

## // FROM THE PRESIDENT

**I am extremely pleased to have completed my second year as President of Great Plains College. As we go forward into the New Year, a significant focus will be placed upon renewing the college's strategic plan. As such, I look forward to the privilege of stewarding the college into its next stage of growth and development.**

Overall, 2013-14 was a year of transition as the college undertook a fairly intensive and thorough reorganization of both student services and registration processes, while also expanding upon program offerings. These changes not only better position the college for the challenges and opportunities ahead, but they have also had a significant

impact in terms of providing greater support for both employees and students. As the college gears itself for continued success, particular focus will be put toward increased partnerships as well as program growth.

Great Plains College plans to place continued attention on our advancement portfolio, with the intent of achieving a strong philanthropic culture. Advancement is an important part of the college's strategic plan, going hand in hand to help achieve our goals. We are also very excited about the success of our varsity program and will look to increase the profile of athletics as it pertains to the college's image and as far as enhancing student life and experience.

I welcome our alumni, donors and partners to keep in close contact with Great Plains as we look forward to continued growth and success throughout our campus regions. These relationships are critical to our success and will continue to be an integral component in our planning processes.



President & CEO, Dr. David Keast.

## // GROWING PROGRAMS



*The Heavy Equipment Operator program offers a state-of-the-art simulator lab.*

**Over the past several years, Great Plains College (GPC) has made tremendous effort to ensure it has strong and positive relationships with the communities in which it operates. As a result, it has been able to enjoy great success in terms of development.**

Whether soliciting funds to support the scholarship program or heeding advice from the local business community, Great Plains prides itself on being well connected to its constituents, thus delivering results of great benefit to its students and the communities in which it operates. The college is also committed to ensuring a great experience for students. Increased focus is being placed on our varsity athletics program as well as in ensuring that alumni are involved and excited about their college experience. In the coming year, GPC plans to continue along this path, working to ensure sustained success and growth.

In the past year (2013-14) GPC was able to provide 192 of its students with scholarships totalling \$215,650. This was made possible thanks to the generous donations of people, businesses and service clubs across the college service region, which were then matched by the provincial government through the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship fund. While our funds come from various sources (single donations, endowments,

events, etc.), most are from annual contributions made by people, clubs and businesses that view education as an important and critical part of our community. Their donations impact our operations significantly and also provide a taxable benefit for the donor. GPC plans to ensure this tremendous scholarship program remains in-tact and will continue to work closely with local communities within the college region to grow and expand upon the program to better serve our student population.

The Great Plains College development team enjoys working in partnership with the local communities whom have provided tremendous support for the college. It is our intent to maintain and grow upon those existing relationships, while fostering new ones in order to ensure that Great Plains College can continue to play a significant role as a positive community partner and in providing an educated workforce for our local business communities.

# // CARHARTTS & CAVIAR

## We are thrilled to announce that Great Plains College is hosting the 3rd Annual Carhartts and Caviar welding showcase auction.

The event will take place on Thursday, February 26, at 7 p.m., at the Great Plains College Swift Current Campus. Last year our event raised over \$17,000, which was put toward a plasma cutter and student scholarships to enhance the students' experience in our Welding program. We hope you will join us for this year's fun-filled evening.

**To buy tickets, or if you have any questions, please contact Jody Blaschuck, Development Assistant at [jodyb@greatplainscollege.ca](mailto:jodyb@greatplainscollege.ca) or 306-778-5482.**



▲ **The Scrap Chopper** is a yard art piece that was created by the Welding students. As part of a team-orientated project to create an item for the upcoming Carhartts and Caviar auction, the students were given a pail of parts and scrap metal and challenged to be creative.

◀ Attendees at the 3rd Carhartts and Caviar fundraiser presented by Acklands-Grainger are invited to enjoy an evening of food, drink and metal art from around the world. There will be a quick stop in Paris when the **Eiffle Tower**, sponsored by the City of Swift Current, is up for bid.

## // MOVING FORWARD

### In the fall of 2014, the college's senior management team met to discuss a three year programming plan to identify opportunities not currently available at Great Plains College (GPC) that may be offered in the future.

From this two-day session, a number of potential programs were identified in both the trades and university programming. Over the coming months, our intent is to research those programs to identify program availability, student demand and regional labour market demand. In some cases, this can be done with relative ease, but at times requires a significant amount of logistical legwork and funding to make the programming a reality.

Although known primarily as a trade school, Great Plains College offers a variety of academic programs such as first year university classes, a Bachelor of Social Work, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Master's of Business

Administration in Community and Economic Development. Based on enrolment success in these programs, the college is evaluating the potential to add similar programs. GPC would like to identify a business program that is effective for students on its own, and is readily transferable to other programs and institutions for students looking to upgrade. Based on the region's significant labour demand in the hospitality and tourism industry, we have been encouraged to identify an applicable program.

The trades are of principal interest at Great Plains; many of our programs such as Welding, Electrical and Heavy Equipment Operator have strong enrolments and help to establish partnerships and relationships throughout the region. Going forward we would like to add additional trades to our repertoire. As a result, we are investigating areas such as industrial mechanic, agricultural mechanics and a welding upgrader program.

The welding upgrader program has received considerable interest already and may soon become a reality. There's also potential for a tri-trades program, which provides students the opportunity to learn a trade with three applicable paths; this could also be provided via a mobile training lab, so the classroom is transported to the students allowing for more efficient use of student time. Power Engineering continues to be a priority at GPC; level four is currently being offered and will also be supplemented with level three in the coming year.

Providing Education and Training to support regional labour market development is one of Great Plains College's four strategic directions. Programming is a constant focus as we strive to make ourselves aware of the region's labour demands and offer programming that provides the business community with workers that can have an impact from day one.



## // GIVING BACK

Great Plains College students are very fortunate to have the financial support of the donors who have chosen to invest their funds in students and, in turn, their future. Recipients include the student-athletes who play basketball or volleyball in the SunDogs Varsity Athletics program.

Over the past couple of years the SunDogs have welcomed opportunities to give back to the community that has supported their academic futures. The student-athletes have offered their “thank you” in the form of giving back time. SunDogs student-athletes and coaches have volunteered numerous hours to various local initiatives. To date, some of these initiatives include:



### Mentoring

SunDogs student-athletes continue to volunteer their time to clubs and schools to coach and assist coaches with younger basketball and volleyball athletes.

They also provide assistance to the Special Olympics basketball program by spending time on the court offering skills and exhibition play.

### Fundraising

The student-athletes and coaches have assisted with the annual Kiwanis apple drive which has raised funds for various Kiwanis youth events and safety initiatives.

### Community Involvement

Joining in on the festive season, the SunDogs student-athletes and coaches have helped the Downtown Businessmen Association with their annual tree lighting.

When the City of Swift Current celebrated its 100th birthday in 2014, the SunDogs student-athletes and coaches facilitated children's games, face painting and balloon art. The SunDogs mascot attended various events, such as the parade. Their involvement provided a fun opportunity for children to take part in the celebration.

To show their support of healthy living habits, the SunDogs student-athletes have taken part in the City of Swift Current and area Wellness Challenge.

### Sports

When Theoren Fleury had a speaking arrangement and book signing at Great Plains College, the SunDogs varsity program made it a priority to attend and show their support for the positive ethics that should surround sports.

The Great Plains College Varsity Program is growing stronger each year and as the community continues to support the team, the SunDogs will continue to look for more opportunities to give back. The SunDogs student-athletes and coaches continually show their appreciation to Great Plains College and its donors by volunteering to work at and support the annual SunDogs Auction—a major fundraiser for the Varsity Athletics program at Great Plains College.

#### Mona Patterson

SunDogs Athletics & Recreation  
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## // HELPING OTHERS ALONG THE WAY



Sharon and Les Fehr.

**When Sharon Fehr began working for the college in 1987, she started the process of helping students to build their bridges to a brighter future.**

Nearly 30 years later, her relationship with the college continues to be an inspiring and steady reminder of how a donors' help can make post-secondary a reality for many students.

“Les and I give because we want to make a difference, and because I could see the difference our support made for the students we were helping,” said Sharon as she explained what has motivated their financial gifts since the scholarship program began in 1993.

Throughout 23 years of working at the college in various positions, Sharon has had many heart-to-heart conversations with students and quickly learned of the challenges that many of them face. Some moved out at a young age, others worked full time jobs while studying and some were raising a family while going to school. Regardless, each student seemed to have their own personal obstacle to overcome.

When the Fehrs share their personal stories, it is apparent that things have not always been easy. But, that does not change the fact that they feel blessed in their life, nor does it alter their ambition to chase their hopes and dreams. They share the sentiment—if they can help others along the way, their life overflows with purpose and meaning.

Great Plains College is fortunate that it has been chosen as the charity of choice by two such devoted and passionate people. It is donors like Les and Sharon who provide motivation for the college to excel at being a supportive and safe learning environment. And for that, we can't thank them enough.

# // ELECTRICIANS LIGHT UP THE FUTURE

Great Plains College's Electrical program under the direction of instructor Dave Emery decorated a float for the "Centennial Light Parade" on November 28, 2014.

The theme for the parade, hosted by the Swift Current Lions Club, was "Lighting up the Future." The Electrical students won second place out of approximately 20 entries for their Charlie Brown themed float—congratulations! They won a cash prize of \$1,000, which they put toward treating the students to lunch for their efforts with the rest of the money going toward making enhancements to the learning resources within the program.



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## INFORMATION SESSIONS

Wednesday, February 18 - 10 AM, 1PM, 5PM & 7PM

Ramada Hotel, Saskatoon, 806 Idywyld Drive North

Thursday, February 19 at 10 AM

3rd floor boardroom at the Saskatoon Community Service Village  
506 25th Street East

For more information contact:

George at (902) 563-1467 or email: [mba@cbu.ca](mailto:mba@cbu.ca)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Orientation – Biggar (PN) – February 9, 2015 from 9am – 3:30 PM
- Carhartt's and Caviar – Swift Current – February 26, 2015 – 7 PM
- Open House – Warman – March 25, 2015 – Time TBD
- Open House – Biggar – April 15, 2015 – Time TBD
- Open House – Maple Creek – April 22, 2015 – Time TBD
- Swift Current Graduation – Swift Current – May 8, 2015 – 7 PM
- Biggar Graduation – Biggar – March 24, 2015 – 1 PM
- Warman Graduation – Warman – April 30, 2015 – 6 PM
- Sundogs Auction – Swift Current – May 1, 2015 – 7 PM
- Kindersley Graduation – Kindersley – May 29, 2015 – 6 PM

Visit [greatplainscollege.ca/news-and-events](http://greatplainscollege.ca/news-and-events) for more information.

## CONNECT WITH US

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