

## // FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Throughout the graduation season, I find myself asking what this time of year means to all involved. For the institution, a culmination of student success serves as a reinforcement of our core business. For students, it's a sense of accomplishment and preparedness to tackle the workforce. Meanwhile, the business community sees a new group of potential employees prepared to help their organizations succeed. This important time of year provides the opportunity to celebrate success and reflect upon our ultimate goals as a post-secondary institution.**

Great Plains College takes pride in the impact that we and our graduates have in providing a well prepared and competent workforce to support the regional labour market. Our programs are designed to reflect regional demands and this has resulted in consistently high levels of post-graduation employment rates. The college's focus on delivering education and training to support regional labour market demand has led to great success in terms of developing partnerships with local industry and municipalities that benefit both the students and partners. These partnerships attract investment to the

college, provide hands on training for our students and in turn provide employers with workplace ready candidates.

Our graduates should feel a strong sense of accomplishment. The achievement of a college certificate or diploma is no small thing. After the decision has been made to pursue post-secondary training, there remains a number of challenges to overcome, commitments to be made and sacrifices to endure. With a new or renewed sense of ability and professionalism, GPC graduates are now ready to enter the workforce. They will take advantage of the skills learned over recent months and years and apply them to improve both themselves and their communities.

The GPC team is proud to witness the success of our graduates, who now form part of GPC's alumni. As alumni, you represent Great Plains College; with this comes the responsibility of representing the college through your professionalism—your words, actions and successes which help shape the perceptions of Great Plains College throughout the communities in our region. We ask that you take pride in this

responsibility and that you continue to be involved with the college.

It is our intent to further develop an active alumni group and encourage past students to support and maintain a positive relationship with the college.

To our graduates, congratulations and all the best. You have the opportunity to build on the success you've achieved here and to provide the best for yourself, your family and your community. Take pride in what you have accomplished and enjoy the results of your success.



President & CEO, Dr. David Keast.

## // SAVE THE DATE

### You are invited to attend our Scholarship Receptions

- **KINDERSLEY CAMPUS**  
Thursday, October 1, 12 PM  
Masonic Lodge
- **WARMAN CAMPUS**  
Wednesday, October 7, 12 PM  
Legends Golf Course at the  
Prairie Links Restaurant
- **SWIFT CURRENT CAMPUS**  
Wednesday, October 14, 6 PM  
Swift Current Campus  
Gymnasium



# // GREAT PLAINS COLLEGE STUDENTS CELEBRATE GRADUATION

**SWIFT CURRENT— A total of 122 graduates were celebrated for the completion of programs ranging from Adult 10 to post-secondary degrees from Great Plains College. The group gathered in Swift Current Campus Gymnasium on Friday, May 8, at 7 p.m. and were joined by more than 450 classmates, family and friends.**

Students that completed Adult 10, Adult 12, GED®, and Administrative Assistant, Business, Continuing Care Assistant, Early Childhood Education, Electrician, Fourth Class Power Engineering and Welding certificates, as well Practical Nursing and Bachelor of Social Work were in attendance. Academic and Achievement Awards were presented to approximately 25 students.

“It has been a fun year,” said Jessica Mosher-Slenn, Student Association president and second-year Registered Nursing student. “It is my hope that the graduates go on to empower those around them just like their classmates and college staff members have empowered them.”

Personal empowerment was a sentiment shared by guest speaker, Cam Ellis, Bank of Montreal Swift Current branch manager and 2011 Business alum.

“If you can imagine it, you can achieve it; if you can dream it, you can become it,” said Ellis, quoting William Arthur Ward.

Great Plains College is invested in their students and wants them to be successful. Part of defining their future through a strong education is making sure that students are prepared to enter and complete the programs without too many roadblocks in the way.

“The graduation ceremony is a chance for students to celebrate their achievements, and for the instructors—who have worked along with them and invested in the student’s success—to celebrate with them,” said Shawna Smuk, the Swift Current Campus graduation coordinator.

As demonstrated by the Annual Graduate Follow-up Survey, which assesses employment trends one year after graduation,

close to 80 per cent of all students who graduated in 2013-14 were employed. And, nearly every student—96 per cent—said that they would recommend Great Plains College to a friend, colleague or family member. A number of variables including program selection, location, small class sizes and excellent staff support continue to be the main reasons why students are choosing Great Plains College.

Great Plains College continues to support a strong scholarship program. Over two-thirds of full-time, post-secondary students received Entrance Scholarships to assist with the cost of their education. Although the Entrance Scholarship deadline for most programs has passed, the deadline has been extended to June 30 for Business and Administrative Assistant full-time students.

Intake for 2015-16 programs is ongoing at all locations. In Swift Current, there are currently seats available in Business, Administrative Assistant, Electrician (Winter 2016) and Adult Basic Education.

## // MEET MARTYN BANKS



**After years of travelling and working as a scuba diving instructor on the Grand Cayman Islands, Martyn Banks knew it was time for a change. It was time to return home and spend more time with his daughter.**

As a result, like a number of college and university students, Banks’ decision to go back to school to further his education was a decision made out of necessity.

Upon his return, he realized that finding a job with a good salary and reasonable hours that he would enjoy was almost nonexistent. So, he began roofing. When a coworker started looking into what programs were offered at Great Plains College, Martyn was inspired to do the same.

Looking to get formal training in a field that would offer him a secure future, he was drawn to the Power Engineering program. At 40 years old, nearly 20 years since he had last been in an educational setting, Martyn enrolled in the Power Engineering program at Great Plains College.

With strong commitment and hard work, he wrote three exams to catch up on what he already missed. Banks was pleased when he discovered that much of what he was learning came quite naturally to him.

“I enjoyed the whole thing,” said Banks when he was asked about his experience at Great Plains College.

He excelled in his class and completed the program with a 90 per cent average. He appreciated how invested the instructor was in helping students succeed. And, he valued working in a team environment that created a tight-knit group where the students felt comfortable exposing their weaknesses so that they could eventually become their strengths.

Banks noted that his success, and the success of his peers, was made possible with the help of scholarship donors. Their gratitude is beyond words. Although Power Engineering is a program he highly encourages others to look into, it is also one that requires all of a student’s time. Work is not an option while enrolled in the program.

“The program opens a lot of doors when you are done – and the rewards are really worth it,” Banks added.



# // SUNDOGS IN REVIEW

The SunDogs had a great year in 2014-15. It was year of competitive athletics, award winning athletes, new endeavors, coaching shifts and academic success. The volleyball and basketball courts lit-up with talented athletes from both the men's and women's teams. The SunDogs led the pack to the Provincial finals in volleyball and witnessed the breaking of team records throughout the basketball season.

SunDogs athletes earned a Prairie Athletic Conference (PAC) League All-Star Award in both volleyball (Brandon Schultz) and basketball (Ben de Gala). And, Great Plains College SunDogs proudly presented the following awards to student athletes at the SunDogs Awards Banquet in May:



## SUNDOGS MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

**Most Valuable Player:**  
Brandon Schultz  
**Outstanding Defense:**  
Brad Bickner  
**Coach's Award:**  
Zachary Neufeld

## SUNDOGS MEN'S BASKETBALL

**Most Valuable Player:**  
Jordan Braun  
**Outstanding Defense:**  
Logan Tisdale  
**Coach's Award:**  
Ben de Gala.

## SUNDOGS WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

**Most Valuable Player:**  
Breena McInnes  
**Outstanding Defense:**  
Lindsey Zilkie  
**Coach's Award:**  
Tiffany Powell

## SUNDOGS WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

**Most Valuable Player:**  
Shae-Lynn Bolton  
**Outstanding Defense:**  
Christina Gerlach  
**Coach's Award:**  
Rachel Selke

The SunDogs were sad to say goodbye to two long-standing volleyball coaches, Travis Cuthbert and Gerod Wiens, who were an asset to the program for years. Their level of dedication and commitment to the SunDogs over these past years was outstanding. We wish them the best of luck in all that they are a part of. This coaching shift brings new and exciting light to the program. We are pleased to announce two new additions to our coaching staff, Michael Ruus and Tyler Byers. The SunDogs welcome them and look forward to a great season!

## SUNDOGS BADMINTON

This year the PAC League offered a season of badminton to student athletes. The SunDogs team placed third overall and Kim Espiritu took home a gold medal in women's singles. It was a great addition and the student athletes loved the opportunity to compete.

The SunDogs student athletes should also be noted for their academic success while studying at Great Plains College, another demonstration of their dedication and hard work. Several student athletes were awarded academic achievement awards at the 2014-15 Graduation Ceremony.

**All in all, it was a great year—one to be proud of for sure.**

**GO DOGS!**

# // SUNDOGS ATHLETICS UPCOMING EVENTS

## 2015-16 – Decade of Dogs

SunDogs Wooff Scouting Camp  
- August 2015

Volleyball try-outs  
- September 2015

Volleyball Season  
- September – November 2015

Volleyball Battle of the Southwest  
- October 2015

Westerns – hosted by SunDogs Athletics  
- November 2015

Basketball try-outs  
- December 2015

Basketball Season  
- January – March 2016

Basketball Provincials – hosted by SunDogs Athletics  
- March 2016

Badminton Season  
- March 2016

SunDogs Awards Banquet  
- April 2016

10th Annual SunDogs Auction Extravaganza  
- April 2016

### STAY CONNECTED

[greatplainscollege.ca/sundogs](http://greatplainscollege.ca/sundogs)  
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# // GREAT PLAINS COLLEGE RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL DESIGNATION

**In May 2015, Great Plains College Swift Current Campus obtained its international designation through the Ministry of Advanced Education. As such, International students can now enrol in the Business and Administrative Assistant programs at Swift Current Campus.**

“We recognize the current and looming labour shortage in Saskatchewan and the desire to have access to skilled graduates,” says Keleah Ostrander, director of planning. “By being able to accept International students and support them through post-secondary education, we are able to help meet the needs of employers in the province.”

“The designation of the Administrative Assistant and Business programs is only the starting point. We believe it will open the doors to many possibilities for the institution,” added Ostrander.

Great Plains College is the second Saskatchewan Regional College to receive international designation.

This past year, the Saskatchewan Government announced the launch of the International Education Strategy. The strategy includes the goal to increase the number of International students studying in the province by 75 per cent from 3,500 to 6,200.

“I’m pleased Great Plains College achieved this designation to educate students from around the globe,” Minister of Advanced Education Scott Moe said. “This initiative supports the province’s goal of building economic and cultural bridges between Saskatchewan and the rest of the world.”



The Administrative Assistant program provides practical and applied training in word processing, accounting, spreadsheets, database and Internet searches, office procedures, communications and business calculations. The program is competency based, meaning that students can work and learn at their own pace.

The Business program is designed to help students build a strong foundation for their future. Through the program, they are prepared to enter the workforce with foundational learning for careers in accounting, administration, financial services, human resources, insurance or marketing or pursue an entrepreneurial lead.

Students who graduate from the Business program are able to bridge their education to complete a diploma from Saskatchewan Polytechnic or transition to University studies and apply credits to degrees such as business management and chartered accounting.

Admissions to the Administrative Assistant and Business certificate programs are evaluated on a first come, first served basis, provided that students meet entrance eligibility criteria. Full-time International students are also eligible for a \$500-5,000 Entrance Scholarship, provided they are accepted into the program and meet the application deadlines set by the college

International students whose primary language is not English and-or their country is not exempt, will need to meet the requirements of English language skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing necessary to be successful in the program to which they have applied.

For more information, visit [greatplainscollege.ca/international](http://greatplainscollege.ca/international) or book an appointment with Margaret Schafer, Great Plains College international student adviser, by calling 306-773-1531 or toll-free 1-866-296-2472.

## CONNECT WITH US

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