

April 2012

From the Dean's desk

MNK — the little conference that grew



In seven years, we've watched our graduate student research conference take its place as a premier event in the life of Brock's graduate community. The conference organizing committee is to be applauded for finding a model for our one-day event that makes for an exciting showcase and celebration of graduate research.

This year 92 students, from our six academic Faculties, presented oral and poster presentations in one of our largest conferences ever. Here are some highlights:

- **Professor Melanie Pilkington** gave an inspiring keynote address in which she ended by saying:

"My take home message to you all is to enjoy this part of your life. It is your opportunity to grow academically, broaden your mind and make memories that will sustain you later on in your lives and careers. Have the courage to make the most of every opportunity that comes your way. Be realistic about your strengths and weaknesses and work hard to improve yourself. Be kind, supportive and respectful to your colleagues and peers. Stand up for yourself and don't be intimidated, speak up to defend your ideas and thoughts. Learn all you can from your mentors, listen to their suggestions and don't take their criticism too personally since their objectives are to mould you into the thinkers of the future."



- **Professors June Corman and David Gabriel** were presented with the 2012 Graduate Mentorship Awards. The presentation ceremony paid special tribute to all of the 13 faculty supervisors who were nominated by their students; that list includes **Michael Ashton, Anteneh Ayanso, Robert Dimand, Diane Mack, John McNamara, John Novak, Tim O'Connell, Sandra Peters, Cristina Santos, Philip Sullivan, and Philip Wilson.**

My congratulations to our winners and finalists. Also, I wish to congratulate the student nominators for their success in expressing so well their genuine sense of admiration and appreciation to supervisors who help them to become the best they can be as researchers, teachers, and leaders in their communities.

- For the first time, the conference included adjudication for the new **Youth University Research Prizes**. A total of 11 presentations, oral and poster, met the eligibility criteria for the two prizes. The results of the adjudication were presented to the awards sub-committee of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee and I'm pleased to announce the winners are **Ashley Miller** – Youth University PAPSE (Promoting Access to Post-Secondary Education) Research Prize, and **Sierra Holtzheuser** – Youth University PWCE (Promoting Whole Child Education) Research Prize. A special thank you to Youth University for its leadership in establishing the prizes.

• A very special mention to the **Graduate Students' Association** for their work in organizing a very successful conference workshop "Your Mind: Maintenance and Repair" as well as a very enjoyable social to wrap up a great conference. About 150 students gathered in Isaac's for refreshments and a prize draw following the conference. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and talk with students and the event generated a great spirit of community in connecting students and faculty from across the campus.

Convocation and applications for the Spirit of Brock medals

Brock's Spring Convocation ceremonies will be held June 5 to 9 — a complete schedule is posted at brocku.ca/registrar/grad/schedule

Please give some thought to students who are graduating and who you feel are ideal candidates for the Board of Trustees Spirit of Brock medals. The awards recognize students who have demonstrated characteristics of leadership, courage, innovation, inspiration and community involvement. There will be one medal presented to a graduate student in each of the six academic Faculties who will receive his or her degree at Spring Convocation.

To be nominated for this honour, graduating master's and doctoral students must fill out a paper application. The applications must be received in the Student Awards and Financial Aid Office, ST 402, as of 4:30 p.m. on Friday, May 4. Information is available online at <http://www.brocku.ca/safa/awards/prestigious-awards>

More congratulations

Deborah Jehu, Kinesiology, and Jacob Berman, Biological Sciences, are the recipients of the 2012 Graduate TA Award, sponsored by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation. The award recognizes graduate student TAs with less than three years experience who show promise in the field of teaching. Deborah and Jacob are in their second year of study. Both had earned their Basic Certificates in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education from the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation which offers a program of professional development in teaching for Brock TAs. Deborah went on to earn the Advanced Certificate, and to take the three-day Instructional Skills Workshop, as well as the GTA Practicum.

Both GTAs were honoured at a luncheon reception held on Tuesday, April 10. The award is recognized with an inscription on a plaque and recipients receive \$400.

May 15 celebration

Through the generosity of various donors, the Faculty of Graduate Studies is able to offer support to graduate students through our internal donor awards/scholarships competitions. We have completed the adjudication process for 49 internal donor awards/scholarships and have notified our award winners. We are pleased to report that students will share in a total of \$138,608 through awards that have been established by Brock donors.

The Faculty looks forward to congratulating students who have received internal and external awards and to recognizing our donors at the annual Graduate Student Awards and Donor Reception on Tuesday, May 15, beginning at 10 a.m., Pond Inlet.

This event is by invitation only and guests have been asked to RSVP by May 1 to Sarah Muir at smuir@brocku.ca



Each year we celebrate the achievements of graduate students such as, from left, Megan Gordon, Nicole Neil, Vincenzo Coia and David Allison, who spoke about their research at last year's reception.

Mike Plyley,
Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies