

# WESLEY TIMES

COLLEGIATE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

## April 2025 Newsletter

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It's finally starting to warm up in Winnipeg, and Spring Session is getting underway for Collegiate students. With summer just around the corner, it's an opportunity for the newest members of the Collegiate Alumni Association to get excited about the future, and for existing members to take some time to remember and reconnect.

The Alumni Association is looking forward to attending this year's Safe Grad celebrations for the Class of 2025. The Collegiate Alumni Association is donating \$2,000 to this year's event. In addition, Vice Chair Quinn Cove will be speaking at Convocation on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Keep your eyes open for an upcoming Convocation 2025 edition of the Wesley Times!

Postcards have gone out to Collegiate Alumni not currently in our database. If you're receiving the Wesley Times for the first time, let me officially welcome you



to the Association! Please feel free to reach out to update your information, schedule a visit to the Collegiate, or just to say hello. If you have any exciting news to share, we will include it in the next edition of the Wesley Times!

I wish everyone in the Collegiate Alumni Association a safe, happy, and healthy spring as we get ready for another extraordinary Manitoba summer. And of course, *Go Jets Go!*



Dear Collegiate Alumni,

As we move through the spring season, there's much to celebrate at The Collegiate. We recently wrapped up our Fall/Winter session and welcomed the start of Spring Session on April 28. March saw a wonderful Fine Arts Night and Coffee House, where students showcased their incredible talents in a vibrant and supportive setting—thank you to everyone who made these events so memorable. We are also proud to

recognize several faculty and staff milestones, including 15, 20, and even 30 years of dedicated service at the University of Winnipeg, as well as celebrate the retirements of some cherished members of our community. Their contributions have shaped generations of students and will continue to inspire. As always, we look forward to the upcoming celebrations at Convocation and invite you to stay connected with your Collegiate family.

Warm regards,  
Osaed Khan  
Acting Dean, The Collegiate

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**Alumni Come Home - Sarah Harris (2013)**



On February 5th, we had the pleasure of welcoming back Collegiate Alumnus Sarah Harris (Class of 2013) to share her inspiring journey with our current students. The event was a hit, with a full house of students in attendance, especially many aspiring ballet dancers and future engineers eager to hear Sarah's story.

Sarah's path has been anything but conventional. From professional ballet dancer to biomedical engineer, she shared her fascinating career pivot and the lessons she's learned along the way. After eight years in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's aspirant program and dancing professionally, Sarah decided to trade her ballet shoes for a career in engineering. Initially drawn to environmental engineering, everything changed when she witnessed a live joint replacement surgery. That moment sparked her passion for biomedical engineering. "Every tool in the operation room directly affects the life of the patient receiving surgery," Sarah shared. "After witnessing this surgery, I realized that I wanted to be a part of the manufacturing and engineering of these life-saving devices."

This newfound passion led Sarah to intern at the Orthopedic Innovation Center (OIC) during her undergraduate studies. There, she gained hands-on experience in improving orthopedic treatments, testing medical devices, additive manufacturing, and 3D modeling—skills that are now helping shape her career.

Sarah also saw the importance of connecting with others in the engineering community. That's why she co-founded the *Women of Manitoba Engineering Network* (WOMEN) to promote opportunities for women-identifying engineering students at the University of Manitoba. Sarah's experiences with mentorship during her studies helped her understand the power of advice from peers, especially those who share similar academic interests. As she put it, "Building relationships with your peers can help shape the trajectory of your career, and you never know when you'll inspire someone."

Today, Sarah's work focuses on clinical epidemiology and quality improvement at the Pan Am Clinic, where she's helping establish a database to improve orthopedic practices across Manitoba.

Sarah's visit was a reminder that career paths aren't always linear—and sometimes, the most unexpected journeys lead to the most rewarding destinations. We are grateful she came back to share her story and inspire the next generation of Collegiate alumni!

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**Mayor Scott Gillingham at The Collegiate**



On March 5, 2025, The Collegiate had the exciting honor of welcoming Scott Gillingham, Mayor of Winnipeg, to engage with students and answer their pressing questions. The mayor's visit was sparked by an inspiring initiative from Jennifer Janzen, a dedicated educator known for her innovative approach to teaching.

Ms. Janzen encouraged her students to explore Winnipeg, capturing photos of issues they noticed around the city. These snapshots were then transformed into postcards, each carrying thoughtful messages for the mayor. This hands-on project caught the mayor's attention and led to his visit. This isn't the first time Ms. Janzen's creative efforts have caught the eye of political figures. In 2015, she was awarded the prestigious Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching for her involvement in the play *Shadows of Manitoba's Past*, a collaboration with local playwright Debbie Patterson.

At the same time, the Canada Postal Strike was underway, Ms. Janzen personally delivered these postcards to Mayor Gillingham. The messages from students covered a wide range of topics, including homelessness, urban sprawl, transit systems, and downtown safety—issues that clearly resonated with the mayor.

During his visit, Mayor Gillingham shared insights into his role, the challenges he faces, and his vision for the future of Winnipeg. "When making decisions, we have to look 20 years into the future and consider how it will affect Winnipeg," the mayor explained. "What kind of decisions do we need to make now to help us 20 years down the line?"

The discussion then moved to a dynamic Q&A session, with students asking thoughtful questions about everything from downtown safety and housing to how different levels of government interact. One of the more memorable moments came when the mayor humorously revealed that one of the biggest issues on his plate right now is... sewage! With Winnipeg's population having grown by 71,000 people in the past three years, the city's aging infrastructure is struggling to keep up. "I never thought I'd be talking about sewage so much," Mayor Gillingham joked, "but it's a problem we need to fix. We have to invest in the city for the future."

Throughout the session, the mayor's charisma and willingness to engage left a lasting impression on the students. He ended his visit with words of encouragement: "Not only are you the future, but what you do matters right now. You are a part of this city and this community. Who knows, one of you may even become the next mayor of Winnipeg!"

It was a day full of insightful conversations and an inspiring reminder of the power students have in shaping their city's future. Thank you to Mayor Gillingham for



taking the time to connect with The Collegiate community, and to Ms. Janzen for continuing to inspire her students to make a difference in Winnipeg!

\*Below you will see an example of one of the students postcards that caught the Mayors attention!



Dear Scott Gillingham,

Recently, I have become more aware of some of the urban issues and solutions related to urban sprawl and transportation in Winnipeg. Urban sprawl has been a growing issue in Winnipeg with people moving farther towards the outskirts of the city into the suburbs. Leading to increased emissions, increased construction costs, and heat island effects. It has also led to auto dependency because of a lack of accessibility and connectivity. A solution to combating urban sprawl would be to renovate downtown and add more inner-city housing. According to Global News, "Portage Place unintentionally created a barrier between the north and south neighbourhoods that make up our downtown". This is why renovating downtown is key to connecting neighbourhoods and making amenities more

accessible. Revitalization of downtown will allow for more accessible housing, health centers, shopping centers, and food spots reducing urban sprawl.

Transportation is also becoming an issue in Winnipeg because it leads to increased greenhouse gas emissions. According to The Manitoban, “four out of ten Canadians live within 250 meters of a busy road, which is a high exposure area for traffic-related pollution”. A way to cut back on that pollution would be to improve public transportation. Some ways to improve public transportation would be to build more bike paths, create more car share systems, and make busing more effective. Improving public transportation would decrease construction costs and allow for more affordability and connectivity. I feel like these are some ways to improve Winnipeg and make it a more connected and sustainable city.

Sincerely, Student

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**Celebrating Faculty: Bonnie Talbot**





Bonnie Talbot is a proud alumna of Brandon University; she holds degrees in both English and Education. She later pursued a Master of Arts in English Literature at

the University of Manitoba, where she focused her thesis on the poet John Keats. A fitting choice, especially since students lucky enough to have her as an English teacher will likely remember their deep dive into thinkers like Shakespeare, Ishiguro, and Michael Ondaatje.

Her passion for teaching started early playing “teacher” as a child. However, it was her love for literature that solidified her path. After completing her undergraduate degrees, she began teaching high school. It wasn’t until she returned for her Masters that she briefly considered a new direction, until a thesis committee member offered an unforgettable piece of encouragement: “You should really consider teaching, you would be a fabulous teacher.” Though she had not initially intended to return to the classroom, her eventual decision to do so proved invaluable to The Collegiate.

Bonnie joined The Collegiate thanks to a nudge from Dean Rob Bend, a former colleague who deeply understood the school’s mission. “He was thoughtful and intentional about what the school needed,” she recalls. It is a testament to the leadership and collegial spirit that continues to shape The Collegiate. The faculty and staff truly are the heart of the school, fostering a community that supports both students and each other.

Over the past two decades, Bonnie has worn many hats at The Collegiate, including Associate Dean, Faculty member, and now a key role in Guidance, Scholarship, and Post-Secondary Office. Throughout every position, one thing remained constant: her commitment to the classroom. “Staying connected to students is incredibly important,” she says. “They are the reason we’re here. Watching them learn and grow, that’s what matters.”

Today, Bonnie is a cornerstone of The Collegiate. She describes it as “a place where curious, motivated students who enjoy learning and trying new ideas can truly thrive. Not necessarily the straight-A student, but those who are genuinely eager to grow.” That spirit of growth and encouragement is what makes the school, and educators like Bonnie, so special.

She credits her own teachers for inspiration, particularly a beloved second-grade teacher and an unforgettable Grade 12 chemistry teacher, with shaping her as both a student and a teacher. “I was terrible at it, I sucked at it,” she laughs, recalling her struggles with chemistry. “But the teacher made it enjoyable.” These

early experiences, along with the inspiration she received from her teaching colleagues have helped guide her throughout her career.

One moment that stands out came a few years ago when she received a voicemail from a former student, the message stuck with her. “She said something had reminded her of our class, and she wanted me to know it still resonated. That phone call meant so much to me. And I would never have known if she hadn’t reached out. You wonder how many moments like that go unspoken.”

In conversation, Bonnie speaks thoughtfully about learning, resilience, and staying curious, conversations that so many students have had the privilege of sharing with her. It’s these moments that reflect what makes The Collegiate such a powerful place to learn and grow.

As we celebrate the educators who shape our community, we’re proud to shine a spotlight on Bonnie Talbot—an educator who continues to inspire, mentor, and make an impact, one student at a time.

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### **Giving Back**



French Studies at the University of Winnipeg would not be where it is today without Dr. Carol Harvey. Her interest in French started as a seventeen-year-old, when she spent a year in France as an au pair. Harvey then developed her academic talent at the University of Edinburgh, beginning with an undergraduate honours degree in French Language & Literature in 1963 before transferring to the Université de Caen for a year in 1963-4. Spurred on by her love of the language and interest in French medieval texts, she returned across the Channel to her alma mater to refine her skills and immerse herself in the works of 12th – 15th century writers. She completed her PhD in Medieval Studies in 1969.

“I began rather tenuously at UWinnipeg in 1970 as a sabbatical replacement professor, but I was fortunate enough to move beyond that role as the years went

on.” says Harvey. “By 1984, I was a full professor teaching a multitude of courses, some of which I helped create.”

During her academic career, Harvey received numerous awards, including the Robson Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1980, the Clarence Atchison Award for Community Service in 1999, and the Erica & Arnold Rogers Award for Excellence in Research in 2000. She also served as Chair of the department from '83 to '88 and was made Professor Emerita of Modern Languages and Literature shortly after retiring in 2008 and Fellow of United College in 2017.

In 1991, Harvey made her first donation to the Kay Duckworth fund which supports a range of Art History and entrance scholarships at the University. Since then, she has given more than \$118,000 to 15 distinct awards—three of which are endowments she created to better support Collegiate and French Studies students.

“If you believe in something—be it a cause, establishment, or institution—then I feel you should support it financially if you are able.” says Harvey. “I benefitted greatly from financial support while studying in Edinburgh, and I want to help today’s students plot their own path through life in much the same way that my donors helped me.”

The Harvey Travel Scholarships in French and Harvey Scholarships for Collegiate Model School Students are the latest awards born from Harvey’s incredible generosity. Established in December 2024, both awards represent her commitment to supporting the institution she faithfully served for 36 years.

“The greater community of alumni and retired educators like me play a big role in supporting this University. It is my hope that people who can now give back realize this and decide to contribute to the next generation of great minds who come here to learn and work,” says Harvey. “Supporting the Model School was an easy decision when I learned that students are drawn from Winnipeg’s inner-city and other backgrounds that are traditionally underrepresented at the Collegiate. I created the Harvey Scholarships for Collegiate Model School Students to make a positive impact in the lives of deserving students who often face considerable barriers as they strive for a quality level of education.”

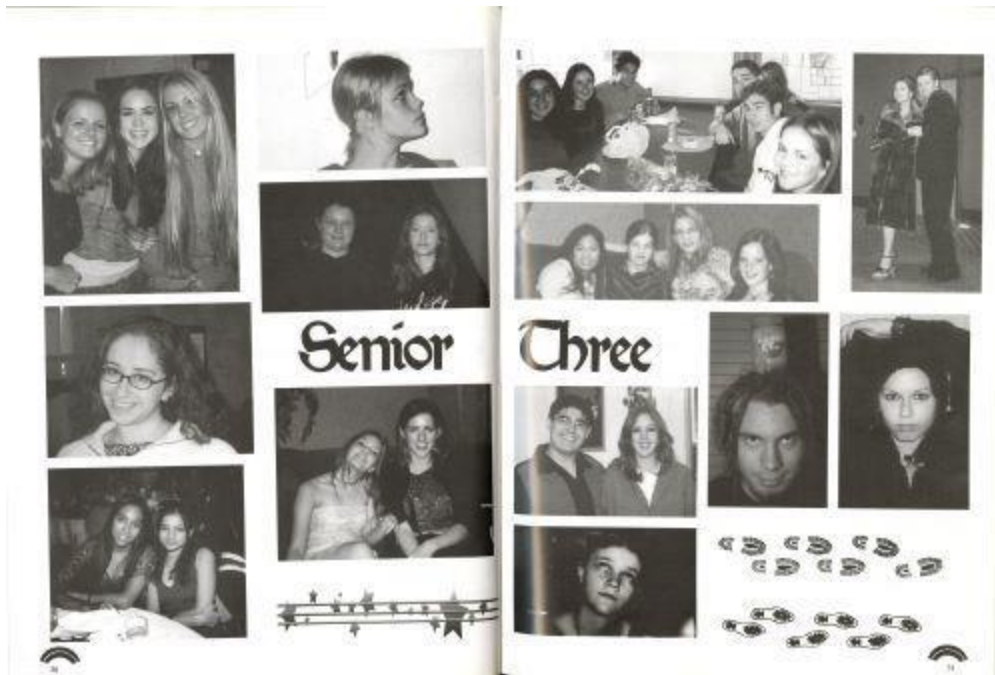
Dr. Harvey had originally intended to leave a bequest in her will but decided that she wanted to see her funding make a difference during her lifetime. With all funding in place since December 2024 and Senate approval to move forward, both scholarships will be available to students in 2026.

**Trics & Tic Yearbook photos 1987 & 2003**

Do you recognize yourself or someone you know in these photographs? We would love to hear from you! Please update your Alumni profile or if you would like to be featured in our next newsletter please let us know at [collegiate@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:collegiate@uwinnipeg.ca).







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