

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO
McMASTER UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MARCH 2, 2017**

Global Affairs and the Role of the Academy

On January 27, 2017, the White House issued its now notorious *Executive Order: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States*. As I write this, the order has been blocked by the courts and theoretically citizens of the seven Muslim-majority countries targeted by the ban are able to enter the United States as before. A new Executive Order is said to be imminent, however, so it is reasonable to assume that in one form or another discrimination on the basis of faith or ethnicity will continue to be an element in US immigration policy under the present administration.

That the issuing of the Executive Order would provoke protest from civil liberties and immigrants' rights organizations was entirely to be expected. The volume of complaint from the university sector, on the other hand, may have come as a surprise both to the public and to the authors of the Order. The American Association of Universities issued a statement almost immediately, noting that the ban "is already causing damage and should end as quickly as possible," and calling on the Administration, "as soon as possible, to make clear to the world that the United States continues to welcome the most talented individuals from all countries to study, teach, and carry out research and scholarship at our universities." Scores of institutions—including most of the country's leading universities—also posted individual statements expressing grave concern about the direction of American immigration and border policy.

Here in Canada reaction from the academic sector was also immediate and followed a similar pattern: Universities Canada led the way, with institutions across the country subsequently releasing their own declarations. Interestingly, on both sides of the border these communications frequently drew attention to their own exceptionality. Thus, "Universities Canada does not typically comment on executive action being taken by another country, but we do so today because of the real impediment this new executive order poses to the free flow of people and ideas and to the values of diversity, inclusion and openness that are hallmarks of a strong and healthy society."

That last sentence summarizes very well why the Executive Order has triggered such a vehement response from the academy. The sequence tells it all: the "hallmarks of a strong and healthy society"—diversity, inclusion and openness—are essential to the effective functioning of any and all institutions in a democracy; but it is "the free flow of people and ideas" on which the life of any great university specifically depends. Parochialism and protectionism are the enemies of enlightenment, progress and discovery, and no institution can expect or continue to be great if it is walled off from the rest of the world. That is precisely why America's finest universities spoke out so quickly and with such force on this issue.

Inclusion and openness are not merely desirable conditions for the prosecution of the academic mission, they are for historical reasons essential to it. Universities in the West came into being for no other reason than to protect the unimpeded flow of people and ideas that was understood

to be a prerequisite for learning and human advancement. In twelfth-century Bologna the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa intervened to protect foreigners who had come together there to study; and out of that moment in history came both the structural model for institutions of higher learning as well as the intellectual concept that must underpin any university worthy of the name—academic freedom. Implicit in that genealogy is the important point that where there is injustice, intolerance or exclusion, there cannot be academic freedom. Universities have therefore a fundamental and essential obligation to oppose bigotry and closed-mindedness in all its forms.

Those young learners in Bologna were called “*clerici vagantes*,” “wandering clergy,” and sometimes they were also known as “*vagabundi*,” a name which should help us see more clearly the historical kinship between the students enrolled in our universities, the academics who work in them, and the world’s migrant populations. Mobility is what links them all: in the case of refugees the goal is home as a geographical place; in the case of “*clerici vagantes*,” “home” is any milieu in which their curiosity and imaginations can work unfettered for the betterment of humanity. Universities seek to be homes in that sense, but without the free traffic of ideas and the movement of people hungry to engage with the world’s problems and to understand the complexities of life, they cannot properly fulfill their mission. Our universities, like our society, are only enriched and strengthened by diversity of opinions, academic disciplines and people. In recognizing and celebrating that strength, and in responding to those who would seek to restrict it, we commit ourselves even more deeply to the mission of providing a welcoming and inclusive home to scholars from around the globe, to protecting the free flow of ideas and to opposing hatred and intolerance in all its forms.

CAMPUS UPDATE

Global and Community Engagement

The Role of the Academy in Building Cultural Abundance in a Diverse Nation

As part of the McMaster Seminar on Higher Education series, the University hosted a panel discussion on February 13 focused on the importance of promoting diversity and cultural abundance within our society, and considering the role of the university in doing so. The event was attended by members of the McMaster and Hamilton communities, and included a variety of interesting speakers and perspectives, with the discussion moderated by Drs. Daniel Coleman and Gary Warner.

Exhibition to Highlight Foundational Indigenous Art

A new exhibition at the McMaster Museum of Art is showcasing 11 foundational works of art by contemporary Indigenous artists. “Unapologetic: Acts of Survivance” opened on January 12 and features works by Carl Beam, Bob Boyer, Robert Houle and other artists critical in paving the way for Indigenous artists and curators today.

Indigenous Health Conference focuses on Cultural Humility

Students, faculty, community members, and Six Nations representatives gathered at the McMaster Indigenous Health Conference in January. The theme of the day was Indigenous Youth Mental Health: Sharing Realities and Exploring Strategies. In attendance were keynote

speakers from North Dakota who spoke about the Standing Rock resistance and Dakota Access Pipeline and how both of these have affected the mental health of Indigenous youth.

Centre for Narrative Arts helping to preserve Hamilton's Stories

Events hosted by the Centre for Community Engaged Narrative Arts have, for the past year, been bringing together community groups, artists, individual community members, academics and arts organizations to share stories from the Hamilton community. The events are part of an ongoing effort by the Centre to work with community partners to identify and gather stories from the Hamilton Community and preserve these stories through physical or electronic archiving.

Exploring Potential Partnerships in India

A team of McMaster leaders was in India recently meeting potential partners at the India Institute of Technology and the University of Delhi, and exploring possible joint research initiatives with the Bharti Foundation, which provides education for children living in marginalized communities. The trip also included a visit to the Public Health Foundation of India, which is led by two McMaster graduates, and a partnership meeting hosted by the High Commissioner of Canada in India.

McMaster hosts Women in Engineering Excellence Event

Dozens of female high school students came to McMaster recently to learn what it's like to be an engineer. The annual Women in Engineering Excellence Day on February 3 brought more than 30 high school students together with female professors and current engineering students for a day filled with activities, including interactive workshops, shadowing current students to their classes, and a women in engineering panel.

Nominations for Women of Distinction Awards

Many members of the McMaster community are among those nominated for YWCA Women of Distinction Awards. Students, staff, faculty and alumnae were all nominated in areas ranging from excellence in arts, culture and design to science, technology and the trades. The awards recognize outstanding women and organizations who are committed to the development of other women and to the overall improvement of the community.

Research

Fourteen McMaster Researchers among the World's Most Cited

The 2016 listing of the world's most highly cited researchers includes 14 scientists from McMaster's Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine. Clarivate Analytics recently released its Highly Cited Researchers list, formerly known as Thomson Reuter's annual publication of The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds. Nine McMaster researchers were listed in the clinical medicine category, five in social sciences, and one in psychiatry/psychology. Their work is rated as among the most referenced by other researchers worldwide.

McMaster Study one of most Influential of 2016

A key study in the prevention of heart disease, led by Professor Salim Yusuf, has been named one of 14 "notable articles" of the year by the prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine* (*NEJM*). The results of the Heart Outcomes Prevention Evaluation (HOPE)-3 trial, published last

April, showed that heart disease could potentially be stopped before it starts by giving healthy seniors a pill to lower cholesterol. The top articles were chosen by the editors for “being the most meaningful in improving medical practice and patient care.”

McMaster-based institutes receive nearly \$10M from Canada Foundation for Innovation

Two McMaster-based institutes – the Canadian Centre for Electron Microscopy and the Canadian Research Data Centre Network – have received a combined investment of nearly \$10M from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). The awards, funded through CFI’s Major Science Initiative (MSI) Fund, ensure that Canada’s large, complex research facilities, which serve communities of researchers, are able to continue to operate at the cutting edge.

Federal Government invests in McMaster Technologies

Three McMaster research projects – led by Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences’ Yingfu Li, Engineering Physics’ Andy Knights and Computing and Software’s Rong Zheng – have received a combined investment of \$1.68M over three years from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Council of Canada. The program brings together academic and industry partners to develop innovative solutions to address some of Canada’s biggest challenges, design new technologies and applications, increase training and create jobs.

Campus News

Engineering Professor named to Order of Canada

McMaster Engineering professor John Bandler has been appointed an officer of the Order of Canada. Bandler, who is also an artist, novelist and playwright, has been recognized for his work in the field of microwave engineering. He is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Two McMaster Professors receive Order of Ontario

Dr. Mehran Anvari, a world-renowned surgical robotics pioneer, and Dr. Anthony Chan, a prominent pediatric hematologist and scientist, have been awarded the Order of Ontario. Anvari, a Professor of Surgery and founding director of the Centre for Surgical Invention and Innovation, was one of the first surgeons in Canada to use robotics in surgery. Chan is a McMaster Professor of Pediatrics who has significantly advanced the care of children with thrombosis and stroke.

Hybrid Powertrain Expert named Fellow of National Academy of Inventors

Engineering’s Ali Emadi has been named a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI), a distinction awarded to academic inventors who have demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of life, economic development, and the welfare of society.

Renowned McMaster Expert recognized for Contribution to Silicone Science

Michael Brook, Chemistry and Chemical Biology, and School of Interdisciplinary Science, Faculty of Science, is the winner of this year’s Chemical Institute of Canada’s Macromolecular Science and Engineering Award. The award is presented to a researcher who has made a distinguished contribution to Macromolecular Science or Engineering and recognizes Professor Brook's contribution to silicone polymer chemistry.