Brock University

ALUMNI INSIDER

Faculty of Applied Health Sciences

Vol. 1, No. 2, Fall/Winter

Health, safety and offshore survival

Sport analytics

Critical care response

Passionate community builder

Brock University

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Peter Tiidus, Dean

Welcome to the second issue of the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences Alumni Insider.

We are pleased to once again provide you with a number of thought-provoking articles about how our alumni are working to make the world a healthier place.

Whether teaching flight crews how to survive an aircraft crash, responding to the critical care needs of citizens in Niagara or connecting with communities through recreation in Alberta, our alumni are individuals who are not content to sit on the sidelines.

Based on feedback from our inaugural issue, we have added a Faculty news section intended to provide you with news briefs about recent developments and events in our Faculty.

Last month, we hosted a very successful Physical Education and Kinesiology Alumni Reunion which saw 96 alumni, former faculty and staff return to campus for an afternoon of celebrations. This is one example of the many kinds of events we have been planning to further engage our alumni.

If you have ideas about the kinds of reunion activities you would like to participate in, please contact us at FAHSComms@brocku.ca or visit brocku.ca/alumni for more information.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Tiidus, Dean

Faculty news

Students go for gold at Paralympic Games

Jessica Lewis. Photo courtesy of Earl Basden, Bermuda Press (islandstats.com).

Recreation and leisure studies student Jessica Lewis represented Bermuda at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games this past September. The T53 racer achieved a personal best time of 1:58.24 in the 800m and placed a respectable sixth place in the 100m and 11th place in the 400m. This was the second Paralympic Games for Lewis.

Third-year kinesiology student and Paralympian Erica Scarff finished seventh in the KL3 200 metre ParaCanoe race. This adaptive version of the flatwater sprint canoe kayak sport marks the first time the sport has been part of the Paralympics.

Both athletes have their sights set on the 2020 Paralympics.

Sport Management researchers receive funding for leadership study

A Department of Sport Management (SPMA) study looking at whether students believe they can become industry leaders will continue with the help of the Janet B. Parks Research Grant.

SPMA professors Shannon Kerwin and Kirsty Spence have been awarded the grant from the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM).

The longitudinal study, entitled, "Assessing sport management students' ego development and occupational leadership efficacy," began in September 2015 and is tracking 40 SPMA students over four years.

Prof integrating meditation into the classroom

Health Sciences Assistant Professor Paula Gardner didn't set out to incorporate mindfulness into her teaching practices. Rather, she stumbled into it after a particularly frantic commute through New York City. Through her research and the practice of beginning each class with a short meditation, Gardner is finding the classroom environment has become more enhanced.

Through her Brock University Chancellor's Chair for Teaching project, A Focus on Faculty: Building a Contemplative Campus One Classroom at a Time, Gardner aims to understand the challenges of integrating mindfulness into post-secondary classrooms.

Brock University - Loyalist College nursing student wins 2016 SIM Student Award

Megan Mahoney

Megan Mahoney, a fourth-year BScN student in the Brock University - Loyalist College Collaborative program, is the recipient of this year's SIM Student Award.

The SIM Student Award, sponsored by CAE Healthcare, was created to highlight the experiences of Canadian undergraduate (or equivalent) healthcare students who have used simulation to further develop their professional roles. The theme of this year's competition is "How healthcare simulation has become an integrated part of my learning and professional development."

Local MPs get a look at federally funded research

Brock University student Aindriu Maguire, an NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awardee, explains cell research to Members of Parliament Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre), right, and Chris Bittle (St. Catharines) in the lab of Assistant Professor of Health Sciences, Adam MacNeil during a tour at Brock University.

Two Niagara politicians toured Brock University labs on June 28, 2016 after researchers were awarded $2.4 million in federal government funding. Members of Parliament Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre) and Chris Bittle (St. Catharines) saw first-hand the impact of Brock's research on the Niagara community and beyond.

Among their stops, the MPs called on Assistant Professor of Health Sciences Adam MacNeil, whose research team is working to better understand cell-signaling and their role in defending us from bacteria, viruses and parasites.

Trauma-informed boxing program improves mental health

On Nov. 25, 2016 in recognition of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health Kamal Khera, announced with Brock University Vice-President of Research, Joffre Mercier, $420,536 in funding towards a trauma-informed boxing program for female and trans survivors of family violence called Shape Your Life. With this funding, Kinesiology professors Cathy van Ingen and Kimberly Gammage will measure the program's impact on 225 participants' self-esteem, resilience, PTSD, social supports and other areas of their lives.

Nursing pulls back curtain on new lab

From a critical care isolation room to a state-of-the-art clinical lab, students in Brock University's Department of Nursing now have a modern space enabling them to learn in a realistic setting.

The grand opening and ribbon cutting took place on Wednesday, Nov. 23 in the University's new Nursing Lab which includes simulation equipment, a primary health care office, a debrief room, a community apartment for training in nursing home visits and a student lounge.

Niagara Recycling gives $15,000 to Autism Camp

For two decades, a summer camp at Brock University has been offering developmentally appropriate movement education to children and youth in the Niagara Region with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Since 1997, Niagara Recycling has donated more than $317,000 in financial commitments to disability programming at Brock University with more than $137,000 going to the ASD Summer Movement Camp. This year's commitment was in the amount of $15,000.

Brock University Vice-President Administration, Brian Hutchings, Niagara Recycling Chief Executive Officer, Norman Kraft, Camp Founder and Kinesiology Professor, Maureen Connolly, Niagara Recycling, Vice-Chair, Bert Murphy, and Faculty of Applied Health Sciences Dean, Peter Tiidus.

Sport analytics: a field on the rise

BY COLLEEN PATTERSON

Many professional sports teams are realizing the importance of playing the numbers game. Organizations are hiring sport analytic consultants and staffing entire departments aimed at delving into the statistics to give their teams an edge.

Brock University's Sport Management Assistant Professor Kevin Mongeon, a North American leader in the field of sport analytics, says interest is on the rise and how decisions are made in the professional sport industry is changing. Gone are the days of player statistics only being available on the back of trading cards or in the local Saturday paper. Advanced analytics are now being used by sport organizations of all types to stay ahead of the competition.

"Sport analytics allow people to apply their knowledge of sport in creative new ways."

Kevin Mongeon (PhD '10)

"Currently, most of the literature available is related to roster design, player evaluations, and in-game strategies and decision making. Through the use of advanced qualitative and quantitative data, analytics is another piece of information sport management executives can use to make decisions," explains Mongeon.

Analytics has grown beyond traditional player acquisitions and decisions to include in-game and real-time tactical coaching decisions. In fact, Mongeon broadly defines sport analytics as analyses related to the production of winning sport contests.

"The publically available data produced by major professional sport leagues, and increases in low-cost data collection methods and computer processing technology has enabled the organic growth of the sport analytics industry." However, not all sport organizations have implemented sport analytics to the same degree. One of the reasons for the different adoption rates is the varying manner in which sport contests are played. Different sports require different strategies for analysis.

For example, one of the reasons Major League Baseball teams were early adopters of analytics is the 'discrete nature' in which games are played.

"Game events, such as hits, errors and runs, are largely independent of one another. Therefore, relatively accurate information can be discerned from examining summary statistics," explains Mongeon.

"Other sports, like hockey, have a constant flow with competing teams simultaneously playing offence and defence, and with different incentives."

Mongeon notes good sport analytics models incorporate the way in which games are played and therefore many analytical methods are not generalizable across sports. This development of models is focal to Mongeon's teaching.

In the fourth-year sport analytics course he teaches, students learn to examine and model the processes of winning games rather than just analyzing and making inferences based on summary data.

"I continually articulate the importance of students developing strong conceptualization skills learned from both qualitative and quantitative research. It's not just about analyzing the data available, it's about formulating an idea about games and then learning and applying the appropriate method to obtain accurate results," says Mongeon.

These approaches are being utilized by a number of Brock graduate students who are studying sport analytics with Mongeon. The topics being researched are wide ranging and include the accuracy of National Football League coach's fourth-down decision making, the impact of scoreboard watching on Major League Baseball playoff races and optimal roster design in the National Hockey League.

Mongeon's own work involves National Hockey League team roster designs, in-game win-probability models and in-game coaching decisions.

Mongeon extends the sport analytics models he develops into other areas of research. As part of a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Insight Development Grant, he is currently using win-probability models to test whether sport bettors exhibit behavioural biases and its potential for impact on market prices.

As analytics experts are becoming increasingly prominent in sport organizations and it continues to emerge as a profession, post-secondary programs are integrating sport analytics into their curriculum.

Through the Sports Analytics Institute, Kevin Mongeon and Michael Boyle collect and analyze hockey data in real-time to evaluate National Hockey League team and player performance.

"In the Bachelor of Sport Management degree and graduate programs at Brock University we have recognized the need to provide students with a foundation in this ground-breaking discipline that influences all areas of sport," says Department of Sport Management Chair Lisa Kikulis.

"Students have the opportunity to develop technical skills, as well as critically analyze the impact and role of data in decision-making," says Kikulis.

In the last few years, numerous well-respected academic journals and textbooks have been established providing an outlet for academic research. Mongeon, with Sport Management Professor Lucie Thibault, is integrating this topic into the sixth edition of the Contemporary Sport Management textbook.

As co-editor of the textbook, Thibault notes the importance of introducing a chapter on sport analytics.

"Given the prominence of analytics in sport decisions and the fact that sport analytics is becoming an integral component to the curriculum of sport management programs in colleges and universities, undergraduate students need to be introduced to sport analytics concepts early in their studies," says Thibault.

"I think you are going to see a continual progression of sport analytics in both industry and academics. Many people have a significant amount of knowledge pertaining to a sport. As a result, scholars from a wide range of disciplines are able to apply their sport knowledge and engage in sport analytics," says Mongeon.

Colleen Patterson is the Marketing and Communications Officer for the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Brock University.

Health, safety and offshore survival

BY COLLEEN PATTERSON

Imagine you are a crewmember on a night-time Atlantic coastal flight. Suddenly, an hour and a half after take-off, unexpected weather conditions causes your fixed wing aircraft to drop altitude. For 17 harrowing minutes, the plane flies without power, gliding and descending for approximately 88 km before crashing into the sea. Your five person crew's only chance for escape is through a single door in the already submerged aircraft.

This is among the real-life scenarios trainees consider when learning how to survive an offshore crash.

Dr. Mike Taber, who completed an Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation Post-Doctoral Fellowship in 2013 and currently holds an Adjunct Professor position in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Brock University, is dedicated to improving survival in emergency situations.

With a military background, as an aviation technician for the Royal Canadian Air Force, Taber became interested in underwater survival after he started training as the ship's team diver for rescue operations. This new-found passion was a turning point in Taber's career. He started thinking about ways to try and survive a helicopter crash at sea.

Survival training

Taber, who now splits his time between Niagara, Halifax, N.S., and Mount Pearl, N.L., has provided lifesaving aviation and marine survival training to civilian, military and Special Forces personnel in more than six countries.

> **"It may seem like I work in a field of doom and gloom, but I'm really in the business of preparedness."**
>
> *Mike Taber (PhD '11)*

"It may seem like I work in a field of doom and gloom, but I'm really in the business of preparedness. With the correct training and knowledge, individuals can significantly increase their chances of survival," says Taber.

In his role as Senior Research Scientist at Falck Safety Services Canada, based in Halifax, Taber provides research support to the training methodology and use of simulators to demonstrate various underwater escape techniques.

"Through our technology, Falck provides trainees with an experience that simulates what it is like after their aircraft has impacted the water and becomes submerged. For example, based on the research we have carried out in our Helicopter Underwater Egress Training program, we can show people how to make a safe exit upside down, in the dark and in turbulent conditions," explains Taber.

Other aspects of the complex survival skills training include preparing individuals to equip themselves with the appropriate survival gear, such as the use of life rafts, immersion suits, lifejackets and purpose-built evacuation equipment.

"Falck's training program has proven to be successful on numerous occasions. We've had people who were involved in a crash landing into water come back to us afterwards to talk about how the process helped them successfully manage the emergency. We have had individuals escape in complete darkness, in cold water and after being injured during impact," he says.

Research

From the moment a flight crew realizes there is an emergency, to the moment of impact, there are a number of factors that can influence how pilots, navigators and other crewmembers respond.

As part of Taber's approach to survival, aspects of his research focus on pre-impact variables such as,

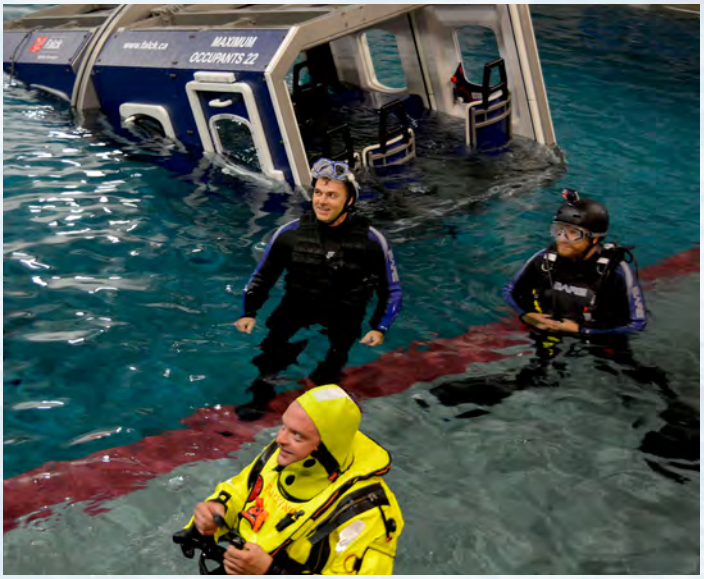

Photo courtesy of Falck Safety Services Canada

what a person does in the hours before a flight that influence their ability to respond to an emergency as it is happening.

Through his St. Catharines based N2M Consulting Company, Taber and his team are currently working on five projects with CAE, a global leader in modelling, simulation and training for civil aviation and defence.

By examining everything from training methodologies to gaze tracking and cortisol, the projects explore how the unique set of factors present in Atlantic Canada influence offshore helicopter transportation.

Photo courtesy of Falck Safety Services Canada

Photo courtesy of Falck Safety Services Canada

For example, Taber notes the concept of fight, flight or freeze suggests that, "when a firefighter is in a fire situation, the expected response would be to fight, but when faced with an in-flight emergency in a cockpit, the same person may freeze because it is an unusual situation for which there is no preplanned action."

"My research takes into consideration how elements such as hydration, caffeine and caloric intake, sleep, heat exposure, and the flight deck environment can impact the physiological and psychological responses required to handle a crisis,"

Mike Taber (PhD '11)

Other industry-supported research projects explore aspects of survival task performance in dark conditions, as well as training techniques needed to ensure people can remember what they need to do in an emergency.

"We have been looking at how influences such as darkness or various simulated sea conditions can impact a person's ability for survival training recall," says Taber.

Not only does Taber's applied research help the Falck team modify and improve upon the training they offer to help ensure survival, but it has also helped set new standards of training for both military and offshore safety-based training in Canada.

When reflecting on the time he spent at Brock as a Post-Doctoral Fellow, Taber believes his experience has helped equip him for what he is doing now.

"While at Brock, I was involved with an extremely large project with multiple people from academia and government, so managing all of the moving parts, as well as the different personalities, has proven to be tremendously helpful in my daily life," says Taber.

"Additionally, the beneficial survival performance data which emerged provided a solid foundation for project management in applied research which has allowed me to pursue my passion of Industry-based research."

Ultimately, Taber's goal is to help improve the likelihood of surviving an emergency.

"When trained people don't survive an emergency, it is very difficult, because we feel like we didn't train them enough. Ideally, every one of our trainees would survive, but at the end of the day even if only one person survives, it's all worth it."

For an in-depth comprehensive look at the issues and concerns facing offshore helicopter transport, Dr. Mike Taber has authored the Handbook of Offshore Helicopter Transport Safety: Essentials of Underwater Egress and Survival.

For more information visit www.falck.ca/en/safetyservices/news/2015/helicopter-safety-book

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Colleen Patterson is the Marketing and Communications Officer for the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Brock University.

A passionate community builder

BY COLLEEN PATTERSON

With a 'get it done' attitude and a firm belief that successful communities are the result of strong leadership, Brenda Herchmer (BRLS '86) has made a career out of tapping into local knowledge and expertise through recreation initiatives.

"I understood from a young age that recreation and sport can enhance quality of life and build a sense of community. That is what attracted me to the field of recreation and leisure in the first place," says Herchmer.

In 2007, Herchmer became Director for Active, Creative, Engaged (ACE) Communities, an initiative that would improve the quality of life for people living in rural Alberta.

With a mandate to connect with 60 communities across the province, there was one big question that needed a solution. How can entire communities be mobilized to work together in the right direction?

Herchmer and her team decided to tap into grassroots wisdom and learn if the solutions they were seeking already existed in the communities.

"A lot can be learned from Canada's smaller rural communities."
Brenda Herchmer (BRLS '86)

"In the first year, we collected stories and information about local initiatives. We learned the only common denominator among communities that were successful in improving quality of life was strong leadership."

The types of leaders ACE Communities found were not the traditional 'top down' leaders from municipalities, or even recreation staff with specialized expertise. Instead, what emerged were community leaders who did not have formal titles at all.

"We often embrace the idea that staff are experts, but we also need to view the community as experts with assets and strengths."

Brenda Herchmer, 2016 Faculty of Applied Health Sciences Distinguished Graduate

Through the collection of stories and strategies gained to improve quality of life, it became clear the team needed to develop tools to enhance the skills of community leaders.

"When we strengthen our leaders, we are positioning them to not only help balance economic development and quality of life, but also to ensure learning, growth and innovation" says Herchmer.

A six million dollar grant and another five years in rural Alberta doing on-the-ground applied research reinforced for Herchmer that holistic planning and a good process that empowers the community is key to readying people to deal with more complex issues.

"Recreation provides a really important place to start. Bringing people together to figure out a small, local project that everyone agrees is important, such as building a playground, trail or park, can help to build the foundation of trusted relationships that are essential for change."

For her innovative approaches to community development, Herchmer is the recipient of many prestigious awards including the YWCA Woman of Distinction in Training and Education and the Brock University 2016 Faculty of Applied Health Sciences Distinguished Graduate Award.

Critical care response in Niagara

BY COLLEEN PATTERSON

Niagara Health is home to a newly developed, state-of-the-art critical care facility. With a Level 3 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) providing the highest level of critical care available in the country, our community is well situated for the best possible health outcomes.

This level of care would not be possible without the 26 Registered Nurses who make up Niagara Health's Critical Care Response Team (CCRT). Among this dedicated group, seven are Brock University Nursing alumni, including the Critical Care, Respiratory Therapy & Critical Care Response Team; Clinical Manager, Elayn Young (BScN '02); and Registered Nurse, Mark Dinga (BscN '08).

Young and Dinga, are accomplished critical care nurses committed to delivering high-quality, efficient care.

In her role as Clinical Manager, Elayn Young is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the CCRT, Critical Care Department and the Respiratory Therapy program throughout all of Niagara Health. A major aspect of her role is to ensure critical care is taken from the ICU out to the rest of the hospital.

"The Critical Care Response Team is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to take care of the sickest, most acute patients in the region."

Elayn Young (BScN '02)

"We are available to be called to anywhere in the hospital, day or night," says Young.

Patients presenting to the hospital or being transferred from another ICU in Niagara with life threatening conditions such as, cardiac arrest, anaphylaxis, heart attack, stroke or respiratory failure could be taken care of by the CCRT.

"We can be called to the emergency department, medical or surgical floors to take over care and transfer the patient to our floor in the ICU. We work to stabilize and provide advanced life support treatment including advanced airway management," explains Young.

Respiratory therapists, as an integral part of the CCRT, provide care for people's lungs and manage needs such as, ventilation and airway management.

"We definitely work in a high-stress and complex environment due to the technology and medications we deal with," says Young. "Fortunately, the professors in the Brock Nursing program stress the professional aspect of nursing and have really encouraged aspiring nurses to raise their standards."

In her management role, Young spends less time working directly with patients, but still makes an effort to be involved and provide support to families.

"When a new patient comes to the ICU, I make an effort to introduce myself to them (if they are alert) and the family. I review what their expectations are and try to help them become a part of our team."

When nurses who are less experienced come into the field of critical care, Young also provides support to help them become accomplished critical care nurses.

"When a novice ICU nurse joins our team, I enjoy watching their knowledge and confidence grow. For example, Mark Dinga was relatively new when I started here and he has progressively taken more informal leadership roles within the unit."

Registered Nurse Mark Dinga is described as 'calm and collected' with an attention to detail that is unmatched.

The CCRT in Niagara was developed in 2015 and Dinga was one of the first members.

"At any given time, there are three of us dedicated to the team, a physician, respiratory therapist and registered nurse. Having a dedicated RN means time is set aside to helping people outside of the ICU," explains Dinga.

A typical CCRT shift for Dinga begins by reviewing a status report of the patients receiving care and then following up with them and the nurses on the other floors to make sure there are no issues.

"Much of the work of the dedicated RN is focused on prevention activities. Often we already know the special needs of the patient. By catching things early we can start treatment right away," says Dinga.

If a situation arises where the CCRT is activated, the team responds with a specialized cart that allows them to begin triage on the spot.

"I'm a bit of a scout, going out and making sure everything is going well."

Mark Dinga (BScN '08)

"Being able to bring our cart bedside saves us from having to find items that might not necessarily be on the floor. The cart is supplied with a defibrillator, glide scope to intubate, IV fluids and other medications that might be needed."

Another complex aspect of Dinga's role is helping patients and families have realistic end of life discussions.

"Sometimes the goal is not to swoop in and fix the person. Sometimes there are situations where there is not a lot we can do medically. So what needs to happen is finding out how much treatment a person wants before ensuring a comfortable death with dignity."

Dinga recognizes he sees a lot more death in his work than the average person, and while that can be emotional and tiring, there are other outcomes he finds energizing.

"Sometimes, I'll be standing in a line somewhere waiting for coffee or doing my groceries and I'll see a patient who I treated that was on life support. Often they have no idea the role I played in helping them, but it is wonderful to see them get better."

Editor's note: During the interview for this story, Madeleine Dinga, (Mark's wife) went into labour. On Sept. 30 at 8:57 p.m. the Dinga's welcomed their second child, Caleb, weighing 7lbs 6oz.

The Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Brock University congratulates the Dinga family during this happy time.

Mark Dinga and Elayn Young with the specialized Critical Care Response Team Cart. *Photo courtesy Niagara Health*

Alumni updates

PHED alumna named women's rugby coach

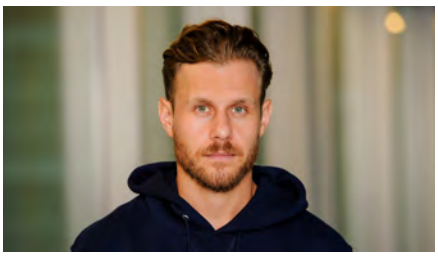
Stefanie Pavlovich (BPhEd '11), a teacher at Grimsby Secondary School, was named as the new head coach of Brock Women's Rugby. Pavlovich played four seasons with the Brock team while earning OUA All-Star honours twice in 2007 and 2008.

Pavlovich is currently a Master Educator for Rugby Canada's Rookie Rugby Program and coach for both of Grimsby Secondary's boys and girls teams. She also coaches the Niagara Wasps' U18 girls program. Last season, she guided the Beamsville District Secondary School girls rugby team to OFSAA.

Kinesiology alumnus represents Canada at Rio 2016

Tim Schrijver (BKin '15) and the Canadian men's coxless four rowing team finished sixth at the Rio Olympics with a time of 6:15.93 in the final, bettering their semi-final time of 6:20.66.

Schrijver, who is a member of the Heavyweight Men's four, was a kinesiology student at Brock from 2010 until 2014. He credits the Brock rowing program for giving him his first experience rowing in a novice eight. He has now represented Canada six times.



SPMA alumnus receives distinguished graduate award

Ryan Pallotta (BSM '09) received the 2016 Brock University Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni award during this year's Homecoming celebration. On completion of his degree, which included taking all of the film and arts classes he could, Pallotta decided to pursue his longtime passion by moving to Los Angeles. His career gained momentum as he quickly established himself as one of the most sought after young film directors in the industry.

Naomi Cermak memorial scholarship

Naomi Cermak (MSc '06) never had the chance to complete the triathlon she trained so hard for while battling cancer. The disease took that away from her. But, cancer could never steal her determination to try in all aspects of her life.

Despite metastatic melanoma, the 31-year-old Brock University graduate achieved academic breakthroughs and thrived athletically throughout her short life.

Naomi's efforts to raise awareness of melanoma, as well as her determination to conquer her illness resulted in her selection to participate in the Kona Ironman championships as an inspiration athlete. She inspired thousands with her drive to train for this 226-kilometre triathlon while undergoing painful treatment for cancer. She had to withdraw from the event as her immune system became too compromised and her health deteriorated. She died in December 2013, one year after her diagnosis.

On Thursday, July 21, 2016, more than 70 participants and 50 supporters, from all over Ontario, took part in the inaugural Naomi Cermak Tri to Inspire at Brock University to honour her memory and to begin raising funds for a graduate student scholarship in her name.

Make a difference in the life of a current graduate student and support the Naomi Cermak Graduate Student Scholarship at brocku.ca/donate.

Your donation will be matched through the Ontario Graduate Fellowship Program (OGFP).

Brock University

Please DONATE NOW as we celebrate our past and look towards our future.

Give online @ brocku.ca/donate

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