

the insider

A newsletter published for everyone in the Athabasca University community

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In early February, a group of undergraduate business students competed in the CASEIT, an annual international undergraduate MIS case competition, hosted this year by Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. The team was made up of (left to right) Dr. Alain Ross (coach), Tracey Anderson, Krista Notenbomer and Amber Manchester Parkhill. Read more about this great learning experience on page 2.



Posted on The Landing:
<https://landing.athabascau.ca>

Spotlight on Excellence - CaseIT 2012

by Dr. Alain Ross, assistant professor,
e-Commerce and CaseIT team coach



The AU CaseIT 2012 team: (left to right) Dr. Alain Ross, Tracey Anderson, Krista Notenbomer and Amber Manchester Parkhill.

In early February, a team of AU undergraduate business students (Tracey Anderson, Krista Notenbomer and Amber Manchester Parkhill) competed in the International CaseIT Undergraduate MIS Case Competition hosted by Simon Fraser University in Vancouver.

The AU team earned its place in CaseIT 2012 by placing fourth overall at a preliminary competition held in October. At the end of preliminaries, they were the top Canadian team in the competition.

In the Vancouver finals, the AU team was assigned to a pool that included the National University of Singapore, Carnegie Mellon University of Pittsburgh, Pa., and the University of British Columbia. All teams get the same case (an unpublished, never been seen before case) and are given 24 hours (sequestered in a hotel room) to develop their solution.

This year, the case was about an entrepreneurial company that had created an innovative MRI technology to improve the accuracy and comfort of breast cancer detection. The company had six months of funding left and had to decide next steps: how to position its product and services, how to finance its efforts, the appropriate technology platform and how to bring its plan to fruition.

This very challenging case raised many issues to resolve and provided few specific details. As a result, the competing teams had to do significant research into the health care industry and MRI technologies and to demonstrate knowledge in many business disciplines, especially marketing, technology, finance, entrepreneurship and innovation, and strategy.

The AU team's solution was strong and engaging and received particular kudos from the judges for being innovative and focusing on the outcomes most relevant in the health care environment: patient health and safety. Despite the team's great presentation, however, the National University of Singapore was selected as the winner of the pool, based on its very thorough and detailed case analysis. The other finalists were University of Manitoba, Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Indiana State University.

After the final case presentations and an exciting lightning round, Kwantlen Polytechnic took top prize, National University of Singapore took second and Indiana State University, third.

The competition represented a great learning experience for everyone involved. Anderson, Notenbomer and Manchester Parkhill worked very hard on their preparations, and I am sure that they would say that the experience was worth their efforts. As their team coach, I am very proud of their achievements. They represented AU very well and demonstrated that an AU education positions people to compete against the best in the world.



DID YOU KNOW?

Athabasca University's Facebook page has over 1,800 fans.

Check it out at www.facebook.com/Athabasca.University

If you would like something posted onto the AU Facebook page, please contact [Michael Shouldice](#).

AU to Co-host Three Springtime Learning Conferences

1 Follow the Sun

AU, along with the Australian Digital Futures Institute and the Beyond Distance Research Alliance, is hosting 2012 Follow the Sun, a global online conference on the future of learning as viewed from different knowledge perspectives, to be held March 27 to 30. Registration is free, and those interested in participating can register online.

2 Analytics, Big Data and the Cloud

In partnership with the Alberta Council of Technologies and the U of A's Alberta School of Business, AU is also hosting *Analytics, Big Data and the Cloud*, a big data conference, in Edmonton, April 23-25. Those planning to register should use the code "AthabascaU" to save \$100 on the conference fee.

3 LAK 2012

The program for LAK 2012, the Second International Conference on Learning Analytics and Knowledge, to be held in Vancouver April 29 to May 2, is now available. AU's Technology Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute is one of seven co-sponsors for the conference, which will bring together a diverse group of researchers focused on the many inter-disciplinary fields associated with learning analytics.

Fundraising and Friendraising: AU to Launch Campaign

It is time to focus on telling the AU story to the wider public, developing more awareness, building donor interest and support and moving closer toward successfully reaching our goal of raising \$30 million through the Athabasca University Campaign, AU's inaugural fundraising campaign.

Campaign launch events will be held in Athabasca and Edmonton. These events are to celebrate AU, to thank and recognize past and present donors, champions and partners and to generate momentum for the final sprint toward the goal.

Funding priorities for this campaign include scholarships and bursaries, research institutes such as the Technology Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute, other research initiatives identified by faculty, deans and the Research Centre, and special projects such as the Learning Communities Project.

Planning for the Campaign began in 2008 when the feasibility of a multimillion-dollar campaign was tested. Based on the data collected, the recommended campaign goal was \$30 million. A formal campaign plan was then prepared and approved by the Governing Council of the day. The campaign is expected to wrap up by 2014.

If you would like more information on the campaign, please contact [Development and External Relations](#).



Got the latest Open?

Keep up with the latest AU news all year round with *Open AU*, the online companion to *Open* magazine: www.open-au.com

Check out Open AU online

Keep up with the latest AU news all year round with *Open AU*, the online companion to *Open* magazine: www.open-au.com



Download the *Open AU* app from iTunes.

AU Press News



Working people gathered at the Ironworkers Main Hall in Edmonton on February 24 to celebrate the launch of *Working People in Alberta: A History* edited by Dr. Alvin Finkel, a professor of history in the Centre for Humanities. The book is the newest title in the Working Canadians Series from AU Press.

Solidarity!

Over 100 people gathered to eat, drink and celebrate. Those attending had an opportunity to speak with contributors to the book and listen to short presentations by Gil McGowan of the Alberta Federation of Labour and Guy Smith of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees.

You can order a copy of *Working People in Alberta: A History*, from [AU Press](#). If you are interested in attending the next launch event, contact [marketing](#) at AU Press.

Open Access Monographs

Continuing its commitment to open access publishing, AU Press has made all of its publications available through the new *Directory of Open Access Books*. AU Press is one of a select number of publishers involved in the DOAB project.

OAPEN (Open Access Publishing in European Networks) released this statement about the project: “DOAB will provide a searchable index to peer-reviewed monographs and edited volumes published under an Open Access business model, with links to the full texts of the publications at the publisher’s website or repository. . . . [This service] will maximize dissemination, visibility, and impact.”

AU Press expects to benefit from participation in the project through increased traffic to its website and increased profile for its publications. More information about the initiative is available in the [OAPEN press release](#).

Want more? Visit [AU Press](#) or:



Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association Update

by Amanda Nielsen, President, AUGSA

Introducing the 2012-13 AUGSA Executive

A hotly contested AUGSA Executive Committee Election was held on February 25. Four candidates ran for vice-president academic, two for vice-president operations and finance, two for vice-president external and one for president.

I am delighted that I will continue to serve as president for the coming year, and I look forward to working with all of you to ensure that AU is the best institution possible. Joining me as vice-presidents will be Lisa Barrett (external, MBA student), Olivia Meyia (academic, MAIS student) and Wilson Ho (operations and finance, MBA student). Barrett and Meyia are new to council, while Ho is currently serving as a Faculty of Business representative.

The new executive will take office on May 1, along with the faculty and centre representatives which the graduate student body will be electing in early March.

Each new executive member brings his or her unique skills to the table, and I am excited to work with the team that AU graduate students have elected to work on their behalf.

Thank You to Advancement Web Services and the Office of the President

AUGSA is part of a provincial umbrella group, called the Alberta Graduate Council, which represents graduate students at Alberta's four research intensive universities: AU, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge.

In each of the past two years, the AGC has hosted an Alberta Graduate Conference to connect graduate students to industry and to showcase the value of graduate studies. As one of its contributions to the conference, AU is building the conference website. AU is also supporting the conference through donor leads and assistance with conference finances.

On behalf of the AUGSA and the AGC, I would like to thank Dr. Frits Pannekoek, Jasper Buys, director of operations in the Office of the President, and Vern Hume, manager of online communication in Advancement Web Services, for their assistance in the creation of the Alberta Graduate Conference website. AUGSA sincerely appreciates the dedication of the AU leadership team and staff for ensuring student success and for their commitment to supporting our initiatives.

East Coast Meet and Greet

In an effort to connect graduate students with one another, as well as with faculty, staff and AU board members, AUGSA hosts Meet and Greet events about once every two months. Our next Meet and Greet will be held, in partnership with AU's Alumni Relations Unit, in downtown Halifax.

All AU staff, faculty and board members are invited to attend this event. Our members appreciate being able to meet their professors, program administrators and board members. Meeting their fellow students and university staff in person helps to make the AU community more tangible for graduate students and contributes to a positive AU experience.

If you will be in the Halifax area on March 13, we would love to have you join us at the Lord Nelson Hotel from 5 to 7:30 p.m. RSVP by emailing [me](#).

Centre for Corporate Stewardship Relunched

Under the leadership of Dr. Anshuman Khare and Terry Beckman, the Faculty of Business has revamped and relaunched the [Online Centre for Corporate Stewardship](#). The centre provides access to sustainability frameworks, best practices, research and other networks and organizations that promote sustainability.

Ethical standards and agreements affecting social responsibility can be difficult to develop, especially in the corporate world. “The Online Centre for Corporate Stewardship and its online community are stepping stones to helping people understand what sustainability is, how it touches all businesses and individuals in some form,” Khare said, “but the overarching goal is to get businesses and organizations to put corporate social responsibility and corporate stewardship into practice.”

Read the feature article about the Online Centre for Corporate Stewardship in [Open AU](#).

Scholarships Benefit AU and Caribbean Students



A pilot project administered by [Canadian Virtual University](#) and funded by the Government of Canada has increased enrolment at AU and provided educational opportunities for 40 Caribbean students who have received scholarships to complete AU programs.

The scholarships, which were divided among students from seven countries, fully cover the costs of either the Certificate in Counselling Women or the Certificate in Computing and Information Systems.

One student has already completed all requirements of her program, and another seven are expected to complete in the coming year. The remaining students have completed one or two courses or have withdrawn, usually for personal reasons. In some cases, students were not prepared for university-level studies or for independent learning.

In total, CVU has managed 200 scholarship students in 13 different programs at five partner universities, including AU.

Founded by AU and TÉLUQ in 2000, CVU is a consortium of 12 universities collaborating on online and distance education. Since its founding, AU's president has been a member of the CVU Board of Directors.

Anderson Addresses Swedish Conference

Dr. Terry Anderson of the Centre for Distance Education was recently a keynote speaker at the Next Generation Conference held at [Dalarna University](#) in Sweden.

A short interview with Anderson on [YouTube](#) focuses on why online learning should be embraced.

AU – the Crown Jewel?

Technology columnist Greg Hughes, in his in his Tech Talk column “[Embrace Technology and Enhance your Education](#)” on [InsideToronto.com](#) recently wrote, “The crown jewel of distance education options is Athabasca University in Alberta, which offers a wide variety of learning options online.”

“One of the best parts of the rise of the Internet,” Hughes continues, “has been how it's been a godsend for education, not just in terms of form, but what kinds of options are available for people. And in an era where it's essential people recognize that the digital economy's mantra—fast-paced, always changing—affects everything we do, there are options available for you to train and re-train online.”

Hughes also has a monthly technology column in the [Toronto Business Times](#).



The Insider is published for AU faculty and staff members and other members of the AU community by the Advancement Office.

Please send any information or photographs for inclusion to the [co-ordinator](#). If a photo opportunity presents itself, please contact [Blaise MacMullin](#). Due to FOIP regulations, a release form must accompany all photos. Please contact *The Insider* co-ordinator for a copy of the release form.

The first edition of *The Insider* will be published on March 26. The deadline for submissions is March 16.

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