

New profs in water security and regional economic development

The School of Environmental Design and Rural Development welcomed two professors to its team this past summer.

Prof. Sheri Longboat began teaching in rural planning and development, and Prof. Ryan Gibson assumed the Libro Professorship in Regional Economic Development for Southwestern Ontario.

Sheri Longboat is a Haudenosaunee Mohawk with 20 years of experience working with indigenous communities in Canada. She grew up with a love of water and water-related activities, which eventually led to an interest in water security and governance.

"Canadian research is needed to resolve the water crisis facing First Nations and within a broader national water security landscape," says Longboat.

"In Canada we are privileged with vast freshwater supplies, however, we know now that water is a finite resource and understand its health is connected to much larger physical and ecological systems upon which we depend."

Her research looks at collaboration in water governance, and indigenous knowledge systems and practices to enhance water security and environmental protection.

Longboat believes there is a tremendous opportunity to synergize the strengths of Western and indigenous knowledge. Her balanced approach and respect for knowledge form the basis of her research and teaching.

Gibson's research focus is also influenced by personal experience.

"I grew up with a deep intrigue and respect for rural communities, rural people and the events that shape their futures," he says. "Growing up witnessing the transformations in rural development instilled a fascination and commitment to rural issues."

Gibson examines key issues affecting



Prof. Sheri Longboat



Prof. Ryan Gibson

rural communities, such as governance, public policy, immigration and revitalization.

One of his projects is looking at inter-generational transfers of wealth in rural communities.

When one rural generation passes wealth onto the next, the wealth often leaves the region, as children living in rural areas move away as adults. Gibson is studying community-based strategies to collect this wealth, such as region-specific charities.

His position is supported by a \$500,000 donation from Libro Credit Union, along with two gifts from the Roberts and Klosler families totalling an additional \$500,000.

Correction: The summer 2016 issue of *OAC Alumni News* incorrectly noted the name of the S.H.A.R.E. Agriculture Foundation (not S.H.A.R.E. Canada) in the "Students go bananas over Belize learning opportunity" story.

Upcoming Events

Jan. 12

Gryphons Men's Hockey Game – "Aggie Night"

Join U of G Athletics for an Aggie-themed regular season game.

Tickets at gryphons.ca/tickets

March 18

OAC AA Bonspiel

uoguelph.ca/oac/bonspiel

June 9 to 11

2017 Alumni Weekend

Exhibition Place, Toronto

Details at alumni.uoguelph.ca



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Follow Prof. Sheri Longboat, a rural planning and development professor focusing on water security.

@ryanfgibson

Follow Prof. Ryan Gibson, Libro Professorship in Regional Economic Development for Southwestern Ontario.

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