

the insider

A newsletter published for everyone in the Athabasca University community

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Things were popping with this year's United Way Campaign. Sales were brisk as A.J. Fraser greeted customers with a smile and some hot salty popcorn. See more photos from this year's campaign on page 4.



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

Athabasca University 

AU Prepares to Go Public with Fundraising Campaign

by Erin Ottosen

This coming spring, AU will publicly launch the Athabasca University Campaign. This public phase is the final phase of the campaign, which has already achieved over 50 per cent of its \$30-million fundraising goal.

Dr. Pamela Walsh, AU's vice-president (advancement), chatted with *The Insider* about what the campaign has accomplished so far, where it is headed and why we are nearing the time to "go public."

When did the campaign begin, and when is it scheduled to wrap up?

Planning for the Athabasca University Campaign, the first fundraising campaign that the university has ever run, began in 2008 when we hired KCI Ketchum Canada Inc. to test the feasibility of a multimillion-dollar campaign. KCI conducted about 30 interviews with key AU prospects and stakeholders and carried out an online survey involving about 500 alumni. Based on the data they collected, they recommended that we set a \$30-million goal for our campaign. We then prepared a formal campaign plan, which was approved by the Governing Council of the day. We've recently updated this plan, and we expect to wrap up the campaign by 2014.

Why did AU wait until 2012 to make the campaign public?

The accepted practice in fundraising is to announce a campaign publicly only when 50 to 70 per cent of the target has been reached. Most campaigns are about five years long, and the first two or three years is a "quiet phase" that focuses on building internal capacity and donor support.

Why has AU undertaken this campaign?

Campaigns are a normal part of the life cycle of a non-profit organization, and they serve several purposes. The first one is obvious: they raise money. But they also serve to raise the profile of an institution and recruit more donors and volunteers. With the building of the Development and External Relations team within Advancement, it is AU's time.

Who is managing the campaign?

The [Development and External Relations team](#) within Advancement is managing the campaign, but it is important to note that this is a university-led initiative, not an Advancement-led initiative. We have strong

commitment from the Board of Governors for the campaign, and we are counting on their counsel and support. The team of professionals in Development have a combined 39 years of fundraising experience, so we can be confident of achieving our goal.

Can you provide a snapshot of each phase in the campaign and the purpose of each phase.

The Athabasca University Campaign includes two phases: a quiet phase and a public phase.

The quiet phase, which will conclude this spring, consists of behind-the-scenes groundwork: building institutional readiness for the campaign and soliciting and securing donations with an emphasis on major gifts. The Leadership Campaign (2008-09) and the Family Campaign (2009-10) were important parts of the quiet phase, as giving by those who most intimately understand AU's needs enhances the credibility of the overall campaign. Members of the external community respond more generously if they perceive that the university's board, faculty and staff are supporting the campaign.

Now that relationships, resources and processes are in place, and some major gifts have been secured, we are almost ready to begin our public phase in the spring. The public phase will start with a launch event, and then we will focus on telling the AU story to the wider public, building more donor interest and support and, of course, obtaining the 30-40 per cent of additional funds needed to reach our goal.

After the launch event in the spring, what other public activities might take place?

Throughout the public phase, we will work with faculties and centres to explore fundraising and friendraising events that encourage public participation and increase awareness. Also, events regularly held by AU such as the community breakfast, Convocation and alumni events, will provide opportunities to further support the campaign. The campaign communication plan which is now being developed will ensure that campaign accomplishments, progress and events are shared and communicated appropriately with our internal and external audiences.

A key part of the campaign is raising funds for specific initiatives. What are some of the initiatives that the campaign is supporting?

Priorities for the campaign include scholarships and bursaries, infrastructure priorities (including information and communication technology infrastructure), AU's research institutes such as the Technology Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute, other research initiatives identified by our faculty, deans and the Research Centre, and special projects such as the [Learning Communities Project](#).

The campaign involves forming a cabinet. What is the cabinet and what is its role in the campaign?

The campaign cabinet, which includes a chair and several other members, is made up of community and business leaders as well as other influential people who are committed to advising, directing and supporting all campaign fundraising efforts. Campaign cabinet members make their personal gifts to the campaign before seeking gifts from others, illustrating their confidence in and support for the university. Among their many roles, the cabinet members will be responsible for soliciting funds, developing and reviewing campaign strategies and enlisting volunteers.

What roles do volunteers play in the campaign?

Volunteers are critical to the campaign and can play many roles including organizing, hosting and assisting at events, identifying prospective donors and meeting prospective donors, alongside campaign cabinet members and Development and External Relations staff members, to talk about AU and its mission.

What roles might AU staff play in the campaign either pre-launch or post-launch?

AU staff members can support the campaign in many ways including by serving as volunteers. Our staff are among the strongest ambassadors for the university, and helping to identify potential donors and supporters, building relationships with them and assisting at campaign events are all important roles for AU staff members. Philanthropy starts at home!

For more information on the Athabasca University Campaign, please contact [Pamela Walsh](#) or any member of the [Development and External Relations team](#).

Strings Across the Sky



Violinist Andrea Hansen (centre) was accompanied on her trip to Athabasca by Frank Hansen (left), co-founder of Strings Across the Sky, and Lucas Karvonen-Lee, grandson of filmmaker Pirkko Karvonen. (Photo by Wayne Brehaut)

Filmmaker Pirkko Karvonen and Andrea Hansen, a violinist retired from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, were at AU Athabasca for a November 7 Science Outreach – Athabasca presentation.

Karvonen's documentary *Strings Across the Sky*, which details a program established by Hansen in 1988 to revive the fiddling tradition in the Arctic, was shown during the presentation.

Hansen's *Strings Across the Sky* program features four-day intensive teaching sessions for youth in remote communities followed by a community concert.

Staff Changes Announced

The following changes to administrative and academic appointments will become effective as of December 1, 2011.

Dr. Rory McGreal, UNESCO/COL chair in open educational resources and director of the Technology Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute, has completed his second term as associate vice-president (research) and is leaving this position to focus on activities associated with the UNESCO/COL Chair. He will remain as director of TEKRI. McGreal will be joining the faculty of the Centre for Distance Education.

Dr. Donna Romyn, dean of the Faculty of Health Disciplines and former director of the Centre for Nursing and Health Studies, has agreed to serve as acting associate vice-president (research). As director, Romyn led the expansion of the Centre for Nursing and Health Studies and, as dean, the formation of the Faculty of Health Disciplines. She has served on both AU Academic Council and AU Governing Council.

Dr. Margaret Edwards, associate dean of the Faculty of Health Disciplines, has agreed to serve as acting dean of the faculty. Edwards has held several administrative roles in the faculty and previously in the former Centre for Nursing and Health Studies.

Dr. Terry Anderson, Canada Research Chair in distance education, recently completed the maximum term as CRC and has joined the faculty of the Centre for Distance Education as a professor.

News In Brief

Keeping Alberta's History Alive

The [Historical Society of Alberta](#) is once again sponsoring its annual essay contest. The goal of the contest is to encourage students to learn about Alberta history and communicate that history to others.

The contest is open to all undergraduate students attending Alberta universities or colleges in 2011-12, and the author of the winning essay will receive a \$1,000 prize and have his or her essay published in the society's quarterly publication, *History NOW*. Runner-up essays may also be published. The entry deadline is April 15, 2012.

Contest guidelines and an entry form are available on the competition [website](#). Email inquiries to [Alberta History](#) or phone 403-261-3662.

Philanthropy at AU: Another Successful Campaign for the United Way

Philanthropy is defined both as the act of giving and the love of humankind. When we take care of one another, whether on a grand scale or through small acts of kindness, we become, at heart, philanthropists.

The annual United Way Campaign at AU was once again a success. Events, run by enthusiastic volunteers, went well, garnering high levels of participation from across the university and generous contributions.

Food featured prominently in this year's activities.

As David Johnston, Governor General of Canada and patron of the United Way Canada, has said, "Every day, the United Way changes lives for the better, instilling hope, renewing faith and inspiring others to action. Working with community members to set local priorities, the organization serves as a convener and catalyst for social change, all while supporting local programs and initiatives designed to make a real difference. I encourage everyone involved in this year's campaign to strive for success and maintain your commitment towards creating a more caring Canada for all."



TOP: Rita Fertig (right) and Diane Morrison sold doughnuts and pop.
BOTTOM LEFT: This table of confectionery delights was featured at the bake sale.
BOTTOM RIGHT: The book sale, the only non-food event in the campaign, allowed book lovers to enhance their libraries.

Staff Awards



Alexandra Venter and Robin Hedley-Smith were recognized for their contributions to AU at the CUPE conference in Edmonton on October 22.

Venter, an advanced biology tutor and lab instructor in the Faculty of Science and Technology, received the President's Award for Tutoring/Mentoring Excellence. Venter has devised a number of creative approaches to improving the learning experience of her students and has been a strong contributor to biology textbooks and exercise books.

Hedley-Smith, who teaches English literature in the Centre for Language and Literature, received congratulations on her 35-year service award from registrar Jim D'Arcy.

Environmental Health and Education

Eight months of working in rural Tanzanian villages opened Larissa Duma's eyes to how changes in environmental health can drastically affect people's livelihoods and showed her that environmental education can be a pathway to positive long-term change.

Duma, a graduate of Edwin Parr Composite High School in Athabasca, will be the next speaker in the Science Outreach – Athabasca series on November 29, at 7 p.m. in Governing Council Chambers.

Her presentation, "Science, Humans and Action," will recount her experience as an intern with the Canadian International Development Agency working on environmental sustainability in Tanzania. The presentation will highlight some of the challenges and successes she experienced abroad and will explore how integrating science into developmental practice can improve global environmental health.

More information is available on the [Science Outreach – Athabasca website](#).



News In Brief

Campus Alberta Writing Studies Colloquium

AU will host the sixth Campus Alberta Writing Studies Colloquium at AU-Calgary on April 26.

Write Site co-ordinator Linda McCloud-Bondoc will be organizing this event, and details will be posted on the [CAWS website](#) as they become available.

Anyone interested in what is going on with writing studies and rhetoric in Alberta (teaching, research, writing program administration, writing centres, writing across the curriculum) is encouraged to attend.

AU People In the News

Ice-Free Travel

Research by Dr. Ken Munyikwa, an assistant professor of earth sciences in the Faculty of Science and Technology, is described in an article in the November 2011 issue of *Scientific American*. Munyikwa leads a team of earth scientists and dating experts that is examining a potential alternative passageway for early colonists to North America.

Known as the ice-free corridor, this midcontinental route formed after North America's largest ice sheet, the Laurentide, began retreating eastward, separating from the Cordilleran ice sheet that blanketed the west, and after vast glacial lakes blocking the passageway drained, leaving dry land. The resulting corridor ran along the eastern flanks of the Rockies and extended nearly 1,200 miles, from Alaska to the lower 48 states.

The article is available through the [AU Library](#). The section which focuses Munyikwa's research appears on page 44.

Job-Site Inspections and Christmas Lights

Associate professor of labour relations Dr. Bob Barnetson was quoted in a recent *Edmonton Journal* article about the disappointing results of a provincial government blitz of job-site inspections last month. The government is boosting the number of inspectors to 132 from 100.

Barnetson said that while hiring more inspectors is a good step, the government needs to double or triple their numbers to make a difference in a province with two million workers. "There's virtually no chance of an employer getting caught violating the rules, and even if they do get caught, nothing happens," he said, adding that more fines for employers could be a powerful motivator, but the government should also consider "public embarrassment" by publishing the names of companies with two or more serious infractions.

Read the full article in the *Edmonton Journal*.

Barnetson also appeared in the November 19 issue of the *Journal* in a story about "true Christmas keepers" and how he puts up 4,000 Christmas lights every year. "Lights are the best part of Christmas," he told reporter Marta Gold. "My folks always had Christmas lights, and I just find them cheery and happy. It's a little bit of colour at a time of the year when everything is so white and bleak."

See "Edmonton's fools for Yule" in the *Journal*.

Performer in Training

AU student Calla Wright is in her second year with the [Young Acting Company](#) at the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton. Four Young Companies offer advanced training and mentorship to aspiring artists, aged 16 to 21, who are serious about pursuing post-secondary education and a career in theatre in acting, musical theatre, playwriting and theatre production.

Read her *Edmonton Journal* [blog entry](#).

Superior Resources

MBA student Scott Parsons has been appointed vice-president of corporate development at Northern Superior Resources in Sudbury, Ontario. Parsons is a registered professional geoscientist in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Quebec and Ontario. Read the announcement in Dow Jones and Company's *Market Watch*.

OER Project

British researcher Gabi Witthaus posted her interview with Dr. Terry Anderson and Dr. Rory McGreal, both of the Centre for Distance Education, on her [TOUCANS Project Blog](#).

Anderson and McGreal were visiting the University of Leicester to meet with colleagues about a new, EU-funded OER project called [POERUP](#) (Policies for OER Uptake) and AU's participation in the project.



DID YOU KNOW?

Athabasca University's Facebook page has over 1,700 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](#).

Manasc Isaac Wins Recognition for ARC

The design for the new Academic and Research Centre at AU Athabasca won a People's Choice Award at the 2011 Infrastructure Partners Conference in Edmonton November 14-15.

Manasc Isaac Architects submitted one of two dozen posters, representing a wide range of project types and subject matter, to the competition.

The conference attracted about 500 attendees, including politicians, senior administrators, provincial employees, post-secondary representatives, architects, engineers, contractors and suppliers.

New Video Highlights Results of KIP Funding at AU

by Erin Ottosen

To mark the conclusion of two AU projects funded by the Government of Canada's Knowledge Infrastructure Program, the Advancement Office has produced a short video, [Building Knowledge: Athabasca University and the Knowledge Infrastructure Program](#), about the improvements that have been made to AU facilities through KIP program funding.

In the video,

- Biology professor Dr. Roland Treu, explains how KIP-funded renovations have enhanced the science lab at AU Athabasca, and geologist Dr. Ken Munyikwa shows how he uses the lab for his research.
- Vice-president (information technology) and chief information officer Brian Stewart, provides a short overview of the 35 information and communication technology projects that were completed with KIP funding.

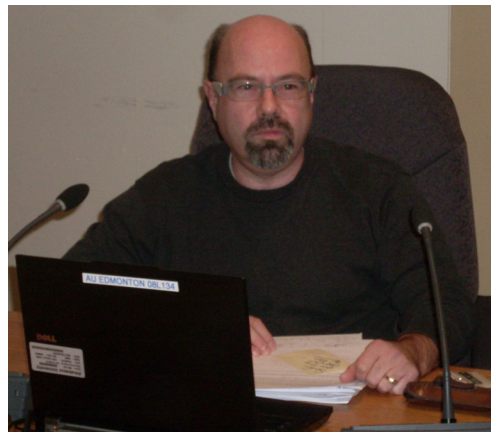
In 2009, AU received \$8.45 million from KIP and other sources to upgrade and renew facilities in the main campus building at AU Athabasca and \$7.65 million from KIP and other sources to enhance the university's information and communication technology infrastructure.

The Right to Decide

On October 21, the Arts and Science Research Talks Series welcomed Liam Connelly of the Centre for Global and Social Analysis who gave a thoughtful presentation on legal issues related to personal directives.

Connelly provided a commentary on a recent British Columbia case involving Gloria Taylor and on Canada's laws against assisted suicide and whether they infringe on the legitimate and understandable right of citizens to have a say in their medical treatments. As he discussed, the courts view active decisions quite differently from passive decisions (withholding treatment).

Connelly's recorded presentation is available through [Adobe Connect on the Centre for Research website](#).



Liam Connelly

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 Holiday Receptions

The holiday season is fast approaching and, with it, comes the opportunity to renew acquaintances, reconnect and celebrate. You and a guest are invited to attend the upcoming AU holiday reception in your area (come-and-go). Please RSVP by the specified dates indicated below:

Calgary

Friday, December 2, 4:30 - 7 p.m.
Julio's Barrio Mexican Restaurant
RSVP by November 28 to [Farahnaz](#).

Edmonton

Thursday, December 8, 4:30 - 7 p.m.
Zuppa Cafe
RSVP by December 1 to [Jim](#).

Athabasca

Friday, December 9, 4:30 - 7 p.m.
Athabasca Regional Multiplex
RSVP by December 1 to [Reception](#).



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, December 12, 2011. The deadline for submissions is December 2.



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Athabasca University 