



UKRAINIAN RESOURCE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE  
CELEBRATES

35  
YEARS

Engaged in community development and intercultural dialogue, URDC identifies, carries out, and contributes to educational and cultural projects, connecting the University with its partners in Canada and Ukraine.

The Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre (URDC) is an endowed, project-based centre at MacEwan University. It was founded by Dr. Roman Petryshyn, who sat as its director for 28 years. URDC was shaped by Dr. Petryshyn's extensive work in the field of multiculturalism in Canada and his belief that ethnocultural groups needed representation and advocacy for their respective interests in all Canadian institutions.

He started URDC as a way to connect the Ukrainian community with a post-secondary institution and to encourage communication and partnership. Ukrainian community organizations and initiatives would gain legitimacy through the rigour, ethics, prestige and recognition offered by the post-secondary institution. In turn, MacEwan could expand its programming in the area of Ukrainian-Canadian and Ukrainian studies through both educational and community-engaged projects.

URDC has played a vital role in fostering global citizenship and care for Ukraine amongst MacEwan University students, faculty and the broader Ukrainian

community through advancing student, faculty, and community-engaged research; transformative learning experiences through on- and off-campus educational opportunities; and faculty and student exchanges. URDC has coordinated and supported major provincial, national and international projects in collaboration with MacEwan faculties, community organizations, external agencies, post-secondary institutions and governments, both in Canada and Ukraine. Together these projects have built an extended network of individuals dedicated to supporting, celebrating and furthering research on Ukraine that spans multiple disciplines, generations and continents.

URDC was originally launched in July 1987 as a pilot project through the Office of Multiculturalism and Native Programming at what was then Grant MacEwan Community College. When the centre formally opened in spring 1988, many of its first projects supported the Ukrainian arts in Alberta, such as music and dance, through the co-creation of organizations, events and conferences. For example, URDC helped launch the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts (ACUA), sponsored Altanets '87 (a 10-day workshop for Ukrainian dance instructors across Canada) alongside the Alberta Ukrainian Dance Association (AUDA), and co-organized a master choir concert to close an annual conductors' seminar.

Within a few years, Dr. Petryshyn began to recognize that URDC and MacEwan could play an important role in the development and reform of educational institutions and agencies in the newly independent Ukraine.

URDC facilitated projects that spanned various disciplines, including agriculture, business, human resources, nursing, education, the arts, and humanities and social sciences. To better facilitate URDC development projects in Ukraine, a MacEwan international office was opened in Kyiv in 1992, led by Yuri Konkin. Konkin would later immigrate to Canada and continue to work with URDC and MacEwan, eventually becoming the centre's director between 2016 and 2018.

The URDC directors have worked hard to foster strong relationships between Ukrainian universities and MacEwan University. Presently, MacEwan has four official partners in Ukraine: Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) in Lviv, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA) in Kyiv, Ternopil National Medical University (TNMU) in Ternopil, and Mykola Lysenko Music Academy (MLMA) in Lviv. These ties continue

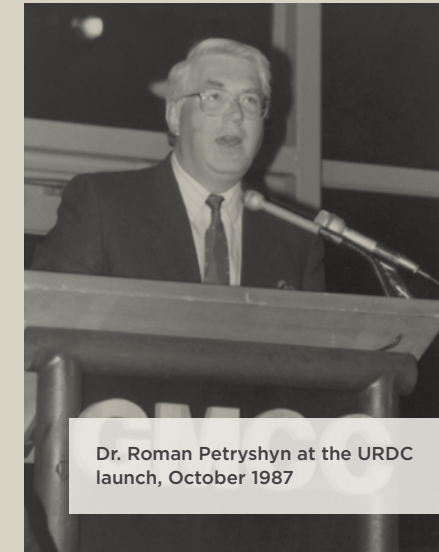
to strengthen under the current URDC director, Larisa Hayduk, who assumed the position in 2019 and has demonstrated innovative and effective leadership through several challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine. Hayduk boasts a long career with both MacEwan University and URDC dating back to 2007. After working with URDC for five years as she pursued a Master of Education degree, Hayduk moved to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Program Services office at MacEwan. In 2017, she developed and taught a community-service learning course, COSL 301: Building Peaceful Communities, where students had the opportunity to volunteer at a camp for disadvantaged children in the Carpathian Mountains, Ukraine.

As director of URDC, Hayduk has exemplified a commitment to facilitating cross-disciplinary engagement with MacEwan's partner universities in Ukraine.

Historical articles by Kalyna Somchynsky

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## Our Donors

URDC has received ongoing support from the Ukrainian-Canadian community, the Government of Alberta, the Government of Canada and MacEwan University.

URDC is also graciously funded through community donations and five endowments managed by the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education Trust (UFCE Trust). UFCE is a non-profit society established in 1994 to support URDC's local and international initiatives through fundraising and cultural expertise. UFCE operates through community-university engagement, building close relationships with both MacEwan and the Ukrainian Canadian community that are mutually beneficial. UFCE generates donations that support URDC and MacEwan through two primary annual fundraisers: the Kyiv Konnection Banquet and a golf tournament.

URDC's Kule Chair in Ukrainian Community and International Development, Chair of International Health, and Health and Nursing Technology Fund endowments were established through significant donations by Drs. Peter and Doris Kule – local philanthropists in the Ukrainian Canadian community. Peter Kule was an accountant with his own firm, a builder, developer and investor who immigrated to Alberta in 1938 from Ukraine. Here, he met his wife Doris, who was the daughter of Ukrainian immigrants from Bukovyna and worked as a teacher. The Kules were incredibly active within the Ukrainian Canadian community and demonstrated a firm commitment to education and the enhancement of Ukrainian studies throughout their lives.



Drs. Peter and Doris Kule

In 2002, the Kules made their first donation of \$500,000, which was followed by a \$1 million donation in 2004, and a further \$500,000 donation in 2006. These donations were matched by MacEwan or UFCE on a two-to-one ratio to establish an impressive endowment that supports and funds URDC activities. Currently, the endowments are valued at over \$10 million.

The Kules' generous donations have led to the creation of two chairs at MacEwan: The Drs. Peter and Doris Kule Chair in Ukrainian Community and International Development at MacEwan (2004) and the Chair of International Health (2008). The Kule Chair was established to promote Ukraine as an academic subject, support faculty in their research and advance research on Ukrainian-Canadian themes. Dr. Petryshyn was the first Kule Chair, followed by Dr. Svitlana Krysz, who became editor of the prestigious Ukrainian studies journal *East/West Ukrainian Studies* during

her term. Currently, the position is held by Dr. Jeffrey Stepnisky, a sociologist whose research explores atmosphere and memory. He is currently exploring these themes through research on the Maidan Museum in Kyiv, Ukraine, and spaces of collective memory for the Ukrainian Canadian community in Edmonton.

The Chair of International Health is housed in the Faculty of Health and Community Studies at MacEwan. This position is dedicated to promoting education in international health and conducting research in Ukraine and Eastern Europe. The Chair of International Health was first filled in 2020 by Dr. Elizabeth Burgess-Pinto whose research interests include the health of immigrant and refugee children and families, international and intercultural nursing. She is currently undertaking a comparative study of responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in Edmonton (Canada), Ternopil (Ukraine), and Talca (Chile). She



NaUKMA colleagues from the English Department singing revolutionary songs during the Orange Revolution, 2004. Left to right: Lydiia Retushna, Iryna Semyankiv, Liudmyla Omelianenko, Alla Shunai, Nadia Buzunova, Iryna Denysenko, Natalia Grushetska, Nataliya Kulnichenko, Olena Kurovska (Head of the Department), Lesia Baturaska, Yaroslava Fedoriv

has also partnered with Ternopil National Medical University (TNMU) faculty and Dr. Olenka Bilash (University of Alberta) to teach qualitative research methods to TNMU faculty.

Most recently, UFCE has demonstrated tremendous support for URDC's response to the war in Ukraine. Proceeds from the 2022 Kyiv Konnection Banquet were dedicated to bolstering URDC's efforts to support students, faculty and researchers at Ukrainian universities. UFCE donated 20 \$1,500 individual bursaries to Ukrainian students continuing their studies at MacEwan after their education was disrupted by the war. URDC is also grateful that UFCE has financially supported free English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes organized by URDC for Ukrainian newcomers.

## General Introduction to Development Projects

After the declaration of Ukrainian Independence on August 24, 1991, URDC saw increasing opportunities to build relationships with Ukrainian institutions to ease their transition into a democratic, free-market and internationally integrated society. Dr. Petryshyn began identifying areas where URDC could partner with industry experts to support Ukraine through the development process of forming sustainable, self-sufficient, and contemporary institutions in various sectors. URDC facilitated several projects in the areas of agriculture, business, nursing, and inclusive education, with some projects even receiving funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

These projects were conducted through a similar framework that involved partnerships between Canadian and Ukrainian educational centres, the exchange of students and specialists, and translation and adaptation of educational materials to the Ukrainian context. From the very beginning, URDC sought to work with international partners in a collaborative rather than a prescriptive and didactic manner. The Canadian project specialists would demonstrate knowledge in their respective field while working to adapt their experience to the local context and empower their Ukrainian partners. These projects were incredibly successful, and some have carried forward to the present day.

## Canada-Ukraine Farmer Exchange and Agriculture Development Programs

*“Земля дає основне багатство при любі країні”*

*“Land provides the most significant source of wealth in any country”*

**Yaroslav Rodych**

*Participant in the Canada-Ukraine Farmer Exchange Program*

In 1991, the Canada-Ukraine Farmer Exchange Program was launched by URDC in response to land reform legislation announced in Ukraine in 1990. Under the new legislation, individuals had the opportunity to own land privately as opposed to the state-owned and run collective farms that were standard in the Soviet Union. The legislation allowed individuals to own up to 100 hectares (the equivalent of 250 acres) of land and cultivate up to half of it. It also access to farming equipment, bank loans at reduced rates, tax exemptions and the ability to purchase essential commodities at “state” prices. There was only one problem: farmers in Ukraine were not familiar with the management of small-scale family farms under a free-market economy. They needed support to ease the transition, and URDC stepped in with three interrelated programs aimed at supporting Ukrainian farmers through a holistic and collaborative approach: the Canada-Ukraine Farmer Exchange Program, the Agriculture Curriculum Development Project and the Agri-Business Learning Project.

The Canada-Ukraine Farmer Exchange Program, led by Bohdan Chomiak at URDC, helped Ukrainian farmers learn practical and management skills through hands-on experience working on Canadian farms, short courses and independent learning modules. URDC hoped that the program

would contribute to a stable agricultural supply. With funding from the Geneva-based Karl Popper Foundation, the program was able to run for two years and allowed 70 farmers from Ukraine to come to Canada for a six-month period.

Neither URDC nor MacEwan had experience in the agricultural sector, yet they recognized the need for such a program and had the capacity to facilitate it; collaboration with local and Ukrainian partners was key. The program was coordinated in partnership between the *L'vivska Asotsiatsiia Fermeriv*, their counterparts in Ivano-Frankivsk, and Dr. Oleh Isichko from Kherson. As a result, candidates selected on the basis of their education and experience represented those respective regions of Ukraine. In Canada, the project was led in collaboration with the Alberta-Ukrainian Association for Farmers' Exchange, their branches in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and volunteer farmers.

The project provided both the farmers from Ukraine and their Canadian host families with opportunities to share knowledge about cultivation, infection and pest mitigation while also sharing cultural values and building relationships. Many Canadian host families reflected that the experience allowed them to reconnect to their Ukrainian ancestry and enhance their Ukrainian language skills.

The Canadian farmers who participated in the Canada-Ukraine Farmers Exchange Program enjoyed the experience so much that they took over the project in 1994. The Alberta-Ukraine Agriculture Exchange Society operated the project on a smaller scale than URDC, although they did have many successes. For example, representatives from the group travelled to Ukraine to interview 23 potential candidates for the exchange, eventually selecting eight participants. The society struggled to secure funding to make the project sustainable in the long term; however, the experience of travelling to Ukraine, visiting the individuals who stayed with them in Canada, and reconnecting with their ancestral homelands provided a worthy experience for members of the Alberta-Ukraine Agriculture Exchange Society.

### **Agriculture Curriculum Development Program**

When URDC began facilitating the exchange of farmers from Ukraine to Canada, it became evident that farmers in Ukraine had additional needs that URDC could help fulfill. One of these areas was the development of an agriculture curriculum in Ukrainian colleges (known as *technikums*). Once the proposal was approved by Canada's Department of External Affairs and International Trade, URDC began to



Ukrainian farmers in Canada

assemble a team to carry out the project. Since MacEwan did not have an agriculture program, URDC enlisted expertise from Olds College, Lakeland College and the School of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan. Together with the URDC, they worked with six *technikums* in Ukraine located in Simferopol, Donetsk, Poltava, Kakholka, Zalishchyky and Rutko.

The team endeavoured to develop a curriculum for farm management and fruit and vegetable production. The process began in February 1992 when six Canadian specialists made an initial visit to Ukraine to research the context and needs of farmers. They then met with their Ukrainian partners and industry representatives to review the findings of the trip and identify the projected outcomes. The Canadian course developers then returned to Ukraine to draft the curriculum with their Ukrainian counterparts, who also translated materials into Ukrainian. Finally, the course was

piloted at Ukrainian colleges and delivered by Ukrainian and Canadian project staff.

### **The Agri-Business Learning Project**

The Agri-Business Learning Project was a 15-month project that resulted in the adaptation and translation of 1,200 pages of Canadian Agricultural Business Materials consolidated into 10 texts and three dubbed farm management videos for use at agricultural *technikums* in Ukraine. The texts and videos revolved around three main topics: agricultural marketing, agricultural economics and farm management. The project sought to empower individuals in Ukraine to run their own farms by sharing knowledge of the market economy attained by Canadian farmers and adapting it to the local context.

The agricultural projects facilitated by URDC demonstrate the importance of respectful and adaptive international collaboration. The project leaders realized

that the only way to successfully support Ukrainians in the agricultural industry was through a descriptive, rather than prescriptive, approach that allowed for learning to occur in all parties. It was important to respect the knowledge the Ukrainian counterparts had of their local context and experience with what may or may not work in a particular scenario. Overall, the project allowed for education, but also network sharing between partner colleges, and sustainable relationship-building into the future.

## URDC Arts & Music Awards

URDC has the pleasure of supporting musicians and literary, visual, media and folk artists who explore Ukrainian or Ukrainian Canadian subject matter through its arts and music awards.

The first awards were distributed in 1991 and have grown with time. Award winners are selected through an application and committee adjudication process. Eligible applicants include both members of the MacEwan community and the general public with the only stipulation being they contribute to the body of Ukrainian and Ukrainian Canadian work produced in Canada.

There are six URDC arts and music awards: the Anna Pidruchney Award for Young Writers, the William and Mary Kostash Award for Media Arts, the Ukrainian Millenium Foundation Award, the Roman Soltykewych Music Award, the Serge Eremenko Music Award and the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts Award.

The awards are named after individuals who made significant contributions to the Ukrainian arts, were active community members or demonstrated a passion and dedication to Ukrainian arts and culture in Canada. Anna Pidruchney was an active community organizer and the first Ukrainian bilingual teacher of Grades 7, 8 and 9 in Vegreville, Alberta. William and

Mary Kostash were both teachers who loved the arts; William was a writer and editor, and Mary worked as a docent at the Art Gallery of Alberta. Roman Soltykewych was the conductor of the Ukrainian Dnipro Ensemble of Edmonton and was dedicated to the enhancement of Ukrainian choral music. Serge Eremenko was the founder and lifelong member of the Ukrainian Music Society of Alberta. The Millenium Foundation promotes Ukrainian music in Alberta and its award is the only one limited to students in MacEwan's Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications. Finally, the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts supports Ukrainian and Ukrainian Canadian visual artists through exhibitions, workshops and a gallery space.

It is always a pleasure to receive the applications and learn about the creative projects being pursued within the Ukrainian arts!



## The Canadian Business Management Program in Ukraine

The Canadian Business Management Program was launched in 1997 with the goal of establishing a diploma in Ukraine to help support the development of a democratic market that could compete on an international scale. In order to support a free market in Ukraine, individuals first needed the education and skills to foster its growth. In this program, students learned Western business skills in accounting, finance, marketing, management and communication at the middle-management level.

The project was administered by the International Institute of Business (IIB) in Kyiv and MacEwan's School of Business, with funding from CIDA and support from UFCE that allowed students to complete practicums in Canada. The program consisted of classes followed by a six-week work experience period where students

were exposed to business management practices and had the opportunity to integrate experience and learning. Some students from each cohort had the opportunity to complete the work experience component in Alberta where they were placed with institutions such as the Royal Bank of Canada, TD Canada Trust, the Holiday Inn and Enbridge. The first class of 33 students graduated on October 7, 2000, with a diploma signed by both the IIB and MacEwan. The completion of a business diploma through a Canadian post-secondary institution allowed the students to excel in their careers, land competitive placements and receive promotions.

In total, 211 students graduated from the program during its ten years of activity. In 2001, URDC's formal involvement in the project concluded with two successful

graduating cohorts and four total cohorts registered in the program. The Business Management Program continued with staff, bilingual faculty and its own materials and resources as a self-sustaining program in cooperation with MacEwan. In 2002, the program expanded, with IIB adapting and offering MacEwan's Human Resources and Management Program in Ukraine. The last cohort of students was accepted into the program in 2009, marking its conclusion.

## Collaboration with the Faculty of Health and Community Studies and Faculty of Nursing

MacEwan's URDC, Faculty of Health and Community Studies and Faculty of Nursing have maintained a close and fruitful collaborative relationship since the early 1990s that has resulted in numerous projects to enhance the standard of health care delivered in Ukraine. URDC's knowledge of the Ukrainian context and prior experience with development projects, including the Agriculture Exchange Project and Business Management Project, has proved an asset in assisting with advising, facilitation and project management.

### 10 Development of Nursing Programs in Ukraine

Dr. Geraldine Nakonechy, former dean of Health and Community Studies (1994-2005), and longtime UFCE member, was critical to initiating partnerships between MacEwan and medical institutions in Ukraine. During a 1993 fact-finding mission organized by the Canadian Society for International Health, Dr. Nakonechy noticed that Ukrainian classrooms lacked educational resources and that the resources that were available were decades out of date. This trip inspired her to engage MacEwan in nursing development programs that have continued and evolved to the present day.

In 1995, she worked closely with Dr. Chernychenko from Ukraine, health administrators and senior nursing personnel to co-organize the country's first national nursing conference, which took place from September 12 to 14, 1995,

in Chernivtsi and attracted over 400 attendees. The conference focused on developing university nursing programs at the baccalaureate, masters and doctoral levels, adopting a national nursing curriculum and creating distance learning materials to assist with upgrading nursing education in remote areas.

The first Canada-Ukraine nursing project launched at MacEwan was a CIDA-funded nursing development program in partnership with the Canadian Society for International Health and led by Dr. Nakonechy. The project ran from 1993 to 1999 and included several faculty exchanges and the translation of MacEwan's nurse credentialing materials into Ukrainian in order to support the professionalization of nursing in the country. The faculty exchanges and study programs allowed nursing faculty to upgrade their training at MacEwan and experience the Canadian health-care system. In total, the project led to the translation of 3,500 pages of MacEwan's nursing curriculum by Veronica Izsak of MacEwan and the voiceover into Ukrainian of 17 instructional videos. These materials were distributed to 21 nursing schools in Ukraine.

Dr. Nakonechy's work connecting URDC and MacEwan with medical institutions in Ukraine and Eastern Europe led to the establishment of the Eastern European Leadership Team (EELT), directed by Yuri Konkin and administrative assistant Veronica Izsak, that ran out of the Health and Community Studies Division from 2000 to 2009.



MacEwan and TNMU students in Ternopil, Ukraine



Dr. Nakonechy, Dr. Petryshyn, and Yuri Konkin with Ukrainian colleagues

### The Chair of International Health

The success of the aforementioned projects supported by URDC led to the establishment of an endowment fund for a Chair in International Health in 2008. The Chair was funded by a donation from Drs. Peter and Doris Kule and the UFCE, and was tripled by MacEwan. It was the first medical endowment in the Ukrainian diaspora and was intended to maintain improvements to health care in Ukraine through joint research and knowledge sharing. In 2020, the position was formally filled by Dr. Elizabeth Burgess-Pinto, who boasted experience collaborating with faculty from Ukraine and Ternopil National Medical University (TNMU) since 2014.

### Relationship with TNMU

URDC has facilitated a strong and productive relationship with TNMU that continues to the present day. In 2001, MacEwan and TNMU first signed a letter of understanding. Several successful collaborations with TNMU took place in the 2010s, fostering an important and ongoing partnership with URDC and MacEwan University.

In 2014, MacEwan and TNMU signed a letter of cooperation that resulted in faculty exchanges, joint conferences and the establishment of a jointly published journal.

In 2016, Dr. Burgess-Pinto first travelled to Ukraine where she was instrumental in a project to enhance the curriculum on mental health in Ukraine through a course on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), developed by Dr. Lisa Adams. The course was incredibly valuable, as Ukraine was already contending with war in the

Eastern Donbas region at the time. While in Ukraine in 2016, Dr. Burgess-Pinto presented on both PTSD and diversity at TSMU and met with public health faculty at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA) – forging important long-term partnerships. That same year, four nursing students, along with Christine Shumka and Dr. Burgess-Pinto attended the TNMU International Summer School in Ternopil, Ukraine. Subsequently, in May 2018, Christine Shumka and Dr. Burgess-Pinto took the first group of 20 nursing students to UCU and TNMU for the course HLST 400: Global Health Perspectives. The Faculty of Nursing at MacEwan University has hosted visiting faculty from TNMU several times.

Most recently, URDC collaborated with TNMU to host the 2021 conference, A New Generation of Nurses: Achievements and Innovations in Nursing. The conference was organized by TNMU, the State Institute Nursing Development Centre, Ministry of Healthcare of Ukraine, Collegium of Mazovia Higher School of Innovation (Siedlce, Poland), the University of Alberta, and URDC, MacEwan University.

## Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Ukraine

*“This project gives us the opportunity to see what we require in Ukraine in order to adapt existing experience and develop a new model of inclusive education. Also of great importance is the collaboration between Ukrainian and Canadian colleagues, and nations generally. The project has accelerated the development and provision of inclusion in Ukraine.”*

### Oleg Ieresko

*Head, Department of General Secondary and Pre-School Education, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine*

Inclusive education is a term used to describe an educational system where children with special needs are granted access to equal and quality education. In an inclusive educational system, students are placed in a neighbourhood school with their peers while receiving appropriate support to help them excel. Inclusive education did not exist in Ukraine during and shortly after the Soviet period. Rather, students were placed in boarding schools away from their families where they were segregated from other members of society. The Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Ukraine project was established to allow educators in Canada to share their experience in inclusive education with their Ukrainian counterparts to help them create applicable systems for the Ukrainian context.

URDC was well aware of the need and possibilities to introduce inclusive education systems in Ukraine through Dr. Petryshyn's work with the Canada Ukraine Alliance for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons and collaboration with Dr. Michael Rodda and Dr. Ihor Kobel. In 2003, URDC began compiling a team to research the best way to implement an inclusive education program in Ukraine.

MacEwan and the University of Alberta Department of Educational Psychology formalized a relationship as the Canada Ukraine Research Team (CURT) and facilitated research, exchanges and special projects with partners in Ukraine from the National Pedagogical Drahomanov University, the Institute of Special Pedagogy of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, and individual professors from several other universities in Canada and Ukraine.

Upon successfully receiving funding from CIDA, the project Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Ukraine was formally launched and ran from 2008 to 2013. The project aimed to promote and implement inclusive education through three key areas – policy, education and civil society – by collaborating with educators, specialists and government officials such as the Ministry of Education and Sciences in Ukraine and the Ministry of Social Protection. It was hoped that policies of inclusive education would give families choices and empower them to make the best decisions for their children. Programs to support and implement inclusive education were launched in pilot schools in two regions: Lviv in Western

Ukraine, and Simferopol in Crimea.

When the inclusive education project began, the team faced many challenges. Adopting and implementing legislation in Ukraine generally took a very long time. There was also a lack of funding and integrated services, resistance to change and negative perceptions of inclusion. There was clearly much work to be done. Over the five years of the project, the team made significant strides thanks to patience, dedication and extensive communication between partners. The success of the project can be attributed to the perseverance of the individuals, both in Canada and Ukraine, who strove to improve the quality of life for children with special needs and their families in Ukraine.

In the end, the program boasted several significant successes in the areas of policy, education, and civil society. URDC is honoured to have facilitated such an important and impactful project that has undoubtedly touched the lives of many children and their families in Ukraine. Participating in this project was an unforgettable experience for all involved.



Deaf and Hard of Hearing project



Inclusive Education Meeting of Canadian and Ukrainian project participants in Kyiv 28.10.2009

## Community-University Collaboration

**Community-university engagement is an important component of URDC's programming, and the centre has fostered and maintained close relationships with partners in the Ukrainian Canadian community since its inception.**

Dr. Petryshyn was instrumental in creating several self-sustaining organizations, such as the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts (ACUA), Ukrainian Canadian Social Services (UCSS), Canada Ukraine Foundation (CUF) and Canada Ukraine Alliance for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (CUADHHP) now known as the Alberta Local and International Education Association (ALIEA), amongst others. Larisa Hayduk, URDC's current director, has continued to collaborate with the Ukrainian Canadian community on a number of diverse and timely projects.

CUADHHP was formed in the early 2000s with a mandate "to foster educational, social and medical partnerships between organizations working with, or for, deaf and/or hard-of-hearing individuals in both countries." URDC supported the CUADHHP by utilizing its networks and resources within the post-secondary environment to foster collaboration between specialists in deaf studies to the benefit of deaf and hard-of-hearing communities in Canada and Ukraine. For example, URDC sponsored the launch of the Centre for the Advancement of Deaf Education at the Maria Pokrova School for the Deaf in Lviv, Ukraine in 1999. In the following years, URDC and CUADHHP worked together to bring specialists from Ukraine to Canada for education and

professional development, including Dr. Ihor Kobel, who has become a longtime collaborator of both URDC and the CUADHHP/ALIEA.

Together with Ukrainian partners, the CUADHHP launched an immensely successful series of summer institutes across Ukraine for children, parents and specialists in the deaf and hard-of-hearing community to network, build relationships and exchange knowledge. These summer institutes, which have continued annually to the present day, have proven to be incredibly popular and effective at countering the predominance of feelings of isolation for many with deafness. CUADHHP boasts significant accomplishments, such as facilitating the recognition of Ukrainian Sign Language as an official language in Ukraine. It is important to note that sign language was banned in the Soviet Union as authorities were suspicious of any mode of communication only intelligible to a select group; individuals with deafness were forced to communicate by lip reading alone. Thus, the work of the CUADHHP has been life-changing for multiple generations of Ukrainians with deafness.

Inspired by previous initiatives in the Ukrainian Canadian community to explore and foster historic and contemporary Indigenous-Ukrainian relationships, URDC partnered with the Kule Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta, and local writers and intellectuals Leah Hrycun, Myrna Kostash and Chelsea Vowel to begin the Indigenous-Ukrainian Relationship Building Initiative (IURBI) in 2020. Over the course of two years, the

IURBI has organized several virtual presentations and roundtable discussions on a variety of topics, including local histories, artistic collaborations and "askiy / земля / the land" – a three-part series on the significance of land in both cultures. These presentations have begun to generate important conversations and reflections within the Ukrainian Canadian community on our position as settlers in a colonial state – conversations that are crucial to the process of reconciliation.

In 2021, an immensely successful community-university collaboration with the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts (ACUA) was completed: *Threads that Connect: A Year Long Celebration of Ukrainian Embroidery and Textile*. After the COVID-19 pandemic forced the project to be postponed, the successive events – presented in a hybrid virtual/live manner – were met with great enthusiasm. *Threads that Connect* consisted of the exhibition curated by Larisa Sembaliuk Cheladyn, workshops and presentations by scholars, artists and folklorists from both Ukrainian Canadian and Ukrainian universities and museums. The project concluded with a fashion show at MacEwan University's Allard Hall that featured traditional Ukrainian embroidery and vintage embroidered garments donated by members of the Ukrainian Canadian community, as well as Ukrainian fashion designer Olena Romanova's Fall 2021 collection. *Threads that Connect* demonstrated the value of community-university engagement and would not have been possible without the many volunteers and artists who donated their time and expertise, the dedication of the



Roman Petryshyn and Michael Rodda  
with a folk group, 1999

entire community to celebrating simultaneously the history and beauty of Ukrainian textiles, and the individuals who laboured to create these pieces.

In fall 2021, URDC also launched the oral history project *Local Narratives: The Lives, Legacies, and Locales of Edmonton's Ukrainian Canadian Community*. Researcher Kalyna Somchynsky was hired to interview members of the Ukrainian Canadian community and compile those interviews into narratives on display through a publicly accessible website. The project coincided with the production of two short documentaries: one about Dr. Petryshyn

that was produced in collaboration between URDC and Brandy Yanchyk of Brandy Y Productions, and another about Dr. Ehor William Gauk that was a collaboration between URDC, the Alberta Local and International Education Association (ALIEA) and Shadow Light Productions. Both individuals have profiles featured on the *Local Narratives* website. Additionally, the website contains a story on the activities of Ukrainian Canadian feminists who started the Hromada Housing Co-op in Edmonton and organized the Second Wreath Conference in 1985 – a three-day conference to celebrate and discuss issues pertaining to women in the Ukrainian

Canadian and other ethnocultural communities.

University-community collaboration is a dynamic and enriching component of URDC's activities that benefits both MacEwan and the Ukrainian Canadian community. These projects demonstrate URDC's unique position as a post-secondary centre, and its ability to connect and unite communities, and help them achieve their goals.





UKRAINIAN RESOURCE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE  
MACEWAN UNIVERSITY

***With gratitude to all our partners and  
supporters, in Canada and Ukraine.  
We look forward to another 35 years  
of meaningful, collaborative work.***



*URDC digital graphic by Larisa Sembaliuk Cheladyn*

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## February 24, 2022 has changed the world.....

### SUPPORT, EDUCATION AND COLLABORATION: URDC'S RAPID RESPONSE TO RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE

On February 24, 2022, the Ukrainian Resources and Development Centre (URDC) was faced with an unprecedented challenge in its history: respond to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Despite the increasing build-up of Russian troops on the northern, eastern and southern borders of Ukraine, beginning in November 2021, Putin maintained that war was not imminent. While braced for the worst-case scenario, the world was shocked, angered and devastated when bombs began falling outside Kyiv and Kharkiv shortly after 5 a.m. Kyiv time on February 24.

After a sleepless night, the URDC team, composed of Director Larisa Hayduk, Kule Chair Dr. Jeffrey Stepnisky, Chair of International Health Dr. Elizabeth Burgess-Pinto and URDC Research Assistant Kalyna Somchynsky began formulating appropriate and immediate measures to support URDC's partner universities in Ukraine, the MacEwan community, the local Ukrainian community and Ukrainian nationals looking to seek refuge in Edmonton.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre (URDC) at MacEwan University is located in ᑭᓄᓐᓂᓐᓂᓐᓂᓐᓂᓐᓂᓐ Amiskwaci-wāskahikan, Edmonton, Alberta, on Treaty Six Territory and the Métis Homeland. This land is the traditional home and gathering place of diverse Indigenous Peoples, including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit and others. We honour and are learning from the cultures, worldviews and practices of these diverse communities. Indigenous-Ukrainian relations are longstanding and complex. At URDC, we are dedicated to untangling our Indigenous-Ukrainian stories. We recognize this process is challenging and are committed to creating shared spaces where we can listen, reflect and learn how to live well together.



**TOP LEFT**  
MacEwan Ukraine  
Team - Team Україна  
(Ukraine)

**BOTTOM RIGHT**  
MacEwan Time  
Capsule

To engage the whole university to support Ukraine, URDC organized the Ukraine Support Team, including Dr. Chaldeans Mensah (Faculty of Arts and Science), Lindsey Whitson (MacEwan Library) and later Dr. Lucille Mazo (Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications). Polina Budyanska joined the team in August. The URDC also recognizes the critical role of MacEwan International and the Faculty of Nursing in welcoming visiting students from our partner universities in Ukraine to MacEwan. The first steps for URDC included assessing how to best utilize our resources in an ever-changing and turbulent environment.

### EDUCATION: DISSEMINATING REPUTABLE INFORMATION

URDC's first initiatives involved disseminating accurate and useful information to the broader public. Hayduk and Somchynsky created a *Guide to Support Ukraine* composed of lists of reputable organizations collecting donations, news sources and suggestions for how people could get involved in the community. Some of these suggestions included attending rallies organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Alberta Provincial Council (UCC-APC) and letter-writing campaigns to MPs and MLAs urging them to support Ukraine. Overnight, Dr. Stepnisky teamed up with Lindsey Whitson to create the *URDC Library Guide: A guide for understanding Ukraine and current events* featuring a carefully curated selection of academic and literary texts, films and podcasts. The guide was made available both to the MacEwan community and the general public as a rapid response to Russian disinformation and damaging analyses of current events that began circulating as soon as the war began.

On February 25, 2022, the team organized a university-wide information session on Ukraine where URDC provided a summary of current events in a historical context, and shared our *Guide to Support Ukraine* and *URDC Library Guide*. The meeting was attended by over 80 staff, faculty and students who showed their strong solidarity with Ukraine. URDC extended continual support to the MacEwan community by holding a Ukraine Support Forum – informal weekly gatherings with the university's PAWSS (Pets Assisting With Student Success) volunteers. At the weekly meetings, attended by between five and 15 people, we read poetry and diaries of the war, and engaged in discussions.

MacEwan President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Annette Trimbee has shown enormous support for the Ukrainian community at MacEwan by attending URDC's university-wide information session, composing an address on Ukraine immediately after the war began, and attending a session of the Ukraine Support Forum. URDC is grateful for demonstrations of support from all levels of the university.

### ADAPTATION: CONTINUING PLANNED PROGRAMMING

The war forced URDC to shift its programming in response to the growing needs of students, faculty and the Ukrainian community, while continuing and adapting previously planned events as necessary. One example was the Traces of Chernobyl panel organized as part of MacEwan's university-wide 2022 Interdisciplinary Dialogue Project (IDP) that explored the theme "recovery." The panel was originally planned to explore the lessons learned from the Chernobyl Nuclear Explosion on April 26, 1986 and its aftermath; however, the group was faced with the challenging

prospect of addressing recovery in the midst of the full-scale Russian invasion in Ukraine. In the days leading up to the panel, the Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plants were both occupied by Russian forces and anxiety was high that another nuclear catastrophe was imminent. The panel was moderated by Dr. Stepnisky, and speakers invited to participate in the panel included Dr. Lindsey Freeman of Simon Fraser University (atmosphere, memory and poetics in nuclear zones), Dr. Maryana Kravtsenyuk (personal and familial recollections of Chernobyl), Dr. Lesia Kulchynska (contemporary Ukrainian art: conflict, censorship and societal change), and Dr. Timothy Mousseau of the University of South Carolina (effects of radiation and contaminants on organisms in radioactive zones). Together, the diverse panel addressed both Chernobyl and the ongoing war in Ukraine by sharing personal stories and experiences analyzed with both criticality and care.

The relationship between MacEwan and our Ukrainian partner universities is strong, and our faculty were forced to adapt their collaborative programs to the current circumstances. Three Collaborative Online Integrated Learning (COIL) courses co-developed with our Ukrainian partners and planned for the Winter and Spring 2022 terms were disrupted by the war.

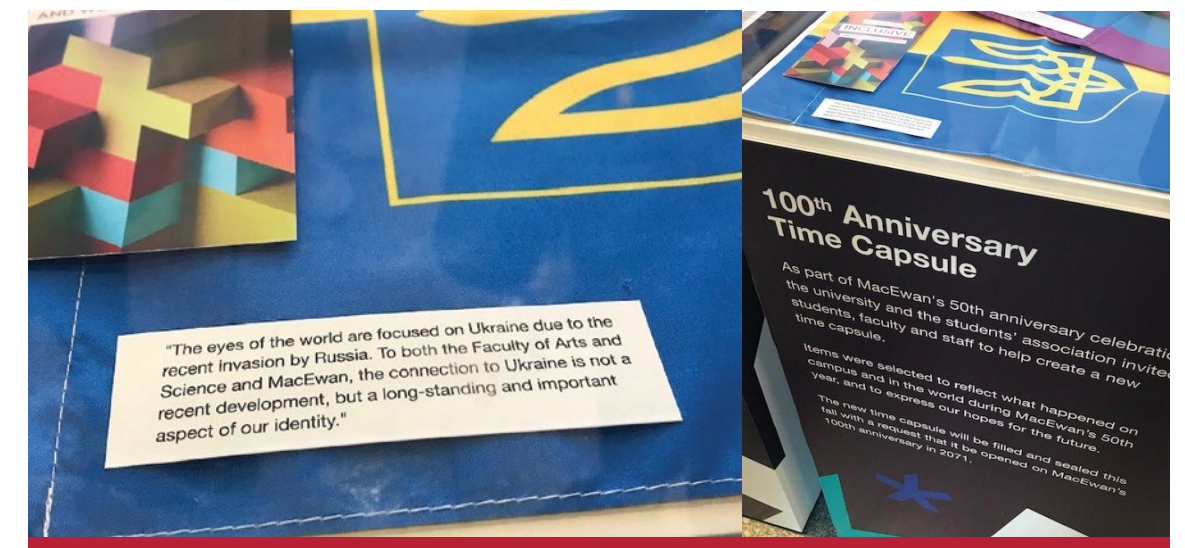
These courses included: SOCI 395: Sociological Field School, taught by Dr. Michael Gulayets and Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU); POLS 398: International Organizations, taught by Dr. Chaldeans Mensah, Dr. Halyna Protsyk from UCU and Dr. Galyna Soloviy from National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA); and HSLT 400: Global Health Perspectives, taught by Dr. Burgess-Pinto and Dr. Svitlana Yastremska, Dr. Svitlana Danchak and

Dr. Lyudmyla Mazur from Ternopil National Medical University (TNMU).

In Fall 2022, Dr. Sergiy Yakovenko taught the first iteration of ENGL 383: Topics in World Literature: Tales from Ukraine: Culture and Politics, introducing MacEwan students to a representative body of 20th-century Ukrainian literature in translation with a specific focus on philosophical allegory. Students read and discussed, among others, works of Lesia Ukrainka, Mykhaylo Kotsiubynsky, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Valerian Pidmohylny and Valeriy Shevchuk. The course was made available to select students at NaUKMA in a synchronous format and included guest speakers from Ukraine.

### SUPPORTING OUR UKRAINIAN PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

From the very first moments of the war, Hayduk maintained frequent communication with MacEwan's partner universities in Ukraine. These conversations revealed concerns about how the war may trigger a brain drain in Ukraine and encouraged URDC to establish programs for students and faculty to come to MacEwan for short-term study (a one-year period). URDC established weekly meetings with representatives of MacEwan administration and MacEwan International to facilitate opportunities for Ukrainian students and faculty to study at MacEwan with full academic, mental health, immigration and financial assistance. Seven students from MacEwan partner universities began their studies at MacEwan between May and September 2022. MacEwan also accepted international students from Ukraine fleeing the war. The university covered the tuition and accommodation fees, and URDC, with the donation





**TOP RIGHT**  
Student Maksym Kohutiak at the *Be Brave Like Ukraine* poster exhibit, MacEwan Library

from the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE), offered 20 settlement grants of \$1,500 each.

Upon the announcement that MacEwan University was accepting students from Ukraine into the MacEwan Residence, Chair of International Health Dr. Elizabeth Burgess-Pinto quickly began organizing donations with staff and faculty from the Faculty of Nursing and MacEwan International. Together, the team collected housewares, toiletries and \$1,800 in gift cards to help the newly arrived students feel comfortable and supported.

URDC has been touched by the support of the MacEwan community and its eagerness to help Ukraine. The Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications donated proceeds totalling \$10,052 from music performances and a showing of the theatre department's *The Drowsy Chaperone* to the Canada-Ukraine Foundation. The John and Maggie Mitchell Gallery (MAG) hosted a post-doctoral researcher from Ukraine for a research position funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) as part of the gallery's research project, *Articles of Faith*.

#### CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

Community-university engagement is a key component of URDC's mandate, and these partnerships became increasingly important as the Canadian government announced the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) immigration pathway for individuals evacuating Ukraine. URDC began working

with the UCC-APC to create a guide for newcomers to help them immigrate and settle in Canada comfortably. The project began as a small section of the Alberta Stands with Ukraine website, but after thorough consultation with community members on the ground helping Ukrainian evacuees, evolved into an independent UCC-APC website dedicated to immigration and settlement. Once Somchynsky and Hayduk established a framework for the website, it was handed over to UCC-APC for sustainable management.

As soon as individuals began arriving from Ukraine, it became apparent that they required access to English language classes in a welcoming and comfortable environment. Hayduk reached out to her network of educators in the Ukrainian community and the English as an Additional Language (EAL) program at MacEwan, and launched free English language classes. Three bi-weekly groups ran through May and June 2022, partially funded by UFCE. Volunteers consisting of members of the MacEwan Ukrainian Students' Club, MacEwan alumni and members of the Ukrainian Canadian community who supported the classes as teaching assistants and helped to make the students feel comfortable in Canada. The EAL classes have proven effective in both education and fostering community, providing Ukrainian newcomers with welcoming, inclusive spaces to meet friends and improve their language skills. Read more on page 19.

#### STUDENT PORTRAIT

## Kateryna Kuzmuk

### Visiting Student

### from NaUKMA

A lot of people talked about war and some people prepared suitcases, but I couldn't believe it. It was the same situation a year ago with lots of Russian troops at the borders of Ukraine, and nothing bad happened.

But when my parents came to get me on the day the Russian troops invaded Ukraine, I was extremely scared and crying as I packed my clothes. It was the worst night of my entire life. I was scared for myself and my family. I was checking the news all night. When I heard the sound of explosions, I woke my sister and parents to go to the shelter.

The next day, we left Kyiv. Usually, it takes three hours to journey to the small town where our relatives live in Western Ukraine, but that day it took 12 hours. I knew that I wanted to continue my studies, so during the two weeks we spent with my relatives I searched online and found an opportunity with MacEwan University. I talked to the International Office and they helped me with everything, but getting a visa took a lot of time.

After those first two weeks, my parents decided to send my sister and me to Vienna, where my dad had friends and colleagues he knew would help us. He took us to the Romanian border, where volunteers helped my sister and me make our way to Vienna. It was my first journey to another country without my parents.

We spent two months there and so many people helped us. It's such a beautiful city and I met many cool people, but it was bittersweet. Walking around and going to cafes didn't seem right when there was war in my country and my friends were hiding in shelters.

In April, I got my visa and started making my way to Edmonton. I knew that so much could go wrong. Sometimes I think I'm too



young for all of this stuff – I just turned 18 a few months ago – and that I can't handle it because of my lack of experience, but I keep trying to be strong.

When my plane arrived in Edmonton earlier than scheduled, I did not think anyone would be there to help me. I was in another country, another continent and I didn't even know where I would live. I was pretty upset and crying as I walked around the airport. Then I saw a group of people with Ukrainian flags. They were from MacEwan and were there to meet me. I was still crying, but I was happy.

I'm just finishing my distance classes at Kyiv Mohyla. I will take some courses at MacEwan, I would like to join the MacEwan Model UN Club. I have heard lots of good things about them.

I have a roommate who is also a visiting student from Ukraine. I have someone to

talk to, and we can share our experiences. My mom is still in Vienna with my younger sister, and my dad is in Ukraine – men from 18 years old to 65 are not allowed to leave – but he is with my granddad, so he is also not alone.

I really miss my family and home city, but I keep smiling, laughing and joking. It is what keeps me alive.

**Kateryna Kuzmuk is a visiting first-year student from the NaUKMA Bachelor of International Relations program.**

**MacEwan International and the university's URDC have been working to bring visiting Ukrainian students to Edmonton since the war began.**

Originally published on MacEwan.ca in June 2022.

<https://www.macewan.ca/campus-life/news/2022/06/portrait-kuzmuk-22/>

## Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Day at MacEwan

by Polina Budyanska

The Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Day celebration at MacEwan University on September 7 was a significant event for the university's faculty, staff and students, and all Ukraine supporters here in Edmonton. This was a time for MacEwan's community to unite and remind each other of the sacrifices that continue to occur on Ukrainian soil daily. This year, Dr. Annette Trimbee, MacEwan's president and vice-chancellor, together with Maksym Kohutiak, a visiting student from our partner university NaUKMA, raised a Ukrainian flag on campus, showing MacEwan's unrelenting support for Ukraine and its people.

Emotional speeches from the revived MacEwan University Ukrainian Students Organization and Kateryna Kuzmuk, a visiting student from NaUKMA, found a lot of resonance in the community crowd. A special speech by Dr. Trimbee once again displayed MacEwan's commitment to Ukrainian initiatives.

That day, the support was felt not only from the university, but also from the community in Edmonton. It was inspiring as we proudly walked with Ukrainian music, flags and posters to the Alberta Legislature. There, the MacEwan group joined the provincial government where another Ukrainian flag was raised to demonstrate the support of Albertans for Ukraine.

We also had a Ukrainian booth at MacEwan's Downtown Campus Block Party, with giveaways, fun quizzes and the opportunity to sign a big Ukrainian flag for future Ukrainian student organization events. We would like to recognize the considerable contributions of students Diana Melnychuk, Katherine Luzanak,

Kateryna Kuzmuk, Kadin Pochynok and Nicholas Semenko to the success of this event. We could not have done it without you!

Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Day would not have been complete without showcasing Ukrainian food – an integral part of Ukrainian culture. A pyrohy (varenyky) and borshcht-making workshop was a great success. As we were mastering our varenyky-pinching skills under the guidance of Daria Luciw, Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA (and, at that time, Associate Minister of Status of Women), shared her inspiring stories on growing up in a Ukrainian Canadian household. That afternoon, we also got to enjoy homemade borscht prepared by Dr. Christy Raymond, dean and professor of the Faculty of Nursing. We promised not to tell anyone about the secret ingredient that made this borscht stand out, but the next time you make it, we recommend adding pickle juice.

With our hearts and stomachs full, we sat down for a presentation about the connection between borscht and Ukrainian identity given by Vadym Kuzin, a PhD candidate in history and political science at the Ukrainian Free University in Germany.

Through the events of September 7, we showed our friends the hospitality of Ukrainians and the richness of Ukrainian culture. These events were meaningful for everyone involved and allowed the MacEwan community and Ukraine supporters in Edmonton to lean on one another as we recognized the realities of the war Ukrainians are living with every day.

### BOTTOM LEFT

MacEwan Peace Walk to the Legislature

### TOP RIGHT

Ukrainian cooking session of borscht led by Dr. Christy Raymond and pierogi (varenyky) led by Daria Luciw

### MIDDLE RIGHT

MLA Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk sharing her Ukrainian family stories during the cooking session

### BOTTOM RIGHT

Dr. Christy Raymond and Daria Luciw leading the cooking of borscht and pierogi





## URDC Marks its 35th Anniversary

by Polina Budyanska

The URDC is turning 35 this academic year. When we first started planning our anniversary event, it was meant to be celebratory, as the achievements of URDC have truly earned a day of joy and celebration. However, on February 24, we scrapped our original script and instead planned to mark the milestone with a special program announcement and concert in support of Ukraine by John Stetch on October 14.

That evening, URDC received warm congratulations from our friends and colleagues, including Dr. Trimbee, Dr. Petryshyn and Mr. Oleksandr Danyleiko, consul general of Ukraine in Edmonton. It was heartwarming to receive video greetings from our partners in Ukraine – Dr. Ihor Pelatiuk, president of Lviv National Music Academy; Dr. Dmytro Sherengovsky, vice-rector for the Academics and Internalization of UCU; and Serhiy Kvit, president of NaUKMA. Their greetings once again show how much our support is felt and appreciated across the ocean. Attendees included former premier Ed Stelmach and former deputy premier Thomas Lukaszuk. Hosting the event was Stephanie Nedoshytko, a former Students' Association of MacEwan University president as well as a former MacEwan Ukrainian Student Club president.

### GENE ZWOZDESKY ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

A new initiative – the Gene Zwozdesky Artist in Residence Program – was formally announced at the 35th anniversary event. The Zwozdesky family believes it is a fitting tribute to the well-known politician, community leader and musician who had strong ties to MacEwan and the URDC.

“We are just very thrilled that he is remembered in this way,” said Christine Zwozdesky, Gene’s widow. Her son Myron added, “My father’s pursuit of enabling education and leadership is perfectly encapsulated in this program.”

The Gene Zwozdesky Artist in Residence Program is generously supported by the donation from the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE) Trust. Fundraising is underway to ensure the sustainability of the program for years to come. The first recipient of the award will be announced in the fall of 2023.

### CONCERT FROM MACEWAN ALUMNUS JOHN STETCH

To conclude the anniversary evening, URDC invited a fantastic jazz pianist and a MacEwan alumnus John Stetch for a concert in support of Ukraine. Earlier the same day, Stetch awed MacEwan music students with a special master class. Sabina Mamedova, a visiting student from Ukraine, opened the concert with a powerful message on the importance of art during the war and encouraged everyone to continue supporting Ukraine.

Stetch is a Steinway Artist and seven-time Juno nominee who has written over 50 compositions for solo piano, jazz combo and, more recently, some classical chamber formats. He is especially interested in bringing classical and jazz together and fusing ethnic and popular music with his personal jazz stamp.

Stetch has Ukrainian roots and a lot of his works are inspired by Ukraine. In the second half of the concert, he was joined by the brilliant MacEwan music students: Morgan Hanna on guitar, Jacob Rabuka on saxophone, James Kumaran on drums and Jeremie Gutierrez on bass. The standing ovation at the end of the concert was well-deserved! The net proceeds from the ticket sales were donated to the Canada Ukraine Foundation.

We would also like to recognize Nadia Konon for singing for us that evening. Her beautiful Ukrainian songs were key to the warm atmosphere during the guest reception. URDC also expresses its gratitude to students Diana Melnychuk and Kateryna Prus for volunteering their time and helping us to welcome the guests.

#### TOP LEFT

UFCE Trust first out of 5 donations towards Gene Zwozdesky Artist in Residence Program

#### MIDDLE RIGHT

President Trimbee with the Zwozdesky family

#### BOTTOM RIGHT

John Stetch concert (Left to right: John Stetch, Morgan Hanna, Jacob Rabuka, Jeremie Gutierrez, James Kumaran)





**TOP LEFT**  
Dr. Jeffrey Stepnisky  
in Allard Hall

**TOP RIGHT**  
Dr. Elizabeth  
Burgess-Pinto in Kyiv

## From the Kule Chair of Ukrainian Community and International Development

As Kule Chair, Jeff Stepnisky has focused on two main projects. The first, which is funded by the Kule Chair endowment and a SSHRC Institutional Grant, focuses on the commemoration of the Revolution of Dignity at the Maidan Museum in Kyiv. Last summer and fall, Dr. Stepnisky and his research assistant, Diana Oliferchuk, collected hundreds of Ukrainian newspaper articles about the Maidan Museum. These materials served as a starting point for two paper presentations that Stepnisky gave this fall. “Dignified Memory: The Maidan Museum as Response to Cultural Trauma” was presented online at the Maidan Museum’s annual conference. “Humans Rights and Collective Memory – the Maidan Museum” was presented as part of a workshop on Transnational knowledge production at the Fulda Autumn school in Germany. The next phase of the research will involve further analysis of news articles and interviews with Maidan Museum staff.

Dr. Stepnisky’s second project focuses on the collective memory of the Ukrainian community in downtown Edmonton. Last year, with the support of his research assistant, Assia Rami, and funded by the Kule Chair endowment, Dr. Stepnisky started to develop a list of important memory sites in the history of the Edmonton Ukrainian community. This research was presented at the summer meeting of the Canadian Sociological Association. He is now working with

fellow MacEwan sociologist, Dr. Michael Gulayets, and a team out of the University of Alberta, led by Dr. Olenka Bilash, to develop an app that will include a tour of these memory sites. The project team includes student assistants from Ukraine.

In addition, Dr. Stepnisky, along with Chair of International Health Dr. Elizabeth Burgess-Pinto and the URDC, has joined a national team that will research experiences of Ukrainian youth under the Canadian government’s Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) visa program. Finally, in Winter 2023, for the second year, Stepnisky is teaching a fourth-year seminar on collective memory. Though global in scope, this course incorporates materials on and about Ukraine.



## From the Chair of International Health

Housed in the Faculty of Nursing at MacEwan University, the Chair of International Health is dedicated to promoting education in international health and conducting research in Ukraine and Eastern Europe. Dr. Elizabeth Burgess-Pinto, the first faculty member to fill this role, studies the health of immigrant and refugee children and families, international and intercultural nursing, and planetary/global health.

Since the spring of 2018, Elizabeth has collaborated with faculty members from TNMU to create and deliver a course called Global Health Perspectives. MacEwan students partner with TNMU students to explore community and global health topics and work on related projects. Course foci have included the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and policy, global migration and food security issues, the COVID-19 pandemic and infectious diseases. For the first two years, the course was conducted in person in Ukraine, but with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the course turned to a COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) pedagogical framework. Planning sessions with TNMU faculty are maintained throughout the academic year via biweekly Zoom meetings.

Currently, Elizabeth is undertaking a comparative study of responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in Edmonton (Canada), Ternopil (Ukraine) and Talca

(Chile). Preliminary results from open-ended questions were presented at an ICN (International Council of Nurses) conference and articles are in progress. In the fall of 2021, in collaboration with TNMU and colleagues from Siedlce, Poland, she co-organized and presented at an online conference called Current Challenges and Achievements/Innovations in Nursing. She has also partnered with TNMU faculty and Dr. Olenka Bilash (University of Alberta) to teach qualitative research methods to TNMU faculty. Elizabeth continues to meet with TNMU partners to develop the Spring 2023 course. Research study plans are being modified to account for the current war situation.

## Canada Ukraine Model UN Project

### A STORY OF RESILIENCE: UKRAINIAN VOICES AT THE NATIONAL MODEL UN CONFERENCE

The Canada Ukraine Model United Nations project is entering its fourth year. In 2022, the Ukrainian and MacEwan teams participated in several initiatives, including the Fulda Summer School in Germany and National Model United Nations (NMUN) in Japan. The most far-reaching activity, however, was the representation of the joint team of UCU and NaUKMA at the National Model United Nations in New York. The Ukraine team told stories of resilience and brought the Ukrainian voice to the 4,000-member audience of future leaders. Below are reflections from the students and their faculty advisor.

Despite the immense challenges presented by the war, the Model UN Clubs from NaUKMA and UCU –supported by the Model UN Club at MacEwan University, Dr. Chaldeans Mensah and Larisa Hayduk–persevered to attend the National Model UN Conference in New York in April 2022. This was the first time a Ukrainian delegation had participated in the global conference. NMUN New York 2022 was an opportune moment for the delegation to represent Ukraine in an international context, and the team took advantage by holding a press conference led by their faculty advisor Galyna Protsyk. They also had the opportunity to meet the Ukrainian permanent representative of the United Nations. URDC is honoured to have facilitated this unforgettable experience for these well-deserving students. You can read more about this project through coverage by MacEwan University, Associated Press and UCU.

URDC expresses its gratitude to the NMUN Board of Directors and Executive Director Michael Eaton, and MacEwan's Dr. Chaldeans Mensah for their incredible support of the Ukraine team during these challenging times. Thank you for the financial donations, for the time devoted to the Ukraine team, for all the changes

*NMUN New York 2022 was more than the Model United Nations – it was a special mission to deliver the message from the Ukrainian people. The participation of the Ukrainian delegation was at risk due to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. The biggest victory of our delegation is that we could share the truth about the brutal war in Ukraine and the crimes against the Ukrainian people committed by the Russian army.*

**Evangelina Tkalenko, NaUKMA**

*We spent 52 hours travelling. Grief and guilt competed with anticipation and excitement in our hearts. It was very difficult to leave Ukraine and our families in the middle of a war with Russia to attend a conference on diplomacy in New York City.*

*But the results we achieved were definitely worth it. For more than a week of the world conference, our joint delegation took part in meetings of six UN committees, met with the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the UN (just before the UN General Assembly voted for suspending Russia's membership in the UN Human Rights Council), visited UN headquarters in New York, held hundreds of meetings and conversations with delegations from other universities from other countries, with whom they shared evidence of the war in Ukraine. Thanks to the support of the NMUN board, in particular the Executive Director, Mr. Michael Eaton, we held two panel discussions on the war in Ukraine, which was attended by thousands of students and their teachers from more than 100 countries. One of the key messages we delivered to the world audience was the awareness of the dangerous propaganda activities of the centers of Russian and Eurasian studies in universities around the world and the need to decolonize the Eastern European and Slavic studies from the Russian-centric view of eastern Europe.*

*Our participation had a very unique mission. We were assigned and honoured to represent Republic of Slovenia but given the fact that it was an ongoing war in Ukraine, we used every minute of our stay, every corner and every platform to communicate with more than 4000 participants, to attract their attention, stir their conscience, and call them to concrete actions to help Ukrainians rather than remain in silent contemplation. After 12 hours of daily work and activities, after such a phenomenal experience of conducting diplomatic and multilateral negotiations, defending the state interests of Ukraine, applying the UN rules of procedure and their skillful application to build consensus and a sense of global solidarity, I can say with confidence that I am very proud of our team and of our partners! They achieved an unprecedented result in such a difficult time for our country. And our mission to ensure that Ukraine and Ukrainian universities are forever integrated into the world community of NMUN – has been fulfilled 100%!*

**Dr. Galyna Protsyk**

*Director of the International Academic Relations Office, UCU*

TOP

Meeting with Sergiy Kyslytsya, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

БОТТОМ

NMUN NY conference







**TOP**  
Dr. Chaldeans Mensah,  
NMUN Board member  
and MacEwan UN Club  
faculty advisor

**MIDDLE**  
UCU and NaUKMA  
NMUN delegates

**BOTTOM**  
Fulda Summer School



*I've been able to make new friends and meet wonderful people through Model UN, as spending a couple of hours a week in class and up to four days at conferences gives me plenty of time to get acquainted with people I wouldn't have talked to otherwise. Working with my peers on solving issues and reaching difficult resolutions has given me fantastic opportunities to get to know students from all over the world.*

*NMUN Initiative also helped me realize how important it is to stay up to date on current events. As it obviously centers around recreating the United Nations, knowing what's happening around the globe makes me more conscious of what other people deal with in every city and every corner of the world.*

*Taking Model UN has made me, a commonly used expression in the United Nations, a world citizen, and taught me so much more than I ever could have anticipated. I've learned valuable life skills and had a great time doing it, and I cannot wait to continue this excellent journey! Joining two years ago was a total impulse decision, but it's one of the best ones I've made throughout my BA degree so far!*

**Olha Tolmachova, UCU**

*NMUN is not only a way to get academic or cultural background – it's a life-changing experience, which can define a future career path, or even save your life, as it happened to me.*

*My willingness to learn more about international relations and understand principles of interactions between different actors found me when I was at high school in Crimea, which was occupied by Russia in 2014. Getting my own experience about how a country can implement its propaganda in educational system and violate international law defined my desire to study international relations in Kyiv, capital of the country I was born in.*

*For me, NMUN defined my rescue plan, when the war started. Last year I was selected as a staffer for conference in New York, and we had been preparing for this event for almost a year. The war broke out in February, and questioned my participation, because I had no idea how to get to the conference and simply where to go, because all my family has been in a Russia-controlled Crimea. But NMUN team was highly supportive, maintained communication with me all the time, and they took me a ticket to NY from Romania, gave a chance to attend both conferences A and B, and make it all happen. Since that time I have been in New York, where I currently work and continue my studies at Ukrainian university online. This would not be possible without NMUN community which made this transition as smooth as it was possible.*

*Now I know for sure that passion about this project, willingness to contribute to the initiative with a long-lasting impact, sharing values of global community and thriving to change the world for a better can save and shape your life in a new direction. Now I know that being a part of a global academic community of like-minded people means never being alone. And we all should know and understand that Ukrainian students have to be presented on the global academic platforms today to make a change not even tomorrow – we've all learned not to postpone, but to make an impact today.*

**Kateryna Bila, NaUKMA**

that had to be implemented, for all of your advice, and for your friendship.

The Canada Ukraine Model UN project stimulated the development of several other academic initiatives. Dr. Halyna Protsyk was the first to integrate the NMUN methodology into an academic course in Ukraine. She first taught the course in 2020 to a group of UCU students, with support and training from Dr. Chaldeans Mensah and MacEwan UN Club members and alumni. The course enjoyed immense success among the students, and it was offered again in 2021, with the same MacEwan participation.

Considering the outstanding achievements of the course at UCU, Dr. Protsyk and Dr. Mensah started the long process of developing the Collaborative Online Learning (COIL) course that was launched in February 2022.

The course was taught to 130 Ukrainian and Canadian students from three universities who were distributed into 38 mixed groups (each with one student from UCU, MacEwan and NaUKMA). These mixed groups were assigned a specific country and collaborated to prepare joint written and oral assignments, which were evaluated based on joint evaluation criteria for all three universities.

"This was one of my greatest teaching projects," says Dr. Protsyk.

As part of information dissemination, the Canada Ukraine Model UN team presented at the national Canadian Bureau on International Education (CBIE) annual conference, sharing the story of resilience and bravery and the importance of bringing the Ukrainian voice to the NMUN New York conference.

In November 2022, MacEwan's Dr. Mensah and Dr. Stepnisky were invited to present at the Fulda University Autumn School, at an event that is part of a project called Transnational Governance and Human Rights, which promotes the cooperation between the Department of Social and Cultural Sciences at Fulda University of Applied Sciences and six partner universities, including SUNY Cortland (USA), MacEwan University (Canada), German Jordanian University (Jordan), Birzeit University (Palestine), Sciences Po Toulouse (France) and the University College London (UK).

## Collaborations with the Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications

### IMAGINE: UKRAINE PODCAST SERIES



After arriving in Canada, visiting students Sabina Mamedova (communications) and Maksym Kohutiak (political science) from NaUKMA were inspired to create the podcast, *Imagine: Ukraine*, a series of conversations about the most interesting and important spheres of Ukraine. “Our first episodes explore the evolution of Ukrainian brave society, and its collaboration with businesses and government,” says Sabina Mamedova. The series will focus on Ukrainian authentic cultural development in fashion, contemporary Ukrainian art, urban cafes, restaurants and hipster culture.

When the two Ukrainian students learned that many Canadian students did not know where to search for

information about Ukraine it sparked the idea for the podcast. “We wanted to tell as many people as possible about Ukraine. Why our country is so great and why we love it so much,” elaborates Mamedova.

Mamedova and Kohutiak both feel that sharing Ukraine is the best way for them to help defend their country during the Russian invasion: “We want to help our parents and friends in Ukraine, who have been under constant threat to their lives all these months. Some of them were even face-to-face with death.”

The pair feels that when people know why Ukraine is great, they will want to travel to the country, invest in it, and plan their trips to get the most out of it. Their podcast series describes its culture for everyone to learn and experience.

Dr. Lucille Mazo, associate professor in MacEwan’s Department of Communication, is supervising the *Imagine: Ukraine* project.



### BOTTOM LEFT

Sabina Mamedova and Maksym Kohutiak, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (Photo by Jason Malenko)

### BOTTOM RIGHT (INSET)

Left to right: director/curator of Mitchell Art Gallery Carolyn Jervis, Director/curator of Shcherbenko Art Centre Maryna Shcherbenko

### BOTTOM RIGHT

Panel attendees, Roundhouse

### GIVE ME TOMORROW CONTEMPORARY UKRAINIAN VIDEO ART EXHIBIT

by Polina Budyanska

The importance of art, especially during these devastating times of war, cannot be overestimated. Art has always been a mirror of the reality in which it was created, so it was a big responsibility and an honour to bring a contemporary Ukrainian video art exhibit to Edmonton. With the passion of Carolyn Jervis, director of MacEwan’s Mitchell Art Gallery (MAG), it was easy to cooperate in bringing the *Give Me Tomorrow* exhibition from Shcherbenko Art Centre in Kyiv to Edmonton.

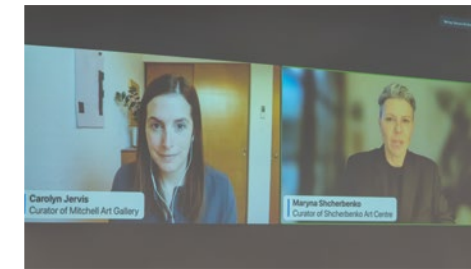
*Give Me Tomorrow* features six video art works by eight contemporary Ukrainian artists from Kyiv and Mariupol. The artists featured have experienced war, become its victims, escaped from it, worked as volunteers, and witnessed traumatic events. Unlike images taken by photojournalists, their work is not frightening – its artwork asserts their right to a tomorrow. Works by Piotr Armianovski, Andrii Dostliev and Lia Dostlieva; Zoia Laktionova, Yarema Malashchuk and Roman Khimei; and Mariia Proshkovska and Maria Stoianova are included in the exhibition curated by Maryna Shcherbenko.

All of these artists are gathering strength in their work, telling the rest of the world about Ukraine and how art can be medicine, and giving reasons to move forward from the devastation around you. They are convinced

that now it is more important than ever to do what you can, to do it sincerely and openly, transforming and sublimating trauma into creativity.

Two weeks after the launch of the exhibition, the Mitchell Art Gallery and URDC organized an artist in conversation panel discussion hosted at MacEwan’s Roundhouse and co-presented online for international guests and participants. Maryna Shcherbenko elaborated on how she champions the work of contemporary Ukrainian artists in her curatorial practice. Further, she explored what curation looks like under the conditions of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the challenges for artists with studio practices in these conditions, and what visual artists uniquely offer in times of war. Due to the regular blackouts in Ukraine because of shelling, only the artists who are currently abroad were able to join the panel. Andrii Dostliev, Piotr Armianovski, Mariia Proshkovska and Maria Stoianova talked about their works presented at MAG and how they find balance in life and their work while being refugee artists.

*Give Me Tomorrow* was at MAG from October 14, 2022 to January 14, 2023.



# Dr. Olena Moiseyenko

## Visiting Scholar

## from NaUKMA

by Polina Budyanska

*“Nothing makes the earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance.”*

Henry David Thoreau

Knowledge exchange and experience sharing are key to achieving teaching excellence. URDC's long standing visiting scholar program gives scholars from Ukrainian partner universities a firsthand experience in Canadian classrooms and helps them gain knowledge of the Canadian education system that can be shared in their home universities. In exchange, MacEwan get valuable perspectives on teaching and research in Ukraine.

This year, URDC and the department of English welcomed a professor from the Department of English at NaUKMA, Dr. Olena Moiseyenko. During her visit, Dr. Moiseyenko established connections for future projects between the two universities' English departments, which share a long history. The first NaUKMA scholar to visit MacEwan's English department was Dr. Lesya Baturaska in 1994.

A year later, three MacEwan professors (Dr. Laurie Morison, Dr. Barbara North and Dr. Alan North) travelled to Kyiv and visited NaUKMA. To commemorate the June 1998 launch of one of their common projects – the Ukrainian Canadian English Language School – NaUKMA presented MacEwan with a beautiful painting that had travelled across nine time zones to hang in the reception area of the English department in Room 6-229. The painting by Vsevolod Sharkevych is called *Bread and Salt*, which are traditional symbols of Ukraine's hospitality. This year, the hospitality has been shown by the English department and its chair, Dr. Pamela Farvolden.

An important part of Dr. Olena Moiseyenko's visit was sharing the experience of teaching during the war in Ukraine. This is the second



time that the professor had to flee a Russian invasion (the first was in Luhansk in 2014). In her presentation, titled *Teaching and Research in a Time of War*, Dr. Moiseyenko talked about the challenges that the universities are facing in Ukraine right now, and the adaptations needed to make teaching during the war possible.

Despite having a fully remote semester, the campus of NaUKMA is still open for students to meet for volunteer and out-of-class activities that, as Dr. Moiseyenko says, provide shelter from the terrifying realities of war. She also mentioned how Ukrainian students have never been more motivated to study. Not even the air raid sirens or the blackouts due to Russia's energy terrorism can prevent the students in her class from submitting

their assignments and joining online lectures. According to Dr. Moiseyenko, as soon as the electricity is back on or the air raid siren ends, all of her students are back online, willing and ready to study. She believes that the Ukrainian students know that the day when Ukraine wins the war will come and the responsibility of rebuilding the country will be on their young minds. With her presentation, Dr. Olena Moiseyenko inspired everyone who attended to be more resilient to any stress that we may face in our work, and to draw inspiration and innovation from the challenges.



## Free English Classes Help Ukrainian Newcomers Learn the Language and Find Community

Since the beginning of May, three groups of Ukrainians fleeing the war have been coming together at MacEwan University twice a week to learn English.

Filling a need until government-funded English language courses became available was part of the Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre's (URDC's) motivation when they set out to create the courses in March. But it wasn't the only goal.

“We also wanted to provide healing spaces, a sense of community and a place for people to feel comfortable and included,” says Larisa Hayduk, director of the URDC. “The response – from the volunteers who made this possible to the participants themselves – has been incredible.”

Instructors from MacEwan's School of Continuing Education and the Edmonton Ukrainian community, including Melody Kostiuk, were quick to offer their time to develop curriculum and lesson plans.

“As members of the Edmonton Ukrainian community, we are very much affected by what is happening in Ukraine, but it can be challenging to know how to help,” says Kostiuk, a former Ukrainian bilingual teacher who works with Alberta Education. “This opportunity was an outlet for me – something concrete to do to be of assistance.”

For two hours twice a week for the past eight weeks, Kostiuk and her fellow instructors have been working with their teaching assistants, including MacEwan

alumni and members of the Ukrainian Student Club, to create opportunities for Ukrainian newcomers to learn some basic English skills – enough to help prepare them for job interviews, be more comfortable in settling into life in Edmonton and as a bit of an escape.

“Many participants have thanked us for creating this space where they could laugh, converse with each other and spend a couple of hours not worrying about finding a job, how they were going to make ends meet or what was happening in Ukraine,” says Kostiuk.

Anna Brenovan, a 25-year-old retail worker from Vinnytsia, is one of the students hoping that honing her English skills will help her in the next steps of her journey in Canada.

“When I finally found these classes, I was so excited,” she says. “I learned some English in the store where I worked in Kyiv – we have customers from other countries, and they speak English, so I can understand English. But I don't know enough words to speak comfortably.”

Because Brenovan had some English skills already, she ended up being a support for her classmates.

“I was one of the youngest in my class at MacEwan,” she says. “We are all different ages and from different cities in Ukraine – Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Odesa, Mykolaiv. We learned together and helped each other with what we need to do next with documents and other steps.”

Some of her classmates have already found employment, while others, like Brenovan, are considering taking more classes to continue improving their language skills.

“I really need to find a job, and it's hard without speaking English well.”

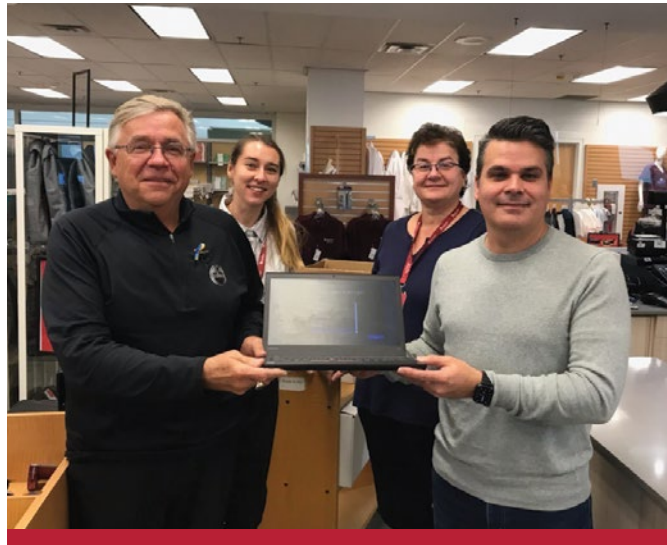
Now that more services are available to Ukrainian newcomers and there are more options for English language training, the URDC will look for other ways to help, says Hayduk.

“This is what we do at MacEwan – we serve, collaborate and engage with our community.”

MacEwan's School of Continuing Education, English as an Additional Language program provided resources, advising and volunteers for this project. Special gratitude goes to the instructors Eaman Mah, Lori Diepenbroek, Nataliia Naiavko, Olena Hartsula, Melody Kostiuk, and all student and alumni volunteers. The Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE) Trust provided funding to cover the cost of the initiative. As always, UFCE Trust stepped in and supported the idea that required quick decision making and action. URDC developed and implemented the idea with professionalism and passion.

Originally published on MacEwan.ca in July 2022.

**TOP**  
Participants come together for the final class on June 29.



## MacEwan Donates Laptops to Ukrainians Fleeing the War

by Polina Budyanska

Moving to a new place is always scary, and travelling across the ocean into the unknown as a refugee is terrifying. URDC is always on a mission of supporting the Ukrainian community in Edmonton and this year, the centre has been working on ways to help Ukrainian newcomers make an easier transition to the new place. After creating a language guide and organizing free English classes over the summer, it became clear that the next step in helping newcomers integrate would be to provide the means for them to join Canadians at school and in the workplace.

MacEwan University donated 70 laptops to the Ukrainian Canadian Social Services in Edmonton that were distributed to newcomers most in need – women with children. The newly received laptops have already been put to work at schools, universities and remote workplaces.

URDC would like to express its gratitude to MacEwan Bookstore's Mauro Sanchez and Marija Vukusic for all their work in organizing the donation. This outstanding community initiative wouldn't have been possible without generous strong support from the university's senior administration.

### TOP LEFT

Left to right: John Shalewa (UCSS), Polina Budyanska (URDC), Marija Vukusic, Mauro Sanchez

### TOP RIGHT

Photo of the Simulation Centre from TMNU



## Kules Health and Nursing Technology Fund in Support of Ukraine

Through donations from the Peter and Doris Kule Health and Nursing Technology Fund, TNMU in Ukraine, a longtime URDC and MacEwan partner, created a new education centre named the MacEwan Clinical Simulation Centre.

In 2019, visiting scholars from TNMU travelled to MacEwan for training. During that visit, Dr. Svitlana Yastremska said that, "Meeting face-to-face helps us see the whole picture and realize opportunities to learn from each other." One such inspiration was to create a clinical simulation centre at TNMU.

In July 2022, URDC donated an educational mannequin, called "Laerdal Nursing Kelly," which was unveiled at the opening of the TNMU's new simulation centre. With realistic anatomical features, "Nursing Kelly" provides students in Ukraine with an optimal learning experience for a wide range of practical clinical skills. The mannequin allows students to perform assessments and interventions, thereby developing the critical thinking skills needed in the healthcare environment. In November 2022, another donation of educational equipment was shipped to TNMU to assist in setting up the new centre.

The Kules' fund has also made it possible to translate Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches by John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell into Ukrainian. The book is a bestseller that pioneered the comparison of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research design. It is the golden standard manual for research internationally, and its translation Ukrainian will support future academic research in Ukraine. URDC would like to recognize translators Taras Kobel and Dr. Ihor Kobel; Olga Polozhevyh, UCU Press editor; Ihor Kobel, scientific editor; and Volodymyr Netak, managing director of the UCU Press, for their work to make the publication a reality. The Ukrainian edition was published by UCU's publishing house and will be shared with our partners in Ukraine.



## Indigenous Ukrainian Relationship Building Initiative

Although the Indigenous Ukrainian Relationship Building Initiative (IURBI) had big plans for the spring and summer of 2022, the events they had planned were postponed by the Russian war in Ukraine. Stay tuned as we look to reschedule these events.

In January, Maryna Chernyavska and Larisa Hayduk were invited to present at the *Reconciling Multiculturalism in Today's Canada* conference, organized by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS). The story of the IURBI, challenges and hopes, reflections and plans have been discussed, and will be included in the upcoming article of the CIUS publication. Chernyavska and Hayduk were also co-applicants for the successful SSHRCC partnership grant, in collaboration with CIUS, for the project *Sovereignty and Citizenship in Contemporary Ukraine*. Learn more at [StoriesofTheseLands.ca](https://StoriesofTheseLands.ca).

## URDC welcomes Polina Budyanska

This year, the URDC welcomes its new administrative assistant, Polina Budyanska. Polina graduated from Jagiellonian University in 2013 and holds a master's degree in international relations. She speaks three Slavic languages (Ukrainian, Polish and Russian), which will help strengthen URDC's ties to various Slavic communities in Edmonton and internationally.

Polina is thankful for the opportunity to engage in the Ukrainian academic and cultural sphere of MacEwan University.

"I was 17 when I moved out of my home in Ukraine to start university studies in Poland. Whenever I came back home for the holidays, my grandpa would always repeat the good old lines from Shevchenko's poem to me: "Учітесь, читайте, І чужому научайтесь, Й свого не цурайтесь." (Translation: "Study, read and learn from others, but do not shy away from your own."). Through the prism of time, these words have become prophetic for me as well as many Ukrainians today. As our country is once again fighting for its freedom and right to exist, our people have been displaced all over the world in search of shelter. But no matter where we are, we cannot allow ourselves to be cut off from our roots – to be ignorant of the origin of our family, the history of our region, the country, or the customs and traditions of our people. The knowledge and experience I've gained, and my Ukrainian soul, are the things that will guide me through the work at URDC," said Polina.

Polina is looking forward to working towards supporting and enriching the Ukrainian community in Alberta while bringing more exciting opportunities for MacEwan's intercultural dialogue. "Always learn from other cultures and forever make your own flourish!"

## UFCE's Fundraising Activities

UFCE's two signature annual fundraising events enjoyed great success. The Kyiv Konnection banquet featured Dr. Roman Petryshyn, founder and first director of URDC, and recent recipient of the Order of Canada, who spoke about Ukraine, the consequences of the war, and the future of Ukraine and Canada-Ukraine collaborations.

During the banquet, Dr. Olenka Bilash, UFCE board president, recognized Dr. Ernest Skakun, past UFCE president, and Kevin Fitzgerald, MacEwan's associate vice-president, Alumni and Development with the President's Award. Dr. Trimbee, MacEwan president and vice-chancellor, reflected on the immense amount of work MacEwan and URDC have done since the beginning of the war. She stated that universities across Canada stand in solidarity with Ukraine and those affected by the invasion. MacEwan is committed to working to support faculty and students and all people across Ukraine.

The annual Gene Zwozdesky Memorial Charity Golf Classic – the United for Ukraine tournament – brings together supporters of UFCE, URDC and the Ukrainian community. It has become a tradition to start the day with Koobie on a Bun, followed by a welcome from the UFCE President, Dr. Olenka Bilash, a nine-hole golf game, and deluxe Ukrainian dinner at the Mundare Recreation Hall, with prizes.

The proceeds from both events have been earmarked to support students and academics affected by the Russian war in Ukraine.

URDC expresses its deepest appreciation and gratitude to the presidents of UFCE and UFCE Trust, and to each board member for their ongoing support of various initiatives undertaken by URDC. Thank you for your trust and friendships.

### UFCE BOARD MEMBERS

- Dr. Olenka Bilash, President
- Dr. Ernest Skakun, Vice-President
- Len Hudyma, Secretary
- Denise Lucyshyn, Treasurer
- Ivan Fedyna
- Jason Golinowski
- Rena Hanchuk
- Dr. Maryana Kravtsenyuk
- Lubomyr Markevych
- Dr. Mark Minenko
- Dr. Roman Petryshyn
- Dennis Scraba
- Michael Sulyma
- George Zaharia
- Dr. Natalia Zinchuk

### UFCE TRUST

- Dr. Steven Kashuba, Chairman
- Dennis Kowalishin, Vice-Chairman
- Len Hudyma, Secretary
- George Zaharia, Treasurer
- Dr. Olenka Bilash
- Dr. Roman Petryshyn



### TOP LEFT

UFCE President award. Left to right: Kevin Fitzgerald, Dr. Olenka Bilash, Dr Ernest Skakun.



### TOP RIGHT

UFCE golf tournament participants



### BOTTOM LEFT

Dr. Roman Petryshyn giving a talk at the Kyiv Konnection banquet

### BOTTOM RIGHT

Dinner after the UFCE golf tournament





## URDC Awards

ALBERTA COUNCIL FOR THE  
UKRAINIAN ARTS AWARD (\$500)

Kappella Kyrie Slavic Chamber Choir

THE UKRAINIAN MILLENNIUM  
FOUNDATION AWARD (2 X \$1,000)

Eric Siemens, Faculty of Fine Arts, MacEwan University

Dominic Plamondon, Faculty of Fine Arts, MacEwan University

ROMAN SOTLYKEWYCH MUSIC AWARD (\$1,000)

Olga Zaitseva-Herz

SERGE EREMENKO MUSIC AWARD (\$500)

Olga Zaitseva-Herz