

**110**  
**YEARS of**  
**AUGUSTANA**

# Report to the Community

 **UNIVERSITY OF  
ALBERTA**  
AUGUSTANA CAMPUS

**2021**





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Augustana students enjoying a fine fall day in the quad in the 1970s. This year, we're celebrating Augustana's 110th anniversary! Head to [aug.ualberta.ca/110](http://aug.ualberta.ca/110) to join us!

## Statement of Acknowledgement of the Traditional Territory

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE LAND ON WHICH WE GATHER, TRADITIONALLY KNOWN AS ASINISKAW SIPISIS (STONEY CREEK), IS TREATY 6 TERRITORY AND A TRADITIONAL MEETING GROUND FOR MANY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. THE LAND ON WHICH THE AUGUSTANA CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA IS LOCATED PROVIDED A TRAVELLING ROUTE AND HOME TO THE MASKWACIS NĒHIYAWAK, NIITSITAPI, NAKODA AND TSUUT'INA NATIONS, THE MÉTIS AND OTHER INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. THEIR SPIRITUAL AND PRACTICAL RELATIONSHIPS TO THE LAND CREATE A RICH HERITAGE FOR OUR LEARNING AND OUR LIFE AS A COMMUNITY.

# Message from the Dean

## To members of the Augustana and Camrose communities,

Thank you for the opportunity to share the 2021 *Report to the Community* with you. Like we did with the Fall 2020 *Circle* magazine, we have decided to take this publication in a slightly new direction. This year's Report, therefore, provides a glimpse of campus over the past year instead of offering the longer feature-length pieces to which you may have become accustomed; at the same time, we do hope you will find this year's version of the Report just as enjoyable as those published in the past.

In the message that follows, I would like to discuss briefly both the challenges as well as the successes we have experienced over the past year. For instance, and as you surely know, in March 2020, we had to re-orient quickly to remote delivery of our programs. Our instructors spent the summer of 2020 (and they continued this labour-intensive work throughout the year) developing and re-developing their digital classrooms in order to be able to provide the best learning experience possible for our students.

During the 2020-21 academic year, Augustana saw approximately 100 students living in residence, while the rest were spread around the city, province and even around the globe. Our staff worked diligently to provide student supports—including workshops, advising and counseling appointments, mental health and wellness resources and so much more—remotely, and our Augustana Students' Association also performed admirably in continuing to offer a variety of programs during this unprecedented time. Throughout the year, we also made it a priority to hear directly from our students about their experiences, and I am proud to state that the majority of our students have indicated to us that all the measures we have taken, along with our willingness to listen to students and to adapt and accommodate their needs, have resulted in a positive—if not ideal—year. We have enjoyed other successes as well during this challenging year, including a wide-array of community programming which you can read more about in this Report.

You may also know about the enormous and long-lasting change that the University of Alberta is undergoing in response to the substantial cut in its Provincial Grant. To address the budget deficit, the University of Alberta has embarked upon *University of Alberta for Tomorrow*, a restructuring initiative of both its academic and administrative organization. I myself have been involved by serving as the academic co-sponsor of one of the streams of what is called the Service Excellence Transformation initiative or SET, a new operational model implemented to support the goals of *University of Alberta for Tomorrow*. Through SET,

then, a restructuring of the U of A's administrative operations is taking place, with the goal to serve and support the core teaching and research mission of the university more effectively and efficiently—and to meet, of course, budget targets.

While we are still in the midst of *University of Alberta for Tomorrow*, we now know that Augustana will remain a “stand-alone” faculty as part of the U of A in order to preserve its autonomy and character but also to enhance our connections to key community partners—including all of you, as well as our rural and Indigenous prospective student communities, our alumni and our City of Camrose and Camrose County communities—but also our links to Augustana's historical character, including its roots in the Lutheran tradition.

These roots are especially important in this year, which marks the 110th anniversary of Augustana Campus, and which we are celebrating with a digital program this summer. I would like to invite each of you to take part in this celebration by visiting our dedicated website at [aug.ualberta.ca/110](http://aug.ualberta.ca/110), where you may find stories, photos, events and much more.

While the challenges around all of the changes of the past year have been, and will continue to be, unprecedented, the year has also highlighted the adaptability and resilience of the Augustana community, including staff, faculty and students. Our students, especially, have done a wonderful job and have discovered within themselves the level of commitment and the perseverance and intellectual vigour—the very things we seek to teach at Augustana—so as to adapt, excel and succeed.

Although the pandemic is still a grave concern, the promise of vaccines and a return to mostly in-person activities on our campus, and at other universities throughout the province this Fall, brings with it a sense of relief. We're looking forward to welcoming our students back to campus and back into the community while providing the support that they need to get into more regular rhythms once again.

Sincerely,

*Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos*

Dean & Executive Officer

Augustana Campus, University of Alberta



# Events

Even though we couldn't gather in person this year, various departments and centres across the campus continued to offer virtual events. Here are some of the highlights.

## Music

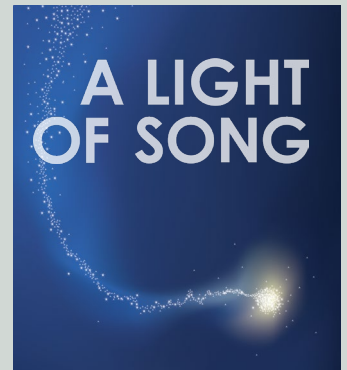
21 Virtual Events & Performances  
Over 5000 attendees and views

### Highlights

"A Light of Song: A Virtual Concert for the Season"  
2900 views

Pedagogy & Wellness Hub presents "A Music Therapy Approach to Life"  
with Jennifer Buchanon  
20 attendees

Recital Lecture with Jonathon Adams: "Perspectives on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion"  
346 views



## Ronning Centre

8 Virtual Events & Webinars  
Over 750 attendees

### Highlights

"Truth and Reconciliation in a Time of Crises"  
with Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu  
290 attendees

"A Jewish Journey in the White House" with Sarah Hurwitz  
80 attendees

"Religion and Beyond in Contemporary Vaccine Hesitancy" with Paul Bramadat  
65 attendees



## Other

Professorial Lectures  
with Professor James Kariuki, Professor Alexander Carpenter and Professor Bill Hackborn

What's Cookin' Soup  
Supper Fundraiser

Fall Drama Production:  
*Autobahn—Seven Short Plays*

The Alberta Centre  
for Sustainable Rural  
Communities  
"Rural Economic and  
Community Development  
in a Post-Pandemic  
Alberta" Webinar Series

25th  
augustana  
human  
library



## Alumni & Giving

47 Digital Events & Campaigns  
Engaging over 2200 alumni, donors and community members

### Highlights

"Five Economic Rules to Unlearn... and what it means for Alberta in 2021"  
356 attendees

Indigenous Speaker Series in collaboration with  
the Indigenous Student Services Office  
476 attendees

Award-Winning "Get Outside" Webinar Series  
Over 400 unique viewers

Community Awards Banquet  
103 attendees



# Digital Programming

From video tips on how to stay sane during the pandemic to digital campus celebrations, the year was not without its fair share of exciting programs. Here's a look at some of them.

## Wellness Week

When the pandemic hit, we wanted to reach our students and community members where they were spending the most time: on their phones and computers! We launched a Wellness Week campaign where a group of alumni—including personal trainers, a nutritionist and a psychologist—offered tips on how to continue living your best life...from home.

## The Hesje Observatory Launch

In early January, over 500 people tuned in to the digital launch of the Hesje Observatory at the Augustana Miquelon Lake Research Station. The event was followed up by a facility tour, a time-lapse video that shows the observatory being built, a valentine's day message from the observatory and virtual community programming.

## Student Life Awards

Every year, Augustana looks forward to celebrating student and staff achievement. The Student Life Awards do just that by honouring award winners from across campus, including awards handed out by the Augustana Students' Association, student life and athletics. This year, students were celebrated with a week-long digital Instagram campaign, featuring award videos and photos. Congratulations to everyone who participated!

## Ask an (Augustana) Alumni Anything

Our alumni office reached out to past students to see what they're up to, and what advice they had for current students. Some of the features included:

**Jamie Grunwald**, a second-year medical school student who provided MCAT prep tips

**Wassim Daoud**, businessman and tech expert at Honeywell, who let students know the importance of cultivating critical thinking skills

**Eric Gustafsson**, who studied physical education, studio art and drama at Augustana and now spends his time on the big screen (including a Hallmark Christmas movie!)

**Koren Lightning-Earle**, a lawyer and owner of her own firm (among many other things) who let students know she loves seeing Indigenous communities succeed



"I would 100% recommend that every Augustana student take advantage of the liberal arts environment and take a class that's totally out of their degree path."

**-Stephanie Booth, '14 BSc, '17 MPH, Epidemiologist**

# Augustana Students at a Glance

Each year, students attend Augustana from all over the province, the country and even the world. Here is our last year's cohort of students at a glance.



Alberta: 725	Ontario: 4
British Columbia: 42	Quebec: 1
Manitoba: 3	Saskatchewan: 46
North West Territories: 17	Yukon: 2
Nova Scotia: 4	International: 172



**82%**

Incoming High School Average for  
Fall 2020 Admission



**178**

Augustana Graduates in 2020



Bachelor of Arts: 397  
 Bachelor of Management: 114  
 Bachelor of Music: 12  
 Bachelor of Science: 471  
 Bachelor of Science/Education: 16  
 Other: 6



First Year: 373  
 Second Year: 258  
 Third Year: 186  
 Fourth Year: 193  
 No Year Status: 6



## International Students

Bangladesh	Korea	Turkey
China	Mongolia	United Arab Emirates
Ghana	Nigeria	United Kingdom
Hong Kong	Norway	United States
India	Pakistan	Vietnam
Indonesia	Senegal	Zimbabwe
Iran	South Africa	
Japan	Sri Lanka	
Kenya	Tanzania	

## SELF-IDENTIFIED INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

**69**



**1016**  
ENROLMENTS

# Giving



## Jessica Ryan

When we think about the concept of community, we often think of the “whole”—a singular group working towards a shared purpose. However, focusing on the whole often overlooks the consistent actions each individual needs to make to achieve this purpose.

Jessica Ryan—Augustana alumna, volunteer and donor—is one such individual.

Jessica arrived at Augustana at the same time she arrived to Camrose. After her father got a job on campus, she decided to transfer from her school in Montana to finish the last two years of her degree at Augustana. While the education systems, in terms of structure and credits, were similar across the two institutions, the experience Jessica had on campus still differed: “The smaller class sizes and campus was great for me—you got to know people in a way you can’t in other places.”

Her feelings towards Camrose are much of the same, and part of the reason why she eventually decided to leave her job in Calgary for one back home: “Camrose offers me great opportunities to be part of and contribute to community, and to benefit from the people working to make it a good community,” said Jessica. “From that, I got a very positive perception of being involved.”

Today, Jessica integrates Camrose and Augustana into her life in small, meaningful ways, but in ways that nevertheless make a difference. She works at the alumni-founded, environmentally-focused Newo, she works to benefit the mental health of Augustana students by volunteering with the campus’ Alumni Student Support and Engagement Team (ASSET) and gives to the campus through a monthly pledge. In each of her actions, and just like those she’s admired herself, Jessica helps to better the community she’s chosen as her own.

Read Jessica’s full story at [aug.ualberta.ca/Jessica](http://aug.ualberta.ca/Jessica)



## Marilyn Murray

A third generation Augustana alum, Marilyn Murray is also a three-time Augustana student. First, graduating high school in 1969, then completing her first two years of university in 1971 and finally with her degree in 1988.

After completing her first two years of university, Marilyn moved to Red Deer and shifted her focus in the way many do: on starting a family. Not long after, she decided to finish her university education and set her sights back on Augustana, which had recently started granting degrees. However, this time she was not just attending as a student, but as a single mother.

“In order for me to finish my degree, I had to work part-time, and I also depended immensely on scholarships,” said Marilyn.

Despite the difference in her experience outside the classroom, her education remained a space where she felt she could learn from her professors and classmates in a way that was collaborative—exposing each other to different perspectives and ways of life. That’s why, when the class of 1969 returned to campus for their 50th reunion and the idea of a class award came forward, Marilyn stepped up as its champion. “I couldn’t have continued being a student without awards. Most of us were able to have some sort of support when we were students,” said Marilyn. “I think having an award that’s collectively funded helps us remember that education is a collaborative effort.”

Read the full story at [aug.ualberta.ca/Marilyn](http://aug.ualberta.ca/Marilyn)

# \$1,359,976 RAISED



This past year, **575** donors gave a gift to Augustana



with **132** giving for the first time!



# Giving

## PROGRAMS



"It's been a weird year. I don't know if I would have started university if I knew it was going to be online, but what's made it worthwhile are the people—both the music staff and students—and my few in-person classes, which were really enjoyable."

- **Hannah Nichol**, first-year Bachelor of Music (Vocal Performance) student and choir member

## RESEARCH



This past year, professor of environmental science Glen Hvenegaard received funding to supervise a graduate student—Augustana alumna, Julie Ostrem—to investigate collaboration among partners within the Beaver Hills Biosphere and among other Biosphere Reserves in Canada.

In addition to this work, Glen's [current research](#) focuses on the potential impacts of park interpretation. You can read about this research in "Don't feed the bears! How parks get visitors to protect nature" at [aug.ualberta.ca/folio](http://aug.ualberta.ca/folio)

## AWARDS



"I can still vividly remember that afternoon when I received an email confirming I was the recipient of an award. At that time, we were in the midst of the pandemic; days were long, nights were rough, but this email brought a renewed sense of hope and joy."

- **Robel Ng'ong'a**, second-year Bachelor of Management student, award recipient and 2021-22 ASA President

## FACILITIES



On January 12, 2021, Augustana Campus launched the donor-funded Hesje Observatory. The observatory is currently hosting virtual programming and looks to open to public access once health restrictions are lifted. Visit [aug.ualberta.ca/observatory](http://aug.ualberta.ca/observatory) to learn more.

# Distinguished Alumni Award



Since graduating from Augustana University College in 1997, Dr. Deena Hinshaw has dedicated her career to the health and well-being of Albertans.

After her time on campus, Dr. Hinshaw pursued medical school at the University of Alberta. Following graduation, she completed a residency in family and community medicine at the U of A, which included earning a master of public health degree. After completing clinical training, she stayed connected to the U of A as a clinical professor with the Division of Preventive Medicine.

While most know Dr. Hinshaw for her current role as Alberta's chief medical officer of health, her work in public health began over a decade ago; first as a medical officer of health in the Central Zone, then the medical officer of health lead in the area of public health surveillance and infrastructure. This position was followed by serving as the deputy chief medical officer of health in the Ministry of Health before taking on her current position.

Over the past year, Dr. Hinshaw's work has moved into the public eye due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this enhanced public-facing expectation and the increased demands of her role, Dr. Hinshaw has continued to lead Alberta through the challenges of the pandemic, embodying the Augustana value of servant-leadership in her calm and compassionate way.

*The Distinguished Alumni Award is presented to an alumnus/a in recognition of outstanding achievement in one's vocation.*

“Here at Augustana, we can hardly take credit for Dr. Hinshaw's many accomplishments,” said Dean Demetres Tryphonopoulos, “but we are proud to have played a small part in her education and development.”

# Alumni Citation Award



**Margaret Rathnavalu**

“I’m just an ordinary person,” said Margaret, “but ordinary people are important in this world.”

As a small, residential campus in rural Alberta, Augustana is closely tied to the members of its surrounding community. A shining example of how this connection can manifest is through the engagement of the 2020 Alumni Citation Award recipient—Margaret Rathnavalu.

Margaret has been a member of the Camrose community since she was young, and credits her upbringing for instilling active neighbour and community interaction as an essential way of life. Today, this value is seen in how Margaret thoughtfully offers her time to Augustana. Whether it’s attending campus events and workshops, furthering the education of students through student awards or supporting Spirit of the Land conferences and the Chester Ronning Centre, one can be sure Margaret is involved.

Margaret’s enthusiasm for the campus and its liberal arts and sciences education is clear in her advocacy. From 2012 to 2018, Margaret championed the Spirit of the Land conference that attracted people from across Alberta to campus every fall to discuss key topics of our time. Most recently, her leadership took form in the promotion of Augustana’s impact—on both students and the surrounding community—by organizing a Friends of Augustana rally held last summer. During a time when many were distant and isolated due to pandemic restrictions, the rally brought our community together to share their campus experiences—all while ensuring provincial health regulations were met.

Margaret’s willingness to not only get engaged but advocate for the campus demonstrates how community members make significant contributions to life at Augustana and the experiential education of its students. Without people like Margaret, our Augustana Campus would not be the same.

*The Alumni Citation Award recognizes the contributions of a non-alumnus/a to the life of Augustana.*

# Lois Aspenes Award



**Yvonne Becker**

Throughout her involvement at Augustana—as a student, athlete, professor, coach, athletic director, volunteer, donor and community member—Yvonne Becker has cemented herself as a standard of involvement for others to embrace and emulate.

With her many commitments stretching across campus, Yvonne became known as one of the first people who would volunteer and lend a helping hand. In each role, whether as a coach on the court sidelines or as a volunteer welcoming donors to an annual awards banquet, Yvonne has worked to build up our community with those around her.

“Every bit of every day and every interaction is important,” said Yvonne.

Yvonne’s work to improve the Augustana community has also reached beyond campus. In particular, she’s dedicated countless hours towards the betterment of athletics within the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) and the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA), often as the only female voice around the executive table. Such work included introducing a harassment policy for both associations, improving equity requirements within the CCAA, working to establish the CCAA Female Apprentice Coach Program (which still runs today) and becoming an enduring champion of female collegiate sport, all while promoting the Augustana experience to her peers.

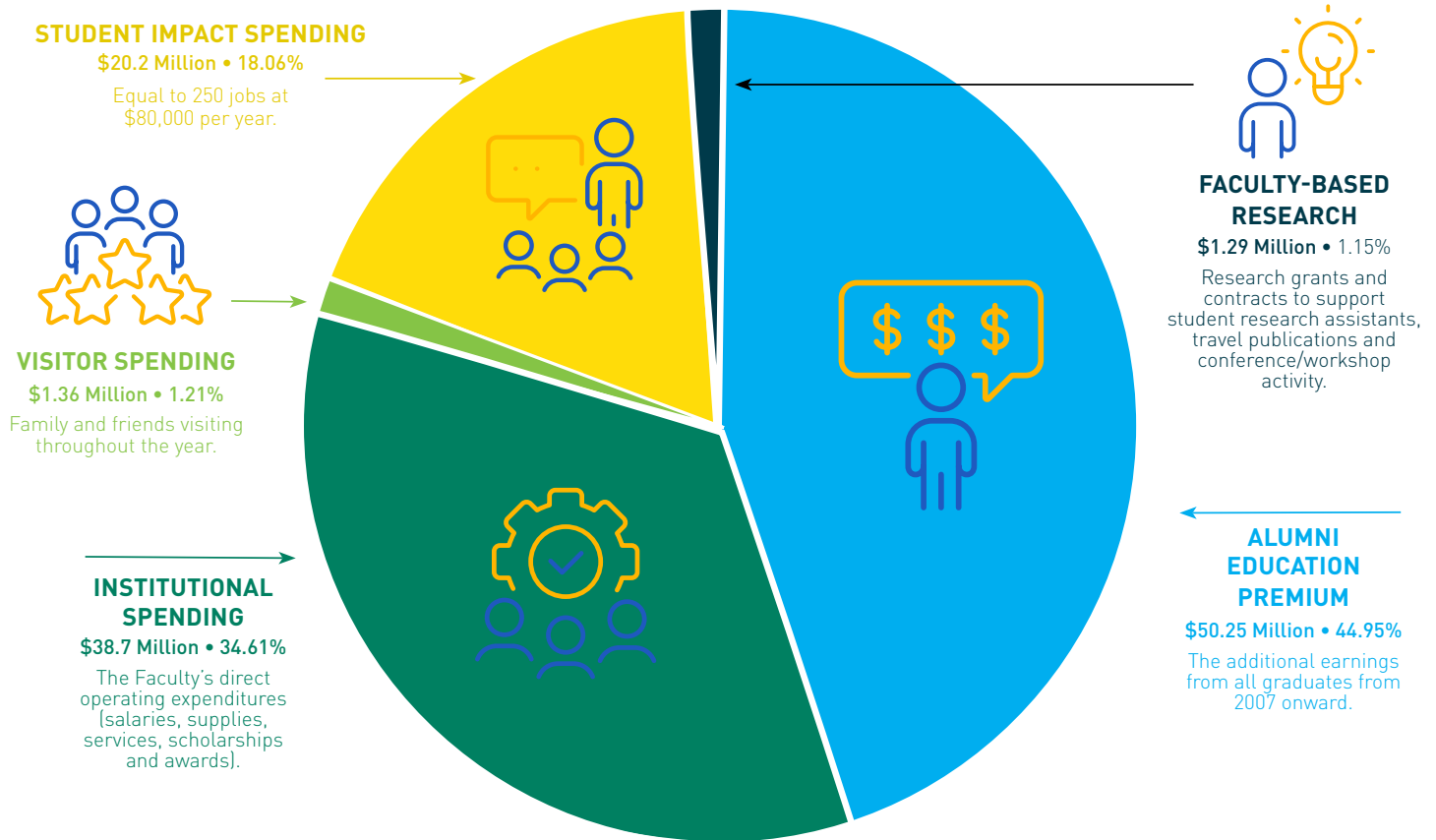
With all that she has done and continues to do, Yvonne has bettered the Augustana community by being a part of it, making her a deserving recipient of the 2020 Lois Aspenes Award.

*The Lois Aspenes Award recognizes the contributions of an alumnus/a to the life of Augustana.*

“Augustana is the thread that pulls through much of my life,” said Yvonne, “I take seriously the ‘to lead and to serve’ part of our history, and I think that’s an important part of creating a profound community.”

# Economic Impact

In 2020, professor Lars Hallström, former director of the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities, completed an Economic Impact Assessment for the University of Alberta's Augustana Faculty. The assessment reflects the 2018-19 fiscal year and found the total economic impact of Augustana Faculty on the province of Alberta as approximately **\$111.7 million** and **\$73.8 million for Camrose and the surrounding area.**



To see the full assessment report, please visit [aug.ualberta.ca/eia2020](http://aug.ualberta.ca/eia2020)

# Research

Research at Augustana spans faculty projects of national and international impact to undergraduate student work that showcases impressive skills and drive.

## NATIONAL RESEARCH GRANTS



Professor Glynnis Hood was awarded a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) grant to study the role that beavers play in flood events. This research can help answer questions like those that arose out of the 2013 flooding events in Alberta, which damaged industry, agriculture and residential areas.



In a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)-funded project, professor Mélanie Méthot delves into the archives to research the over 2,500 bigamy cases that have been prosecuted in Australia since 1812. "This research will have implications for contemporary debates about the nature, roles and meaning of marriage in Western societies," says professor Méthot.

## MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

*Approaches to Teaching Pound's Poetry and Prose*  
Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos, Editor

*Consumption and the Literary Cookbook*  
Roxanne Harde, Editor & Janet Wesselius, Editor

## THE FESTIVAL OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

At the annual university-wide celebration of undergraduate research and creative activities, five Augustana students presented their outstanding projects.



### ARNOLD GIHOZO

"Opening the Door to Technology!"

*Supervised by  
Professor Rosanna Heise*

### JOSIAH KWABENA AFRIYIE

"Patriarchal concept of Marriage between 1917-1921"

*Supervised by Professor Mélanie Méthot*

Josiah received the "Outstanding International Student Researcher" award for his presentation

### MEGAN BERG

"Bridging the Gap: Policy for Successful Forest Restoration in the Neotropics"

*Supervised by Professor Sean Moore*

### KATHERINE CORRIGAN

"COVID-19 Impacts on interpretive programming in Alberta's provincial parks in the summer of 2020"

*Supervised by Professor Glen Hvenegaard*

### HARSHIL VYAS

"Linked List Visualization Tool"

*Supervised by Professors Rosanna Heise and Karsten Mundel*

# Undergraduate Research Spotlight

## Exercise and Diabetes Research

with Professor Jane Yardley



**10**

**UNDERGRADUATE  
RESEARCH  
ASSISTANTS**



**9**

**JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS  
CO-AUTHORED WITH  
UNDERGRADUATE  
STUDENTS**



**21**

**CONFERENCE  
PRESENTATIONS**  
*(national and international)*

"Having the opportunity to take part in research at Augustana with Dr. Yardley was an invaluable experience. It was a great way to be exposed to the entire research process, from creating ethics applications to analyzing data to writing and publishing manuscripts. I believe it was not only helpful in being a successful medical school applicant, but throughout medical school it has been an enormous asset. I have felt confident in the skills I learned from Dr. Yardley to be able to critically assess research in medicine, as well as continue to conduct research with other physicians and contribute to furthering the field of medicine. It is a skill that will benefit me throughout the rest of my career, which I will always be thankful for."

- Nicole Brockman, '18 BSc, former Research Assistant



# Vikings Athletics

Although our student-athletes could not compete this year due to COVID-19 restrictions, they stayed busy. At the beginning of the year, Vikings Athletics introduced the first-ever University Athletics Board (UAB). Made up of student-athletes from different sports, the main goal of the UAB is to enrich the student-athlete experience and increase collaboration and communication between Vikings Athletics and Vikings student-athletes. The inaugural members of the board were:

Every year, the Augustana Vikings host **Vikes for Tykes,**

a student-athlete led initiative created to allow Augustana athletes to give back to the very community that supports them throughout the athletic season. This year, Vikes for Tykes went online! Their results were just as impressive.

**Money Raised: \$3,041.90**

**Contributors: 63 people**

Programs Helped: Stollery Children's Hospital and Kinette Club of Camrose



**Nathan Bowie**  
Men's Basketball Representative



**Danielle Brockman**  
Vikes For Tykes Executive & Women's Volleyball Representative



**Treyl Ernst**  
Men's Volleyball Representative



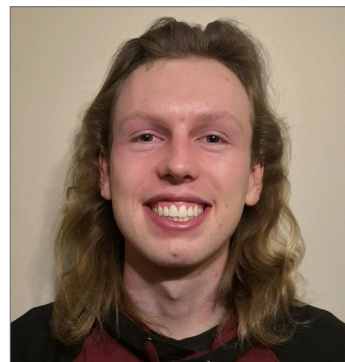
**Jarod Hovde**  
Men's Hockey Representative



**Caroline Kilmartin**  
Women's Soccer Representative



**Hannah Mitchell**  
Women's Basketball Representative



**Dustin Rupertus**  
Curling Representative



**Nathanael Tabert**  
UAB President & Temporary Nordic Sports Representative



# Community Story

## Augustana students help local food producers boost sustainability

By Bev Betkowski, *Folio*



Carolyn Herbert (second right) worked with students from the U of A's Augustana Campus to create a new quarterly newsletter highlighting her family's eco-friendly farming practices and the importance of buying local. (Photo: Braeden Kelly, Augustana Student)

Camrose-area farmer Carolyn Herbert wanted to connect with her customers about the food she was selling them, but wasn't sure how best to do it—until some University of Alberta students gave her a hand.

Thanks to the efforts of [Augustana Campus](#) students enrolled in an [Applications in Sustainability](#) course, her [family farm](#) now has a [quarterly newsletter](#) that highlights its eco-friendly practices and the importance of buying local.

"We would often email our customers when we wanted them to buy something, but we wanted something more that would tell our story and build our relationships with them," said Herbert, whose mixed farm sells poultry, beef and eggs locally and raises cereal crops.

The first edition of the newsletter created by the students in collaboration with Herbert quickly proved popular when it was released early this year, she said.

"We've picked up new customers as a result of our readers passing it on; it was satisfying to see results within a few days of sending out the first issue."

Herbert's project was one of nine that 45 students in professor [Greg King's](#) [Applications in Sustainability](#) class tackled this year, working with the [Food Artisans of Camrose County](#), a collection of food and beverage producers and restaurants, to address their various sustainability challenges.

## Fresh perspectives on sustainability

The course uses an environmental lens to look at sustainability, and also incorporates humanities and social science perspectives.

The students, enrolled from various [degree programs](#) across Augustana Campus, were tasked with helping members of the collective come up with ideas and solutions to their individual challenges.

“The students asked them about specific projects or research questions that they couldn’t tackle on their own,” said King, noting that the students brought a valuable “generational perspective” to the table.

“They bring a passion for bringing change and also access to a tremendous amount of knowledge and research skills.”

The 3-week projects included Herbert’s newsletter, exploring the potential of renewable energy for a pork processing operation and finding ways for producers to use less plastic packaging when selling their food.

The students’ work helped the group in several ways, said Anjah Howard, manager of planning and development at [Camrose County](#).

“The students were savvy on what works for communication strategies like social media outreach, and they brought skill sets in technology and being able to conduct research that the producers don’t have the capacity or time to do. They also brought ideas on how producers could shift their operations to be more sustainable.”

In Herbert’s case, students crafted a handful of stories around sustainability for her newsletter, including spotlighting how the [farm diverts food waste](#) from a local grocery chain to help feed its livestock.

“They got me thinking more broadly about how to put into words the ways we are sustainable and the stories we have to tell,” said Herbert. “They were willing to ask about our key values and mission to really know what the heart of our farm was.”

“People reading the newsletter really enjoyed the information, and since our goal is to help customers become more passionate about buying local, to articulate our stewardship of the farm can be important to them,” she added. “Long-term sustainability for a farm is important, and if we have advocates in our customers in understanding that, that’s a really good benefit.”

The group of food artisans is making good use of the students’ work, said Howard.

“All of the projects were successful in some way, and it made the producers more aware of changes they can make that have a big impact, like taking a different approach to social media or tweaking their operations to save costs. The students were able to provide a laser focus on ‘if you do this, you get these results,’ so producers now have the knowledge to start making decisions on four-, 10- or 20-year plans.”



“Involving the community is a different way to do things, and you can learn a lot by interacting with the community next door or down the street. It was awesome how much time community members were willing to give us and how welcoming they were.”

- Ally Hamilton, Bachelor of Science student

## Learning while serving the community

Through Community Service-Learning (CSL) placements, Augustana Campus students have already been working with Camrose County for a decade, with this course project being the latest success, said Howard, a U of A graduate herself.

“We’ve been doing CSL for a long time, but this year in particular the work and the passion that the class brought really showed through. Our group now has several action items coming out of the students’ final presentations that we want to move forward on. They always do good work, and we had an expectation of what we were going to get, but they raised the bar.”

The course also builds awareness for students about their own ability to make a difference, said King.

“It develops a way to look at problems through a sustainability lens, and it can apply to how they look at their own lives, how to contribute to their communities and ways to find potential jobs in sectors they didn’t know existed. That lens can change the way they look at the world and how they interact with it.”

It also helps students realize they can have an impact, said King, adding that Augustana’s new project-based core set of courses—including classes like Applications in Sustainability—will help future classes deepen their involvement through community-based projects.

“Their projects get compliments from their community partners, and a student can say to themselves, ‘I helped with this and I helped make a change for the better.’”

“It was great that we weren’t just writing a paper on sustainability, but actually doing something for a person’s business. Our work felt more important,” said Ally Hamilton, a bachelor of science student whose class group built a website and created social media posts and a marketing video for a Camrose-area farm.

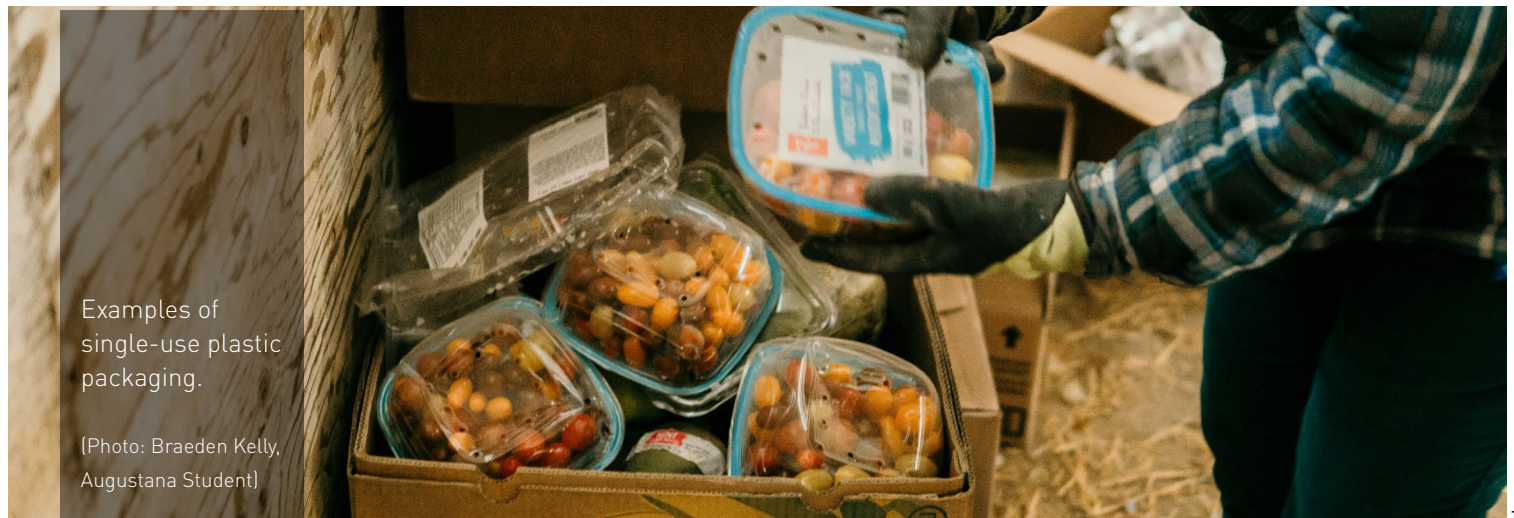
Hamilton and her classmates wanted to help TME Farms market its meat products, particularly to attract younger customers, by showing that buying local was comparable to buying at a large commercial outlet, and more environmentally sustainable.

“We did a project about the true cost of local food to tackle the assumption that it cost too much to buy locally. We broke down the comparison to show the costs weren’t that different to encourage more customers.”

They also listed the benefits of locally produced meat on the website, including lower environmental impacts.

Hamilton said she gained a new appreciation for working on a hands-on, community-based project, and will keep it in mind as she plans for a career as a school teacher.

*This story originally appeared in the University of Alberta’s news site, Folio.*



Examples of single-use plastic packaging.

(Photo: Braeden Kelly, Augustana Student)



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