

2014 MURA Annual General Meeting



Susan Denburg, Associate Vice President (Academic), Faculty of Health Sciences and Strategic Advisor to President Deane, was the guest speaker at MURA's June 4 luncheon and annual general meeting. Susan provided an update on the progress and priorities stemming from Deane's directional document entitled 'Forward with Integrity' (FWI)

and the subsequent Advisory Group paper, 'The Emerging Landscape'. Susan framed the update by posing a number of questions to indicate the impact of FWI on the University's strategic direction.

Who are we?

McMaster is a research-focussed, student-centred institution. We are a massive, flourishing, complex organization with strong roots and a foundation of educational innovation and research excellence.

What do we want to do?

McMaster will 'educate for capability' and seek opportunities to integrate our research intensity into our educational mission. We will enhance our connections with communities, both locally and globally, and foster a thriving culture of research distinction.

How are we going to do it?

We need to dream of where we want to be, but remain grounded in reality and be cognizant of our environment. We will promote integrity, civility, openness and flexibility. We will strengthen our internal community and our connections with external partners. We will make sure that our enabling platforms are functioning and that our research excellence is not compromised. We will work to ensure that our students are prepared to engage with our world.

How will we evaluate our success?

We have a strong foundation to build on, and we need to continually assess our progress towards our tangible goals to remain top ranking, educate students to function in a complex environment, and ensure that research permeates everything we do, from the classroom to the laboratory.

Under the title 'Stoking the Creative Impulses', Susan described the disbursement of 76 starter grants to support creative ideas from faculty, staff and students that were consistent with the priorities and goals of FWI and focused on enhancing the student experience or initiating interdisciplinary research collaborations. Susan showed a video in which fund recipients shared updates on their projects and reflected on the impact that the FWI funding had on their work.

Denburg noted that the engagement of retirees in the strategic direction of the University has been the subject of several conversations during the initial years following the letter. There are many potential roles for MURA members within this program, such as participation in the development and implementation of the Learning Portfolio, an online tool that allows students to plan, record and reflect on a range of educational experiences: academic, extra-curricular and experiential. Retirees might become involved by enhancing the Portfolio through mentorship, helping establish the most effective means of mentoring students and participation in community-campus partnerships. For more information, see

<http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/learning-portfolio.html>

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