



UNIVERSITY OF
ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT TO COLLEGIUM

JUNE 20, 2018

This marks my 3rd and final annual report. I find that in compiling it, I am invariably also offering what amounts to a stock-taking, a summing up of major themes and projects that have been central to my time as President. I have therefore organized my report along these major thematic lines:

Reinvesting in Academic Life

The period under review saw the very successful completion of the inaugural version of Principal **Randy Boyagoda's** Gilson Seminar on Faith and Ideas, which featured a two-week exploration of the art, culture and religious significance of Rome. This proved to be a fitting conclusion to a year of intellectual exploration. It also brought the seminar group together as a cohort, one that will have much to contribute to the life of the University over the years to come.

In fact, the wonderful success of Gilson has enabled us to respond favourably to the suggestion from some of our new professors (about whom more below) that we move quickly to create two more seminar programs, and we have done just that. One new seminar course will focus on the enduring global impact of our distinguished professor Marshall McLuhan. In bringing his global impact up to date, the students will, naturally enough, visit Silicon Valley. The other new course will explore the Celtic contribution to the communication of ideas in the mediaeval period. Fittingly, it will conclude with a sojourn in Dublin, and an exploration of cultural treasures like the Book of Kells. Like Gilson, these courses are designed to appeal to our bright, energetic and intellectually adventurous incoming students. And, as with Gilson, we believe that each cohort will have an enduring, positive impact on community life.

These new initiatives fit nicely alongside an equally ambitious contribution to undergraduate academic life: hiring six new assistant professors and two post-doctoral fellows. By doing this, we have sent a powerful message to the University of Toronto and to prospective students. We've moved from having one of the lowest percentages of courses taught by continuing status faculty to (at 87%) what is almost certainly the highest. We're already seeing the impact in terms of increased enrollments, in positive course evaluations and in our standing, within the University of Toronto and beyond, as a centre of scholarship, relevant debate and cutting-edge thinking.

It has also been gratifying to see our new professors interact with our alumni, most recently via talks and presentations at Spring Reunion. In my own remarks to alumni, I have been making the point that their generosity is enabling us to make a distinctive contribution to the academic life of the University of Toronto, something that is at the heart of our commitment to federation. At the University of Toronto as elsewhere, you get a hearing when you come to the table with ideas and the resources to advance them.

In that respect, I want to thank Principal Boyagoda for his work in arranging for Sam Tanenhaus, distinguished American journalist and public intellectual, to serve as a visiting professor of Book and Media Studies next year. This is a collaboration with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the School of Public Policy and Governance, and the Centre for the Study of the United States.

Led by Chief Librarian **Sheril Hook**, we've also been continuing to take advantage of the many ways in which the Kelly Library enriches our learning environment. We have, as a result, created a learning commons on the 3rd floor of the Library, a space that is now being used for drop-in writing sessions and small group instruction. Special-collections staff at the Library are working to ensure that our rich trove of special-collections material is shared with students in their classes or through special visits to the Library. We were deeply grateful to accept a donation of over 5000 books from the Sheptytsky Institute, something that further contributes to the broadening of our intellectual horizons that has come with their arrival.

I am grateful to Associate Chief Librarian **Dave Hagelaar**, who has capably filled in for Sheril while she has been on research leave.

Thanks to support from U of T's Faculty of Arts and Science, which has been collaborating closely with our new Registrar, **Giancarlo Mazzanti**, we have increased the hours for our Learning Strategist, who works with students in Brennan Hall. We will also be offering a Math Aid centre for our students, and plan to extend this to provide an aid centre for our students in the sciences. In addition, we will be offering a program to help students apply for the Rhodes and other major scholarships.

Our renewal of Continuing Education continues on three fronts under the leadership of **Hilary Ryall**, Senior Manager Continuing Education. First, we are reinforcing our links to our very successful Corporate Social Responsibility program, making even clearer its connection to the University and examining ways of sharing with it our own human and program resources. Second, we are looking to align the General Program more closely with its original rationale of lay formation. In doing this, we are contemplating programs that could also help develop our own student leaders. Third, we are looking for ways to step up support for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program. This represents an important continuing link to the objective that inspired our commitment to our Continuing Education at St. Michael's, as well as representing an enduring link to our original partners in the Archdiocese.

Reinvesting in Community Life

The Brennan project will have reached a major milestone by the end of this quarter when we will be preparing for the move-in of the Registrar's office. Bursar and Chief Administrative Officer, **Effie Slapnicar** has been carefully overseeing each stage of the process, which is on schedule despite the challenges of remodelling a building that has not had a significant upgrade in many decades. We are currently in a highly competitive labour and materials market. In addition, since opening the walls and ceilings, we have found more problems than anticipated and are working with our architects and our Building and Property Committee to manage through this. Meanwhile, **Kathryn Elton** who heads Advancement and Alumni Affairs has been building alumni support, getting us within striking distance of our objective. Her success in winning the support and trust of the University of Toronto's Department of University Advancement meant that our Brennan ad was recently seen by the 300,000 readers of the U of T's magazine. This is continuing to generate a strong response. Our recent Spring Reunion saw class year's 1958 and 1968 competing to bring in the most financial support for the project.

Dean of Students **Duane Rendle** and **Oriana Bertucci**, Director of Student Life, have again collaborated in the hiring of a team of remarkably dedicated and experienced student dons. Duane is responsible for the Residence dons, while Oriana oversees the Commuter dons. I interview every don before the hiring decision is made. We're finding that this extra, personal engagement pays off significantly in terms of the quality and dedication of our teams.

In addition to our major project at Brennan Hall, we will also be giving a long-overdue upgrade to residence rooms in Elmsley Hall, which will be getting new flooring, new beds and improved interior features.

Duane has just completed a video outlining the regulations governing residence life. Short, focussed and (reasonably) entertaining, it is designed to walk every residence student through the many important points that might previously have been missed within the fine print. Duane's earlier video, *The Alcohol ABCs*, was enthusiastically adopted by the U of T. I think they will be similarly impressed with his latest production.

We were gratified to learn that our neighbours at a federated college will be adopting the alcohol guidelines we introduced in 2015 and 2016. I am grateful to Duane and Oriana for their work in introducing the policy, discussing it with students, and, as a result, making it viable and successful. We are seeing a noticeable decline in serious alcohol related incidents on campus.

Oriana has played the key role in reanimating student government. She and her team have met regularly with student leaders, solving problems, delivering resources and support, and identifying opportunities for training and mentoring. In this last respect, she has worked closely with Hilary Ryall in the development of a program that we are calling "Virtuous Leadership." There is a real appetite for this among young people interested in student government and other leadership roles, and who are also thinking about their lives and careers after graduation. Oriana's office alone recruits some 180 students for a variety of leadership roles.

This transformation in student leadership culture is something we cannot and should not take for granted. It is central to living our mission.

Through the efforts of Campus Ministry, St. Michael's staff and students played a key role in organizing a contingent of students from a cross-section of Toronto universities and allied organizations to participate in the March for Life. We were fortunate to have our Chancellor, Cardinal Collins, meet with the students at a working dinner for the Toronto contingent at St. Theresa's Church in Ottawa kindly hosted by the Archdiocese of Toronto.

Oriana has worked hard to reinforce our links to the University of Toronto's Multifaith Centre, which will be supporting an intern under our supervision.

We continue to attach priority to the safety of students, staff and visitors. We have just completed an Emergency Preparedness Plan that has helped us to establish a short list for new investments in community safety. We are currently at work on the implementation of a new, campus-wide alert system, the renewal of all emergency related signage and instructions, and the introduction of enhanced security monitoring in the Kelly Library. We are committed to meeting the highest standards of accessibility, and are ensuring that all new and/or redeveloped spaces are accessible. Training is being provided to all new employees and regular reporting requirements have been met. New projects include

accessibility doors in Brennan Hall, a motorized desk at the Library's circulation counter, the inclusion of a wheelchair accessible kitchenette in the Registrar's office and the incorporation of the latest accessibility standards into the design of our new website.

Hiring the People Who Will Take USMC into the Future

We continue to find talented and dedicated people to lead the University into its future. Let me offer three recent examples. First, in creating a new Student Life section under Oriana Bertucci, we added new colleagues **Erica Tice**, who is the Campus Ministry and **John Taylor**, whose portfolio includes supporting student clubs and associations. The new section represents the fulfilment of a commitment to better engage and mentor student leaders, and to expand the reach of campus ministry. The additional resources are enabling us to find new opportunities to engage our students in one-on-one sessions in which we have the opportunity to listen and learn. This is also central to the good work being done by Wellness Counsellor **Nicole LeBlanc**. I also want to thank **Steve Marchment** who has done a tremendous job overseeing the Residence Life portfolio this year while **Katie Forjoe** has been on maternity leave.

Second, although the departure of Janet MacMillan left us with a very big gap to fill in our Finance section, Bursar Effie Slapnicar moved quickly to bring in a highly experienced and capable replacement. **Louis Chan**, our new Director of Finance, is already making a major contribution in supporting our people and programs through his already notable participation at our Finance and Investment committees.

As noted above, our new Registrar, Giancarlo Mazzanti, is already making a difference. This is particularly true in terms of communities that mean a lot to us. He is an active presence across campus where admissions policy is set with the Faculty of Arts and Science and with the registrars of the other colleges. I note with a real sense of gratification that our voice is being heard and taken seriously in conversations that really matter to our future. Giancarlo is helping us to think through our own next steps when it comes to determining just how big we should be and how we can do even better at attracting students who are seeking the distinctive experience that we offer. He is also rebuilding our relationships with guidance counsellors at what were once key feeder institutions and at schools that are becoming feeder schools. In this, he is working closely with Principal Boyagoda, skillfully highlighting the exciting changes that we are bringing to undergraduate academic life. This is aided considerably by the work that Kathryn and Effie are doing in enabling us to use generous contributions from alumni to recruit and support the students we seek.

Needless to say I am very grateful to **Suzanne Ramnauth**, who is in charge of Human Resources at the University, for her skill, energy and dedication in helping us to put together such a capable team. Suzanne has also played a key role in our negotiations with

the three unions on campus, which has been a major undertaking through the first 6 months of 2018.

Telling Our Story

I have been gratified by the extent to which we are getting better at telling our story on many levels. **Stefan Slovak**, Director of Communications, Events and Outreach has built a highly effective communications team. They have given an exciting new look to our visual identity and branding and have, working closely with Effie and others, successfully launched our new website. We will be introducing a new, password-protected portal for Collegium members at this week's meeting. Thanks to Stefan and communications team members like **Rachel Wilson** and **Martyn Jones**, we are building a communications plan (including more effective use of social media) into all of our major events. As a result, we are delivering a thoughtful and compelling narrative about St. Michael's to a range of audiences, and we're seeing an immediate response in terms of improved event participation rates and fund-raising totals.

This was evident, for example, in our efforts to build support for major events like our Dante lecture, which was mounted by Sheril Hook and her team at the Kelly Library, working closely with Randy and the College and with Kathryn and Advancement, and enabled through the generous vision of alumni Alberto Di Giovanni and Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni, whose collection formed the backbone of the event. We followed a similar format of lecture and exhibition a few months later for an equally successful exhibition on Catholic Social Teaching, in which Dean **Jim Ginther** and the Faculty of Theology worked with colleagues at the Kelly Library (led by **James Roussain**) and our Advancement team. In this case, the featured speaker was Archbishop Durocher of Gatineau, and among the guests were members of our three sponsoring religious communities, whose history of good work was carefully chronicled. The faculty and the library recently invited members of those communities to join in a celebratory tea as the exhibit comes to its close. The exhibit also highlighted the vision and courage of the Archdiocese of Toronto in creating the Share Life charitable campaign, a reminder that the first principle of Catholic social teaching is respect for life.

An international conference titled "The Church and Migration: Global In/Difference" opens next week with support from our Faculty of Theology.

Stefan's team is also working closely with communications partners at the University of Toronto, ensuring that they are more aware of what we're doing and that we have a more conspicuous presence in the U of T's own communications

Thanks to Effie and Stefan the campus was shown to good effect through our first-ever participation in Doors Open Toronto. The organizers were particularly impressed by the

quality of our student volunteers. A highlight for visitors was the ability to tour Marshall McLuhan's long-time office on campus, carefully recreated by our resident McLuhanist, Professor **Paolo Granata**. Kathryn Elton arranged to have this particular feature held over for Spring Reunion, where it delighted alumni who had been taught by McLuhan.

As usual, visitors to this and other major events, had high praise for the beauty of our campus, thanks for the work of people like Director, Facilities Operations, **Frank Bertuzzi**, **Monica Echavarria**, Manager, Janitorial and Housekeeping and Groundskeeper **John Scarcelli**, whose dedication to our urban landscape is a joy to behold.

The single most successful communications initiative of this (or any year that we know of) was the promotion of the Cardinal Sarah visit. Viewership of the videos we made of the event exceeds 25,000. The Catholic Herald in the UK featured separate accounts of the visit authored by the talented **Rebekah Lamb**, who has taught in the Gilson program, and by Martyn Jones from Communications. (Martyn also produced that much-watched video).

Kathryn and her team have been carrying our message to alumni in Canada and the USA. Aside from big annual events like the Golf Tournament and the Bank of Montreal reception, the team has organized events, such as a reading by Randy Boyagoda in the home of alumnus Donall Healy in New York, and a trip to Boston by new arrival **Sara Franca**, who heads the Advancement side of Kathryn's team. Sara and Kathryn have conducted an ambitious series of outcalls on alumni, something that is providing tremendously important insights into their thinking and helping to shape future programs. Our two main fundraising themes—investing in student academic and community life—are drawn directly from the testimony and wise counsel of our alumni.

Thanks to efforts like this, we have seen highly encouraging increases in Annual giving and Major Gifts.

Thanks to the efforts of **Leslie Belzak** and her team in Alumni Affairs, many colleagues from across the University and a cohort of wonderfully helpful student volunteers, our recent Spring Reunion was one of the biggest and most enthusiastic ever. Of course, that's also because of the remarkable commitment of our alumni, including amazing engagement by the classes of '58 and '68.

Our just-completed Convocation featured record-breaking attendance. A highlight was our open air awards ceremony the Quad.

As noted above, Giancarlo Mazzanti and his team in the Registrar's office are ramping up our outreach to prospective students and their parents, something that is beginning with traditional feeder schools that have not seen a USMC recruiter for some time.

Finally, I have been gratified by the outreach undertaken by our colleagues at the Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian studies, led by their Director, **Fr. Peter Galadza**. Their Tuesday and Thursday night events (27 in total!) in Windle House attract a diverse and distinguished group of guests from across the University and beyond. We had hoped that welcoming Sheptytsky would also mean welcoming with them scholars and other visitors from a wide variety of eastern Christian diaspora communities in the GTA, and this is happening in full measure. I have also been deeply touched and gratified by the warm welcome our Sheptytsky colleagues extend to all of us to attend liturgies in the beautifully appointed Chapel that they have created in Elmsley Hall.

As a university community, we gain enormously by welcoming Sheptytsky into our midst. We benefit from the richness and distinctiveness of who they are and what they bring to USMC most fully when we respect their autonomy. This is a real testament to (and test of) our oft-expressed commitment to ecumenism and intra-faith dialogue.

Building a Culture of Accountability

Effie and her team have worked hard to encourage all divisions of the university and all employees to contribute to our long-term financial viability by embracing a culture of accountability. The results have been borne out by this year's financial performance, in which we are again reporting an operating surplus. Effie's efforts to help colleagues meet their budgetary commitments and to identify, as early as possible, emerging challenges, is a big part of this.

I have been particularly gratified by the teamwork of Effie, Kathryn, Giancarlo, Jim, Sheril, Oriana and Randy in bringing an even higher degree of focus and strategic intent to our use of funds, using them even more effectively to support recruitment, key programs and mission objectives. This has been further enabled by Kathryn's stewardship calls on key donors, something that keeps us focussed carefully on donor intent.

It has been a pleasure to see the steady progress made by **Susie Wang Moore**, who has brought energy and dedication to her work as Manager of Conference Services. I know from direct experience that our guests are deeply grateful for her dedication to client service, something that is reflected in the steady growth of our film and TV business this year, and in our contribution to events like Doors Open Toronto. She has also stepped in to help the Library in its earliest efforts to create some revenue generating opportunities for the Conservation Studio, working carefully with its very talented new Conservator **Natasa Krsmanovic**.

Duane and his team have been working carefully to maximize revenue for Residence operations, while Effie is carefully overseeing the work of food-service provider Chartwell's, a relationship that has a significant impact on our bottom line.

There is a tough but necessary message in all of this. If we are to build and develop the competencies we require as a centre for Catholic intellectual life, we need to stay focussed on financial accountability and on opportunities to grow our revenues through fund raising and ancillary services.

The Miller Report, which was commissioned this year to help us prepare for a “focussed visit” by accreditors from the Association of Theology Schools, points to a larger challenge—and opportunity—that we face. We need to look more carefully at the choices implicit in our spending decisions, and to think more carefully about who we are, and how we stay focussed on competencies and programs that are central to our mission and strategic vision. Among other things, the report points to the importance of seeking advice from experienced and truly disinterested outside authorities in helping to clarify issues that we have struggled with, as a community, for many decades.

Closing Thoughts

Everything I have been able to accomplish has been due to the support of a very small team in my office. I want to thank **Emily Puigmarti**, who has worked for us for the last nine months under the guidance of **Debra Matthews**. Emily and her husband are expecting the arrival of their first child in August. We wish them great happiness!

Working with Debra, who in addition to being Executive Assistant to the President is also Secretary to Collegium, has been a great pleasure and has helped me enormously in every facet of my work. There hasn't been a day when I haven't been grateful for her experience, abiding professionalism and integrity, calm manner, good sense, and good humor. Like so many of my colleagues, I am well aware that her contribution to major university-wide events—like convocation and everything to do with Collegium—is central to their success. It has been a privilege to work with her.

May St. Michael continue to watch over us. Our best years are ahead!

David Mulroney