

June 2018

the torch



Unveiling the plaques, (left to right) Frances Plessis, former secretary-treasurer from River East (1987–1991), Gail Scheer, former trustee from River East (1986–2002), Pat Watson, former trustee from Transcona-Springfield (1986–2002), and Paul Moreau, former superintendent from Transcona-Springfield (1998–2001).

Board honours history with plaques, book, celebration

Two years ago, the RETSD board of trustees held a special event that, in turn, inspired them to take things a step further.

The provincial government proclaimed 2016 “The Year of Women Trustees,” and the board honoured women trustees who served before them by inviting them to the Administration Offices for a celebration. The success of that event encouraged them to find a way to honour all trustees, superintendents, and secretary-treasurers who served before them.

On June 1, those honourees were invited to the Allen Rouse Room at the Administration Offices to celebrate their history with the

division, and witness the unveiling of two glass plaques imprinted with their names.

“While in the process of creating these plaques, we had many discussions about compiling the history of our division in some way,” says board chair Colleen Carswell. “We wanted to collect as much historical information as possible to ensure it wouldn’t be lost to time.”

This led the board to develop and publish a book about the history of the two legacy school divisions—River East No. 9 and Transcona-Springfield No. 12—that were formed in 1959 and came together to create River East Transcona in 2002. Each honouree who

attended the plaque unveiling was presented with a copy of the book, titled, “A Historical Look at River East Transcona School Division.”

It was no small task to gather historical information that spanned more than four decades, but Ms. Carswell and fellow trustee Eva Prysizney were up to the task, having organized the event for women trustees in 2016.

They searched through minute books, did online research, and explored historical documents at the Legislative Library, Manitoba Archives, and Winnipeg Library. They also spent countless hours making contact over the phone with former trustees, employees, and their families.

“The most enjoyable part was often the discovery of photos, moments in time that brought faces to names,” says Ms. Prysizney. “Then, a voice on the other end of the phone would bring a personal story to a photo and the person with it.”

The board hopes the plaques and history book not only honour those who have served in the division, but also help people appreciate the community’s heritage, and see how it has changed and grown.

To view the online version of “A Historical Look at River East Transcona School Division,” please visit: retsd.mb.ca > Your RETSD > Our History



Onstage at the Murdoch MacKay fashion show: (left to right) trustee Eva Prysizney; Silver Jeans competition winners Agnes Buller, Paris Mykietowich, and Nhat Nguyen; trustee Peter Kotyk; and board chair Colleen Carswell.

of excellent vocational programs and this one, being as unique as it is, is one of the ways our division sets itself apart from others," says board chair Colleen Carswell, who takes in the show each year.

"This is a great opportunity for me to see some student work up close and celebrate their success."

Students learn industrial sewing techniques, fashion illustration, pattern-making, garment construction, fabric dying, classic tailoring, and more.

They also gain valuable experience working behind the scenes at local fashion shows.

After the Murdoch show, trustee Peter Kotyk spoke with the winners of the Silver Jeans competition, which allows students to show their work to large-scale designers and marketing personnel.

"You never know," he said. "One of these students may be designing me a suit in the future."

Fashion program first of its kind in Canada

For the 38th year in a row, Murdoch MacKay Collegiate students hit the catwalk to show off the results of their hard work and creativity to an appreciative audience.

The students take part in the Fashion Technology Program and they modelled their own creations, from practical to theatrical, at an annual fashion show put on by the school.

The program was created in 1980 and was the first of its kind in Canada. It's still the only vocational fashion program in Winnipeg.

"Murdoch MacKay offers a variety

Students net medals at Skills Manitoba

River East Transcona has no shortage of talented students in its vocational programs, and that was clear when 26 of them were awarded medals at the Skills Manitoba Competition, held April 12 at Red River College's Roblin Centre and Notre Dame campuses. The board of trustees would like to congratulate the following medal winners from our division on their success.

Kildonan-East Collegiate

Gold	Mitchell Epp	Electrical Installation
Gold	Dylan Kraynyk	Refrigeration & Air Conditioning
Gold	Carson Malinowski	Cabinet Making
Gold	Christiana Louise Masalunga	Baking
Silver	Davis Chambers-Heesaker	3D Digital Game Art
Silver	Jordan Kumka	Refrigeration & Air Conditioning
Silver	Matthew Dyck	Carpentry
Bronze	Chad Besner	3D Character Computer Animation
Bronze	Matthew Myrowich	Refrigeration & Air Conditioning
Bronze	Patricia Ocko	3D Character Computer Animation
Bronze	Kyle Xavier Quinsaas	Photography
Bronze	Thomas Wood	Automobile Technology

Miles Macdonell Collegiate

Gold	Leatishia Arnaud	3D Character Computer Animation
Gold	Maryse Chartier	3D Character Computer Animation
Bronze	Nolee Aguilar	2D Character Computer Animation
Bronze	Chinemerem Chigb	2D Character Computer Animation
Bronze	Aleah Woodhouse	Aesthetics (Nail Tech)

Murdoch MacKay Collegiate

Gold	Matthew Desorcy	Precision Machining
Gold	Nhat Anh Nguyen	Fashion Technology
Silver	Nicolas Andrews	Workplace Safety
Silver	Hannah Belec	Job Search
Silver	Paris Mykietowich	Fashion Technology
Silver	Josef Weiss	Precision Machining
Bronze	Agnes Bullert	Fashion Technology
Bronze	Trey Chaske	Precision Machining
Bronze	Elise Hrizai	Public Speaking

The eight gold-medal winners attended the national Skills Canada competition, held June 4–5 in Edmonton, Alta. For the results, visit: www.skillscompetencescanada.com



Indigenous mentors with (third from left, back) assistant superintendent Jason Drysdale, (fourth from left, back) Elder John Miswagon, and (far right) board vice-chair Michael West.

Students celebrated for Indigenous mentorship

A large group of RETSD students have put their time and hearts into serving as mentors to Indigenous students in the division.

On May 25, they were honoured at a mentorship celebration, and board vice-chair Michael West was there to greet them.

"We're proud of the important work they're doing," says Mr. West. "Especially at a time when the recommendations of the Truth

and Reconciliation Commission continue to be front and centre in Canada."

He praised the students for their commitment to meaningful Indigenous-focused mentorship and engagement between the division's high school and early years students.

Elder John Miswagon performed a Cree blessing and a smudging ritual at the celebration, and the mentors and guests enjoyed a luncheon.

Assistant superintendent Jason Drysdale thanked the mentors for selflessly giving their time to be role models, friends, and teachers to the younger students.

"Being part of an Indigenous mentorship is powerful," says Mr. Drysdale. "It's an opportunity to share yourself, and that's the most generous gift you can give."



The Transcona Legion held its annual Decoration Day Parade on June 3, and board chair Colleen Carswell (pictured) was there to take part and represent the board of trustees and division. It began with a service at the Transcona Cemetery to pay respects to fallen veterans in the Field of Honour. Then, legion and guard members, along with government representatives, marched from the legion to the cenotaph at Memorial Park Circle, where wreaths were laid.



Trustee Rod Giesbrecht (pictured) gave greetings at a recent divisional presentation held at Bernie Wolfe Community School, titled, "What Anxiety Wants: Family Edition." A large audience showed up to see guest speakers and learn strategies for coping with anxiety in their children.

Students and staff from the division's English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program celebrated Ukrainian Easter at Springfield Heights School on April 11, and several trustees were there to take part—(left to right) John Toews, Jerry Sodomlak, Peter Kotyk, Colleen Carswell, and Eva Prysizney.



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Participants with board vice-chair Michael West (far left), board chair Colleen Carswell (second from left), and trustee Jerry Sodomlak (far right).

Students 'Lead for Success'

River East Transcona prides itself on "creating student success," so it makes sense that it was students the division turned to recently for their outlook on what that success means.

On May 10, the division held its second "Leading for Success" event at John G. Stewart School. They invited middle years students from across RETSD to

share their ideas on student success with trustees, senior administration, and principals. Last year, senior years students shared their thoughts.

Leading up to the event, the students had been invited to take photos illustrating success in their schools.

"This provides us with a chance to

reach a common understanding of what student success is," says board chair Colleen Carswell. "It was wonderful to engage with them and see the photos they'd taken, providing their perspective."

Conversation included what makes the students feel successful in schools, what they think students need at school to be

successful in life, what the division is currently doing to support this success, and what more could be done.

"It was a great evening of sharing," said board vice-chair Michael West. "It provided insights that will help us advance our efforts to nurture achievement."



The RETSD board of trustees would like to congratulate the graduating class of 2018, and wish them the best in the next stage of their lives.

We would also like to thank everyone in our school division who helped these students reach this milestone. Well done, everyone!

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For more information about the board of trustees, visit: www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/BoardofTrustees