

the insider

A newsletter published for everyone in the Athabasca University community

Volume 2: Issue #14
September 12, 2011

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Premier Officially Opens Academic and Research Centre

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Athabasca University 

Premier Officially Opens Academic and Research Centre

by Erin Ottosen



The new Academic and Research Centre

Three storeys tall, over 5,000 m² in area and nearly four years in the making, AU's \$30 million Academic and Research Centre was officially opened by Premier Ed Stelmach on July 29.

The ARC is a breathtaking structure, its design diverging from the box style of so many twentieth century buildings. The building's east wall curves gently outward, and the spruce and pine roof is at a 15 degree angle. Large windows on all three floors provide panoramic views of the surrounding countryside, and they have been

configured so that natural sunlight will continuously illuminate the building as the sun travels across the daytime sky.

See the full story of the ARC opening in [Open AU](#).

A series of time-lapse construction photos showing the entire ARC construction process in just over a minute is available on [YouTube](#) and the full story of building can be found on the [ARC website](#).



The official ribbon cutting: (left to right) AUGC chair Barry Walker, Jim Woodward, Premier Ed Stelmach, Frank Appleby, Dorothy Appleby, Athabasca-Redwater MLA Jeff Johnson, Della McLean, Trevor Martin, Noel Major and AU president Dr. Frits Pannekoek.

Award-winning Public Affairs Veteran Tom St. Denis Joins CSLS

by Erin Ottosen

Tom St. Denis, the creator of the Department of National Defence program that was the basis of AU's Journalism in Conflict Zones course (CMNS 451), has joined the Centre for State and Legal Studies as an adjunct professor of communication studies and has also won an award for developing the program.

St. Denis received the 2011 Department of National Defence Innovation Award for developing the program, which places Canadian soldiers and journalism students in a replicated Afghanistan war zone at the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre in Wainwright, Alta.

For just over two weeks, the soldiers and journalism students involved in the course receive training in how to operate in a war zone by behaving as if they are in an actual war zone for 24 hours a day. Each day the students produce news in a fully functional print and broadcast newsroom helmed by seasoned news producers.

"We are delighted to welcome Tom St. Denis to the Communication Studies Program," said program co-ordinator Dr. Evelyn Ellerman. Aside from a long career in public affairs and journalism, she said, St. Denis brings substantial professional knowledge of the Canadian military to AU: "He is working with the university to extend its ability to address the study of the relationship between media, the military and Canadian society."

St. Denis has spent almost two decades working as a public affairs officer for the DND and a decade working as a print journalist in Africa and Asia.

A feature on St. Denis will appear in *Open AU* in the coming weeks. More information about *Journalism in Conflict Zones* is available on the course webpage.



Josée Touchette, assistant deputy minister (public affairs), Department of National Defence, presents the 2011 Innovation Award to Tom St. Denis at a ceremony in Ottawa.

Provincial Grant Supports Work on Open University of Nepal

The government of Alberta has awarded AU a \$21,000 Community Initiatives Program grant in support of its efforts toward establishing an open university in Nepal.

The grant, which will support an analysis of a pedagogical model for the proposed Open University of Nepal, was announced by Lindsay Blackett, minister of culture and community spirit, at the opening ceremonies for the Academic and Research Centre on July 29.

The Culture and Community Spirit Ministry's international development grants provide financial assistance to small and medium sized Alberta based non-governmental organizations to help meet Alberta's commitment to give people in developing countries the tools to eventually meet their own needs. The grants match or supplement donations by citizens of Alberta to humanitarian projects of their choosing.

DID YOU KNOW?



Athabasca University's Facebook page now has over 1,580 fans.

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

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

Arts and Science Research Talks Presents the 2011-12 Season

The Arts and Science Research Talks Series is set to go for the 2011-12 season with another full slate of speakers.

Presentations will take place on the third Friday of every month starting at 3 p.m. in AU Edmonton Boardroom 1222 (except where otherwise noted in the schedule below). Presentations will also be available on web conference with Adobe Connect.

Please mark your calendars and join us at AU Edmonton to meet your colleagues and learn about their research.

Further details about each talk will be emailed prior to the presentation.

- **September 23:** Dr. Joe Pivato, Centre for Language and Literature, reading from and interviewing Canadian writer Mary di Michele, Concordia University
- **October 21:** Liam Connelly, Centre for State and Legal Studies, "Death, Dying and Lawyers: Legal Issues Related to Personal Directives" (Boardroom #1112)
- **November 18:** Dr. Alvin Finkel, Centre for State and Legal Studies, "Class Dismissed: Where Working People's History Fits into the History of Alberta"
- **December 16:** Dr. Josh Evans, Centre for Global and Social Analysis, topic to be announced
- **January 20:** Dr. Martin Connors, Centre for Science, topic to be announced
- **February 17:** Dr. Linda Chmiliar, Centre for Psychology, "Self-Regulation Skills and the AU Student"
- **March 16:** Dr. Paul Kellogg, Centre for Integrated Studies, "Social Movements and Trade Unions in an Age of Austerity: Reflections on Ontario's 1995-1998 'Days of Action'" (Boardroom #1112)
- **April 20:** Allison Kydd, Centre for Language and Literature, topic to be announced
- **May 18:** Dr. Jeff Vallance, Centre for Health Disciplines, topic to be announced
- **June 15:** Carolyn Greene, Centre for State and Legal Studies, "Trust and Confidence in the Law: Does the Quality of Treatment Young Muslim's Experience from Police Affect Their Views of and Willingness to Participate in the Canadian Legal System?"



Nathan Gafuik (Photo courtesy of Gymnastics Canada)

Nathan Gafuik Vaulting to Success

AU student Nathan Gafuik of Calgary has become the first Canadian gymnast to capture two individual medals at a single world university games.

Competing at the twenty-sixth Summer Universiade, held in Shenzhen, China, in August, Gafuik won Canada's first medal of the games, a bronze in the individual all-around competition. He added a silver in the vault on the final day of men's artistic gymnastics competitions.

"It feels pretty good. It's not exactly the medal I wanted, but it'll do," Gafuik said. He came close to adding a third medal to his collection, for his performance on the horizontal bar, but an exceptional performance by the final competitor dropped him from third to fourth in the final standings for that event.

Gafuik was an alternate with the Canadian squad at the 2005 Summer Universiade in Izmir, Turkey, but did not compete.

Another AU student, Jackson Payne of Edmonton, also competed at this year's Summer Universiade as part of Canada's four-member men's artistic gymnastics team. Payne is the reigning all-around floor and pommel horse national champion and won the rings event at the 2011 Canada, U.S.A., China Three Way Competition, held in Calgary in March.

Gafuik's performance, received coverage in [The Star](#) and [TSN](#).

(Story provided by [SendtoNews](#).)

AU Alumni Making News

Edmondson's Books Being Developed for TV

A Canadian production company has optioned Jill Edmondson's successful Sasha Jackson mystery books for a television series to be developed for a cable network.

"I can't give many details yet," Edmondson, a 2009 MAIS graduate, said. "I have no idea how involved I'll be, and I know it will be ages before cameras start rolling, but it's exciting nonetheless."

Two of Edmondson's novels featuring private investigator Sasha Jackson have been published since 2009, and a third is due in bookstores this November.

Edmondson's MAIS concentration was in cultural studies with an emphasis on literature, writing and drama, and she said that she has been able to parlay much of her MAIS experience into her personal and professional life. Two independent reading courses on crime fiction, with assistant professor Dr. Veronica Thompson, benefited her greatly when she was working on *Blood and Groom*, her first published novel, she said.



Jill Edmondson

A paper for MAIS 635: Equality on Context, indirectly led to her second novel *Dead Light District*. "The final essay was on human rights and the sex trade," she said. "I did tons of research for the assignment and learned all sorts of interesting—and horrifying—things about the world of commercial sex and human rights. A lot of the information simply didn't make it into the final essay. I hated the idea of not using it somewhere, somehow. Eventually, I used a lot of that leftover info as the background to the plot of *Dead Light District*."

See the full story in [Open AU](#) and an interview with Edmondson by Gloria Filax in the [a-MAIS-ing newsletter](#).

Hourihan Named Ombudsman

Peter Hourihan, a 35-year veteran RCMP officer and an AU alumnus, was recently selected as Alberta's eighth ombudsman.

Hourihan (B.Admin., 1991) was appointed as the RCMP's commanding officer in British Columbia in the fall of 2010 and has an extensive background in policing and mediation. He has been involved in the RCMP's grievance and adjudicative processes and has sat on a number of administrative policing boards.

Hourihan is expected to be officially approved as the province's chief watchdog when the legislature reconvenes this fall following the Progressive Conservative Party's leadership race.

See the full story in the [Edmonton Journal](#).

Jackson Assumes New Management Role

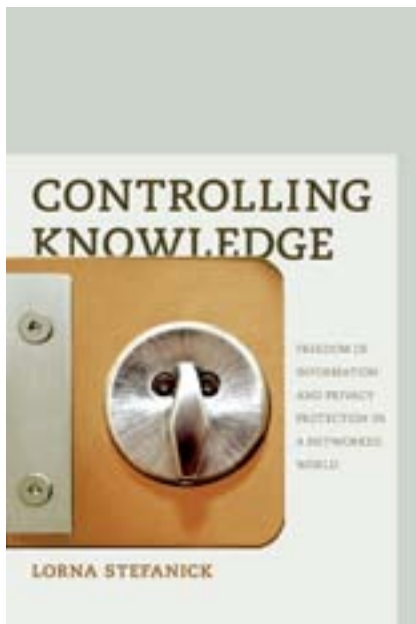
Richard Jackson, who holds an AU MBA, has been appointed manager of Canadian Regional Satellites and the Mississauga Operations (formerly CopperLogic) for Eaton's Electrical Sector -Americas Region.

Jackson has held different roles within CopperLogic, including director of sales and operations, as well as director of supply chain. Eaton's specializes in customized electrical distribution and control assemblies and solutions for the Canadian market.

See the announcement in [Electrical Business](#).

If you know of an AU alumni who is making significant contributions to their community, please contact [Tara Friesen, Manager, Alumni Relations & Philanthropy](#).

NEWS from AU Press



Controlling Knowledge: Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection in a Networked World

In *Controlling Knowledge*, Dr. Lorna Stefanick offers a provocative inquiry into the regulatory regime that governs freedom of information and the protection of privacy (FOIP).

The application of FOIP laws requires a balancing act between two potentially competing goals: the desire to provide citizens with access to the information they need in order to hold others accountable and the desire to safeguard an individual's right to privacy and protect sensitive information from abuse. To illustrate the impact of FOIP, Stefanick, an associate professor in the Centre for State and Legal Studies, examines the secondary uses of medical data, looks at the forms of surveillance that the digital age has enabled and explores the power and perils of Facebook and the Internet.

Intended to serve as a citizen's guide and written in refreshingly down-to-earth language, *Controlling Knowledge* is a vital resource for anyone seeking to understand the concepts and issues that drive FOIP legislation and how these laws are shaping the individual rights of citizens in the information age.

Prior to joining AU, Stefanick was associate director of the Government Studies Unit at the University of Alberta. Having taught in a virtual environment for over a decade, she has had first-hand exposure to some of the radical ways in which new communication technologies have transformed people's working lives and social relationships.



Lorna Stefanick

For more information, visit [Controlling Knowledge: Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection in a Networked World](http://www.aupress.ca)

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Audience Found Fungi Fascinating

More than 85 people attended the Athabasca Mushroom Exhibit presented by Science Outreach – Athabasca in the new science lab on August 24. Presenter Dr. Roland Treu had an attentive audience, and several people brought a variety of mushrooms for identification. Participants learned how to recognize common edible mushrooms and avoid poisonous ones.



Roland Treu (photo by Robert Holmberg)

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 next issue of *The Insider* will be published on Monday, September 26, 2011. The deadline for submissions is September 16.



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