

**Dr. Gary Kachanoski**

**Address to Rotary**

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Good afternoon everyone. I want to begin by thanking the members of the Rotary Club of St. John's for once again inviting me to speak, and also for your ongoing support of your university and for all the good work that Rotary does in our community.

I also want to acknowledge Ms. Iris Petten, chair of our Board of Regents, our chancellor, Dr. Susan Dyer-Knight, and many other members of our Board of Regents. They all volunteer their time and contribute significantly to our university.

As you saw from the slides that were shown just before we started this meeting, we have a number of new members of our senior leadership team who have joined us since I last spoke to you. And I am pleased to acknowledge them.

On Sept. 1, Dr. Isabelle Dostaler joined us as our new dean of the Faculty of Business Administration, in October, Dr. Jennifer Simpson began her term as dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and finally in November Tom Nault started as our new registrar and secretary to Academic Senate.

This year we also welcomed two new vice-presidents. Dr. Neil Bose is our VP(research) and came to us from the Australian Maritime College, the national institute for maritime education, training and research.

And Dr. Jeff Keshen is our new VP (Grenfell Campus). Most recently he served as dean, Faculty of Arts, with Mount Royal University in Calgary.

This is my seventh presentation to the club and it's been wonderful to have the opportunity to keep you updated about all the noteworthy happenings and activities at Memorial. It has certainly been a very busy and interesting year at Memorial.

On the one hand, there is so much to celebrate. Together with our partners, we have significantly advanced initiatives that are priorities not just for the university, but for the province as whole. And as always, our students, faculty and staff continue to amaze us with their leadership and achievement that distinguishes them at a national and international level. So on the one hand so much to celebrate.

While on the other hand, as the daily news media and discussion forums continually remind us, our province's fiscal, economic and demographic challenges are very real, and as recent provincial budgets have shown, Memorial University is certainly not immune to that reality, nor should it be. I will revisit this at the end of my talk today.

At Memorial, we tell our stories of success and accomplishment throughout the year in our alumni magazine *Luminus*, on our *Gazette* news website, and each year, we summarize noteworthy happenings and activities in our on-line President's Report.

This year's report theme is *Out in The Open*. It reflects the place in which we all live, the adventuresome way in which our researchers and students engage with the world around them, the spirit of exploration that is a hallmark of a Memorial University education, and Memorial's commitment to continuing to be open and transparent, while maintaining institutional autonomy, which is at the core of what it means to be a university.

I certainly encourage you to read the report and learn more about the accomplishments of Memorial, and with the short time I have here today I can share just a few examples and highlights.

All of our Sea-Hawks student athletes make us proud but this past year we had an additional reason to celebrate when the Memorial University Sea-Hawks curling team under skip Adam Boland won the National University-Sports Men's Curling championship.

The team finished their national championship-winning season with a perfect 17-0 record. The only match Team Boland lost was in the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Curling championship to Team Gushue, the 2017 Tim Horton's Brier Champions and Men's World Champions. I think Team Boland from Memorial can be excused for losing to Team Gushue.

We also were proud that Memorial had 39 Academic All-Canadians, exceptional Sea-Hawks athletes and leaders with an academic standing of 80 per cent or better.

And speaking of student leaders, I want to mention two examples. First, Michael O'Keefe, a performance and musicology undergraduate student

from St. John's, who is Memorial's and Newfoundland and Labrador's newest Rhodes Scholar.

The dean of Music describes him as “a musician, scholar, humanitarian and policy-shaper.” He is intensely interested in the relationship between music and people, how it influences policy, justice and inclusivity, and its capacity to bring together people of diverse backgrounds together

And second, Dr. Leila Qashu, a former PhD student working at the research centre for Music, Material, and Place in our School of Music, who graduated this past spring from Memorial's ethnomusicology program. Dr. Qashu's PhD thesis dissertation was named best in Canada for 2017 by the Canadian Association of Graduate Schools.

The national association singled out her thesis for “breaking new ground” in conflict resolution in Indigenous communities, and bringing to light a form of justice that has national and international applications.

Memorial researchers also continued to get national and international recognition.

SmartICE, the world's first climate change adaptation tool to integrate traditional Indigenous knowledge of sea ice with advanced sensing data acquisition and remote monitoring technology, was the only Canadian recipient of the United Nations Momentum for Change Climate Solutions Award.

The research is led by Dr. Trevor Bell, University Research Professor in the

Department of Geography, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. In addition to this prestigious UN award, a little over a year ago Dr. Bell was honoured for the second time with the coveted Arctic Inspiration Prize, a national honour often known as the Nobel Prize of the North.

And finally, we are pleased to acknowledge and congratulate Dr. Barbara Neis of the Faculty Humanities and Social Science, Department of Sociology, who in late December was awarded the Order of Canada for her innovative research on the interactions between work, environment and health in the coastal communities of Newfoundland and Labrador, and beyond. Dr. Neis is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and this past year she was awarded Memorial's John Lewis Paton Distinguished University Professorship, our highest faculty honour.

Last year I indicated that at Memorial we are committed to supporting the development and success of innovators across our province, and through that helping to build a vibrant, successful and sustainable future for our province. We believe very strongly that a key to unlocking our current and future potential for fostering entrepreneurship and innovation is to build a foundation that starts with our students from the moment they enter our doors.

And since I spoke to you last year, we have significantly advanced the foundation for building that culture of innovation at Memorial, and creating opportunities for student entrepreneurship and social innovation by the creation and launch of two new campus wide initiatives: the Memorial Centre for Entrepreneurship; and the Centre for Social Enterprise.

The Memorial Centre for Entrepreneurship – or MCE – a partnership between the Faculty of Business Administration and the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, was officially launched this past spring with the support of provincial, federal and private partners.

And just last October it received another significant boost thanks to a generous donation of over \$1.1M from the family of the late Dr. Mel Woodward, a gift that will target and support student entrepreneurs through an annual business competition (the Mel Woodward Cup). It will award \$40,000 annually in cash prizes for seed funding, as well as mentoring and other supports.

The MCE is open to students in all programs and will also help better prepare student entrepreneurs with technology-based ideas for participation in programs at the Genesis Centre – Memorial's award-winning technology incubator.

The MCE will also work collaboratively with the second newly established centre, the CSE Centre for Social Enterprise, a centre that will catalyse and nurture social entrepreneurs and strengthen social enterprises in our province by supporting research, teaching and learning initiatives, and incubating new and existing social enterprises.

Social enterprise is a rapidly growing area of student interest, a reflection of the growing proportion of young people who wish to contribute to the public

good, and the not-for-profit sector, in addition to advancing their own personal goals and careers.

To that end, this fall Memorial will also begin offering Canada's first MBA in social enterprise and entrepreneurship. The program will develop leaders for social change capable of addressing complex social problems in creative and effective ways. By cultivating relationships with existing and emergent social enterprises, this program will also help strengthen the social enterprise sector in the province.

Of course, there's no better example of what can come from empowering students for social entrepreneurship than our Enactus Memorial team, a student-led, volunteer organization that competes nationally and globally, based on the outcomes of community projects and social enterprises that they develop to address a range of economic, social and environmental issues.

You all know their accomplishments. They were world champions in 2008 and again in 2016. In 2017 they were once again Canadian champions, and at the World Cup in England in September they finished a close second in this prestigious global competition – 1,700 university campuses competing for 36 national teams who then compete for the world cup. What a remarkable record of achievement.

Another amazing group of students is the Paradigm Hyperloop team of 40 highly innovative engineering students from Memorial, College of the North Atlantic and Northeastern University in Boston.

They were one of only 24 finalists out of 1,200 international teams in a global competition held this fall at SpaceX headquarters in California, and the only North American team to be awarded the chance to test their pod in the SpaceX Hyperloop tube. They came second in this global competition, an extraordinary accomplishment.

The MCE, the CSE, and the new MBA in social enterprise and entrepreneurship, are all part of our broader Innovation Initiative, an initiative focused on re-imagining the nature and configuration of innovation supports across the university to ensure they best enable and empower students, faculty, staff and external partners

The approval a few week ago by Memorial's Senate of a significantly revised university intellectual property policy is another great example of this effort – all with a purpose of finding ways to maximize our impact as a university on the social, cultural and economic development of our great province.

This past year we were also pleased to play a supporting role to the Atlantic region's ocean industry consortium proposal to the federal government's Innovation Superclusters Initiative. The proposal was short-listed. If successful it would inject significant federal innovation and development funding into the region, hundreds of millions of dollars and we eagerly await the outcome of the competition.



One of the strengths we brought to that supercluster application is the incredible success of the Ocean Frontier Institute launched with our partner universities in 2016, (Dalhousie and UPEI) with an unprecedented \$220 million in funding from the Canada First Research Excellence Fund and various other partner funding.

In the coming months, through the OFI funding, Memorial will welcome a large influx of new post-doctoral researchers and graduate students from multiple disciplines to undertake some of the world's most ambitious research aimed at unlocking the secrets of the North Atlantic.

Over the past couple of years, as many groups have reflected on our provinces fiscal, economic and demographic challenges and opportunities, it has certainly been appropriate and rewarding to see the importance of Memorial and its students reflected in strategic plans and goals from many agencies for population growth, innovation, economic diversification and sustainable development.

This was certainly also reflected, in Mayor Breen's and Premier Ball's and comments to Rotary here over the past few weeks, in the provincial government's new 2017 immigration and innovation strategies, and in recent funding announcements for pilot projects with the Association of new Canadians to help our international students and graduates find work experience and employment in the province, among many other initiatives the past year.

All these plans and goals assume continued successful recruitment and retention of talented students at Memorial. So in addition to the significant upward trajectory of our research activities, we are particularly proud that

despite challenging provincial demographics, Memorial continues to experience strong demand for our academic programs.

Our overall enrolment has remained relatively stable, with significant demand and growth in our professional undergraduate programs and a doubling of the number of graduate students in the past 10 years to a total almost 3,800.

A key aspect is that over 30 per cent of our students are originally from outside the province or Canada. And as I said last year, of particular note is our number of PhD students, up 12 per cent over the last two years, and rising from 300 in 2004 to now more than 850, directly reflecting our upward research trajectory, and our goal to significantly accelerate the generation of scholarly outcomes and intellectual property, including enhancing our focus on innovation.

The Conference Board of Canada, and many others, have emphasized that talented people with advanced graduate education, particularly at the PhD level, are the underpinning of innovation and economic diversification.

In today's globally connected world, innovation occurs where new ideas are generated and supported. And new ideas are the foundation of graduate research degrees, and a vibrant research and innovation ecosystem.

So we should have no illusions, for a successful future we need to have what it takes to attract and retain the highest quality people – people who want to live and work here.

From Memorial's perspective that's directly related to capacity on the ground here, and the development and operation of 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching

and R&D infrastructure, which will attract the best and the brightest faculty and staff, and provide students with access to the programs and the education they need and they deserve.

So, as I have said many times, addressing our aging infrastructure, particularly on our St. John's Campus, has to continue to be our highest priority. More than half of our buildings are 40 years or older, some more than 50 years old. And even with significant repairs or renovations, they can no longer meet the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century university.

At this time last year, we had just re-issued the tender for the core sciences facility, our highest priority. And of course as everyone knows, since then the construction of the building has moved ahead rapidly with the two massive cranes and tonnes of steel on the parkway giving you an idea of the magnitude of the facility.

The construction of this facility will create nearly 1,440 direct and indirect person years of employment and approximately \$94 million in labour income. More importantly, it will enable and support 21<sup>st</sup> century science, and engineering teaching and learning.

This past year we were also pleased to complete (on-budget) phase two construction of the Holyrood Marine Base breakwater, marginal wharf and underwater technology test bed. Combined with a proposed new ocean-front building, the marine base will allow Memorial to undertake critical at-sea, in-water and sub-sea education, training, research and innovation. The base will also be the cornerstone of a new Cold Ocean Research and Innovation Park in Holyrood.

An important aspect of our plans is the development of the Battery Facility as a public engagement platform for creating all types of innovation, collaboration and partnerships. The graduate student residence component is completed and is full with a waiting list. The remaining Battery redevelopment is on-budget and expected to be completed in June.

Subsequently key outreach units will be moving there, including the Gardiner Centre for Business development, the Harris Centre and the Office of Public Engagement, and the Genesis Centre, Memorial's award winning business incubator for technology starts-ups.

Since its establishment nearly two decades ago, the Genesis Centre has helped more than 150 start-ups raise more than \$95 million in private investments, and created more than 1,100 jobs. Going forward, we want to at least triple the number of successful start-ups knocking on the Genesis Centre's door.

Key to this will be fostering entrepreneurship at all levels – from our undergraduate students through to the start-up companies within the Genesis Centre, through the initiatives I talked about earlier.

And at Genesis, the impact of our focus on innovation and entrepreneurship is already being felt. The inquiry rate for their programs is 10 times what it was four years ago. Their Evolution Program, an eight-week idea validator program, now accepts up to 60 entrepreneurs per year. And their Enterprise Program, which helps entrepreneurs commercialize their ideas, has accepted more companies in the last year than in the previous three combined.

Additionally, Genesis is working with the federal government to help immigrant entrepreneurs who have great business ideas establish roots in Newfoundland and Labrador, and just recently has received significant funding to specifically enable and support women entrepreneurs.

We also certainly believe that public engagement at Memorial supports regional and provincial innovation. The Office of Public Engagement and the Harris Centre at Memorial are primary connectors for knowledge mobilization, linking our researchers with groups all over Newfoundland and Labrador supporting active community engagement through the research process.

A great example is the recent collaboration between the Harris Centre and the Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador on the Vital Signs project, an annual cross-provincial check-up on the vitality of our communities on key quality of life issues such as housing, the economy, health and education. A copy of the fourth annual report for 2017 has been placed at each table.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you get the sense that there is much to celebrate as Memorial focuses on meeting the needs of our students, developing innovative living and learning spaces, building and renewing appropriate infrastructure for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching, research and public engagement, and making a difference in our communities.

As I said earlier, however, there also have been significant challenges. I want to repeat that we are acutely aware of the fiscal situation of the province and know that Memorial has to do its part, and is doing its part.

And I would like to end today with some short comments about our budget and budget planning processes.

*(Dr. Kachanoski speaks extemporaneously about Memorial's budget challenges.)*

To close, I want to once again thank you for inviting me here today to speak with pride about the accomplishments and achievements of your Memorial University, and also thank you for listening (just a little) about our fiscal challenges.