

Agora Online -- February 2003

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A Newsletter for Faculty, Staff and Friends of
Lakehead University

<http://agora.lakeheadu.ca>



Photo: Peter Buma

Photo: (l-r) Bill Long, Sales Manager, Precision Camera, Stosh Durbacz, Accounts Manager, Sony Canada, and Keith Ruddy, Sales Manager Central Region, Sony Canada, view floor plans set up in the rotunda of the Advanced Technology & Academic Centre (ATAC) during the Hard Hat Reception held on January 23, 2003.

Precision Camera and Sony Canada are two of the technology corporations partnering with Lakehead in the development of ATAC.

A listing of technology partners, government supporters and honours may be found online at www.lakeheadu.ca/~events/www/atacsupport.html

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- 1. Lakehead Launches ATAC ~ Future of the North Capital Campaign**
A Hard Hat Reception marks the public launch of the ATAC ~ Future of the North Capital Campaign. FedNor announces \$2-million contribution to fund special equipment for the Advanced Technology & Academic Centre.
- 2. Hogarth Plantations Donated to Lakehead University Foundation**
Forestry students and faculty benefit from a generous donation by Dr. Walter Hogarth.
- 3. Campus News**
Ontario Innovation Trust; Distinguished Instructor Award; Contribution to Teaching Awards; Kyoto Accord; Inter-Collegiate Business Competition; Registrar to Retire; Director of Communications Arrives.

Welcome to **Agora Online**, a monthly tip sheet of the news and information you may read online at:

<http://agora.lakeheadu.ca>

Agora Online is produced by the Office of Communications and distributed to staff, faculty and friends of Lakehead University.

We're interested in hearing from you.

To share your news and information, or to add your name to our mailing list, contact us by phone, fax or e-mail:

Office of Communications

Lakehead University

955 Oliver Rd

Thunder Bay, Ontario

Canada P7B 5E1

Phone: 807-343-8177

Fax: 807-346-7770

E-mail:

communications@lakeheadu.ca

Eleanor Abaya

Director of Communications

eleanor.abaya@lakeheadu.ca

Frances Harding

Coordinator, Publications

frances.harding@lakeheadu.ca

Marla Tomlinson

Writer/Researcher

marla.tomlinson@lakeheadu.ca

Publications Mail

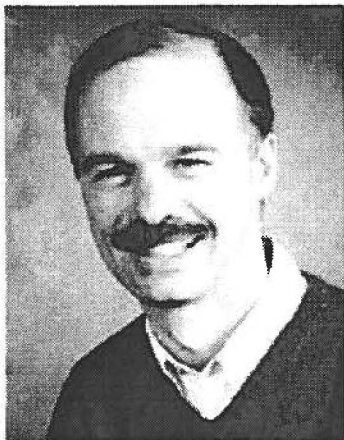
Agreement Number

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Dr. Tom Potter: Distinguished Instructor



Dr. Tom G. Potter is an enthusiastic professor of outdoor leadership who asks himself every day: How can I heighten my students' motivation to learn?

This year he was presented with the Distinguished Instructor Award, the most prestigious award given by Lakehead to recognize excellence in teaching.

Tom Potter studied at McGill University and completed his PhD at the University of Alberta in 1993. He spent 10 years teaching at the primary, secondary, college and university levels before joining Lakehead in 1994 as a faculty member in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks & Tourism. In 1997 he became an Associate Professor.

Potter teaches a wide variety of courses and spends over 30 teaching days in the field per year. "In teaching *Outdoor Skills and Theory II*, it is not unusual for me to place between 60 to 80 students (and staff) in the field in a day, many of whom are engaging in remote activities with a relatively high degree of inherent risk," he says.

At a reception and public lecture held in his honour on January 30, Vice-President (Academic) and Provost Dr. Mary Louise Hill congratulated Potter on his achievements and praised him for his consistent record of eliciting strong, positive evaluations from his students.

One former student writing in support of Tom Potter's nomination for the Distinguished Instructor Award said: "Dr. Potter is a very gifted and intuitive facilitator, one who is committed to the reciprocal nature of learning alongside and from his students. I sense that his natural talent has been fine-tuned through his dedication to diverse student populations along with his dedication to his own personal reflection and growth. Dr. Potter constantly challenges himself and pushes his comfort zone, consistently demonstrating his versatility as an instructor."

In his public lecture entitled, "Teaching for Learning: The Critical Link between Content and Process," Potter expressed concern that universities are often "content rich and experience poor."

The classroom experience is often overlooked, he says, and often we treat our students as vessels to be filled instead of candles to be ignited.

Professors need to use a variety of teaching styles (not just the lecture) and they need to embrace risk, he says.

"We need to relax our need for total control in the classroom. Learning is a social process, and I believe we should welcome the unpredictability of humans learning and growing together. We need to be creative and find new ways of reaching students.

"Teaching students well is the *raison d'être* of universities. It is the core contract between universities and society. Students are the reason we are here and, in my opinion, greater emphasis needs to be placed on teaching them well."

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4. Stepping to the Forefront

Graduate students Michel Beaulieu (History) and Andrea Collins (English) are on the frontier of success.

5. Honours, Awards, Appointments & Publications

New composition by Dr. Aris Carastathis (Music); Superior Science wins Actua Award; Publications by Dr. Azim Mallik (Biology), Dr. Jane Crossman (Kinesiology), and Dr. Ron Lappage (Kinesiology).

6. Agora Online

Share your comments, news and information.

Events@Lakehead

Events@Lakehead is a weekly e-bulletin sent to all students, staff and faculty every Friday from September through May.

To receive Events@Lakehead, contact Marla Tomlinson by e-mail: communications@lakeheadu.ca

To have an event listed, please send the notice to Marla Tomlinson at least a week in advance of the event.