

A Message from the Vice-Provost School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

I am pleased to once again extend my most sincere congratulations to the Society of Graduate Students (SOGS) and the SOGS Academic Committee, whose dedication, commitment, and scholarly excellence is reflected in this ninth volume of the Western Journal of Graduate Research.

Founded in 1993, this publication builds on a tradition of promoting and celebrating academic excellence. The Western Journal of Graduate Research (WJGR) showcases the creative and multidisciplinary scholarship of our Master's and Doctoral students in programs across Faculties and subject areas that include geography, health sciences, biology, psychology, information and media studies, and engineering.

The journal culminates the SOGS annual Western Research Forum (WRF) held every winter semester. This year, the WRF theme was entitled Mosaic and featured the keynote address "Leadership and Research in Turbulent Times: Why They Matter for Democracy" by Dr. Pam Bishop. The agenda also included a new "Young Researcher Keynote" given by graduate student Yimin Chen, PhD candidate in the Faculty of Information and Media Studies.

There were 65 abstracts submitted for peer-review, making 2017 the most successful year for student submissions. As a compilation of presentations at the conference, the WJGR documents and disseminates the excellent research and scholarly contributions of Western's graduate students.

In addition to providing the participating graduate students with invaluable professional development, the forum, the manuscript preparation, and the peer-review processes have enabled SOGS to showcase the outstanding work of Western graduate students to the university community at large.

I want to extend my most sincere congratulations to SOGS and to all the graduate students who participated in (and planned) the forum, submitted their work, reviewed the manuscripts, and managed the publication of this journal.

The Western Research Forum and the Western Journal of Graduate Research continue to be hallmarks of graduate student excellence. It is a privilege and a pleasure to promote and share this latest volume of the journal with the entire Western academic community.

Linda Miller

Vice-Provost, *School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies*