

December 7, 2021

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Report to Senate #695
December 15, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

After another semester that challenged our stock of adjectives for lack of historical precedence, I believe we are all looking forward to a winter break and holiday season. I wish you all a happy and restful holiday.

1. LINCubator opens for inaugural cohort

The first group of early-stage businesses to be based in the LINCubator, the Brock LINC incubator program, had its [orientation](#) on November 19. This is an important milestone in the development of Brock LINC's innovation and applied research activities, which has been in planning stages for some years, following the successful 2016 proposal to the federal Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) that enabled the construction of the Rankin Family Pavilion.

Congratulations to LINC Executive Director Farzana Crocco and her team on this milestone, and thanks to our LINCubator mentors for supporting the program. I include further information about LINCubator members and mentors here.

LINCubator Members 2021-22

- Adrien Belcastro, Dextrous Technologies: With the 'Flex Wallet', Adrien Belcastro aims to address a lack in security and outdated policies with physical student cards. With the use of QR codes and facial recognition, Flex Wallet digitizes university student cards, offering students another option to pay for meals, access transit, access dormitories and more.
- Hayden Maass, Bornea Dynamics: Hayden Maass founded Bornea Dynamics in 2020 at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Bornea Dynamics focuses on innovative technologies that include defense industry applications, as well as an inclusive respirator intended to work for persons with facial hair, eliminating current requirements for respirator users to be clean shaven.
- Sean McCann, SereniVent: A mason by trade, Sean McCann noticed a gap in modern soundproofing techniques for existing homes. SereniVent develops solutions to soundproofing ductwork, with an 85% reduction in mid to high range frequencies.
- Vishal Badiani, Millo: Vishal Badiani's virtual collaboration platform Millo offers companies a way to connect staff across an organization, breaking silos and creating better conversations. Using AI technology, Millo collects data from users to make relevant connections to co-workers based off preferences from interests, hobbies, mentorship, and helping newly onboarded individuals find connections in their place of employment.

- Joe DeLuca & Pat Kelly, Melody Minds: Melody Minds is a non-medical service that offers inclusive music and multimedia programs for brain injury survivors and people with special needs: musical and multimedia activities that may assist in boosting social, emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual engagement. Joe DeLuca and partner Pat Kelly have extensive backgrounds in social work and occupational therapy support work.
- Kyle Chiki, Local Sport Search: Local Sport Search combines all things sports-related into one platform - from intramural sports to adult sports leagues, events and fitness centres. The platform provides personalized search filters to find community members an activity based on days of the week, type (youth, adult, coed) and competition level, offering organizations and league owners exposure to potential clients.
- LINCubator Mentors 2021-22: Amanda Chistoff, Jag Dhariwal, Terry Erb, Yvonne Nasri, Sharon Reeds, and Amrit Sandhu.

2. External and outreach activities

- On November 22, Brock University co-hosted the annual meeting of the CFI Board, held virtually this year.

Following recorded greetings from me and from President Wells, the Board saw CFI-supported laboratory and facility tours, with explanations of the resulting research by Dr. Adam MacNeil and graduate students Natalie Hicks, Jeremia Coish, and Rob Crozier, in the Inflammation and Immunity Lab; and from Dr. Debbie Inglis, Dr. Gary Pickering, and Dr. Belinda Kemp, with graduate student Hannah Charnock, in the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute. Associate Vice-President Research Dr. Michelle McGinn moderated a live Q&A with graduate students for the Board.

I would like to thank and congratulate these researchers for the outstanding presentations they provided to explain how their CFI-funded facilities are contributing to the research enterprise, and to Brock's partnerships with the many communities of which it is part.

Dr. Roseann O'Reilly Runte, President of CFI, subsequently noted: *Everyone was impressed with the depth and scope of knowledge as well as the enthusiasm of the faculty, staff and students. This was a fine opportunity to showcase the talents and accomplishments of the researchers on the Brock campus. You made the best of this occasion and left all virtual visitors with the desire to return one day to meet you and your colleagues in person.*

This meeting was moreover planned and facilitated to the highest quality by colleagues in Marketing and Communications. The production quality of the presentations, and the smooth operation of the live segments, were a critical part of the success of the event.

- The joint SSHRC/NSERC Leaders meetings were conducted on December 3, with AVPR McGinn conducting a panel presentation on the proposed SSHRC Research Training Strategy.

3. Space matters

- IH-VPMI space update: The construction project to expand Inniskillin Hall is expected to be complete by March 2022. Weather-related delays from summer 2021, among other factors, have slowed the process, which had anticipated a January completion. The facility is intended to house equipment and activities related to the Validating, Prototyping, and Manufacturing Institute ([VPMI](#)), including the associated FedDev-funded projects that are already under way with a range of industry and research partners.
- Space transfers: Over the course of the pandemic, two significant transfers of space were made from Vice-President Research control to Faculty control. The first involved bench laboratory space in Cairns 200 level, the former BioLinc labs, which were transferred to the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences to create research space for a Tier I Canada Research Chair. These wet labs for innovation and start-up initiatives were part of former BioLinc programming; however, in my view, the more critical immediate need was for faculty research space. The second change was the transfer of oversight to FOSS and FAHS of most space in Plaza 500 and 600, which had been VPR space, but which comprised the primary or sole research space for many faculty researchers. Shifting control of that space from the VPR to the relevant Deans, on the basis of their shared recommendation, helps ensure that this space will be used in accordance with Faculty and Departmental research priorities, aligned with Brock policies.

4. ORS events and resources

- An orientation to ORS programs was held for new faculty members on November 23, through the Building Better Research series.
- A note that colleagues can consult the [ORS mainpage](#) and review the regular BREA (Brock Research Enterprise Alerts) email digest for up-to-date information on research events and grant opportunities. To subscribe to the BREA email list, send an e-mail to orsadmin@brocku.ca.

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