

New Year's Reflections



By Nicole Tainsh

"The only constant in life is change."

While it is a cliché, I really feel it applies to the Foundation, especially over the last year. New staff, new board members, and new

researchers means we continue to adapt and learn here at the Foundation.

At our Annual General Meeting in December we were excited to welcome four new members to the Board of Directors, Amaya Ander (teacher from Regina Catholic School Division), Kelley Ehman (Superintendent of Education Services at Regina Catholic Schools), Ted Zurakowski (Senior Administrative Staff, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation), and Dean Lucyk (Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan).

In December the Foundation, thanks to a very generous donation from The Leonard Foundation, launched a Special Directed Call focusing on addressing achievement gaps in early literacy, focusing on northern communities. More about that can be found on page two.

Yes, change is common here at the Foundation, but there are some things that stay the same. Prospective researchers are in the process of developing their proposals for the next year, current researchers are continuing their work on the projects funded by the Foundation, and both current and former researchers are sharing their work through McDowell events such as the Salon Series.

After a gorgeous fall and mild start to the winter, I am excited to ring in this new year! Thank you for continuing to support teacher-led research in the province and we look forward to the next year here at the Foundation.



McDowell Foundation Launches Special Directed Call

For the past three years, educational instruction in Saskatchewan has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. School closures, online classes, sick days, and other restrictions have impacted all areas of student learning and, as a result, an achievement gap has emerged, particularly in early years literacy.

Provincial benchmarks collected from school divisions with Grade 3 students show reading levels in early years to be down across the province. Provincially, 69 percent of children in Grade 3 were reading at expected levels in 2021-22, well below the 73-75 percent rate reported pre-pandemic (2014 to 2019). The achievement gap is especially apparent in northern communities where teacher shortages and other factors have exacerbated the challenges experienced by all schools and, after

four years of steady improvement, only 15 percent of students tested at benchmark reading levels in 2021-22.

Thanks to a generous donation from The Leonard Foundation research grants, the McDowell Foundation is able to invite PreK-12 teachers and other educators to apply to a Special Directed Call for research that will focus on addressing the achievement gap in early literacy, with a focus on northern communities.

Applications using Indigenous ways of research are welcomed and encouraged.

We look forward to sharing more about the projects funded through this Directed Call!



Get Involved with McDowell!

The McDowell Foundation is looking for volunteers to sit on our Fundraising Committee and Board of Directors. If you or someone you know is interested, please email the Foundation at mcdowell@stf.sk.ca. To learn more about these positions or other ways to get involved, please visit: mcdowellfoundation.ca/get-involved/

Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee is an action committee responsible for assisting the McDowell Foundation in the support of the projects and associations of the Foundation.

The typical roles and responsibilities include attending two to four committee meetings per year, developing and updating both short- and long-term fundraising goals, identifying existing and potential sponsors, funders, or donors, and selecting the best fundraising approaches to meet the Foundation's fundraising goals.

We are looking for someone who is passionate about public education and research in Saskatchewan. Past fundraising or financial experience, while considered an asset, is not required.

Board of Directors - Public Member

The Board of Directors supports the Foundation by providing strategic direction, risk management, and fiscal oversight. We are currently recruiting a public representative for our Board of Directors.

Typical roles and responsibilities include attending four board meetings per year, making recommendations on policies, strategic priorities, and actions of the Foundation, helping evaluate and develop the long-term success of the Foundation, and to represent the Foundation at Foundation events.

We are looking for dedicated, organized, and self-motivated individuals who are passionate about public education in Saskatchewan. The public member cannot currently be teaching in the classroom and career experience with education is not required. Past board or committee experience or volunteerism, while not required, is considered an asset.

McDowell Foundation holds Annual General Meeting

On December 1, the McDowell Foundation held its Annual General Meeting. Raquel Bellefleur and Michael Graham accepted the 2023 Research Team of the Year award for their project *Educators Doing the Deep, Unsettling Work of Treaty Education*. The research team shared their project with the McDowell Board and STF Executive.

In addition to the Research Award, a two-year pilot In-Kind Management and Administrative Services Agreement was signed by Diana Jemieff Hayes (McDowell Foundation President) and Samantha Becotte (Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation President) at the AGM.



McDowell Foundation Manager Nicole Tainsh (far right) and STF Executive Director Bobbi Taillefer present the 2023 Research Team of the Year award to researchers Michael Graham (left) and Raquel Bellefleur.



Pictured from left to right are STF President Samantha Becotte, McDowell Foundation Manager Nicole Tainsh, Project Advisor Amos McArthur, Researchers Michael Graham and Raquel Bellefleur, STF Executive Director Bobbi Taillefer and McDowell Foundation Board President Diana Jemieff Hayes.

THANK YOU!

Donations of all sizes make an incredible impact on our educational milieu.



For more information on the **McDowell Foundation Annual report**, including audited financial statements, click here: www.mcdowellfoundation.ca/annual-reports/

6 projects
\$72,454 Research Funded

<https://mcdowellfoundation.ca/category/current-projects/>

McDowell Foundation at a Glance 2022-23

Special Directed Call in Celebration of the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan's 50th anniversary.

4 Superannuates Involved

McDOWELL RESEARCH SALON SERIES

4 sessions

27 panelists

76 registrants engaging in McDowell research conversations

RESEARCH AWARD 2022-23

Educators Doing the Deep, Unsettling Work of Treaty Education

Researchers: Michael Graham and Raquel Bellefleur

McDowell Foundation NEWS

McDowell Foundation | 2317 Arlington Avenue | Saskatoon SK | S7J 2H8

306-373-1660
T: 1-800-667-7762
F: 306-374-1122
mcdowell@stf.sk.ca
www.mcdowellfoundation.ca
@STFmcdowell
McDowell Foundation