



3rd Annual
Graduate
Awards Gala

MARCH 7TH 2015

MESSAGES OF WELCOME

Welcome to the 3rd Annual Graduate Student Awards Gala. It gives me great pleasure to share this evening of celebration with all of you. Evenings such as this are a wonderful opportunity to genuinely share in and be inspired by each other's successes, perseverance and hard work. I would like to take this time to congratulate all award recipients who are presented with an award this evening. We wish you continued success as you move forward in your life and career.



We would like to extend a heartfelt appreciation to our many sponsors. Your continued support and dedication ensures that our gala remains a tradition within the Graduate Students' Association. Evenings like this would not be possible without you.

I wish each and every one of you a wonderful and memorable evening.

Warm regards,
Izabela Vlahu
President
Graduate Students' Association

MESSAGES OF WELCOME

The College of Graduate Studies and Research extends warm greetings to all graduate students, faculty and staff attending tonight's 3rd annual gala. For those of you fortunate enough to be able to attend previous galas you will remember the excitement of the winners and the joy we all shared hearing their stories of achievement.



We recognise that for our university to achieve its goal of being one of the most research intensive in North America we must continue to nurture our graduate students so they receive the best graduate education possible from the institution. Part of the nurturing process is to award outstanding achievements. So with that in mind we are gathered here tonight to fulfill that promise and share with our graduate students our time so that they can be awarded and share their experiences with us. I wish everyone an enjoyable evening.

Adam Baxter-Jones, PhD
Interim Dean
College of Graduate studies and Research

MESSAGES OF WELCOME

On behalf of the University of Saskatchewan please accept my congratulations to the Graduate Students' Association on 55 years of supporting graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan. In addition, Congratulations to the deserving recipients at the 3rd Annual Graduate Awards Gala.



The graduate awards gala is an opportunity to recognize and reward graduate students for their research, scholarly and artistic pursuits as well as to enjoy an evening of camaraderie. It is an important event that will continue to motivate graduate students to serve as valuable role models and ambassadors for the University of Saskatchewan graduate student community.

My best wishes for a memorable evening.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gordon Barnhart". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gordon Barnhart
Interim President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Saskatchewan

MESSAGES OF WELCOME

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Advanced Education, I wish to congratulate all of the award recipients. You should be very proud of your achievements.

The University of Saskatchewan is an outstanding institution, one rooted in high-quality education and research. These award recipients are examples of this excellence. You are all great ambassadors for your school and the Province of Saskatchewan.



The Government of Saskatchewan understands the importance of post-secondary education and is committed to supporting research and innovation in the post-secondary sector so that our graduate students are able to participate in our growing knowledge economy.

As you look back and reflect on your successes this past year, you should take pride in all that you have accomplished and achieved.

I wish you the best in the future and congratulate you once again on this incredible recognition.

Kevin Doherty
Minister of Advanced Education
Government of Saskatchewan

MESSAGES OF WELCOME

As Premier of Saskatchewan, I am pleased to welcome you to the 3rd Annual Graduate Awards Gala in Saskatoon.

Higher learning is the foundation of any progressive and knowledge-based society. And, graduate studies are about perpetual learning and the sharing of knowledge. As an association that encourages support, cooperation, and educational success throughout the University of Saskatchewan, I commend the Graduate Students' Association for honouring graduate students who have excelled in their research, scholarly and artistic pursuits.



Over the last one hundred years, the University of Saskatchewan has transformed into one of the most distinguished universities in Canada. With over 100 years of alumni, graduates of this educational institution continue to make important contributions in all areas, both at home and around the globe. Continuing in that tradition, we proudly honour some of Saskatchewan's best and most innovative minds.

Congratulations to the honourees and best wishes for your future success.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad Wall". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Brad Wall
Premier



OFFICIAL SPONSOR



Building upon the foundation of positive student experiences, the U of S Alumni Association fosters goodwill to establish and grow a sense of community among our 143,000 U of S alumni living in 117 countries around the globe.

The University of Saskatchewan Alumni Association:

- is dedicated to adding value to the lives of all U of S graduates through a number of special benefits and services,
- strives to build an involved community of graduates around the world,
- encourages a lifelong relationship with the university and fellow alumni, and
- is committed to celebrating and encouraging the success of all its graduates.

Since its inception in 1917, the accomplishments of our members continue to embody the diversity found on our campus—Rhodes scholars, a Nobel Prize winner, a Canadian prime minister, Olympic medalists, CEOs, entrepreneurs, scholars and teachers, doctors and nurses, artists and actors—the list is as long and diverse as the imagination of our graduates.

Our Mission

Building upon the proud history and tradition of the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Saskatchewan Alumni Association encourages and fosters lifelong involvement of alumni in the life of the university. It is committed to adding value to the lives of all alumni by engaging the community of graduates and celebrating alumni success throughout the world.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Monique Haakensen, PhD, RPBio, PBiol, EP

Dr. Haakensen (University of Saskatchewan Alumni, BSc 2004, PhD 2009) is a recognized leader in business and scientific innovation and entrepreneurship. Since founding Contango in 2010, she has grown the company into a thriving environmental firm with laboratories and dedicated pilot facilities. As a result, she has been named one of Canada's



future entrepreneurial leader's by Profit Magazine. Outside of her business activities, she sits on various boards, serves as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Saskatchewan, and previously served as an Academic lead for the University of the Arctic. In 2014, Dr. Haakensen became the youngest person ever appointed to Canada's Science, Technology and Innovation Council, providing the federal government with confidential, evidence-based advice on key issues that affect Canadian society and our economic development.

A specialist in passive water treatment, constructed wetlands, biogeochemistry and genetic microbial profiling, she has worked on passive treatment systems such as constructed wetlands for more than a dozen mines at various stages of operation including exploration, active, closed and abandoned, many of which are located in Northern Canada. Monique also oversees active research programs for technology development in these areas at Contango in addition to their consulting activities. Monique's interdisciplinary academic background, paired with her ability to recognize and seize opportunities has resulted in a range of successful entrepreneurial undertakings. Her message today will be one of openness to change and adaptation as you move forward during and after your graduate studies.

AWARDS INTRODUCTION

The Graduate Student Award Gala is held once a year to honour the excellence of graduate students and this is the 3rd Annual Gala. The awards categories are below.

Excellence in Aboriginal Research Award

This award honours a graduate student that has made significant impacts in his/her field of study and the research positively contribute to the Aboriginal community.

Research Excellence in the Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences, Law or Education Award

This award honours a graduate student that has made significant impacts in the field of humanities, arts, social sciences, law or education and has produced outstanding research results throughout their course of study.

Research Excellence in the Sciences Award

This award honours a graduate student that has made significant impacts in the field of science and has produced outstanding research results throughout their course of study.

Professional Excellence Award

This award honours a graduate student (non-thesis based program) that has made significant academic achievement in his or her field of study and has made outstanding non-academic contributions to his or her department of studies.

Interdisciplinary Research Excellence Award

This award honours a graduate student that has made significant impacts in two separate but related fields of study and has produced outstanding research results throughout their course of study.

Advising Excellence Award

This award honours a graduate student advisor that has shown excellent supervisory and mentoring skills as well as exceptional support for their advisees' ideas, scholarly work, and financial needs.

Excellence in Community Service Award

This award honours a graduate student that has made significant impacts and positively contributes to the local community of Saskatoon.

Exceptional Course Councillor Award

This award honours a course councillor of the GSA that has shown exceptional initiative beyond their call of duty to carry out the mission of the GSA.

Outstanding Past GSA Executive Award

This award honours a past GSA Executive graduate student that has made significant contributions to the GSA. The current GSA Executive appreciates their dedication and hard work.

Outstanding GSA Partner Award

This award honours a special partner of the GSA and as a result of the partnership has made significant contributions to graduate students on campus. The current GSA Executive appreciates their dedication and support of our work.

EXCELLENCE IN ABORIGINAL RESEARCH AWARD

Belinda C. Daniels - pē miyo maskwa

Belinda is of the nēhiyawak nation of Turtle Island, her home community is Sturgeon Lake First Nation. SK. She has been an educator for 15 years specializing in Aboriginal education.

Belinda resides in Saskatoon with her family and currently works for the Saskatoon Public School Division at a local high school and is an instructor for the University of Saskatchewan languages Dept.

Her interests include research particularly in Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language restoration, preservation and development. Belinda holds a B. Ed., P.G.D., and Master's degree and is currently a Phd candidate.



RESEARCH EXCELLENCE IN THE SCIENCES AWARD

Ahmed Abdel-Salam

Growing up in Egypt with a mechanical engineer father and an electrical engineer mother, Ahmed has always been surrounded by engineering minds which has led to the early start of his engineering career at the age of 6 in their engineering family business. Being inspired by his father's dedication to engineering, Ahmed knew at an early age that one day he wants to become a mechanical engineer. Ahmed says that this would have never been possible without the continuous encouragement and support from his mother who was his best friend and full-time tutor. In 2009, Ahmed received a BSc in Mechanical Power Engineering, Distinction with Honor, from Mansoura University. Among Ahmed's favorite memories during his undergraduate studies in Egypt was enjoying a break between classes to grab some coffee and chat with his best friends Hesham, Haitham and Samar.



Ahmed moved to Canada in 2011 to study a MSc in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan, and he transferred to a direct PhD in 2013 due to his exceptional progress. Ahmed's research project is on solar air conditioning and energy recovery technologies, and he is glad to be conducting his graduate research under the supervision of a distinguished supervisor and a top scientist in his field such as Prof. Carey Simonson. Ahmed says that his brother Rani, who is a PhD student at the same research group, is a great motivator for him to work harder and achieve more success. Over the last three years, Ahmed's research on solar liquid desiccant air conditioning systems has resulted in more than 10 peer-reviewed papers, and has led him to receive several prestigious awards such as the "Graduate Student Seminar Best Speaker Award" and the "Grant-In-Aid Award from the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers".

If he is not working on his research or instructing an engineering lab, you will find Ahmed travelling, horseback riding, hiking, or enjoying a nice day at a ski resort. Ahmed can be contacted at: aha681@mail.usask.ca

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Keshini Madara Marasinghe

K Madara Marasinghe (B.Sc. '13 and MPH '15) graduated from the University of Waterloo, Health Studies and Gerontology program prior to starting Masters in Public Health (MPH) at the University of Saskatchewan.



Madara is passionate about the health of the ageing population and has dedicated her time to conducting public health and geriatric research and volunteering with older adults. She recently received a prestigious World Health Organization (WHO) research internship which she believes was a life-changing opportunity. “Working at the WHO provided insight into the needs of the aging population globally and complexities associated with meeting their needs – especially in low- and middle-income countries.”

She worked with the Innovation for Healthy Ageing team conducting research on innovative solutions addressing the needs of the ageing society in developing countries. While maintaining an excellent academic standing, during her graduate studies she held a graduate teaching assistant position and actively participated in fundraising and walking for cancer. She is also one of the youngest candidates graduating from the 2015 MPH program.

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARD

Zohreh Izadifar

Zohreh Izadifar was born in Iran where she received her B.Sc. degree in Engineering before moving to Canada. She obtained a M.Sc. degree in Civil and Geological Engineering from University of Saskatchewan with focus on hydroinformatics using artificial intelligence modeling.



Zohreh developed increasing fascination with multidisciplinary research areas particularly biomedical engineering where engineering technologies, life science, and medicine are bridged for solving challenging medical problems. By holding the University of Saskatchewan Dean's Scholarship Research Award, Zohreh pursued research in Biomedical Engineering and is currently a Ph.D. candidate specializing in Tissue Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan. She has been awarded a research fellowship with the Canadian Institute of Health Research Training program in Health Research Using Synchrotron Techniques (CIHR-THRUST) along with several other awards, honors, and scholarships during her Ph.D. program.

Zohreh's current research involves application of advanced technologies including 3D printing biofabrication and synchrotron light biomedical imaging for repairing damaged and osteoarthritic cartilage tissue through Tissue Engineering.

ADVISING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Dr. Alexander Moewes

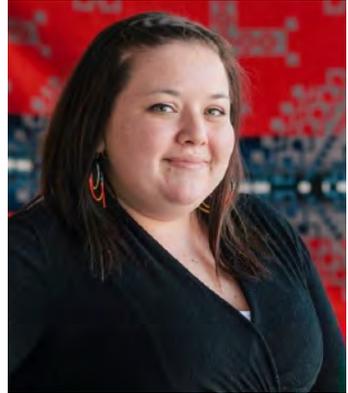
- PhD in Physics Hamburg/Germany (1995), Assist. Prof. at LSU
- Joined U of S in 2000 as an associate professor, full prof. in 2003
- CRC since 2002 currently Tier 1
- Author of over 230 publications in peer-reviewed journals
- Excellence in graduate education: since 2005, I graduated 8 Ph.D. and 10 M.Sc. from my group, eleven students held NSERC scholarships
- Supervised 27 summer students, 22 of them held NSERC USRA
- Selected admin. at U of S: URC, CRC, GAC, Transform US
- Research interests: Condensed matter physics and materials science (specifically two-dimensional materials, spinelectronics and ultra-hard & luminescence materials)



EXCEPTIONAL ACADEMIC COUNCILLOR AWARD

Annie Battiste

Annie Battiste is a young Mi'kmaw woman from Potlotek First Nations, a small community situated in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. She currently resides in Saskatoon while she completes her Masters in Educational Foundations in the College of Education.



She is currently the Events Coordinator at the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre as well as the Co Chair of the Indigenous Graduates Students' Council (IGSC). As a GSA Councillor and the Co Chair of IGSC she sits on numerous committees within the university such as the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Governance Committee and the Aboriginal Student Leadership Group.

This academic year she has engaged with the Aboriginal community to try and recruit more Aboriginal graduate students, created a strong voice for Aboriginal graduates students with the university administration, created and delivered events this year designed to help with cross cultural learning such as Aboriginal Awareness Sessions, 8th Fire discussion, and various other events including the GSA conference.

Her research areas include anti racism and anti oppressive education, Indigenous knowledge, and decolonization. She is convicting in June 2015 and is excited to use the knowledge she is gained within her Masters to help her community and peers.

OUTSTANDING PAST GSA EXECUTIVE AWARD

Omeasoo Butt

Omeasoo Wāhpāsiw is a Cree/Nehiyaw woman currently a PhD candidate in History. Omeasoo was involved with the GSA from 2009-2011. In 2010-2011 Omeasoo was GSA President, the first Aboriginal president of the GSA, ever. In this role, she worked tirelessly to advocate on behalf of students in many cases of academic misconduct.

She discovered that much work in educating all levels of campus administration and the student body on Indigenous issues and history remains.

Omeasoo continues to offer leadership in this area, advising the Indigenous Graduate Students' Council regularly, giving talks to undergraduate classes across campus, and participating in community events like the art installation, Walking With Our Sisters.



OUTSTANDING GSA PARTNER AWARD



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It is with great pleasure that we once again witness the coming together of friends, colleagues, peers and dignitaries at the University of Saskatchewan for the GSA Awards Gala. On behalf of the entire studentcare.net/works team, we offer a warm and heartfelt congratulations to all nominees.

As a GSA partner for 15 years, we are proud to support the ongoing academic achievements and community involvement of graduate students at the U of S. At studentcare.net/works, we are driven by the we developed as student leaders – equitability, accessibility and sustainability—but, we are also constantly inspired by the students we work with; students who never fail to impress upon us the importance of continuing education, as well as the value of hard work, dedication and brilliance. As graduate students, you have a remarkable opportunity to determine what initiatives you will undertake to enrich and inspire your community. This is your moment to decide what your legacy will be—what you will leave behind for those who follow in your footsteps.

We are truly honored to accept this award and we look forward to supporting the great ideas of University of Saskatchewan graduate students in the future. Here's to 15 more years of fruitful collaboration.

Sincerely,

studentcare.net/works

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

The GSA would like to express our deepest gratitude to our sponsors for your support. This event would not be possible without your generous sponsorship. Join us in celebrating the accomplishments of our graduate students and faculty.

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A VOTE OF THANKS...

It is a privilege and a great joy for me to extend a vote of thanks to all those who have contributed in one way or the other to make this Gala a reality.

I would like to give a special thanks to:

- Our sponsors without whom we would not be able to organize this event. Our greatest gratitude goes to you.
- The GSA Commons staff: Sherri Rohovich and her team: Rachit Rowat, Megan Jenkins, Bassey Ekpenyong, Bassey, and Qi Guo for all their hard work and contributions to make this gala a success.
- The GSA Executives for their continuous help and feedback on the planning and organization of this event.
- The Nomination Committee Members who read through pages and pages of nomination package documents to make the hard decision of selecting a winner.
- Last but not least, our performers who make it known that graduate students have so many more talents and skills in addition to Academics & Research.

I would like to thank everyone for attending this event and encouraging our GSA to indeed make it a tradition.

Warm regards,
Rahwa Osman
GSA VP External
Gala Organizer



The GSA Executive would like to thank all of
you for attending this important event.
Please enjoy your evening.