

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

June 2026

June has been a time of connection and celebration across our campuses. I've had the opportunity to meet with faculty, staff, students, and partners from across Saskatchewan, and these conversations continue to shape my understanding of the opportunities ahead and the shared commitment that defines the University of Saskatchewan.

The first week of June, I took part in my first Spring Convocation as President. This was a meaningful moment as it marked my official installation as USask's 12th president and vice-chancellor. The oath I took reminded me of the importance of listening to the people in this organization and across the province. With this in mind, I spoke directly to the importance of the USask community in helping us achieve our goals. I am grateful to everyone who took part and contributed to the sense of community and purpose that guides our work.

With summer beginning, I want to highlight developments that speak to the energy and progress I'm seeing across our campuses.

SPRING CONVOCATION AND INSTALLATION

This year's Spring Convocation brought our community together to celebrate nearly 4,000 graduates from across USask. Over five days of ceremonies at Merlis Belsher Place, students from every college joined the [Class of 2026](#) in marking this milestone. I was also honoured to be formally installed as USask's 12th president and vice-chancellor during the opening ceremony, supported by colleagues, Elders and Wise Ones, students, alumni, and partners.

Convocation also included [honorary degrees](#) for Murad Al-Katib and Dr. Gagandeep Kang, whose contributions to global food security and public health reflect the values that guide USask. Murad's message was powerful and deeply aligned with USask's commitment to local-to-global impact and Saskatchewan's importance to the world. Dr. Kang spoke about the importance of collaboration in driving meaningful change, highlighting how

breakthroughs in public health depend on people working together across disciplines and communities — an approach that mirrors USask’s own commitment to partnership-driven discovery. It was a week that highlighted both achievement and the strong sense of community that defines our university.

PROVOST SEARCH

The university is preparing to launch the search for our next Provost and Vice-President Academic, a position central to advancing USask’s academic mission. As part of this early phase, members of our campus community have been invited to share their perspectives on the qualities and leadership attributes that will be essential in our next Provost. Feedback is being gathered through a confidential survey administered by Odgers, our executive search partner, and will be used to help shape the candidate profile.

The Provost plays a critical role in advancing academic strategy, aligning resources and academic units, and providing strong people and institutional leadership. As a key member of the executive team, the Provost is expected to mentor leaders, support major institutional initiatives, engage with external partners and communicate transparently and effectively.

Community input is an important part of this process, and I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to contribute. Updates on the search, including opportunities for further engagement, will continue to be shared as the process moves forward.

PRINCE ALBERT MOU

USask and the City of Prince Albert have signed their first Memorandum of Understanding, formalizing a partnership focused on community development, health and wellness, transportation, and recreation. The agreement strengthens a relationship more than 40 years in the making and aligns with the city’s 2026–2029 Strategic Plan.

The MOU includes a shared research funding model and a joint working group that will identify collaborative projects and track progress. As I noted at the signing, our success as a university is tied to the strength of Saskatchewan’s communities, and this partnership reflects our commitment to working alongside Prince Albert to support a sustainable and thriving future.

PRIDE MONTH

June is Pride Month, a time to celebrate 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and reaffirm our commitment to creating a campus where everyone feels a sense of belonging. Throughout

the month, the [USask Spotlight page](#) is sharing stories, events, and learning resources that highlight the experiences, leadership, and contributions of 2SLGBTQIA+ students, faculty, staff, and alumni. These reflections underscore both the diversity within our community and the ongoing work required to foster inclusion.

I want to thank the organizers, volunteers, and participants who help ensure that Pride at USask is both joyful and grounded in our shared responsibility to support equity and belonging across our campuses.

INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH/INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

It is also National Indigenous History Month in June, a time to honour the histories, cultures, and contributions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. On June 21, USask will join communities across the country in recognizing National Indigenous Peoples Day. Stories, events, and learning opportunities [are being shared throughout the month](#), and I encourage our campus community to take part and reflect on our responsibilities to truth, reconciliation, and respectful partnership.

TOP RESEARCHERS RECOGNIZED

USask has recognized [three outstanding researchers](#) for their contributions to scholarship and discovery. Dr. Wendy Roy has been named the university's Distinguished Researcher for 2026, honoured for her nationally and internationally recognized work in speculative fiction, women's writing, and power relations in Canadian literature.

Two emerging scientists were also celebrated: Dr. Deborah Adewole, an expert in non-ruminant nutrition, and Dr. Arinjay Banerjee, a virologist whose work focuses on zoonotic viruses and One Health research.

All three were recognized during Spring Convocation for their significant contributions to research and innovation at USask.

HUSKIE ATHLETICS

June is a quieter month for Huskie Athletics as teams transition out of their competitive seasons and begin preparations for fall. Training, recruitment, and community programming continue through the summer, and the athletics calendar will ramp up again as we approach the start of the 2026–27 season. I encourage our campus community to stay connected with Huskie Athletics and support our student-athletes as they prepare for the year ahead.

CLOSING REMARKS

As summer unfolds, I am encouraged by the focus and generosity I see across our campuses. The work taking place in our classrooms, research spaces, clinics, and community settings reflects a university that shows up for Saskatchewan and for one another. Thank you for the leadership you bring to this work and for the support you offer to our students and colleagues. I look forward to continuing this shared effort to strengthen the University of Saskatchewan and to build on the momentum we are creating together.