



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

Augustana Campus

Report to the Community

2023-24



Photo: Jon McCorquindale

The University of Alberta respects the sovereignty, lands, histories, languages, knowledge systems and cultures of First Nations, Métis and Inuit nations.

Augustana is located in (asiniskaw sipisis - Stoney Creek) Treaty 6 territory; a travelling route and home to the Maskwacîs Nêhiyawak, 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.

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The Report to the Community is published annually by the University of Alberta Augustana Campus. It is distributed to donors, sponsors, university contacts, government bodies, community partners and friends of the campus.

This report includes highlights from Augustana Campus' 2023/24 academic year, August 22, 2023 to April 30, 2024.



A look back, a look forward

Dean Demetres Tryphonopoulos reflects on the past year and the opportunities to come

To the members of the community,

It is my pleasure to present to you the 2024 Augustana Report to the Community which features highlights from the past year on campus.

In this year's report, you'll find numerous ways that we are engaging with our community . . . from students working with the City of Camrose to create climate resilience solutions, to bringing internationally acclaimed music to our city, to bringing new programs to campus that address community needs. And, of course, we continue to look for more opportunities to meet community needs through offered programming.

The pages that follow also feature various achievements over the past academic year. Both faculty and students have received noteworthy awards recognizing their teaching, research, athletics achievements and more. Importantly, Augustana has also received in 2024 the largest gift in its history. Additionally, we have been able to welcome two new faculty members and two postdoctoral fellows to campus.

I am immensely proud of what we have been able to do and accomplish on this campus in the 2023/24 academic year. Throughout this report, I hope you will be able to see how the life and work of this campus is strengthened by the work and commitment of so many of you – whether you are students, staff, faculty, alumni, donor or member of the Augustana community at large.

Time passes quickly – not just over this past year but over the course of my term as Augustana's dean and executive officer, which is coming to a close at the end of June 2024. I am grateful for the opportunity I have been offered to help further the education of our outstanding students, support the work of our excellent staff and faculty, and engage with our wonderful community.

I know that with my successor – John Parkins, PhD – the communities Augustana serves are in good hands. Incoming dean and executive officer Parkins is excited to assume this role and is looking forward to connecting and working with our community members. As for myself, I am looking forward to seeing the ways in which Augustana will continue to grow and thrive as well as the ways in which the campus will continue to work with and benefit our community.

Thank you, and see you around,

Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos
Dean and Executive Officer
Augustana Campus



Undergraduate Teaching Excellence

Story by Sydney Tancowny

Assistant professor Willow White recognized with U of A award.

Each year, a small number of faculty members within their first five years at the University of Alberta receive the Provost’s Award for Early Achievement of Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. This award recognizes teaching excellence and, in 2023, one of two awards went to Augustana assistant professor Willow White.

White is a feminist literary historian, assistant professor of English and Indigenous Studies and a proud citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta. From bringing Knowledge Keepers and notable Indigenous speakers to campus, to serving on various Indigenous advisory committees to helping organize events like the Augustana Round Dance in March 2024, White is an active leader in the Augustana Campus community.

In the classroom, White works to create an accepting and inclusive space for all students. Since arriving in January 2022, she has mentored students, developed new courses and inclusive class practices, and has



Willow White during a traditional medicine workshop in September 2022. (Photo: John Ulan)

integrated various experiential, land-based and culturally specific learning opportunities into her courses.

“The biggest pride I take in my teaching is when students tell me that they felt safe to learn and participate in my classroom,” says White. “We are all impacted by the power dynamics and hierarchies ingrained in our society by colonialism. By providing space for inclusion, empathy, tolerance and a wide range of lived experiences, all students – including those who don’t belong to an equity-seeking group – thrive.”

In addition to her classroom work, White received a 2023 Campus Sustainability Grant from the U of A to create interpretive signage that identifies and educates about the native plants that grow on campus, as well as local Indigenous cultures and their languages. As part of this work, White and an Augustana student worked with language speakers of nêhiyawêwin, Siksikáí’powahsin and Southern Michif.



Academics Into Action

Story by Bev Betkowski

Augustana students help create climate resilience solutions in Camrose.

During the Winter 2024 Term, 48 third-year Augustana Campus undergraduates teamed up with the City of Camrose to research and develop strategies in response to a Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) recently conducted by the municipality. Camrose, like other western Canadian municipalities, now faces regular environmental risks, such as drought, heat waves, high winds and wildfire smoke. Patricia MacQuarrie, general manager of community development for the City of Camrose, says there was a need for the city to create or amend its policies.

The students’ work will help guide next steps for the municipality as it proactively prepares for the effects of extreme weather on its public services and infrastructure. This project stems from a course called AUIDS 301: Community Partnership Project, one of a series of core courses that are mandatory for all Augustana students.

“The work these students are doing is having a direct and meaningful impact on preparing both the



Augustana Campus students Kailyn Hofman, Marissa Degenstein, Leah Peters and Michelle Turgeon discuss their work for the City of Camrose with professor Greg King, pictured left to right. Their project was one of several aimed at helping the municipality build resiliency to climate change. (Photo: Sydney Tancowny)

municipality and our citizens to be more resilient to climate change,” says MacQuarrie.

Students called on skills learned in the classroom to approach projects including developing wildfire and smoke response plans, a communications plan for advance public warning of extreme weather hazards like tornadoes, identifying climate-tolerant trees and more.

“With Augustana Campus situated right here in the community, our students can bring a lot to those efforts,” says assistant professor Greg King, who oversaw this work.

“As a student, it’s a non-traditional experience to have your work mean something beyond you,” says Biology student Ayra McCarthy. “It’s bigger than a grade we are getting back, it’s going out into the community and it’s not just for us anymore.”

The project with the city was one of four completed through AUIDS 301 this year, with the other three involving local partnerships with an education authority, food producers and a museum.

New to the Team

Learn more about Clark, Gianluca, Rob and Shelisa at uab.ca/AugNews

Welcoming new faculty members and postdoctoral fellows!

We are thrilled to introduce two new faculty members and two postdoctoral fellows to our Augustana community. Take a moment to learn more about them and explore their stories!

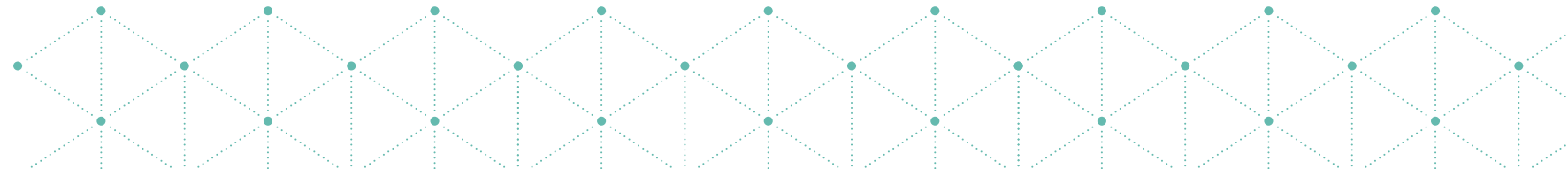


Photo: John Ulan

Clark Banack

Assistant Professor, Rural Studies



Photo: John Ulan

Gianluca Vernillo

Assistant Professor, Physical Education



Photo: Felicia Byron

Rob Colgate

Postdoctoral Fellow, Poetry in the Psychiatric Ward project



Photo: Alayna Friesen

Shelisa Klassen

Postdoctoral Fellow, Chester Ronning Centre

Originally from Camrose, Clark started his journey with Augustana 25 years ago as a student on campus. Now he is thrilled to be an assistant professor in addition to his role as the director of the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC). As a political scientist and the author of several books, Clark’s research focuses on Western Canadian politics and religion in rural settings.

“Rural people continue to be incredibly community oriented. They’re warm-hearted and creative in terms of helping their community thrive.”

- Madisen Gee

Gianluca comes to the U of A from the University of Milan. A long-distance runner himself, his research focuses on neuromuscular fatigue, high-level sport performance and endurance. He has notably worked with elite Kenyan marathon runners and the Italian snowboarding team, preparing them for the Olympics. Gianluca also teaches on the therapeutic potential of exercise in diverse populations, such as those with disabilities and chronic health conditions.

“I wish everyone understood that, if we’re able to move, we can exercise and exercise is medicine.”

- Mifi Purvis

Rob recently graduated with a MFA in poetry and critical disability studies from the New Writers Project at the University of Texas. Originally from Evanston, Illinois, he is a Filipino-American poet and author. During Rob’s term as a postdoctoral fellow, his work at Augustana will focus on helping to pilot a new creative program that brings poetry workshops to current inpatients of psychiatric wards.

“More than solving a problem, we are focused on living disabled in a meaningful way, building community and helping folks author their own narratives.”

- Danielle Godin

Shelisa recently graduated with her doctoral degree from the University of Manitoba. As a historian, her research examines the role of newspapers and religion in establishing and maintaining settler colonialism, through the example of 1870s Manitoba. During her term as postdoctoral fellow, she will help to organize a conference about religion and settler colonialism in the Canadian prairie.

“I want to tell the truth about settler history and, through telling the truth, expose how Canada’s reputation as a peacefully created nation is often incorrect.”

- Danielle Godin

From Germany to Camrose

Story by Sandra Kinash

It took a decade for Roger Admiral to commission music he recently performed in Germany and at Augustana.

In October 2023, Roger Admiral – accomplished pianist and music lecturer at Augustana – performed Klavierkonzert by acclaimed composer Steven Takasugi at the Donaueschinger Musiktage in Germany.

After hearing Takasugi’s work at a music symposium in 2013, Admiral approached the composer to commission this new solo piano piece.

Takasugi was originally going to write Admiral’s piece as a 15-minute piano concerto accompanied by brief recorded samples from stereo speakers. He adjusted his plans so the piece could be performed at the music festival in Germany. The new composition would exist in two versions: solo piano and electronic sounds and solo piano, electronic sounds and full orchestra. The festival in Germany matched U of A’s funding to extend the piece to 50 minutes with an orchestra.

Performing as a solo pianist for 50 minutes is physically demanding, requiring Admiral to do a lot of pianistic choreography and practice for the necessary quick changes of motion in music without repetitive patterns.

After Admiral performed the new piece as a pianist accompanied by a full orchestra in Germany, he performed it again in Camrose at the Jeanne & Peter Lougheed Performing Arts Centre without an orchestra. Takasugi attended the Augustana performance and participated in a lively question-and-answer session afterwards.

Interest in the piece continues to build. In August 2024, Admiral will travel to New York City to perform the piece at the TIME:SPANS festival.

Admiral sees creating new music like Takasugi’s piece as a way to express the mystery of the human interior – this, he says, has always been the goal of composers.

“We’re researching new ways that we can tell a story or reveal the emotions of something as complex as the human mind, or the human heart,” said Admiral.

Discover more
Augustana research
at uab.ca/AugRSRCH

OTHER RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS:

FINE ARTS & HUMANITIES

- Reading Romeo Dallaire and his activism through the lens of Canadian philosophy
- Understanding how the challenges posed by young adult fiction can change rape culture
- Rethinking the women’s education in the Middle Ages

SCIENCE

- Using AI to improve health care support and identify bugs in data software
- Uncovering two weevil species – one new and one thought extinct
- Protecting the least flycatcher by determining its most helpful habitat

SOCIAL SCIENCE

- Untangling the benefits and limits of Indigenous cultural programming in Canadian prisons
- Finding the balance between wetland stewardship and agricultural needs
- Inspecting the legal history of bigamy in Australia

Roger Admiral, Augustana music lecturer.
(Photo: Jeffrey Heyden-Kaye)



Best in the Nation

Women’s volleyball student-athlete Shae Boyes is first Viking to be named CCAA Player of the Year.

For the first time in Vikings Athletics history, a University of Alberta - Augustana student-athlete was named the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) Player of the Year. Shae Boyes picked up the honour for women’s volleyball in March 2024 after already being honoured as the Alberta Colleges Athletics Conference’s (ACAC) 2024 Women’s Volleyball Player of the Year - North.

Having participated in CCAA sports since its inception in 1974, the Vikings have won numerous national titles but had yet to see a student-athlete earn the prestigious Player of the Year award. However, following a season full of record-breaking milestones, Boyes broke the 50-year wait.

Eclipsing 1000 career kills, Boyes cemented her place in the ACAC record books for the seventh most all-time and her 205 career aces are the second most all-time male or female in the conference.

Throughout the season, her 287 kills, 62 aces and 370 points lead the conference, while her kills broke a Vikings single-season record. The graduating fifth-year holds the Viking’s Women’s Volleyball all-time records in career kills, aces and digs.

A two-time CCAA Academic All-Canadian (2022, 2023) with a current 3.2 GPA, Boyes embodies excellence both on and off the court. As team captain, she served as a catalyst for the team’s recent success. Beyond her individual accomplishments, Boyes is recognized for fostering a positive team environment, including taking the time to teach red shirts skills outside of official practices and consistently supporting and encouraging her teammates. Her commitment to sharing knowledge and craft contributes to the overall growth of the team.

“This accomplishment is truly a testament to the support and dedication of those around me, this award is as much theirs as it is mine,” says Boyes. “My family, my coaches and mentors, and my teammates, past and present – I am truly, and endlessly grateful for each and every person who was a part of my athletic journey.”

Adapted from a release posted on the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association’s website.

Prepare for the 2024/25 season, and the 2025 ACAC Women’s Volleyball Championship happening on campus in February, at govikings.ca

Shae Boyes during a Vikings women’s volleyball home game. (Photo: Bryan Krebs)



9

of 11 eligible Vikings teams attended ACAC championships

60

Home games hosted

5

ACAC medals won (1 silver, 4 bronze)

Responding to Community Needs

Four new programs are coming to campus in Fall 2024 to address needs in education and health care.

Rural-based areas like Camrose and the surrounding communities have unique needs. In particular, there has recently been a demonstrated need to increase the number of education and health care professionals in these communities – and Augustana is responding.

Starting in Fall 2024, four new programs are coming to Augustana Campus. The first is a new bachelor of education program in elementary education. Students in this program will spend their first two years of study at Augustana Campus and their final two years at North Campus in Edmonton. Practicum placements for students in this program will prioritize rural schools in an effort to increase the likelihood of them pursuing a career as educators in rural communities and help address difficulties in recruiting teachers to available positions.

The remaining three programs are master's programs that will be offered at Augustana by the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine made possible by \$7.4 million in funding from the Government of Alberta. By offering new programs in occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech-language pathology, people from central Alberta seeking careers in health care will have more opportunities to pursue professional programs closer to home. Practicum placements within these programs will also prioritize rural health care settings to promote post-graduate return to rural and remote communities within the province.

These programs will welcome approximately 60 new students to Augustana each year.

- Sydney Tancowny



OTHER CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS:

- Augustana hosts first Round Dance since 2018
- Annual showcase event connects community with student research
- Alumni professionals connect with students at career mixer

\$2 Million to Support Students

Story by Erik Einsiedel

Augustana Campus receives largest gift in its history in honour and in memory of former dean of women Cora Martinson.

Almost 90 years after Cora Martinson taught at Camrose Lutheran College, which would eventually become the Augustana Campus of the University of Alberta, her legacy has inspired the largest donor gift in Augustana's history.

After moving from China to attend college in the United States in 1925, Cora Martinson began a three-year teaching career at Camrose Lutheran College.

Her time at Camrose Lutheran College would have a lasting impact on her, even after she returned to China as a missionary in 1937. Martinson's loyalties to the college continued for decades as she encouraged international students to study in Camrose. She believed so deeply in the opportunities the small campus offered that her passion would change the lives of those students who followed her encouragement.

Today, several of those students – now alumni – are about to change the lives of future Augustana students with this gift in Martinson's name. The \$2 million gift has made two new entrance scholarships possible, removing financial barriers

OTHER GIVING HIGHLIGHTS:

- 211 donor-funded awards supported Augustana students (with seven new awards established this year)
- \$25,000 given to support experiential learning trips in the 2023/24 academic year
- \$3,007,873 raised (Fiscal Year 2024)



Cora Martinson
former dean of women at Camrose Lutheran College, during the 1930s

(photo courtesy of Gladys Severson)



People attending the gift announcement event on December 4, 2023.
(Photo: John Ulan)

for domestic students and the same deserving international students Martinson spent her life encouraging.

As the largest gift in Augustana's history, it stands as a testament to the influence of great teachers like Martinson and the thriving campus that continues to grow and adapt. While Martinson believed in a strong presence of international students, she may not have predicted how far-reaching the impact of rural Alberta would be on those students, and the close connections Augustana has fostered thanks to support from its community.

The first of these new entrance scholarships will be given in the 2024/25 academic year. In Cora Martinson's name, they will help shape the future by preparing creative, collaborative and confident global citizens – following in the footsteps of all those students Martinson inspired to make their mark on the world.



Join us at

AUGUSTANA

From attending events to joining a choir to hosting student placements — there are many ways to get involved on campus.

Follow us on social media or visit us online to learn more:

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uab.ca/Augustana



Leading with Purpose.



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