

**Diefenbaker Canada Centre**  
**STATUS REPORT**  
[www.usask.ca/diefenbaker](http://www.usask.ca/diefenbaker)

**Our Vision**

The Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker Centre for the Study of Canada will be guided by the University of Saskatchewan's mission to achieve excellence in the scholarly activities of teaching, discovering, preserving, and applying knowledge.

In keeping with the University of Saskatchewan's vision to initiate multidisciplinary approaches to issues facing society, the Diefenbaker Canada Centre will be a dynamic cultural, educational, and historical institution which combines a museum, archives, and research centre.

In the interests of good citizenship the Diefenbaker Centre for the Study of Canada exists to celebrate our country's evolution with its citizens and their visitors. We accomplish this through the preservation and interpretation of our core collections representing the life, interests, and times of John G. Diefenbaker, and enhanced by the presentation of national and international cultural exhibitions, and the development of educational and public programs. Our particular themes are citizenship, leadership, and Canada's role in the international community.

**Our Goals**

Guided by our values, and supported by our stakeholders, the Diefenbaker Canada Centre will achieve its mission by reaching the following goals:

- 1) Preserve, interpret, and display the collections representing the life, interests, and times of the Rt. Honourable John G. Diefenbaker.
- 2) Obtain and display travelling exhibits of national and international cultural significance.
- 3) Develop, and deliver a rich array of stimulating public, educational, and archival programs.
- 4) Attract an increasing number of visitors, supporters, and researchers.
- 5) Obtain the necessary human, informational, and physical resources needed to operate the facility, and manage them in a fair, efficient, and accountable manner.
- 6) Develop, communicate, and maintain a positive public image.
- 7) Develop alliances with scholarly, archival, educational, museum, and other related organizations and institutions.

**Approved by the President's Executive Committee, October 30, 1995.**

**Received by the Board of Governors, November 24, 1995.**

## **Exhibitions**

The DCC was proud to play host to three travelling exhibits from the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC).

*“The First Maple Leaf”* This exhibition was based around the first Maple Leaf Flag ever flown in Canada; raised above the Peace Tower in Ottawa on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, 1965. Also featured was the last Red Ensign flown over Canada’s parliament, and a prototype of an alternative possibility for the national flag: The Pearson Pennant. The DCC was privileged to be the inaugural stop on its tour. This exhibit highlighted and encouraged discussion of Canadian citizenship and the ideals depicted through national and provincial symbolism. The DCC was in a unique position to augment this display using pivotal pieces from the Diefenbaker collection, including the flag proclamation, a first run production flag, and other distinctive items speaking both to the time period and the Great Flag Debate.

*“Love ‘em Hate ‘em: Canadians and Their Politicians”* This exhibit provided a unique perspective on how Canadians view their politicians, recognizing that in politics, public opinion is often shaped by images of personalities and the personal style of their leaders. Alongside this exhibit, the DCC partnered with U of S undergraduate students from the Department of History honours program to produce accenting panels which combined collaborative research with public history.

*“Acres of Dreams: Settling the Canadian Prairies”* produced by the CMC in collaboration with Library and Archives Canada, it was the third exhibit featured. Presenting a major Western Canadian story that had never before been exhibited, “Acres of Dreams” highlighted the great beauty of the Western land, the richness of its natural resources, the struggles of its peoples, and demonstrated enduring Prairie optimism. Through a gallery tour and accompanying educational programming, elementary students were introduced to historical representations of the West, exploring the story of how and why it has been perceived as a Canadian Utopia for the last 150 years. Students were encouraged to discover this crucial chapter in Canada's history: the challenges and experiences of millions of settlers, and the extraordinary international marketing campaign launched by the government to lure them to the West.

## **Programming**

Hosting high quality exhibitions from the CMC alongside the permanent Diefenbaker exhibit provides the DCC with the opportunity to engage thousands of elementary and secondary students with exceptional curriculum based educational programming. Programming offered provides an environment for experiential active participation. Through first hand interpretation, the DCC facilitates an understanding of the value of history, the role it plays, and how to apply past experiences to present day challenges through critical analysis.

## **Engagement**

The DCC offers the U of S a distinctive way to engage with the community by creating an open environment, which encourages the public to explore its exhibits and to connect with the university through its outreach programming. In order to enhance and foster this engagement and accessibility, the following initiatives were introduced.

*“Student Appreciation Week”* in December of 2009 was an opportunity to offer high-quality educational programming to a new and diverse group of students from across Saskatoon. Previously many of the attendees from inner city schools found cost was a barrier to participation, through lowering our fee this initiative enabled many students to experience the U of S campus for the first time.

*“Community Campus Tours”* were offered to the public at no charge during the summer months. These walking tours highlighted the architectural history, important achievements and innovative facilities from over the last 100 years of the university. In addition to being well attended by the general public, the tours also created awareness for diverse community groups, again bringing many participants to the university for the first time.

As part of a commitment to increase public access to cultural spaces, the DCC removed its admission fees in 2009. This was an important endeavour in increasing the opportunity for all people to enjoy the varied and culturally significant exhibitions offered.

## **Leadership Programming**

One of the goals of the Diefenbaker Building is to transform the facility into a hub for leadership activity at all levels. The DCC utilizes a collaborative approach to leadership, preparing young people to lead positive changes in their communities, by providing opportunities for growth and renewal. Programming emphasizes the multi-faceted nature of leadership and reinforces the idea that anybody can challenge themselves to help positively shape their communities, and to lead others in the pursuit of excellence. The leadership programming efforts at the DCC utilizes knowledge of our past, including our political past, to create a snapshot of history that is personally relevant to each individual and reiterates the ordinary beginnings of exemplary leadership within Canada’s history. Through the pilot phase of the Diefenbaker Emerging Leaders Program, the DCC was able to connect leaders from both the U of S and the greater Saskatoon community with high school students. The programme enabled upper year students to explore public affairs topics which foster leadership skills and cultivates pride in Canadian citizenship.

## **Governance**

Director Dr. Michael Atkinson

DCC Advisory Committee members Dr. Frank Winter, Dr. John Courtney and Dr. Peter Stoicheff