

The following sections report on work underway and progress being made in relation to executive priorities for the current year against our [four 10-year strategic change goals](#), which are based on TRU's vision and values. There are also sections on Enabling Strategies and Operations, and International Development/Community.

Enabling Strategies / Operations

NEW STUDENT HOUSING CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING — TRU's newly constructed East Village complex opened on November 22. The Coyote Den or S'kelepéllcw (the Secwepemc word for Coyote Den) is a new four-storey building constructed at TRU's East Village. The permanent housing is TRU's latest addition to help address the rising need for safe, affordable student housing.

The project, which creates 148 beds in 80 single- and double-occupancy rooms, was made possible with \$10.85 million from the province, with TRU contributing \$7.91 million toward the total project cost of \$18.76 million. Construction began in October 2022. Amenities include:

- All rooms have a kitchenette and bathroom.
- Each interconnected floor included a common space ideal for gatherings, collaboration or study.
- Students can access 38 outdoor parking spaces, including one handicapped-accessible stall, 40 enclosed bike spaces and two electric vehicle chargers.
- The area will also feature well-maintained green space, stunning mountain views and a multi-use pathway connecting Summit Drive and Dalgleish Drive.

I am thrilled to see this building come online to serve the housing needs of our students, especially at a time when affordable, quality housing is in extremely short supply both in Kamloops, B.C. and across Canada.

INSTITUTIONAL MESSAGES REGARDING GLOBAL EVENTS — Recently, TRU sent two messages to our community regarding ongoing and deeply troubling global conflicts, urging people to show empathy and compassion for those who may be directly or indirectly affected and pointing people in the direction of support services we offer.

These messages were sent amidst a national environment that is hyper-sensitive to questions regarding what is hate speech and free speech and what duty organizations have to take strong positions that denounce the actions of one group or another.

We are living in difficult times, and TRU's senior executive has taken the position that, as an institution, it is not our role to issue statements about external events or take positions related to them. Instead, we must focus on people and supporting those who need care and attention. We feel there is more value and need in these moments for compassion, empathy, and inclusion over political rhetoric.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI RECOGNIZED — Thompson Rivers University (TRU) is honouring five esteemed alumni with Distinguished Alumni Awards for outstanding achievement, leadership and public service.

The five are:

- Caroline Cochrane — Caroline's (BSW '99) political career began with a fervent desire to improve the lives of people living in her home territory. Now the outgoing premier of the Northwest Territories, she was elected as an MLA in 2015 and became premier upon re-election in 2019. Her tenure proved eventful and challenging — the territory endured the COVID-19 pandemic, frequent flooding and devastating wildfires during her term in office.
- Joshua Gottfriedson — Joshua grew up in Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and is an accomplished athlete, actor and advocate for Indigenous people. Currently, he is a Tk'wenem7íple7 (councillor) for Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc. He was a student-athlete at TRU and received his MBA in Indigenous Business and Leadership from Simon Fraser University in 2017.
- Aleece Laird— Aleece (BBA '98) has been giving back to her community as a volunteer, a mentor and an expert in public relations and communications. From her teen reign as a Kamloops ambassador to her work with Operation Christmas Child Canada, Laird has always prioritized helping others. She is a committed volunteer who has held a wide variety of executive titles, including Kamloops Chamber of Commerce president, chair of the board and governor of the BC Chamber of Commerce and past director on the Canadian Chamber of Commerce board. In 2021, Laird received the City of Kamloops Exemplary Service Award, a formal recognition of her contributions to the community.
- Kuljit Minhas — Kuljit (BSc '03 RT '06) is a registered respiratory therapist who has worked with the Fraser Health Authority (FHA) for nearly 18 years. He is a professional practice leader with FHA and is a past president of the BC Society of Respiratory Therapists (BCSRT) as well as the current president of the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists. He was also part of a group of professionals working to establish the College of Diagnostic and Therapeutic Health Professionals in BC. Through each role, Minhas leveraged his extensive knowledge and industry connections to improve the quality of public health care in B.C.

- Greg Stewart — Greg (BBA '12) is well known in Kamloops as a former TRU WolfPack athlete and Paralympic world champion. Stewart won a gold medal at the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo, Japan, persevering through delays and the COVID-19 pandemic to throw a Paralympic record of 16.75 m.

Honouring exceptional graduates has been a cherished tradition at TRU since the inception of the Alumni Association in 1995. After pausing the awards in 2020, TRU is reintroducing the Distinguished Alumni Awards with an exemplary group of recipients.

TRU WOLFPACK UNVEILS SPORTS LEGACY FUND HIGH PERFORMANCE TRAINING CENTRE — The TRU WolfPack officially opened the Sports Legacy Fund High Performance Training Centre recently.

A state-of-the-art training facility, the space was made possible with a \$500,000 donation from the Kamloops Sports Legacy Fund (KSLF), of which \$375,000 was earmarked for the Kamloops Sports Legacy Fund High Performance Centre and \$125,000 went toward supporting student awards and scholarships.

Situated in the upper level of the TRU gym building, the Sports Legacy Fund High Performance Training Centre expands training opportunities for TRU student-athletes and helps push their performance to a new level.

TRU OPEN HOUSE — This year's fall Open House at Thompson Rivers University (October 21) was bigger and better than ever, with everyone from the community and the region invited to experience what TRU has to offer.

With 15 buildings opened across campus and over 100 displays, booths and interactive activities, there was something for everyone. Prospective students were provided with an application station where they could apply for free. They were also able to tour the campus, residences and learning spaces. Faculties, programs and student services across campus were available to provide information and answer questions.

Community members, families and alumni experienced interactive drop-in sessions, including hydrogen rocket launches, nursing manikin demonstrations, adventure studies students rappelling from buildings and the physics and chemistry magic show. Visitors also found a Fun Zone for treats, tattoos and games. Kamloops' favourite clown, Uncle Chris, and Wolfie, TRU's mascot, were on hand to provide some extra fun.

There were food trucks, on-campus food services, complimentary coffee and donuts, as well as giveaways throughout the day, including an iPad, Air Pods, TRU merchandise and a full semester's tuition credit.

WHY DOES PHILANTHROPY MATTER AT A UNIVERSITY? — TRU's [Annual Report on Philanthropy](#) is published by the Office of Advancement. This report shares initiatives, programs, and success stories made possible by our community of donors, which includes many TRU staff and faculty. It is an excellent way to learn about why philanthropy matters!

As an aside, last year's 2021-22 Report on Philanthropy earned a silver medal for Best Report to Donors from the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education (CCAЕ), an organization that promotes excellence in educational advancement. Congratulations, team!

CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT — Here is a list of recent events and meetings that have allowed me to connect with stakeholders:

- October 21 — TRU Open House
- October 23 – 26 — Ottawa
 - Meeting with Science and Technology Branch, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
 - Meeting with Strategic Policy and Innovation Sector, Natural Resources Canada
 - Meeting with Parks Canada
 - Meeting with Senior Policy Advisor, Policy and Cabinet Affairs, Prime Minister's Office
 - Universities Canada Membership Meetings (Oct 24 & 25)
 - Meeting with Innovation, Science and Economic Dev, Science & Research, and Strategic Policy
 - Meeting with MP Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo
 - Meeting with MP South Okanagan-West Kootenay
 - Meeting with Sr Regional Advisor & Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy PM and Min. of Finance
 - Meeting with an Alum
 - Meeting with Director of Operations, Office of the Prime Minister
- October 30 - Victoria
 - Meeting with President RUCBC
 - Meeting with DM PSFS
- November 1
 - Fall Forum
 - Minister and DM meeting with PSI Presidents & Associations (virtual)
- November 3 - Vancouver
 - RUCBC Presidents' Meeting
- November 7-17
 - Travel to the Caribbean and Mexico, visiting new partner institutions and federal and state agencies.
- November 22 — East Village Opening Event
- November 24 – TteS/TRU semi-annual partnership meeting

Recent university meetings I have attended nationally and regionally confirm that we are in an environment where higher education's importance is less valued than other pressing public priorities.

Cases for increased funding for operations, enrolment growth, graduate students and graduate programs, and for research are not having a significant impact.

Generally, universities must present new narratives about how our activities positively impact society; these new narratives must include compelling quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Housing, health, and electoral issues dominate public agendas; it is good for TRU and other universities to speak to these, for example, by building housing and promoting health programs.

Government relations activities have become more complicated, and we will have to engage with and across many ministries and agencies to find support for major initiatives, as we are doing with wildfire science. Indigenization is prominent on government and university agendas, with promising initiatives at other universities and TRU.

Lastly, I spent more than a week in November visiting new partner institutions in Mexico (states of Queretaro and Guanajuato) and the Caribbean, as well as federal and state agencies in Mexico. These are promising partners for TRU students' outbound mobility, faculty research collaboration and exchange, and, in several cases, for inbound mobility to help meet TRU's balance-related SEM goals in the last nine months.

TRU has built especially warm relations with a consortium of six universities in Queretaro whose presidents visited TRU this past summer, and we have already received 23 students from these institutions this semester, with more to come in January and later terms.

On September 27, I attended a town hall meeting with Premier David Eby and Minister of PSFS Selina Robinson at the BCIT campus in Richmond. The event was hosted by government to discuss post-secondary topics, including supporting students and the post-secondary sector, creating a sustainable and inclusive economy that leaves no one behind, and ensuring British Columbians have access to relevant education and skills training to support their life-long success.

Representatives from PSIs, student groups, and other partners were invited to the event. It was a worthwhile and productive evening that saw considerable discussion about B.C.'s need for international students, the desirability of some or many staying after graduation, and the importance of them having a good experience while they are here. Also, housing and general affordability of post-secondary education figured prominently in student comments and questions.

Eliminating Achievement Gaps

STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT — IPE has released its November 2023 student enrolment projections for TRU, based on data as of November 8th. These projections, developed after consultations with faculties, schools, and other relevant departments, reflect the latest applications, admissions, and course registration data for Winter 2024. The projections suggest an overall

institutional enrolment increase of 6.9% for the 2023-24 year compared to the previous year, with significant growth observed in Open Learning enrolments and on the Kamloops campus.

For the Kamloops campus, course enrolments are projected to rise by 6.8%, driven mainly by a 14.4% increase in international enrolments, while domestic enrolments remain relatively stable. Summer and Fall 2023 enrolments saw moderate changes, and Winter 2024 is expected to follow a similar trend. The Williams Lake campus anticipates a 3.9% increase in enrolments, led by growth in Nursing and EDSW programs, despite a drop in Arts and Science enrolments.

Open Learning is set to experience a 7.2% growth in enrolments, marking its first increase in three years. This includes domestic and international enrolments, with notable growth in the Veterinary Technology and Computing Science programs.

IPE's enrolment projections model incorporates various assumptions, including changes in cohort sizes and new programming. The next update cycle will occur in April and integrate Winter 2024 enrolments.

IPE has provided supporting documents and more detailed information on [OneTRU](#).

LATEST BC STUDENT OUTCOMES RESULTS — Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (IPE) has shared the latest BC Student Outcomes resources and results from former TRU diploma, certificate, associate degree, and apprenticeship and foundation students, which are now available on IPE's OneTRU BC Student Outcomes SharePoint site and IPE's Tableau Server.

The BC Student Outcomes Research Forum, in partnership with The Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training and BC Stats, conducts annual surveys of former students from British Columbia's post-secondary institutions. The results help shape the future of post-secondary education in British Columbia by providing valuable information to post-secondary institutions, the provincial government, career counsellors, parents and prospective students.

The 2023 diploma, associate degree, certificate (DAC), apprenticeship (APP) and foundation (TFTRV) results are located on IPE's [OneTRU BC Student Outcomes](#) site and are available by credential and program. By request, these reports can be customized to include outcomes from 2019 to 2023 at an institutional, credential, discipline, or program level and can be grouped by Indigenous identity, residency, or gender.

The most recent five years of DAC, APP and TFTRV results are located on IPE's [Tableau Server](#) in an interactive dashboard which allows you to filter by year, division, credential, program name, residency, Indigenous identity, rural and gender, as well as view five-year trends for key outcomes indicators. Log into the Tableau Server using your user account credentials and navigate to the Surveys project. Results in these workbooks are intended for internal use only and may not be published or used for publication.

Another fantastic BC Student Outcomes resource is the [BC Student Outcomes Data Viewer](#), which is open to the public. The results in the Data Viewer are available by Student Group, Institution (all participating BC PSIs), Program Area and Program Name. Aggregated data for the three most recent survey years are presented. As an example of the kinds of data to be found, the BC Students Outcomes provided the following summary for the 1,465 TRU degree recipients who responded:

- Gender distribution among respondents — 32% male and 68% female.
- Median age of respondents — 28 years.
- Satisfaction rate — 94% of respondents rated the quality of instruction as very good or good.
- Employment status — 90% of those employed were working full-time.
- Further studies — 45% of respondents pursued additional studies.
- Job relevance to program — 81% of employed respondents were working in a job related to their program.

SUPPORT FROM PHILANTHROPIST KEN LEPIN — Ken Lepin, a TRU Honorary Doctorate recipient and donor, awarded numerous students prizes this fall to encourage their academic pursuits. Recipients were honoured last month with TRU Honorary Doctorate Lepin in attendance. He has been supporting TRU students since 2006. He is one of TRU’s most generous contributors, with his lifetime donations totalling more than \$3.9 million. To date, 368 students have received a total of \$1,140,850.

The Fall 2023 recipients of the Ken Lepin Research and Graduate Studies Award:

- Gabe Carpendale
- Olivier Jumeau
- Calli Lawrence
- Erin Marchio
- Olivia McLennan
- Tay Powrie
- Jacqueline Schoen
- Kara Nickerson Wright

The Fall 2023 recipients of the Ken Lepin Prize of Excellence Entrepreneur and Communication Master of Business Administration Award:

- Isabella Ferster
- Hiten Patel

TRUNITY CAMPAIGN REACHES NEW HEIGHTS — TRU's annual internal giving campaign, now known as TRUnity Employee Giving, wrapped up on October 20, and preliminary results show that TRU has amazingly generous staff and faculty. Following the campaign, participation in payroll deduction giving is up 20 per cent and total contributions through payroll deduction amount to over \$100,000.

Honouring Truth, Reconciliation, and Rights

MÉTIS FLAG IN RECOGNITION OF LOUIS RIEL DAY — TRU is proud to be home to a number of Métis students, staff and faculty. The Métis flag, with a white infinity sign on a blue background, flew high in the Campus Commons in mid-November week to acknowledge visionary activist and Métis leader Louis Riel on the anniversary of his execution on Nov. 16, 1885.

Featured on the Métis flag, the infinity symbol represents the joining of European and First Nations cultures and traditions. It also represents the immortality of the Métis Nation. Louis Riel Day provides the opportunity to recognize the life and legacy of an honourable hero who defended and protected Métis rights and the Métis way of life.

TRU WILLIAMS LAKE INVITES ALL TO THOUGHT-PROVOKING INDIGENOUS EXHIBIT — TRU Williams Lake, in partnership with the Museum of the Cariboo Chilcotin, proudly welcomes the Witness Blanket, a nationally recognized art installation, to campus.

Developed by the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and Indigenous artist Carey Newman, the [Witness Blanket](#) is a powerful and thought-provoking work of art that recognizes the dark and difficult legacy of residential schools in our country. Inspired by a woven blanket, the cedar-framed artwork is made of more than 800 reclaimed items — including braids of hair, a hockey trophy and a piece of stained glass — from 77 sites across Canada, including residential schools, churches and cultural organizations.

Dates: Currently on display until Mon., Jan. 8, 2024

Times: 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Mon. to Thurs.); 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (Fri.); 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (Sat.); and 12 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. (Sun.); *Opening event on Mon., Nov. 27 at 1 p.m.*

Location: 1250 Western Avenue, TRU Williams Lake*

KNOWLEDGE MAKERS SHARES INDIGENOUS APPROACH TO RESEARCH WORLDWIDE — The [Knowledge Makers program](#) has expanded its reach from Kamloops to around the globe, since it first inspired Indigenous students to participate in and publish research. Launched in 2016, the program brings together Indigenous researchers, beginning at the undergraduate level. It's a collaborative teaching initiative where Indigenous students learn how to research and publish research as Indigenous researchers.

Focused on engaging Indigenous students across borders, [TRU partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#) in 2022, inviting Indigenous women from seven socio-cultural regions — with countries such as Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Russia, Hawaii and New Zealand represented — to apply for a special edition of the Knowledge Makers program.

The new partnership provided an opportunity for Indigenous women from around the world to advance their research and have it published in the [Knowledge Makers Journal](#) (volume 9).

Leading in Community Research and Scholarship

TRU'S PARTICIPATION IN US-CANADA WILDFIRE PREDICTION INITIATIVE — TRU has joined the U.S.-Canada Centre on Climate-Resilient Western Interconnected Grid, aiming to improve wildfire prediction models. This initiative is led by the Universities of Utah and Calgary.

The Western Interconnected Grid is one of two major power grids in North America, stretching from the northern edge of British Columbia to the border of Baja, Mexico, and from the California coast to the Rockies. The backbone of one of the largest regional economic engines in the world, the grid serves roughly 80 million people over 4.6 million square kilometres.

Dr. Mike Flannigan, the BC Innovation Research Chair in Predictive Services, Emergency Management and Fire Science at TRU, is working closely with other leading experts to enhance the power grid's resilience to the rising frequency, intensity and duration of extreme weather events, such as wildfires and heatwaves.

This partnership closely follows the introduction of TRU's proposed Institute for Wildfire Science, Adaptation and Resiliency, which is a significant step forward in providing British Columbians and Canadians with solutions to living with wildfires and highlights the university's growing expertise of wildfire researchers.

The academic members of the U.S.-Canada centre include the University of Utah; the WIFIRE Lab at the University of California San Diego; the University of New Mexico; the Desert Research Institute; the University of Calgary; the University of British Columbia; the University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus; the University of Alberta; the University of Saskatchewan; the University of Regina and Thompson Rivers University.

The centre has received \$5 million from the U.S. National Science Foundation and \$3.75 million from NSERC (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada).

International Development / Building Our Community

PLANNING THE FUTURE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION — TRU is embarking on a process to develop a 10-year strategic plan for internationalization. As a university, we celebrated 40 years of international education this year. We're ready to take this leadership to new heights at this stage in our history with a pan-institutional strategy.

Over the past four decades, TRU has achieved a level of excellence in international education, and we did this without a comprehensive framework. In the future, we want our internationalization efforts to be grounded in our Vision and Values and informed by the input of our university community and the communities we serve. We will embark on a broad consultation process in 2024 that will culminate with

a strategic plan to guide our international education, partnerships, and development for the next ten years.

We have sought applications from our community for participation on the Strategic Internationalization Plan Advisory Committee (SIPAC). This planning process will involve broad and ongoing consultation with the TRU community.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY — There's a call from Universities Canada for a renewed International Education Strategy to prioritize student mobility and diversification, highlighting the importance of international education in today's globalized world.

Universities Canada recently submitted its **consultation to Global Affairs Canada to renew the International Education Strategy** (IES). University Canada's recommendations call on the government to support the **EduCanada** brand through market diversification activities, research collaboration, in-country trade commissioner support, commitments to funding mobility programs and addressing issues with study permit processing.

The objective of the renewed IES is to prioritize investing in diversification, research collaboration and student mobility through the **Global Skills Opportunity** program. The current strategy's objectives include:

- Encouraging Canadian students to gain new skills through study and work abroad opportunities in key global markets, especially Asia;
- Diversifying the countries from which international students come to Canada, as well as their fields, levels of study, and location of study within Canada; and
- Increasing support for Canadian education sector institutions to help grow their export services and explore new opportunities abroad.