

PORTAGE COMMUNITY STORIES 2016



# CONTENTS

## **Deny the Ordinary**

New Course Welcomes Students Aboard the Entrepreneurship - **pg. 5**

New Program and Lab Will Help Hairstylists Get A-head - **pg. 6**

New Space a Boon for Health & Wellness Programs - **pg. 7**

## **Discover the North**

Curling Championships a Sweeping Success - **pg. 9**

Portage Program Receives North American Accreditation - **pg. 9**

## **Do Extraordinary Things**

Portage Student Receives Prestigious National Award - **pg. 11**

Getting Up in Their Business - **pg. 12**

College Employees Create and Help Fund New Student Award - **pg. 12**

## **We Are Voyageurs**

Portage Alumni Association Flourishing - **pg. 15**

New program helps Portage students find their way - **pg. 16**

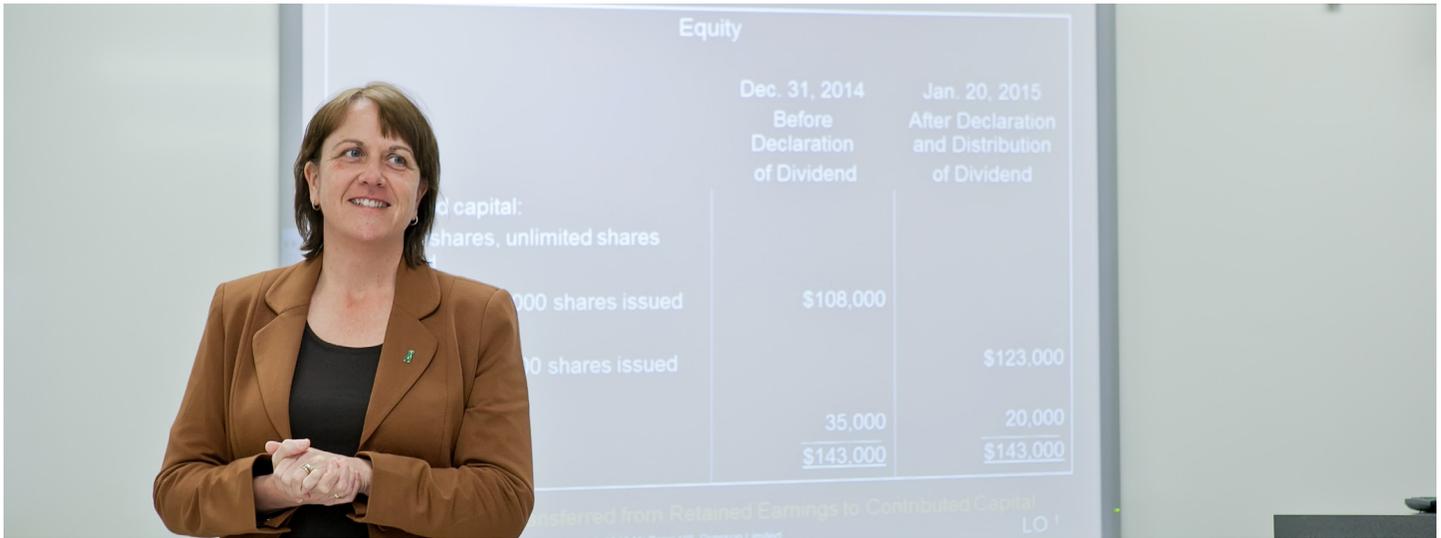
2015-16 Voyage A Lot More Pleasant for College Hockey Team - **pg. 16**

## **Program Offerings**

- **pg. 18**

# DEFY THE ORDINARY





## NEW COURSE WELCOMES HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ABOARD *THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP*

A new Portage College course is helping high school students to mind their own business. Introduction to Entrepreneurship, developed and taught by College Business Instructor Beverly Lockett, BA, MBA, is designed to give students a taste of the entrepreneurial life. She notes the goal of the online course is not necessarily for every student to become an entrepreneur. It's to show him/her that operating a franchise or starting your own business is an option to consider.

"It teaches them what entrepreneurship is all about – the struggles, the highlights that they will enjoy, the options available to them," she says. "It shows that it can be a career choice for them."

During the course, students work on a variety of assignments, including interviewing an entrepreneur, posting a motivational speech to YouTube and crafting a short and persuasive sales pitch (otherwise known as an elevator pitch).

"Another assignment is to walk around and find something that drives them crazy," adds Bev. "Then they have to come up with ideas on how to fix it."

They also study social entrepreneurship which involves applying business techniques to cultural, environmental and social issues.

The online, self-paced course has proven to be a challenge but also a good learning experience for students from three Northern Lights School Division high schools who enrolled this past February.

"They're not necessarily used to having stuff due on a weekly basis," says Bev. "It's quite an adjustment for them and a great stepping stone for college."

The long-time Business instructor has enjoyed the class and hopes to be able to offer it again soon.

"It's taken me out of my comfort zone too," Bev says. "And that's good. I really like this course."



## NEW PROGRAM AND LAB WILL HELP HAIRSTYLISTS *GET A-HEAD*

It started as the strand of an idea – now it's a few short months away from becoming a reality. Portage College's new state-of-the-art hairstyling lab in Lac La Biche is nearing completion. The lab will soon be home to up to 28 hairstyling students from across the province, much to the delight of hairstyling instructor and coordinator Donna Rice, Jny. (Hairstyling, Barber), B.Ed. She has spent the last year developing an enriched 1,500-hour certificate program that the College will be offering this fall.

"It's very exciting," enthuses Donna, who brings a wealth of experience to the salon, including working with the Edmonton Opera and the Citadel Theatre as well as teaching. "It's great to get a chance to create a program using modern delivery methods. I'm even more thrilled to be able to welcome students this fall!"

In addition to 28 regular hairstyling stations, the new \$1 million lab will feature manicure and pedicure stations and waxing rooms.

"We'll even have a private room for haircutting!" adds Donna.

Students in the certificate program will receive expert training in haircutting, perming, manicures and pedicures as well as career and portfolio development during their year at the College. When students are ready to move from styling mannequins and brave friends, they will operate an open-to-the-public salon from Tuesday through Saturday.

"Students will get some real-world experience. Weekends for hairdressers are usually Sunday and Monday," explains Donna.

Labour market analyses have shown that there is a strong demand for hairstylists, especially in the small, rural communities. There are no other programs offered north of Edmonton.

"This is an opportunity to start your own business or shape your career," says Donna. "There are so many opportunities with this program."

For more information about the program, call 1-866-623-5551.

# NEW SPACE A BOON FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAMS

If space is the final frontier, then Portage College's Health & Wellness department has crossed it – or at least the parking lot. After working out of two locations the past few years, staff and students now have brand new, state-of-the-art labs and classrooms inside the Lac La Biche Campus. The space features high-fidelity simulators, one way glass for observation, recording and playback for debriefing purposes. These high tech labs allow Emergency Medical Technician, Paramedic and Nursing students to experience a wide array of real-life simulations, while being evaluated by the College's guiding instructors.

While the programs had most of these facilities available before, Dean of Health and Wellness Carol Ulliac, RN, BScN, MN, explains that moving from two locations to dedicated inside space at the Lac La Biche Campus makes the programs so much more visible.

"Students can now take advantage of all the learning spaces in the College," Carol says. "They now have a proper waiting area and even more access to services and supports. This move really benefits our students."

At the heart of the labs are the high-fidelity simulators (also used at the College's Cold Lake and St. Paul campuses) which allow students to practice procedures in response medical emergencies. The infant, child and adult human-patient simulators can replicate just about any disease, injury or medical situation.

"All of the simulators are able to operate without any direct interaction from the instructor so the students are on their own to practice all of their critical decision-making skills," explains Carol. "It's a really good learning experience for the students and they're in a good space."



# DISCOVER THE NORTH



## CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS A SWEEPING SUCCESS

The house was a-rockin' when curling teams came a-knockin' in St. Paul this winter. The Town of St. Paul and Portage College hosted the Alberta Colleges Athletics Conference curling championships Feb. 26-28. The three-day event, featuring Men's, Women's and Mixed teams from across the province, provided a high-level exhibition of curling prowess and a chance for St. Paul and the College to showcase their facilities.

The College's Culinary Arts students provided food at the concession booth. They also cooked up a feast for a Portage-hosted gala banquet on Feb. 27. Athletic Director Jim Knight was ecstatic by how well everything unfolded, crediting the students and the many volunteers for the events a success.

"I had several e-mails from other institutions saying how extraordinary the weekend was," Jim says. He also notes that the College is planning to apply to host the Nationals in three years. "They were especially impressed with the food which they said was way fancier than what they were used to. I mean, there were even cream puffs in the shape of curling rocks!"



## PORTAGE PROGRAM RECEIVES NORTH AMERICAN ACCREDITATION

Hosting guests from across North America last June paid big dividends for Portage College's Natural Resources Technology (NRT) program – "NAWTA" doubt about it. The College welcomed the North American Wildlife Technology Association (NAWTA) accreditation committee and representatives from 16 accredited institutions across North America for a week-long conference and professional development seminar. The College received a much-sought after three-year NAWTA accreditation for the NRT program.

"Portage has provided NAWTA a perfect place for meetings, professional development, and current Wildlife Management near Lac La Biche," said NAWTA Executive Chair Jim Westerhold. "The field labs are more than appropriate to facilitate wildlife learning."

The College's NRT program is currently one of only two NAWTA-certified programs in Alberta. Graduates of the two-year diploma will have the knowledge and skill set to pursue a career in the Environment and Wildlife fields. NRT Coordinator Al Bertschi, BSc, MSc, says that the NAWTA accreditation is invaluable to the program.

"At Portage we teach about the five elements that make up the environment: soil, water, plants, animals and air," Al says. "Being certified by NAWTA is a very important pillar in recognizing the effectiveness of our quality program."





The Governor General's  
Caring Canadian Award  
Le Prix du Gouverneur général  
pour l'entraide

is awarded to / est décerné à

**Cherina Quinney**

In recognition  
of your outstanding  
and selfless contribution  
to your community  
and to Canada

En reconnaissance  
de votre remarquable  
et généreuse contribution  
à votre communauté  
et à Canada

  
Governor General  
of Canada / Gouverneur général  
du Canada

2015

# PORTAGE STUDENT RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL AWARD

Tuesday October 6, 2015 was an ordinary day for Cherina Quinney. The 27-year old Portage College Business Administration student woke up, had a bite of breakfast ... and received a prestigious award from the Governor General. Well, ok, maybe not so ordinary!

She was one of 30 people from across the country to be honoured with the Governor General's Caring Canadian (GGCC) Award at a special ceremony in Quebec City.

"It was very scary but it was a wonderful experience," says Cherina. Since 1995, the GGCC Award has been bestowed upon Canadians who epitomize volunteerism and selflessness having a positive impact on other people's lives.

The former president of the Portage College Student Association was recognized for her advocacy, for volunteering at College events, for helping to launch an after-school project for families and for her random acts of kindness. Cherina was nominated for the award by four College staff members.

"Cherina has a genuine desire to make a positive difference in the lives of those around her. Many people's lives have been made brighter due to Cherina's kindness and commitment to help others," wrote Associate Vice President of Student Services and Registrar Beverly Moghrabi in her submission. "She freely gives of her time to help others, asking nothing in return."

The ever modest Cherina credits her now three-year-old daughter not only with inspiring her to go back to school full-time but also with giving her the idea to create Family Gym Jam, held every Tuesday night at the Lac La Biche Campus. The semi-structured evening of family-friendly activities and crafts has proven to be very popular, with as many as 100 children and parents attending.

"I have a little girl and I'd always go home and have nothing to do after school. So I asked in 2013 if there were any family-oriented programs after school," she explains. "And they didn't. So with the help of Parent Link and Bev Moghrabi, we formed the Family Gym Jam. I just volunteered my time there because I knew my girl was enjoying it. I love it!"

Cherina is grateful for the opportunities Portage has afforded her not only to pursue her career goals but also to get involved in the student experience.

"I love the size of the school," she says. "I've been here for a few years so I kind of know everybody. It's almost like a little family, a little community. It's great!"

# GETTING UP IN THEIR BUSINESS

## Portage College Students Helping Cold Lake Businesses Develop Their Marketing Plans

A group of Portage College students have been sticking their noses into other people's businesses this winter – and those businesses couldn't be happier! As part of their marketing course, Business Administration Certificate students in Cold Lake have been working closely with seven local businesses (including two business incubators), developing comprehensive marketing plans for each enterprise. The arrangement is the result of a partnership between the College and the Rural Alberta Business Centre (RABC).

Business Instructor Beverly Lockett, BA, MBA, who first approached the RABC with the idea last fall, has always believed in the value of getting her students out of the classroom to discover their own communities.

"It's great for the students," Bev says. "In this case, they get some real-life business experience and get to tackle real-world issues. I think it's great."

The RABC agrees. Small Business Advisor Kathryn Hotte says it's a great opportunity for both students and businesses and it's a win-win for both sides.

# COLLEGE EMPLOYEES CREATE AND HELP FUND NEW STUDENT AWARD

There are no ghosts wandering around Portage campuses (as far as we know) but there is plenty of Voyageur Spirit. What started as an idea in the lead up to the College's annual Professional Development Day in March 2015 has blossomed into an annual award called the "Spirit of Portage." The award recognizes students who encourage others, volunteer their time and help to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom and throughout the College. The award was the brainchild of Carrie Froehler, Cert. (HR), BA, Director of Human Resources, and members of the PD Day organizing committee.

"Our staff and faculty have always been very generous in supporting various causes and organizations as part of our PD Day," says Carrie. "This time, we wanted our staff's extraordinary generosity to directly benefit our students."

Even the PD Day Committee wasn't prepared for the overwhelming response from College employees. Officially launched at the March 6, 2015 PD Day, staff and faculty raised \$1,000 that day, and contributed another \$6,500 at a Welcome Back event in September. The Board of Governors later decided to donate \$5,000 to the effort instead of holding a Board Gala.

"We were absolutely blown away by the generosity of our employees and Governors" beams Carrie. "They are definitely the direct embodiment of the Spirit of Portage!"

Subsequent fundraisers, including a Duelling Pianos dinner and concert in Lac La Biche March 11, have helped push the award total to \$15,000, all in one calendar year. The goal now is to create an endowment (minimum \$25,000) that will ensure the Spirit of Portage award lives on students for years to come.

"This is more than we ever could have dreamed of," says Carrie. "We are so grateful for everyone's amazing support. It's wonderful to be able to acknowledge our students in this way."



# WE ARE VOYAGEURS





## PORTAGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FLOURISHING

Portage College graduates now have another way of keeping in touch with each other and their alma mater. The new Portage College Alumni Association offers graduates several benefits and communication tools – without ever soliciting them for money!

“It’s a place where grads can connect with former classmates, instructors and friends,” explains Student Experience and Alumni Coordinator Erline Harmse. “It’s a wonderful opportunity for students and College employees to keep in touch and to share success stories.”

Alumni have been signing up since the association was officially formed in January 2015. In one year, 275 graduates have joined, surpassing the most optimistic projections.

“I’m very pleased,” says Erline. “We’ve more than exceeded expectations. We originally wanted 50 people by the end of last year.”

Membership is free and includes several benefits such as an alumni benefits card, an alumni e-mail address, free academic transcripts, discounts on Portage College merchandise and facility rentals, a quarterly newsletter and personal invitations to College functions. Harmse is working on adding even more goodies to the list.

“Our goal is to get I.D. cards out to everybody that they can show at the Bookstore etc. for discounts,” she says. “We’re looking at developing more swag items for our members.”

As more graduates continue to sign up, Harmse has a hard time believing how far the fledgling organization has come in 12 short months.

“I’m happy,” she says. “We keep gaining momentum.”

For more information about the Portage College Alumni Association, call 1-866-623-5551, send an e-mail to [alumni@portagecollege.ca](mailto:alumni@portagecollege.ca) or check out the association’s Facebook and Instagram pages and Twitter feed.

## NEW PROGRAM HELPS PORTAGE STUDENTS FIND THEIR WAY

Navigating your way through college, particularly for the first time or after a long break from formal education, can be a very daunting task. A new program at Portage College is providing students with a figurative compass to help them find confidence and success at school. Voyageur GPS matches students with College employees who act as guides throughout the school year.

Launched as a pilot in September 2015 at the Lac La Biche Campus, the program is already paying dividends. "I can name at least two students who wouldn't have stayed in school if not for this program," says Fran Stewart, B.Ed, M.Ed, Coordinator of Career and Counselling Services. "It's really increased the opportunity for students to have one more contact at the College – and we know how valuable contacts are for students."

The Voyageur GPS program essentially works like this: interested students sign up during orientation and are matched with employees who have volunteered to participate. The students then meet with their assigned GPS contacts to get to know them a little bit and to set future meeting times. Stewart encourages students and employees to touch base at least once a week either by phone, e-mail, text, Skype, or at a face-to-face meeting. College employees act as guides, listening and empathizing with their student(s), sharing their own post-secondary experiences, and directing students to the appropriate academic or social supports as needed. In addition, all GPS participants get together every couple of months to talk about how to improve the program.

Although Voyageur GPS is still in its infancy, Fran is already seeing positive results and hopes to eventually expand the program to other Portage College campuses.

"It's doing what it's supposed to do," she says. "The students who are using it are finding that it's definitely working for them. We're very pleased with the results so far."

## 2015-16 VOYAGE A LOT MORE PLEASANT FOR COLLEGE HOCKEY TEAM

What a difference a year makes! Fresh off the worst season in their eight-year history, the Portage College Voyageurs men's hockey team rebounded nicely in 2015-16, improving by 21 points and battling for a playoff spot until the last week of the regular season.

With more than two-thirds of his roster overhauled from 2014-15, first-year Voyageur Coach Arnie Caplan, BA, MA, guided his team to nine wins and seven ties in the ultra-competitive Alberta Colleges Athletics Conference. Led by ACAC rookie of the year and team-scoring leader R.T. Rice, Captain Richard Cameron and Goaltender Kirby Halcrow, the Voyageurs played a physical, up-tempo and entertaining brand of hockey to the delight of the home fans. Many of them showed up to catch the action at the Bold Center in Lac La Biche. The Voyageurs have the largest attending fan base in the ACAC!

"We made some great strides this year," says Arnie, who brings a wealth of coaching experience to the table, including stints in Junior A and NCAA Women's hockey. "We still have a ways to go but the boys played hard and fought to the end."

Having a large and enthusiastic crowd at all home games certainly helped, Arnie adds. Admission was free this year thanks to a sponsorship arrangement with Britton's Your Independent Grocer in Lac La Biche.

"We definitely hear the cheers and the noise," says Arnie. "We appreciate the support and hope to bring our fans some playoff action next year."



**R.T. Rice –  
ACAC Rookie of the Year**

- Open Studies student at Portage College
- 14 Goals
- 11 Assists
- 25 Points



# PORTAGE COLLEGE PROGRAM OFFERINGS

## **Boyle**

- Heavy Equipment Operator

## **Cold Lake**

- Academic Foundations
- Accounting Technician
- Apprenticeship Electrician
- Business Administration
- College Preparation
- Community Social Work
- Office Administration
- Open Studies
- Power Engineering 4th Class
- Practical Nurse
- University Studies

## **Frog Lake**

- Academic Foundations
- College Preparation

## **Goodfish Lake**

- Open Campus

## **Lac La Biche**

- Aboriginal Arts
- Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (U of A)
- Academic Foundations
- Apprenticeship Steamfitter-Pipefitter
- Apprenticeship Welding
- Artisan Entrepreneurship
- Bachelor of Social Work (U of C)
- Business Administration
- College Preparation
- Community Social Work
- Hairstyling (Fall 2016)
- Natural Resources Technology
- Open Studies
- Power Engineering 3rd & 4th Class
- Practical Nurse
- Pre-Employment Heavy Equipment Technician
- University Studies

## **Saddle Lake**

- Academic Foundations
- College Preparation

## **St. Paul**

- Baking
- Business Administration
- College Preparation
- Culinary Arts
- Institutional Cook
- Open Studies
- Practical Nurse
- University Studies

## **Online**

- Early Learning & Child Care
- Educational Assistant
- Emergency Medical Technician (Lac La Biche for labs)
- Emergency Medical Technology – Paramedic (Lac La Biche for labs)
- SAG-D De-Oiling and Water Treatment

## **Continuing Education Courses**

- Ad-hoc Training (skills certification)
- Driver Training
- Professional & Contract Training
- Safety & Trades
- Truck Transport
- Wildland Firefighter Type 1 Firetack

## **Faculty of Extension Courses**

- Academic Upgrading
- Art & Design
- Business & Professional Development
- Education
- Environmental Studies
- Food Sciences
- Health & Wellness
- Pipeline Training/Construction (Coming Soon)
- University





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