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Daily News



[Aging Studies Leadership at Trent Attracts Government Interest](#)

Trent faculty and students engage in roundtable discussion with Ministers Damerla and Leal



Home to the innovative [Trent Centre for Aging & Society](#), Trent University was a natural location for the Minister of the newly created Ministry of Seniors Affairs to visit. Joined by her colleague, the Honourable Jeff Leal '74, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and Small Business Minister, the Honourable Dipika Damerla participated in a lively roundtable discussion with faculty and students centered on aging related research at Trent University on January 25.

Making Trent one of her first stops in her new role, Minister Damerla has been tasked with seeking out partnerships to promote age-friendly communities and to improve Ontario seniors' quality of life. Chaired by Dr. Mark Skinner, Canada research chair in rural aging, health and social care, and the director of the Trent Centre for Aging & Society, the roundtable discussion gave the ministers the opportunity to hear first-hand from members of the Trent Centre for Aging & Society and Trent students, about the leading-edge aging research being conducted at the University.

"Having the opportunity to meet with Ministers Damerla and Leal to discuss my work was really affirming for me. Their interest in what I had to say made it clear to me that I'm on the right track and my research can actually have real world impact on government policy," said Amber Colibaba, M.A. candidate in Sustainability Studies about the visit.

Ms. Colibaba spoke to the ministers about her work with older volunteers who help keep rural libraries viable. Laura Anderson, Ph.D. candidate in Canadian Studies, discussed her thesis project that aims to tackle the

issue of senior friendly policy in nursing. Laura Christie, an undergraduate Nursing student, reviewed her recent placement that saw her compile community narratives that will be used to help develop Peterborough's official age-friendly plan.

Several Trent faculty members working with the Centre for Aging also joined the students and Professor Skinner at the roundtable. Dr. James Struthers, professor emeritus in [Canadian Studies](#) discussed his current project, "Reimagining Long-Term Care: International Study of Promising Practices." The \$2.5 million [SSHRC](#) funded project is studying the promising practices in long-term residential care for the elderly in Canada, and five other nations.

Dr. May Chazan, Canada research chair in [Gender and Feminist Studies](#), discussed the work she conducts around aging activism, which aims to investigate and support the many different ways that people – particularly women – of varied ages, abilities, and backgrounds work for social and political change across diverse movements, and across their life courses.

Dr. Elizabeth Russell, assistant professor, [Psychology](#), spoke about her new collaborative work with Professor Skinner that studies the barriers, and strategies, to maximize age-friendly programming sustainability.

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