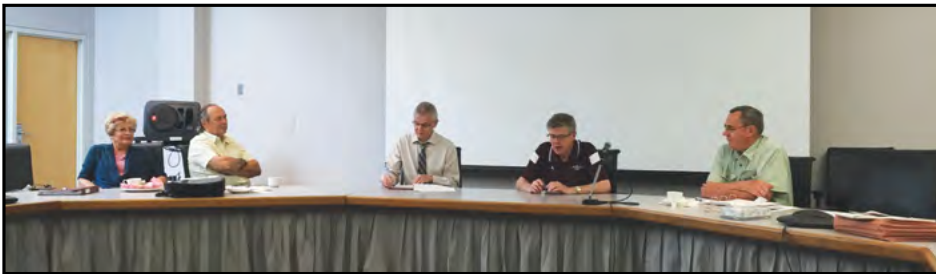# Consolidating the role of URDC at MacEwan



*L to R: Julia Elaschuk (UFCE Board), Gordon Gordey (UFCE Board), John Corlett (provost, MacEwan University), David Atkinson (president, MacEwan University), Ernest Skakun (president, UFCE)*



*Yuri Konkin, director, Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre*

This year, URDC has consolidated its role as a centre at MacEwan designed to conceptualize, develop, facilitate and attract funding and carry out community service projects, faculty and student exchanges and other initiatives that otherwise would not be available through regular university channels.

Among the current projects, to which MacEwan has dedicated budgetary resources for the 2016/17 academic year, are:

1. Student government exchanges between MacEwan and our partner universities in Ukraine - National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA), Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU), and Ternopil State Medical University (TSMU);

2. Advising UCU in their desire to establish services for students with disabilities;

3. Collaborating with NaUKMA and other partner universities in professional development

and academic quality assurance centres;

4. Providing expertise to TSMU in establishing a nursing simulation centre;

5. Facilitating faculty and student exchanges.

In June 2016, MacEwan's president and the provost met with the Board of the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE) and Yuri Konkin, director of URDC. Drs. Atkinson and Corlett expressed support to the URDC programming in Ukraine and shared their ideas regarding strategic approaches to future collaboration with a variety of stakeholders in Canada and Ukraine. The UFCE Board unanimously passed a motion to support a request from URDC to co-sponsor a number of student exchanges in 2016/17. The aim of this motion is to provide additional opportunities for over a dozen MacEwan students wishing to enhance their international learning experiences by visiting our partner universities in

Kyiv, Lviv and Ternopil, and Ukrainian students, who visit MacEwan. URDC is very appreciative of the institutional support rendered by MacEwan and generous sponsorship provided by UFCE.

Yuri Konkin, the new URDC director, has been with MacEwan and URDC since 1994. He started as the manager of MacEwan's office in Kyiv, which was instrumental in developing and implementing a number of MacEwan programs in Ukraine, including its Business Management diploma program. A few years later, Yuri immigrated to Canada and continued working with URDC and MacEwan's Faculty of Health and Community Studies. In 2000-2010, as a member of the MacEwan team, he successfully developed and managed two health education and nursing projects. One of these large-scale CIDA-sponsored projects won the "Program of Excellence" award from the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE). Over the years, Yuri has also worked with MacEwan International as a consultant and the coordinator of the Eastern Europe Leadership Team.

He has taught ESL and worked as an IELTS examiner at MacEwan's English Language Institute. In 2010-2013, Yuri managed the CIDA-sponsored project "Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Ukraine" (IECDU) on behalf of URDC.



*David Atkinson, president, MacEwan University and Taras Dobko, senior vice-rector, Ukrainian Catholic University, sign a MoU and a Student Exchange Agreement.*



*David Atkinson meets with Lilia Hrynevych, Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, and Roman Waschuk, Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine.*

# MacEwan delegation boasts productive visit to Ukraine

The MacEwan delegation's two-week visit to Ukraine in May 2016 was productive and successful. The delegation included President David Atkinson; Lucille Mazo, chair, Bachelor of Communication Studies; and Yuri Konkin, director, URDC.

The itinerary of this trip was quite intense – there were many people to connect with and much to discuss with various Ukrainian counterparts. The trip began with a meeting with Dr. Lilia Hrynevych, the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine; Deputy Minister Dr. Pavlo Khobzei; and Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine, Roman Waschuk. The group discussed MacEwan University's current programming in Ukraine and identified areas for further collaboration.

The trip continued with a series of meetings with the National Academy



*Meeting with members of the NaUKMA Student Council.*

of Pedagogical Sciences, National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA), Ternopil State Medical University (TSMU), Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) and National Ivan Franko University of Lviv. The university's delegation met with the rectors, senior administrators, faculty and students of these institutions to consolidate plans for joint projects in 2016-17 and beyond. The visit provided opportunity to build upon long-standing partnerships with NaUKMA and TSMU by embarking on new projects in the areas of sociology, journalism, faculty development and student exchanges. President Atkinson and Dr. Taras Dobko, senior vice-rector

of UCU, also signed a comprehensive MoU, which envisages cooperation between the two universities in the areas of services for students with disabilities and student exchanges.

"I have been particularly impressed by the quality of the students and their commitment to democratic reforms of their country," remarked Dr. Atkinson of the visit.

Throughout the visit, the MacEwan delegation enjoyed wonderful hospitality for which it is sincerely grateful. The university is very excited to be creating such invaluable education opportunities and personal learning experiences for its students here and those in Ukraine.

*Meeting with students at the Ternopil State Medical University.*


*L to R: Lucille Mazo, Yuri Konkin, Serhiy Kvit, David Atkinson, Terry Atkinson*


*Ruslana with MacEwan students.*


*Gene Zwozdesky, David Atkinson and Yuri Konkin welcome Ruslana to MacEwan.*


*Ruslana hand-in-hand with Provost John Corlett.*

# Celebrating the 25th anniversary of Ukraine's independence with Ruslana

On August 29, 2016, URDC and the MacEwan Ukrainian Students Club, as part of the Students' Association of MacEwan University, held an event to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Ukraine's independence. It was planned as part of an Edmonton-wide program organized by the Ukrainian community.

The keynote address at the MacEwan event was delivered by Ruslana, a well-known Ukrainian singer, musician and civil activist, who played an important role during the Revolution of Dignity, and continues to be one of the best know public figures in Ukraine and internationally.

Dr. David Atkinson, president of Macewan University, and Dr. John Corlett, provost of MacEwan, welcomed the distinguished guest to MacEwan University. The event was also attended by MacEwan faculty and administrators, as well as by Gene Zwozdesky, Ernest Skakun, and other community leaders.

Ruslana spoke about her personal experience in bringing people together on the Maidan and assisting Ukrainian soldiers and POWs in Donbas. She also answered tons of questions from the inquisitive students and shared her vision about "cultivating Ukrainian culture and identity based on the creative energy of Ukrainian people." It was an inspiring and invigorating experience for the entire audience. It was a shame there was no time for Ruslana to sing at the Students' Lounge, but many MacEwan students, staff and faculty attended her concert at the Jubilee the following day.

# MacEwan hosts former Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine

In December 2016, MacEwan University hosted Dr. Serhiy Kvit, former Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, and Tetiana Antoniuk. Currently, Serhiy Kvit serves as director of the Academic Quality Assurance Centre at the National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy (NaKMA), and Tetiana Antoniuk works as deputy director of the Centre.

Serhiy and Tetiana met with President David Atkinson, Provost John Corlett, and many colleagues from different

*Dr. Valerie Henitiuk, executive director, Centre for Advancement of Faculty Excellence (centre), demonstrates an innovative work environment to Serhiy and Tetiana.*

departments at MacEwan. In particular, they had a meeting with Valerie Henitiuk, executive director, Centre for the Advancement of Faculty Excellence Centre (CAFÉ), and Paul Martin, coordinator of Faculty Development. Valerie and Paul were invited to visit Ukraine in October 2017 to assist NaUKMA in organizing in-house professional development services as an element of the Academic Quality Assurance Centre.

Their meeting with Lucille Mazo, chair, MacEwan University Bachelor of Communication Studies and Brian Gorman, professor of journalism, focused on the upcoming exchange of guest lecturers between MacEwan and NaUKMA's School of Journalism scheduled for 2017, as well as a publication of the "Social, Health, and Communication Studies Journal" co-edited-and-published by MacEwan and NaUKMA. Our Ukrainian guests also met with Honourable Marlin Schmidt, Alberta Minister of Advanced Education, and Dr. Peter Mahaffy, co-chair of the Campus Alberta Quality Council. They were sensitized to the operating principles, policies, procedures and practices of the CAQC, which were hoped to assist them in establishing



*Serhiy Kvit by the portrait of Dr. J.W. Grant MacEwan.*

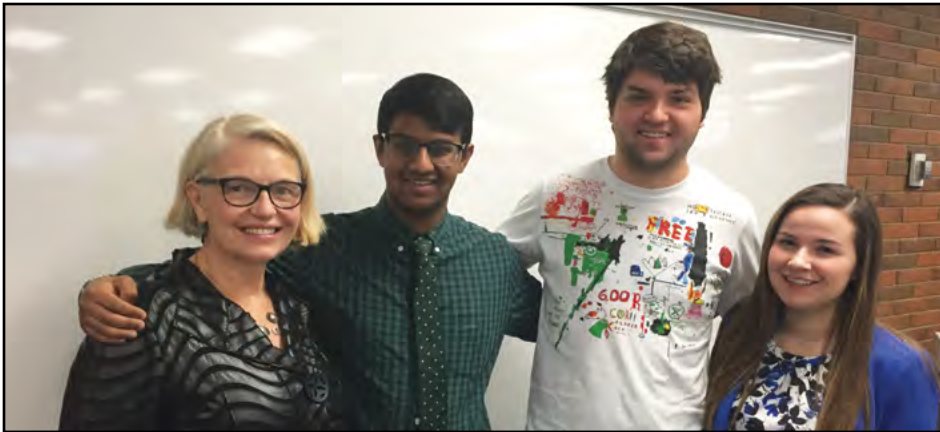institutional and national quality control mechanisms in the future.

The public event, organized by URDC together with the MacEwan University Students' Association (SAMU), brought together about 80 students, faculty and community members, who came to listen to Serhiy Kvit's presentation on "Education Reform in Ukraine as a Catalyst to Social Transformations." "The event helped us appreciate the role of students and educators in the dramatic social reforms that precipitated the Revolution of Dignity of 2014, which also acquired new dimensions and scale after its victory," said Danika McConnell, president, SAMU.

During their visit to Edmonton, Serhiy and Tetiana also took part in the symposium on post-secondary education reforms in Ukraine, organized by the Research Initiative on Democratic Reforms in Ukraine (RIDRU). Overall, the visit was very productive in terms of enhancing the partnership between MacEwan and NaUKMA. URDC thanks Serhiy and Tetiana for sharing their professional perspectives, friendly attitude and smiles with all involved.

# URDC co-organizes a symposium at U of A on higher education reform in Ukraine

In December 2016, a two-day symposium was held at the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta within the framework of the post-secondary cluster of the Research Initiative on Democratic Reform in Ukraine (RIDRU), spearheaded by Professor Olenka Bilash (U of A). The event brought together distinguished academics, administrators and student leaders from Canada, Ukraine and other countries to discuss the progress of reforms in higher education in Ukraine.

On its first day, the program concentrated on the recent developments in higher education in Ukraine. Dr. Kvit's presentation focused on how greater autonomy is being promoted in academic, financial and administrative affairs at Ukrainian universities, without allowing rectors and senior officials to exploit the corruption that currently dominates the government and society. Dr. Anatoly Oleksiyenko (Hong Kong University) spoke about the Soviet legacy and colonial mentality that leaves today's young scholars with few rewards, passive and unmotivated. Professor Jerry Kachur (Department of Educational Foundations, University of Alberta) compared Ukraine, Turkey and Greece, and challenged Ukrainian reforms to avoid substituting one colonial model for another. Dr. John Corlett (provost and vice-president Academic, MacEwan University) and Dr. Randy Goebel (associate vice-president, Research and associate vice-president, Academic, University of Alberta) provided their comments in writing to observe that as public institutions, universities are obliged to be socially responsible and to use public funds wisely, efficiently and effectively.

*L to R: Dr. Olenka Bilash (U of A), Fahim Rahman (Students' Union, U of A), Cassian Soltykewych (president, SUSK), Stephanie Nedoshytko (SUSK and Students' Association of MacEwan University)*



*Dr. Jeff Stepnisky (Department of Sociology, MacEwan University)*

Day two of the symposium was dedicated to the theme of building the infrastructure of a 21st century university in Ukraine. The topics presented were student government in Ukraine and Canada, overcoming barriers of access to post-secondary education, and quality assurance.
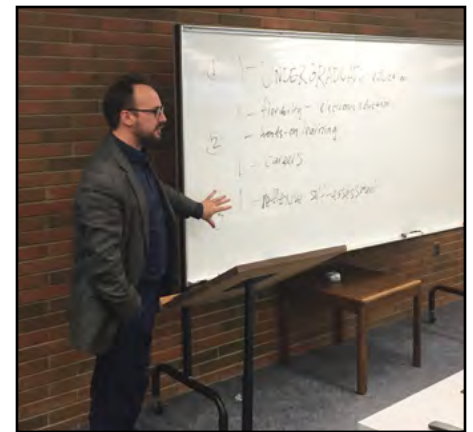
The session on student government heard presentations from Zarina Khalimon (secretary, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy Student Government), Cassian Soltykewych (president, Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union), Stephanie Nedoshytko, (councillor, Students' Association of MacEwan University and director, External Relations, Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union), and Fahim Rahman (president, University of Alberta Students' Union).  Four speakers spoke to the theme of overcoming barriers of access to post-secondary education for students with special needs. The first presentation was given by Abigail Parrish-Craig (chair, Services for Students with Disabilities at MacEwan University), and by Amorena Bartlett, (Student Ambassador, MacEwan), who will be travelling to Ukraine in May to meet with deaf students. The second speaker was Dr. Ihor Kobel from the Ukrainian Catholic University, who reviewed Ukrainian legislation and spoke about his university's plans to open an office at UCU modelled on that of MacEwan University. Finally,

Dr. Tim Loreman (president, Concordia University, Edmonton) spoke about the importance and limits of inclusive education at Canadian universities.

The topic of quality assurance was addressed by Professor Peter Mahaffy (King's University, Edmonton). As co-chair of the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC), Dr. Mahaffy spoke about the principles on which CAQC operates. His presentation was followed by that of Tetiana Antoniuk, deputy director of the Center for Academic Quality Assurance at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, which is the first university in Ukraine to set up its own internal centre for quality assurance. Dr. Jeffrey Stepnisky, (chair of Sociology, MacEwan University), spoke about the importance of cultivating scholarship, the culture of ongoing self-evaluation aimed at personal and professional growth as prerequisites for quality teaching, learning and research.



*Abigail Parrish-Craig (director SSD, MacEwan University) and Amorena Bartlett (MacEwan student)*

# MacEwan Sociology chair teaches at Kyiv Mohyla

At the end of October 2016, through its visiting scholar fund, the URDC supported Dr. Jeff Stepnisky (associate professor and chair, Sociology, MacEwan) in his three-week trip to Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. According to Jeff, the purpose of the trip was to "better understand how universities function in Ukraine," and "deepen connections with NaUKMA." Jeff was hosted by NaUKMA's International Office, led by Larysa Chovnyuk, and the Sociology Department, led by Dr. Anna Osypchuk. While there, Jeff met with faculty, students and administrators from across NaUKMA. He also gave lectures in Dr. Kateryna Maltseva's course on the Sociology of Mental Illness, Dr. Olena Bogdan's Social Psychology course, and Dr. Anna Osypchuk's course on Sociological Theory. He presented his research on Euromaidan to faculty and students, and was fortunate to be present for NaUKMA Day – an annual celebration of NaUKMA's 400-year history.

For Dr. Stepnisky, the highlight of the trip was "meeting and talking with the very intelligent and enthusiastic students at NaUKMA," as "they seemed especially interested to hear Canadian

*Dr. Jeff Stepnisky*

## Sustainable social initiatives in Ukraine inspire MacEwan students

In October 2016, URDC and the MacEwan University Ukrainian Students Club invited student and faculty members to celebrate Sustainability Awareness Week by attending their presentation and screening of documentary film, "Searching 4 Opportunities."



perspectives on sociology and social life." Based on his experiences during the visit, Dr. Stepnisky believes that MacEwan can continue to support NaUKMA and other Ukrainian universities in a number of ways. First, "Ukrainian students are eager for international study, but most opportunities are based out of Europe, so a Canadian alternative would be much welcomed," says Dr. Stepnisky. Second, "Ukrainian scholars and academics are eager to develop research ties with international scholars, so programs designed to facilitate research collaboration and basic exposure to western styles of academic practice would also benefit Ukraine." While in Kyiv, Jeff also had the opportunity to advance his research on the meaning and significance of space for the Euromaidan revolution. He made several excursions to Maidan Nezalezhnosti, and visited memorials, on Maidan, to the Heavenly Hundred. A research paper based on an analysis of newspaper articles about Maidan and his trip to Kyiv is forthcoming. Arrangements are expected to be made to invite a sociologist from NaUKMA to visit MacEwan in 2017/18.

The documentary, by Dr. Oksana Udovyk, features current youth initiatives in Ukraine aimed at achieving social, economic and environmental sustainability in the country. The presentation's attendees were excited to learn about a coalition of Ukrainian NGOs called "Reanimation Package of Reforms," whose goals involve initiating, facilitating and implementing a vast range of societal reforms. They also found quite interesting the work of the Plushkin collaborative consumption – or sharing economy – platform in Ukraine: the online platform allows users to exchange a range of goods and services with one another. A diverse range of items are exchanged on the platform, including clothes, books, furniture, mobiles, computers and cars, among others. The platform offers possibility to exchange services, like singing lessons in exchange for lessons in English.

Overall, the screening provided a great opportunity for students at MacEwan to contemplate their own sustainability initiatives on campus and beyond.

## What is "gay propaganda" in occupied regions of Ukraine?

At the end of January 2017, URDC and MacEwan's Ukrainian Students Club invited students, faculty and community members to attend a presentation and screening of the documentary "This is Gay Propaganda" as part of Global Awareness Week. The film, by Marusya Baciurkiw, a renowned film-maker, author and media theory professor from Ryerson University in Toronto, tells the world about the plight of the LGBTQ communities in eastern Ukraine that suffer from numerous repressions inflicted by the Russia-backed militia. For the past two years, a so-called "Gay Propaganda" Law has been in force in occupied regions of Donbas.

This film is the first to tell the story of the LGBT activists on the front lines of Ukraine's Euromaidan revolution. Attendees of January's screening were introduced to several memorable characters, including Alexandra, an

*Marusya Bociurkiw speaking to journalism students at MacEwan.*



*L to R: Chantelle Scratch, Braidyn Lapp, Kalika LaRiviere, Ashlynn Berg at TSMU July 2016.*

## "Nomadic nurses" from MacEwan explore International Health Care Camp in Ternopil

LGBT activist whose face was on a wanted poster plastered across the city of Donetsk; Sergo, a Georgian activist beaten by his own family; and Olena, a leading LGBT activist in Ukraine. "I'm giving you an interview about LGBT stuff," remarks Olena, in the film – "and it can be considered propaganda." She adds that if the Gay Propaganda Law were in effect across Ukraine, she could be thrown in jail for up to five years. Thousands of LGBT refugees have fled the occupied regions of Donbas, joining the almost two million internally displaced people in Ukraine. "But this is no victim narrative. Ukraine's first generation of out LGBT activists is young, hip and deeply engaged in rebuilding their country. This is my love letter to the LGBT people of Ukraine," remarks Baciurkiw, in the film.

Further, Marusya presented an exciting lecture to a class of journalism students at MacEwan. She shared her experience in covering Maidan and post-Maidan events in Ukraine from a perspective of civic journalism, as a new media movement to counter "alternative facts" news and downright lies perpetuated by



the Russian propaganda. She also spoke about the role of the feminist and LGBT activists in the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine. The lecture was followed by a student press-conference spearheaded by Professor Brian Gorman.

In July of 2016, Chantelle Scratch, Braidyn Lapp, Kalika LaRiviere and Ashlynn Berg – four Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) students at MacEwan visited Ukraine to attend International Summer Camp for Health Care Professionals organized by Ternopil State Medical University (TSMU). Two of the students received a scholarship of $1,500 each, provided by the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE). Covering at least 50 per cent of the project costs (accommodation, food, local travel) by a host institution (TSMU) was quite exceptional, not only for a Ukrainian partner university, but for most study abroad programs at MacEwan.

During a presentation to their peers and faculty after their visit to the camp, Chantelle and Kalika analyzed the initiative not only from the perspective of immersion into rich Ukrainian culture, but also as value-added professional experience. The students described their visit as a "life-changing experience," that "strengthened partnership between MacEwan and TSMU." It also enhanced the capacity of MacEwan's Faculty

*Participants of the International Summer School for Health Care Students in Ternopil.*



*Danika McConnell, president, SAMU, (left) and Carley Casebeer, vice-president external (centre) facilitate discussion on student governance.*

of Nursing to provide international experience to its students and helped MacEwan students learn more about Ukraine and its health care system. On their part, Ukrainian students also learned a lot about the health care system in Canada and the roles of Canadian nurses thanks to the presentations organized by the "nomadic nurses" from MacEwan.

The four MacEwan students particularly enjoyed working with their peers from Ukraine, Georgia, Poland and other countries on emergency assistance practical mock scenarios, which involved case studies ranging from domestic violence to car accidents. The plan is to continue this program in 2017 and enrich it with more nursing components.



*L to R: Taras Moroz, Zarina Khalimon, Mykhaylo Shelemba*

# Ukrainian student government leaders visit MacEwan

In February 2017, three representatives of student governments (SG) from our partner universities in Ukraine visited MacEwan to meet with their Canadian peers. The event was co-organized and co-sponsored by the Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU), the MacEwan President's Office, the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE), the MacEwan University Ukrainian Students Club, and URDC.

Zarina Khalimon (NaUKMA), Taras Moroz (TSMU) and Mykhaylo Shelemba (UCU) spent seven days working together with their colleagues from the SAMU Executive Committee – spearheaded by SAMU President Danika McConnell – to exchange experiences about effective student governance. Ukrainian student leaders were "impressed by SAMU's independent status," and the significant positive role played by the association not only in student life, but in the university governance in general. The visiting students also attended several classes at MacEwan and shared their views on different aspects of life in

Ukraine from political, historic, linguistic and cultural perspectives.

Taras, Mykhaylo and Zarina were thoroughly impressed by their experience at MacEwan, citing that they "could never forget this incredible visit, which helped [them] better understand what kind of policies and strategies are needed to enhance the role of student governments in Ukraine in terms of student advocacy and overall institutional governance." They went on to express their gratitude to their new friends, the organizers of the visit, thanking Danika, Carley, Alicia, Stefania, Yuri, Dr. Skakun, and all the new friends that made them feel "really at home at MacEwan." Further, they extended a special thank you to Dr. Atkinson, who invited them to dinner at his home, where the group enjoyed his piano playing of classical music.

"We also enjoyed our first NHL game at your wonderful arena," remarked Zarina, "however, there was a fly in the ointment as the Oilers lost 2 to 5 that night!"

*Meeting with Alicia Slusarchuk, president, MacEwan University Ukrainian Students' Club (left) and Stephanie Nedoshytko, SUSK and SAMU (right)*



*Larisa Hayduk conquered new height. A climb to the top of the Hoverla Mountain is part of the Vorohta camp program.*



*Ukrainian visitors and SAMU's executive hosted by President Atkinson at his home.*

# Multi–disciplinary course with a focus on Ukraine developed at MacEwan

In August of 2016, Larisa Hayduk, advisor at MacEwan International, visited Vorokhta in western Ukraine on a reconnaissance mission to finalize the development of a new multi-disciplinary six-credit course, called "Community Service Learning: Building Peaceful Communities," which will be launched at MacEwan in 2017. The distinct feature of the course – spearheaded by Larisa – is a three-week practicum in a summer camp in Ukraine, which envisages a variety of projects aimed at increasing learning options for orphans and other disadvantaged children in Ukraine. During her trip, Larisa observed and participated in the summer camp for orphaned children and children affected by the war in eastern Ukraine to ensure the goals of the course can be met, and the conditions are appropriate for MacEwan University students to volunteer and implement their learning and teaching projects.

This innovative educational initiative will be implemented in partnership with Help Us Help the Children (HUHTC), a community organization based in Toronto. Over the past 23 years, HUHTC has provided aid and ongoing support to over 9,000 orphaned children in Ukraine through a variety of programs, including its summer and winter camps aimed at "raising a confident, knowledgeable and powerful new generation, the Ukrainian leaders, who will build a new country," in direct alignment with their organizational mission.

Hayduk "would like to thank the Faculty of Arts and Science, Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre, and MacEwan International for their support in making this project a reality," with a "special acknowledgement to the Ukrainian Students Club of MacEwan University, that so passionately stepped in and delivered on the fundraising goals." Their project collected $2,000 of monetary donations and shipped boxes of items for children in Ukraine during the 2016 summer camp.

As a result of successful recruitment campaign, eight of the best candidates have been selected to enroll in the course. They will work on multiple projects with children in Vorokhta in August 2017, and will also take a course in Ukrainian language and culture at the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU). Our special thanks go to the Ukrainian Foundation of College Education (UFCE) that provided eight scholarships to support the students participating in this great initiative.

*Ernest Skakun (right) presented UFCE's President Award to Ed Piasta.*



*Keynote speaker Bohdan Onyschuk*

# Ukrainian Foundation for College Education hosts 23rd annual Kyiv Konnection Banquet

In May of 2016, the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE) hosted their 23rd annual Kyiv Konnection Banquet at the St. John's Cultural Centre in Edmonton.

The fundraising event, which was a great success, included national anthems, an opening prayer by Bishop Ilarion of the Edmonton and Western Eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, greetings by Dr. David Atkinson, president of MacEwan University, entertainment by the Zemlia Vocal Trio, and a closing prayer by Bishop David Motiuk of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton.

The President's Annual Award for 2016 was presented by Dr. Ernest Skakun, president of UFCE, to Edward Piasta. In introducing Edward Piasta, Dr. Skakun focused on his illustrious achievements in three broad areas related to legal, military and community.

"We acknowledge Ed's dedication and commitment and his exceptional contributions in fostering the growth and the identity of the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education, the Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre, and the greater Ukrainian community," remarked Skakun.

Attendees enjoyed a keynote presentation by Bohdan Onyschuk, the immediate past chair and CEO of the Canada Ukraine Foundation (CUF), and a member of its Board of Directors and Executive Board. A renowned lawyer from Toronto and the recipient of a number of distinguished awards, including the Presidential Order of Merit of Ukraine, Bohdan spoke about his current volunteer work as the chair of the Holodomor National Awareness Tour, a national project of four Ukrainian organizations, led by CUF, to raise awareness in the school systems and other public venues in Canada of the 1932–33 famine genocide perpetrated by Stalin against the Ukrainian nation.

Onyschuk's address also centered on increasing Canadian political and humanitarian assistance for Ukraine and the need to build on the recent successes achieved by CUF and other Ukrainian Canadian community groups.

# MacEwan and NaUKMA strengthen links between journalism programs

Over the past two years, Lucille Mazo, chair of the Bachelor of Communication Studies at MacEwan, has been instrumental in fostering partnerships with the School of Journalism and other departments at NaUKMA. Building on the momentum generated by Lucille, Brian Gorman, professor of journalism at MacEwan, visited NaUKMA in February 2017 as a guest lecturer. Brian was hosted by Dr. Yevhen Fedchenko, director of NaUKMA's School of Journalism, Dr. Serhiy Kvit, the founder of the School, and Professor Daria Orlova. The intense itinerary included lectures to graduate students and a research seminar for doctoral students. Brian also took part in the international conference organized by the Stop Fake project spearheaded by Yevhen Fedchenko.



*Professor Brian Gorman*

*UFCE Board and President Atkinson meet with Ihor Kobel (UCU), Mykhailo Shelemba and Taras Moroz (TSMU).*

# MacEwan assists partner university in Lviv to establish contemporary services for students with disabilities

In autumn of 2016, the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) made the decision to establish a centre aimed at providing assistance to students with disabilities. This is a prioritized issue for Ukrainian post-secondary education, since despite recent successes in introducing inclusive education at the secondary level, there are still no comprehensive services for students with disabilities in the vast majority of local universities.

URDC worked together with Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) at MacEwan – spearheaded by Abigail Parrish-Craig – to organize a study tour for Dr. Ihor Kobel, newly appointed coordinator of the SSD Centre at UCU. Ihor visited MacEwan at the end of January 2017 to observe assisted learning technology, such as Communication Access Real Time Translation (CART) in action, and



*Ihor Kobel (left) meets with Abigail Parrish-Craig (right) and her colleagues at MacEwan's SSD.*

meet with faculty, students and SSD consultants who shared their experience in making the MacEwan environment inclusive. "I have learned a lot during this visit," says Kobel, as "the effective use of assistive technology is definitely something to write home about." "I was particularly impressed, however, with the strategic approach employed by MacEwan," he went on to say, "based on a full understanding of the importance of guaranteeing human rights to all students, and factoring inclusivity into different aspects of university culture." He expressed gratitude to Abigail and her colleagues for sharing their experience and a wealth of materials, which will be exceptionally helpful for him and his colleagues at UCU.

# MacEwan student ambassador takes part in new initiative of the Canada–Ukraine Alliance for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons

The Canada-Ukraine Alliance for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (CUADHHP) was established as a non-profit charitable society in Edmonton in 2002 as a result of several years of productive educational and cultural exchanges between Canadian and Ukrainian educators, researchers and activists, who are involved in the life of deaf and hard of hearing communities in both countries. CUADHHP supports projects that enhance educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing persons in Ukraine.

Over the years, the projects implemented by the Alliance include:

* research, development and linguistic codification of Ukrainian Sign language (USL)
* English instruction for deaf students
* provision of hearing aids to deaf students in Ukraine
* organizing summer institutes/camps for deaf Ukrainian students, their parents and teachers.

The new project, supported by the Alberta Community Initiative Program, is designed to assist educators, local schools for the deaf, NGOs and volunteer support groups in four designated regions of Ukraine, to develop learning resources that will help deaf and hard-of-hearing persons affected by the mental health trauma as a result of the war in eastern Ukraine.

The program is also devoted to promoting the use of Ukrainian Sign Language, affirming deaf culture, and

transferring international educational experiences between countries.

Amorena Barlett, a fourth-year sociology student at MacEwan University, takes part in the project as MacEwan Ambassador. She is scheduled to visit Ukraine in May 2017 to share her learning experiences, supported by MacEwan's Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) with her peers in Ukraine.



*Gene Zwosdesky (right) congratulates the winning team*

# United for Ukraine – 2016 Charity Golf Classic

In June of 2016, the Ukrainian Foundation for College Education (UFCE) sponsored the 2016 Charity Golf Classic, in support of the "Help Mykola" campaign of the Canada Ukrainian Foundation (CUF). The event was in co-operation with URDC and Sports and Wellness Centre at MacEwan University, and endorsed by Ed Stelmach, Former Premier of Alberta, Gene Zwozdesky, former MLA and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, and Dr. David Atkinson, president of MacEwan University.

The fundraiser was a triumph, and raised in total over $20,000 for the Help



*Mykola and his mother Alena*

Mykola Fund. Mykola Nyzhnykovskyi, 11 years of age, from near Mariupol in eastern Ukraine, was playing with his brother, when an undetonated hand grenade exploded. His brother was killed, and Mykola lost both legs and an arm. Mykola has been treated at the Shriners Children's Hospital in Montreal, and the Mykola Fund helped to cover travel and accommodation, future care and medical treatments for the boy. Beyond this, the fund brings awareness to how children and those less fortunate have been affected by the war in eastern Ukraine.

In her interview with CTV's W5, Krystina Waler, CUF's director of humanitarian initiatives, says Mykola is very fortunate, because he'd never had received the same level of care in Ukraine.

"Rehabilitation there would have been non-existent, the physiotherapy, the occupational therapy," Waler explained.

"To watch life being brought back into him has been an amazing journey and I can't wait to continue watching it," said Waler.

Mykola will be brought back to Canada for annual check-ups and fittings, and doctors from CUF's next medical mission to Ukraine will continue working on his facial scars.



*MacEwan Golf team*