboriginal education issues for the federal government. They also inspire his work at Mount Royal University, whether it's partnering with the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area to turn education students (plus schoolkids and their teachers) on to science, or finding innovative ways to support teacher education by integrating theory and practice.

He and two colleagues are funded by the largest Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grant MRU has received to date. They are studying teacher candidates and supporting them with in-school weekly seminars and integrated course work as they bump up against the realities of the classroom during their practica and in the initial years of their careers.

When he's not coaching his kids' hockey, Kevin loves to go camping with his family.

EA

Distinguished Faculty Awards

(contract credit)



Carol Krol

By all accounts, Carol Krol, a contract faculty member of the Sociology and Anthropology Department, is beloved by her students at Mount Royal University.

She received a Students' Association E-Award for teaching excellence in 2015 and was described as follows: "A dedicated instructor, Carol Krol goes above and beyond in service of her students. Her students describe her as warm, engaging, fun and passionate about her teachings. Always willing to devote her time to her students, Carol Krol stands as an example of a tireless educator, always putting her students first."

This year, she was nominated for a 2016 Distinguished Faculty award by a student.

"Carol is a professor who enhances the student experience at MRU with her enthusiasm, clarity of expectations and passion for her discipline," writes Zoe Slusar, an anthropology major in the Bachelor of Arts program, in her nomination letter. "She treats us as human beings and levels with us as people, while encouraging us to meet her expectations of academic excellence."

Carol and her colleague Fredrick Ulmer are researching the rodeo culture of non-professional cowboys and cowgirls in southern Alberta. The specific focus is the members of the Foothills Cowboy Association and the rodeos they sanction. Their research involves both fieldwork and archival research.



Distinguished Teaching Awards

(credit-free)



Elisabeth Szojka

Elisabeth Szojka's long, distinguished career and her nearly 48 years as a violin instructor at the Mount Royal Conservatory are recognized with a 2016 Distinguished Teaching Award (credit-free).

Born in Switzerland, Elisabeth began playing the violin around age eight and was mentored by a famous concert master. "He'd be so happy to know I've become a mentor," she says.

After graduating from the Basel Music Academy, Elisabeth toured Switzerland with a chamber orchestra and recorded before immigrating to Canada at age 25. After a few years of playing with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, she joined the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and soon after the Conservatory of Music faculty at MRU.

She's nurtured pupils starting at age seven or eight — even a few second-generation ones — and while many have gone on to become professional musicians in orchestras across North America, her greatest joy as a teacher is passing on a love of music and bringing out the best in each student.

Elisabeth teaches two 19-week semesters each year and still performs. She owns two instruments: one is a concert violin made by Francesco Gobetti in 1724 ("It's absolutely fabulous to play"); and, the other is an Austrian violin for teaching.

In her free time, Elisabeth loves to garden at her Sylvan Lake cottage, as well as hike, swim, travel and care for her 18-year-old poodle Niccolo Paganini, named for the violin virtuoso.

EA

Distinguished
Administrator/
Manager
Award



Tom Buchanan

Before Tom Buchanan arrived at Mount Royal University in August 2012, the Sociology and Anthropology Department was in transition.

"I walked into a department eager for a consistent chair. That benefitted me quite a bit," says Tom, who holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology from the University of Cincinnati. He was acting department head at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga before coming to MRU.

To unify the department, Tom created a vision council, where he and coordinators for each discipline addressed each and every issue. Dialog and discussion were fostered. All of the different policy documents that were floating around were shaped into one department document. Unnecessarily strict rules were dropped.

Since his arrival, Tom has "radically transformed the culture of our department into an inclusive, equitable, supportive and vibrant workplace," writes Mary-Lee Mulholland, program coordinator and associate professor of anthropology, in the nomination package.

The 2016 Distinguished Administrator/Manager Award winner says he couldn't have done so without the help of others: a supportive dean, peer chairs, his colleagues in the department and his administrative assistant, Pam Jonnson, one of this year's Distinguished Staff Award winners.

In his spare time, Tom plays fiddle and mandolin, fly fishes and camps with his kids. "I just love the outdoors in Alberta," he says.



Effective Team Awards

2016 Student Leadership Conference (SLC)

Taking place January 30, 2016, the planning team for the 2016 Student Leadership Conference put in an extraordinary amount of work to bring this conference to life, positively impacting the Mount Royal University experience for more than 100 current students.

This year's conference theme was Igniting a Passion for Leadership. In its second year, the conference grew significantly, filling all spaces for a total registration of 115 students — more than doubling the registration of last year's inaugural conference.

This full-day conference brought together leaders from across MRU to share their experiences and knowledge about leadership. Both Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi and President David Docherty provided keynote addresses and registrants had a choice of 14 sessions led by 20 MRU student leaders.

The SLC is an extra project, voluntarily undertaken by this team of employees, in addition to their regular workloads. Each of these team members has a passion for leadership and values the development of our students in this area. They work to provide students with the most outstanding experience possible at MRU. The SLC is a testament to this passion and commitment.

The work of this team directly benefits the University's image and sense of community. Student participants become better leaders and are more connected to the campus community. The exceptional collaboration of this team led to an outstanding SLC. These employees have known the satisfaction of working together to meet a goal and then seeing amazing, tangible results.

Team Members:

Janet Miller, Faculty and Chair of Counselling, Wellness Services

Charmene Brewer, Health Outreach Coordinator, Wellness Services

Sarah Rude, Student Success Coordinator, Office of Student Success

Bob Lambert, Residence Life Coordinator, Residence Services

Natasha Reynolds, Manager, Operations and Administration, Residence Services



Effective Team Awards

Life Writing Project

The Life Writing Project was a successful and impactful event undertaken in partnership with the Garrison Green seniors' residence. This initiative deeply enriched student learning and proved transformational in the lives of students and many Calgary seniors. The project exemplifies the best of Mount Royal University, showing us as an institution that prioritizes students, educates them to be responsible and compassionate citizens and deeply cares for the broader community.

Planning began in spring 2015 between MRU's English program and United Active Living who manage the Garrison Green seniors' residence. Resident seniors had expressed an interest in finding a way to tell and capture their stories. The Great Depression was chosen as a starting point. In September, students gathered with Garrison Green staff to launch the partnership. Six students were paired with seniors and supported by faculty mentors.

The work culminated in a public reading of selections on December 10, 2015, along with the launch of the publication, *This is What I Want to Tell You*.

The event saw more than 100 attendees, including the students and residents, their families and friends and MRU faculty and staff. Hearing the readings was a deeply moving experience. The book captures the residents' stories in a variety of forms. A YouTube video of the reading is also available.

The project marked an important foray into community learning for the English program. It was a remarkable opportunity to bridge a divide between generations and to capture stories that might otherwise be lost. Participants grew tremendously and plans for Winter 2016 are underway.

Team Members:

David Hyttenrauch, Chair, English and Languages, Faculty of Arts

Beth Everest, Associate Professor, English and Languages, Faculty of Arts

Natalie Meisner, Professor, English and Languages, Faculty of Arts

Richard Harrison, Professor, English and Languages, Faculty of Arts

Elaine Danelesko, Interim Director, Conservatory, Faculty of Continuing Education and Extension

