

UNB RESEARCHERS RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

The University of New Brunswick's Robert MacKinnon and Nancy Mathis have received nearly \$300,000 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) in support of their Knowledge in Society project.

This three year, multi-disciplinary project, will provide analyses of, and workable options for, New Brunswick's changing demographic and economic picture. It will do this through inter-disciplinary analysis, development of business case studies and community outreach initiatives.

"I am very excited to begin work on this project, said Dr. MacKinnon, UNB Saint John's vice-president. "It will build upon UNB's commitment to conduct research that influences New Brunswick's social, cultural and economic development. This national research grant acknowledges the very significant role that UNB plays in research and development in New Brunswick. The funding will allow us to hire undergraduate and graduate students to work with our faculty members and community partners to complete the various components of the project."

The UNB Knowledge in Society team will focus its examination around four themes: human resources development, social development, innovation and access to capital. The project will utilize UNB's existing research strengths in management, business, finance, economics, history, political science and education to develop best practices for business development.

If New Brunswick's economy is to grow, or at the very least maintain its current level of activity, the province will need more workers and its businesses will need greater access to capital. This fact, combined with the aging population, falling birth rate and strong economic performances in central and western Canada, has forced policy makers to consider significant reforms. Developing public policy to address these issues, at provincial, federal and municipal levels will require a broad-based understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within New Brunswick society.

"This project will capture knowledge that exists in the heads of a handful of leaders and make it accessible to others," said Dr. Mathis, executive director of the G. Wallace F. McCain Institute for Business Leadership at UNB. "Harvard-style business cases will be written for MBA use and then edited for use in K to 12 as well as for the general public. The grant funding from SSHRC will leverage funding received by UNB from Francis McGuire, chairman of NB Power and President of Major Drilling in Moncton."

Rounding out the research team is freelance journalist Lisa Hrabluk. As the project's administrative coordinator, Ms. Hrabluk will act as a bridge between the academic community and the wider provincial community.

In recent years, UNB has expanded its definition of the community of scholars to include researchers and practitioners, both within and outside UNB, who actively apply their knowledge to address the problems within our society. This project will collaborate with researchers from a number of institutions and organizations, including l'Université de Moncton, Harvard Business School, Vibrant Communities Saint John, Policy Link NB, the Saint John Human Development Council, the New Brunswick Securities Commission and the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation. In addition, UNB graduate and undergraduate students will have opportunities to participate.