

FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

## Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

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# DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

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### New Software Program Developed for Ebola Research

**Mr. Forbes:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa has caught the world's attention, and many countries and international organizations are doing what they can to help. There is one constituent of Saskatoon Centre who is contributing to the fight: Brett Trost.

Brett Trost, a recent Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] graduate of the computer science program at the University of Saskatchewan, has helped develop a software program now used for Ebola research at the US [United States] National Institutes of Health. The new system, PIIKA [Platform for Intelligent, Integrated Kinome Analysis], that Brett and his supervisor, Anthony Kusalik, created studies of how Ebola affects cells and what cells do to fight the infection. Trost stated in a recent Star Phoenix article, and I quote, "Clearly Ebola is a major concern, given the unprecedented outbreak in Africa. Better understanding of how Ebola hijacks cell-signalling mechanisms will ultimately allow us to develop better treatments."

This work is part of the new field called bioinformatics which combines computer science and molecular biology. Trost feels that bioinformatics has a great potential to improve human health. To quote him again, "The chance that I might one day play even a small part in improving treatments for human diseases is a huge motivator for me." Trost was also the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] recipient of the prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship in 2009.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in congratulating Brett Trost on this amazing contribution he has made in the fight against Ebola. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.