

## **10<sup>th</sup> Annual CURAC/ARUCC Conference and General Meeting**

**University of Victoria, 18-20 April 2012**

### **Report to UVRA AGM, June 2012**

The 2012 annual conference and general meeting of the federation of College and University Retirees Associations of Canada (CURAC/ARUCC) was hosted at UVic in April by the UVRA in collaboration with the retirees associations at SFU and UBC.

Hosted at a different institution each year, the conference serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas on association activities as well as topics of general interest to post-secondary retirees. It also serves as an important source of revenue to sustain the work of the federation in collecting and disseminating comparative and other information for the benefit of local associations and in lobbying on behalf of the post-secondary sector, in particular retirees' interests.

It is pleasing to report that the Victoria conference can be judged to have been an undoubted success. We trust this success reflects well on the UVRA and the role it can play in advancing the profile and reputation of the University.

#### **Measures of Success**

The conference attracted 61 full registrations and 16 day registrations; hardly a large attendance by the standards of larger organizations, but approximately double the attendance in 2011 and comparable to the attendance in 2010 at York University in metropolitan Toronto. Delegates attended from every province across the country except PEI and from south of the border.

A substantial number of unsolicited complimentary messages have been received since the conference.

Results of an evaluation survey circulated at the conference show that in terms of information provision for attendees and various hospitality measures, over 80% of responses assessed the services as very good or better, and over 97% as satisfactory or very good or better. In terms of the discussion sessions, over 76% of responses assessed the individual sessions as very good or better, and 98% as satisfactory or very good or better.

Preliminary financial results show a substantial surplus, 50% of which accrues to the federation and 50% to the hosting associations. Based on these results, it is anticipated that UVRA and the associations at SFU and UBC will each recover their sponsorship contributions to the conference plus a healthy bonus.

### **Conference Program**

The program was designed to appeal to both association activists and a broader audience of local association members.

In one of the sessions for activists ('Sharing Best Practices'), Bev Timmons of UVRA presented an excellent example of a successful practice, the UVRA Masterminds Series, that other local associations were encouraged to emulate.

Topics for the general audience focussed on seniors' health and lifestyle. According to the survey results, UVRA President David Docherty's presentation on 'Keeping a Healthy Mind and Body as we Age' was one of the outstanding sessions of the conference.

Audio recordings, photographs, brief summaries and power point slides of most presentations will be available on disk to host associations and the CURAC/ARUCC Board.

If there was one disappointment for the conference organizing committee, it was the relatively low turn-out of local members, given the quality of the presentations and despite extensive local promotion through the UVRA newsletter, the UVRA website and direct e-mail/mail correspondence.

### **Suggestions for the UVRA Board**

The Board could review relevant materials from the conference to determine whether activities in other associations might be followed by UVRA. Evidence of activities elsewhere is available in (i) the summaries of presentations in the sessions on best practices, communicating with the membership and pension governance and (ii) the hard copy reports and newsletters outlining activities in other associations that were requested of delegates and are available in the UVRA office. While UVRA is currently very active on several fronts, there may be still further opportunities to benefit members and the University through the sorts of initiatives underway elsewhere (e.g. organizing an association bursary or scholarship fund as at McMaster University).

Also, following up on the discussion in the conference session on regional CURAC/ARUCC meetings, the Board should consult with the associations at SFU and UBC concerning the idea of a BC regional conference.

## **Thanks**

The conference organizing committee wishes to thank the UVRA Board for its encouragement and financial support of the conference, the other conference sponsors, the UVRA members who presented at or moderated sessions, and the UVRA volunteers who helped with a variety of important tasks. Finally, I wish to record my own thanks to the members of the organizing committee for all their hard work and commitment.

John Schofield, Chair, conference organizing committee

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## **Sponsors:**

Platinum: Johnson Inc, Mercer (Canada) Ltd

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In-kind: Monk Office, Harbour Towers Hotel and Suites, UVic Bookstore, Royal BC Museum, Royal Museum Shop, IMAX Victoria, Uplands Golf Club

**UVRA presenters/moderators:** David Docherty, Bev Timmons, Trevor Matthews, Winona Pugh

**UVRA volunteers:** Barrington Beardsmore, Elizabeth Coey, Judy Cryderman, Jim Currie, Marie Elliott, Thomas Fleming, Helen Kempster, Val Lanceley, Trevor Matthews, Peter Murphy, Laura Proctor, Judith Sales, Anne-Marie Stewart, Claire Tugwell, David Turkington.

**Conference organizing committee:** John Schofield (Chair), Joanne Thomas (Vice-Chair and Secretary), Kathy Harris (Treasurer), Melvin Klassen, Lyle Robertson, Winona Pugh, Peter Liddell, Leonard Evenden (SFU), Mark Thompson (UBC)