As we mark the University of Victoria’s 50th anniversary, we celebrate the extraordinary growth and accomplishments of our institution. Students, faculty, staff and alumni could not be clearer: UVic has had a tremendous impact.

In just five decades — thanks to dedicated faculty and staff as well as the support of donors, community members, research partners and funding agencies — the university has transformed over 100,000 graduates, reshaped academic disciplines and made discoveries that have made our world a better place.

The difference UVic makes in our region, across Canada and around the world is an extension of our core mission to integrate outstanding scholarship, inspired teaching and real-life involvement in a research-enriched university setting. In 2012, the results of that focus on excellence contributed to Times Higher Education ranking UVic first in Canada and number 11 globally in its international survey of universities less than 50 years old.

As we look ahead to the next 50 years of our university, I hope you will take a few minutes to join me in reflecting on 50 of the many great moments in UVic’s history, as collected in this year’s Annual Review. Our history is rich, and it continues to influence our extraordinary capacity to shape our future — on campus, in our region, and around the world.

David H. Turpin, CM, PhD, FRSC
President and Vice-Chancellor
Adding billions to the economy each year. After 50 years, UVic’s economic contribution to our region has grown to approximately $3.1 billion annually, with the biggest influence coming from research and the impact of higher education on salaries, a new report from the university shows. After its first full year of operation in 1961/64, the university’s economic impact was calculated at $6.3 million.

Inspirational teacher among Canada’s top 10. Students say he’s an inspiration who changes lives, so it’s not surprising that Dr. A. R. “Elango” Elangovan, business professor and director of international programs with the Gustavson School of Business, was one of only 10 recipients of a 2012 3M National Teaching Fellowship. The award recognizes exceptional achievements and contributions by teacher-scholars across Canada. Elangovan is the ninth UVic scholar to receive this honour.

UVic expands ties with Brazil. Brazil, soon to be one of the world’s top-five economies, shares some important research priorities with UVic such as sustainable development, clean energy and ocean science and technology. UVic’s participation in a Canadian delegation to Brazil in 2011, led by Canada’s Governor General David Johnston, created new opportunities to build on existing academic exchanges and research collaborations. One notable agreement included a student program which brought students from Brazil to study at UVic beginning in September 2012.

UVic student named Rhodes Scholar. Tara Paterson — UVic student, devoted community volunteer, ardent activist and former students’ society chair — is heading to the University of Oxford next October as UVic’s newest Rhodes Scholar.

New UVic fleet prepares for takeoff. Get ready for UVic Air! Thanks to a $671,500 grant from Western Economic Diversification Canada UVic’s new Centre for Aerospace Research, located near the Victoria International Airport, will be producing a fleet or “family” of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). These autonomous UAVs will have a broad range of civilian and industrial purposes, including port security, civil disaster response, search and rescue, forest firefighting, coastal patrol, agricultural crop monitoring and aerial mapping.

Matter & energy

UVic team plays role in search for elusive particle. A large group of UVic researchers shared in the global celebration July 4, 2012, following the release of the latest results in the search for the elusive Higgs boson particle. The UVic team of more than 25 people is responsible for maintaining the components of the ATLAS detector that records subatomic debris at the Large Hadron Collider, buried deep underground in Switzerland where further confirmation that the Higgs boson exists was made.

World’s most powerful microscope. UVic is now home to the most powerful microscope ever built. The 7-tonne, 4.5-metre tall Scanning Transmission Electron Holography Microscope (STEHM) is a one-of-a-kind machine built for UVic in Japan by Hitachi High Technologies Canada and is the highest-resolution microscope in the world. It will allow researchers to see things 20 million times smaller than the tiniest thing the unaided human eye can see.

Nobel invite for UVic research associate. His work as a member of the Supernova Cosmology Project earned UVic research associate Dr. Sébastien Fabbro an invitation to the 2012 Nobel Prize Festivities in Stockholm, Sweden. The supernova project’s leader was a co-winner of the 2011 Nobel Prize for Physics for the team’s discovery that the universe is expanding at an ever-accelerating rate. Fabbro is a member of the astronomy group in UVic’s Department of Physics and Astronomy.

Supercomputing network breaks speed limit. For the second year in a row, UVic has broken a high-energy physics record transferring data at the world’s premier supercomputing conference. Last year’s joint UVic-Caltech team demonstrated a world’s-first 100G connection between the UVic Computing Centre and Seattle. This year’s SC2012 team, which also includes University of Michigan researchers, broke new terrain with a connection from Victoria to Salt Lake City more than three times as fast.

Oceans & climate

Big science projects. In 2012, Popular Science magazine compiled a list of humankind’s 10 most ambitious science projects. UVic’s own NEPTUNE Canada and the Large Hadron Collider — at which the UVic-led ATLAS-Canada team makes substantial contributions — made the list. To round out the year, in December, UVic’s Michael Roney and physicists in the international BaBar collaboration were named in Physics World magazine’s annual list of top
10 breakthroughs, for finding a possible flaw in basic physics theory.

**Undersea antenna could warn of tsunami.** A new undersea antenna — the first of its kind in the world — could potentially protect lives and property by providing advance information about an approaching tsunami. The array of four ultra-sensitive bottom pressure recorders positioned at the ends of a new 25-km powered fibre optic cable off the West Coast of Vancouver Island is part of NEPTUNE Canada and the Ocean Networks Canada underwater observatory. The antenna will provide real-time data to Canadian scientists and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Network.

**One-touch viewing of ocean floor creatures.** Images of deep, deep sea creatures cavorting in their natural habitat are now only an iPad touch away thanks to a new digital field guide launched by NEPTUNE Canada. Its Marine Life Field Guide is a “living book” that provides rare glimpses of animals — some living over 2 km below the surface of the ocean — caught on photos and video captured by NEPTUNE’s network of undersea cameras. The guide, which also helps citizen observers identify and tag sea creatures in the observatory’s growing pool of underwater videos, is free at the iBook store and as a PDF on the NEPTUNE Canada website at neptunecanada.ca/FieldGuide.

**Society & health**

**Prestigious appointment for connecting global communities.** Budd Hall’s world truly is a global village. In 2012, the UVic professor of community development in the School of Public Administration was recognized for his lifelong devotion to community-based research and connecting global communities with his appointment as the prestigious UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education. It provides new opportunities for his leadership in building community research capacity in the global South.

**Geography field school in India.** “Intense, amazing, invaluable”—that’s how UVic undergraduate geography students described a four-week field school in India that ranged from New Delhi and the Himalayan region to the Sariska Tiger Reserve. At each stop the students met with local citizens and considered how to balance development with resource management and conservation. The India Field School was a first for UVic in partnership with the Society for Participatory Research in Asia.

**Picture social change.** Anthropology graduate Devin Tepleski turned his “Sena” photographic exhibit into a powerful form of community activism to support villagers in Ghana displaced by development. His exhibit won an international Lucie Foundation award for photography and has been profiled in Time Magazine.

**Fine arts**

**Canadian theatre’s biggest prize goes to UVic writer.** “The right award at the right time” — that’s how Joan MacLeod, acting chair of UVic’s Department of Writing, describes the $100,000 Siminovitch Prize ($25,000 of which goes to a designated protege) she won in 2011. MacLeod, already the author of nine plays, says she will use the award to create the time to write more and add to her already notable body of work.

**Indigenous education**

**Governor General visits UVic.** Their Excellencies, the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, and Mrs. Sharon Johnston visited UVic in September 2011, accompanied by Their Honours, the Honourable Steven Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, and Mrs. Gwendolyn Point, for a discussion about UVic’s LE, NO NET project. LE, NO NET originated as a four-year research project to increase the post-secondary involvement and graduation rates of Indigenous people. The federally funded program was the first of its kind in Canada. UVic continues to offer this program, which has resulted in increased retention and graduation rates for participating Indigenous students.

**Language revitalization grads extend hope for northern tongues.** UVic’s commitment to preserve and revitalize Indigenous languages made new inroads in 2012 with its first graduates in the Certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization program from the Northwest Territories. The students, who represented seven of the nine official Aboriginal languages in the NWT, learned new approaches and practical strategies to strengthen language revitalization. The program is an innovative partnership among UVic’s Department of Linguistics, Division of Continuing Studies, En’owkin Centre (the Okanagan Nation’s arts, cultural and educational institution) and the Government of the Northwest Territories.
The University of Victoria has witnessed many significant moments during its 50-year history. Many of these have contributed to UVic’s development into a world-leading research-intensive university; others have helped UVic make a difference in the world.

During 2012, members of the university and the local community nominated nearly 250 engaging achievements, individual reflections and events — Great Moments in UVic History — in preparation for the university’s anniversary celebrations.

On the following pages, we’ve highlighted 50 of the most remarkable great moments. You can explore the full list of nominated Great Moments online at uvic.ca/anniversary.
The birth of a university

*Thomas Shanks McPherson & William C. Mearns*

The public campaign to raise funds to establish UVic engaged Victorians from all backgrounds and walks of life. Fittingly enough, the central library at UVic bears the names of two of the strongest early sparks that set fire to that movement. Victoria entrepreneur Thomas Shanks McPherson believed that the “single most important factor in the progress of a city” was the growth of a university. And though McPherson passed away a year before construction of the library began, his bequest funded the development of UVic’s present library.

One of McPherson’s colleagues in advocating for a university, the business leader William C. Mearns, was well known in the 1960s for his efforts to acquire the lands that make up the Gordon Head campus. With his substantial help, an unprecedented $8-million fundraising campaign was waged to establish the campus — making UVic the only university in Canada to have purchased its own land.

Spurred by a new donation from the Mearns family, The William C. Mearns Centre for Learning opened in 2008, signalling a multigenerational commitment to philanthropy. The new media commons and enhanced archives and special collections in the Mearns Centre put the treasures of the past alongside technology that looks to the future, linking students and researchers with scholarship around the world. The expansion has renewed the library’s place at the heart of the campus, with a matched set of visionary benefactors named at the library entrance.

Smiling at the stars

*The face of the Climenhaga observatory*

One of the more familiar — and whimsical — sights on the UVic campus is the happy-face observatory dome on the roof of the Elliott building. The observatory is named after astrophysicist John Climenhaga, the founding head of UVic’s physics department and later dean of arts and science. Climenhaga championed the creation of UVic’s astronomy program and was adamant that an on-campus observatory be part of the package. Telescopes are rated by the size of their mirrors, which determine how much light they can gather. Over the years, the observatory has housed a succession of telescopes. The current 50-cm telescope, installed in 1976, has been used by countless students and has been routinely used by researchers to study the brightness variations of distant stars and to track the motions of near-Earth objects.

Student pranksters painted the two eyes on the dome in 1969, and the smile was added later — with the university continuing to keep fresh paint on the old joke begun by students to celebrate and encourage the UVic rugby team. The dome continues to smile even with the advent of a second observatory — housing Canada’s largest on-campus telescope — atop the nearby Bob Wright Centre. Meanwhile, Climenhaga’s vision has paid off — UVic astronomers are now world-renowned for their research on the formation of galaxies, stellar structure and evolution, and theoretical and observational cosmology.
Michael Collard Williams

A bequest marked by great vision

On August 16, 2001, UVic announced that it was the main beneficiary of the estate of Michael C. Williams — the influential Victoria heritage property developer, patron of the arts and philanthropist, who passed away at age 70. At a net value of $17 million, Williams’ bequest remains the largest estate gift ever bequeathed to UVic. The assets were largely in the form of real and personal property, that included nearly 20 real estate holdings and Swans Hotel.

Williams was a proud advocate for the arts and supportive friend of the university during his lifetime. The ceremonial furnishings used at convocation are perhaps the most prominent gifts he gave the university while he was alive. Williams also left UVic an impressive art collection, considered to be among the most extensive Northwest Coast art collections anywhere.

In 2007, UVic opened the Legacy Art Gallery in one of the properties it was bequeathed in order to fulfill Williams’ dream of providing a vibrant and accessible home for art in the heart of Victoria’s downtown. In 2001, artist and UVic alum Glenn Howarth (who passed away in 2009) recalled Williams’ desire to serve the greater good, and to see the kind of social wealth that advocacy and philanthropy build. As a person and a patron, Howarth noted that Williams “understood that genuine wealth isn’t money; that everybody can have a bit of money but few people can have wealth and can recognize what it is. He knew.”

CanAssist

Empowering people with disabilities

In the late 1990s, an occupational therapist asked Dr. Nigel Livingston if he might be able to design a switch to help a young man with multiple disabilities control a tape recorder on his own. That single interaction — and the delight of one young man for the bit of autonomy the device gave him — lit a spark. “What came to me was that there was a real need for devices like this,” explains Livingston, who went on to found UVic’s CanAssist program in 1999. Developing a truly impressive range of technologies, programs and services for people with disabilities, CanAssist has become a shining example of how ingenuity, passion and teamwork can improve our world — providing hundreds of custom solutions and improving thousands of lives along the way.

One technology that stands out for CanAssist’s engineering team is a device that enables people with very challenging disabilities to control their own music using an iPod and a large button they can push with their hand, head or any other part of their body over which they have control. Today, the system is being used by more than 200 children in the BC school system who are deemed the most severely disabled, as a teaching tool and to promote a sense of inclusion. The device is now available internationally through a US-based distributor of assistive technologies. Delivering the system in 2010 to kids in schools inspired Carl Spani, the project’s lead engineer. “The first time the kids pressed the button to turn on the iPod and play their own music, it was as if they’d just performed magic.”

Norma Mickelson

Pioneering female academic leadership

In her final convocation address as UVic’s eighth chancellor, Dr. Norma Mickelson told the graduating class that “every advance that has ever been made started with one person.” She could just as easily have been referring to herself, because it was no accident that she became Canada’s first female academic dean, leading the Faculty of Education at UVic. One of the university’s first graduate students, Mickelson pursued a long career as a student, faculty member and administrative leader, helping to demonstrate and enact widespread change in the campus climate for women — not coincidentally, one of her areas of academic interest. By the time she was elected chancellor in 1996, she had already achieved an escalating series of memorable firsts: not only first female dean and first female chancellor at UVic, she also served as first female president of the UVic Faculty Association, first adviser to the president on employment equity (playing a key role in the creation of UVic’s equity office) and first adviser to the vice-president academic on women’s academic issues. In 1999, she became the first woman to receive a UVic Distinguished Alumni Award.

“Dr. Mickelson was a real trailblazer in multiple ways,” explains Janni Aragon, chair of UVic’s Academic Women’s Caucus. “She came from a field which is now quite supportive of women. But in the ’50s and ’60s, women accounted for only one in 12 doctoral graduates from Canadian universities.” As difficult as it was, Mickelson was exactly the “one person” who first climbed the mountain of gender barriers, not just to demonstrate that it could be done, but to alter the environment for others who would follow.
Leadership and discovery in physics
‘From TRIUMF to the Large Hadron Collider’

When the news broke in summer 2012 that the elusive Higgs boson — the particle believed to be responsible for the mass of all things — had at last been detected, many UVic physicists were in the thick of the global celebration. And so they should be. The achievement caps decades of close collaboration with the TRI-University Meson Facility (TRIUMF), Canada’s national laboratory for nuclear and particle physics, which UVic co-founded in 1969 in Vancouver. TRIUMF is home to the world’s largest proton cyclotron, and attracts top physicists from around the world to work on research in particle and nuclear physics, and nuclear medicine. Over the years, TRIUMF has been vital to UVic’s leadership of and participation in a number of international particle physics projects. Among them is ATLAS, one of two large detectors that record proton collisions at the massive Large Hadron Collider near Geneva, where hints of the Higgs boson were found. UVic physicists brought Canada into the ATLAS project in 1992 and are responsible for several key components of the detector. (The ATLAS data centre is also housed at TRIUMF.) Soon a new era of discovery will begin at TRIUMF, with completion of the UVic-led ARIEL accelerator, which will expand Canada’s ability to produce and study isotopes for physics and medicine.

Beyond the classroom
‘Distance education transforms curricula’

The roots of distance education in the Faculty of Human and Social Development date back to the 1970s, when “suitcase courses” in public administration sent professors off-campus to students in remote locations. Instruction in social work, child and youth care, and nursing took a big step forward during the late 1990s e-learning transformation that brought accessible, academically rigorous distance education programs to communities across Western Canada. Through these programs, students living in their home communities and attending UVic by distance have been able to build capacity and improve services in countless health and social service agencies and public organizations.

Nursing became a shining example in distance education during the early 1980s, when Drs. Dorothy Kergin and Carolyn Attridge developed a comprehensive outreach program targeting practicing nurses on Vancouver Island — a program which would eventually transform nursing curriculum delivery across the province. “No one else was interested in bringing accessible education to nurses on the Island,” Attridge explained. “We thought there might be an opportunity for partnership with Knowledge Network rather than taking courses out by foot, or train or bus.” The network agreed to deliver nursing courses on television, making them accessible to nurses working in urban and rural areas.

The work in these programs, and in Continuing Studies and the Faculty of Education, has helped UVic establish a wide range of distance education initiatives serving remote regions throughout Canada and around the world.
Congress, 1990 and 2013

Canadian scholars converge in Victoria

From late May to early June 1990, UVic played host to a gathering of the country’s leading thinkers in the social sciences and humanities, then called The Learned Societies. Presenting over 8,000 papers in just 18 days — covering topics ranging from Star Trek to the backlash against feminism and revolutions in Central America — Canadian scholars put Victoria at the hub of scholarship. Hosting this gathering was an important milestone in establishing the university’s national reputation. Thousands of academics descended on the campus — discovering that beyond its picturesque setting, UVic was also one of Canada's leading research and teaching universities. One of the lasting legacies of the event was the raising of a Coast Salish pole carved by local artist Charles Elliott on the grounds of the quadrangle near the McPherson Library.

Now known as the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences Congress and comprising 70 professional associations, the society and thousands of its scholars will return to UVic for its June 2013 gathering.

Graduate studies

Grad school increases research intensity

Though the university was founded around the heritage of two undergraduate institutions — representing teacher education and liberal arts — the launch of the graduate school in 1966 put in place a strong foundation for stratospheric growth. This was big news in October of 1965, when the Martlet splashed leading but accurate speculation about plans for a grad school on its front page — a scoop, as neither Victoria daily paper carried word of the plan. Begun the following year, with five departments teaching graduate courses, the rise and diversification of graduate programming and enrolment quickly helped distinguish UVic as a university where students could take charge of increasingly challenging scholarship and research — a path that has also led to research-enriched undergraduate curricula.

“Graduate students generate energy, excitement and interest in their research and scholarship that is vital to all members of the university,” explains Dr. David Capson, dean of graduate studies. “From humble beginnings, we now offer more than 160 graduate programs in all nine faculties and two divisions. And as future leaders, our grad students carry the UVic traditions of inquiry and engagement into their careers throughout the world and contribute to our reputation.”

Learning and Teaching Centre

Three decades of innovation in teaching

Established to support teaching effectiveness at UVic, the Learning and Teaching Centre (LTC) first opened its doors in 1981, operating out of a small office in UVic’s law faculty. Now a university-wide resource to encourage and support innovative teaching, the LTC coordinates awards programs and conducts a wide range of workshops to help improve teaching skills and curriculum design for faculty and teaching assistants. In 1987, Dr. Andy Farquharson, the centre’s longest-serving director (who was also among the inaugural recipients of Canada’s prestigious 3M awards for national teaching excellence) established the first yearly UVic award for excellence in teaching. Named for a UVic president who advocated support for effective teaching, the Harry Hickman Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching has grown into multiple awards to encourage and support extraordinary instruction, which remains at the centre of campus activity.

The LTC also administers the Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Awards program, launched in 2009 to provide support for exceptional undergraduates to gain direct research exposure as part of their learning experience at UVic.

“Our goal at UVic is to inspire teaching and to nurture inspired teaching,” says LTC director Teresa Dawson. “As members of a comprehensive research university, our faculty, instructors and teaching assistants bring their exceptional research ideas into the classroom setting to excite and encourage creativity and critical thinking.”
Science Venture youth program

A proverbial sketched-on-a-napkin idea started in 1991 by five engineering students who wanted to make science as much fun for kids as it was for them, Science Venture has gone on to become an iconic symbol of summer on the UVic grounds, and has been nationally recognized for its engaging programs. Student founders Daryle Bowles, Graham Carter, Norm Fisher, Roland Shigas and Ted Bunker charted a way to deliver innovative science, technology, engineering and math programming to young people in workshops, after-school clubs, summer camps and special events to stimulate interest and passion for these key subject areas.

Reaching over 10,000 youth in 2011, these high-impact, hands-on learning programs encourage young people to pursue these subjects more passionately. Science Venture has grown to include UVic’s science, engineering, and education faculties, and youth participants are challenged to explore, discover and innovate in a safe environment. Outreach components ensure that socio-economic background does not limit youth participation, and the program provides positive role models and engaging experiences in the fields of science, technology and engineering. Science Venture won a national Actua and GE Canada Award in 2009 for leadership and innovation.

“It’s not uncommon to meet Science Venture staff who were young campers themselves,” adds program director Melissa Yestraw. “I think it’s the passion of the student instructors that keeps the kids coming back, because they help show how innovation can come from an idea sketched on a napkin.”

UVic Speakers Bureau

The UVic Speakers Bureau program opened its doors on September 8, 1980, as an early outgrowth of the university’s deep commitment to community engagement. A free community service, the bureau today is Canada’s only university-wide initiative of its kind, drawing on volunteer speakers from among the faculty, staff, graduate students and retirees who teach, conduct research, study and work at UVic. Under the auspices of the bureau, experts and knowledgeable individuals from UVic make themselves available to speak to community groups, schools, clubs, seniors, businesses, parents, service and other organizations throughout Greater Victoria and southern Vancouver Island.

In its first year, the bureau reached a cumulative audience of 4,500 people through 118 talks on an extraordinarily wide range of subjects. Today, more than 30 years later, the bureau reaches an annual audience of 12,500 people and books up to 450 presentations in the community each year. True to the spirit of dedication to community service that motivates its members, the bureau on its 30-year anniversary in 2010 honoured eight speakers who had volunteered with the program from its very beginning. In 2012–13, bureau members are offering to speak to Victoria groups on a wide spectrum of nearly 400 topics. These talks include Arctic field research, parenting preschool children, end-of-life issues, young adult literature and politics, and beekeeping, among many others.
Putting service at the heart of legal education

Despite a series of contentious exchanges in the local newspaper about the value of establishing a law school in Victoria, the UVic Faculty of Law officially started receiving applications in 1974 — and quickly distinguished itself among law schools, not just in the West, but across Canada. Known today for its tight-knit community of students and faculty, UVic law has produced countless law graduates who have gone on to positions of national prominence. The faculty’s approach to community-driven service differentiates it from other Canadian legal programs. Barely a year after the school opened, Dean Murray Fraser proposed a Law Centre where students could add hands-on experience to their training by serving the needs of those who could not afford a lawyer. Established with an interdisciplinary approach to meeting the community’s needs, the Law Centre also brought in a social worker from the university’s social work program to provide a broad scope of services for people requiring both legal and social services support. “This became a kind of a model for bringing groups together and providing a full level of service to help people with their social and legal problems. At the time this was a unique approach,” says founding Law Centre director Neil Gold. Since its inception, the Law Centre has provided assistance to more than 70,000 clients and provided hands-on experience for about 1,400 law students. "Identifying the underlying social conditions that have precipitated the client’s need for legal services has meant that the services we provide have made a significant impact on the lives of clients," says current Law Centre Director Glenn Gallins. "This interdisciplinary approach is where the legal profession is now headed."

Community-involved research

In 1993, on the university’s 50th birthday, UVic historian Dr. Peter L. Smith wrote that the growth of community-oriented research and education would make the professional schools in the Faculty of Human and Social Development — then a mere 16 years old as a faculty — “a distinctive aspect of UVic’s first 50 years.” Smith’s words were prophetic, and the trajectory of community participation in research has overshort his prediction as well.

Throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium, countless students and faculty at UVic have discovered that when they want to do truly ground-breaking research, one of the best ways to accomplish their aim is to engage communities in their project. Ask questions. Set aside expectations. Listen before speaking. And, foremost, address the needs and concerns of the communities you study as you do your research.

Twenty years later, the bar could not be set higher. UVic professor Dr. Budd Hall, who began a career in Indigenous education, has been named a UNESCO chair for his work in community-based research. The Centre on Aging was asked to take part in a UN-based study by the World Health Organization on what makes senior-friendly cities livable. Dr. Alan Pence, in Child and Youth Care, has been named a UNESCO chair for his work training caregivers in Africa in a manner that reverses the “brain drain” from developing nations. And closer to home, UVic geographers played a central part in documenting air quality in the international waterways around Puget Sound — performing research with goals and measures focused foremost on community benefit. That’s a winning formula.

Canadian diversity

Through the early enthusiasm of several of its faculty and staff, UVic was offered a unique opportunity to see a breadth of scholarship and community connection. There were many connections between Asian communities in Victoria and the university, but the efforts of Dr. David Chuenyan Lai, who joined the UVic geography department in 1968, remain top of mind among his contemporaries, and among those who have benefited from his tireless work to recognize the distinct contributions of Chinese immigrants and their descendants in Canada.

When UVic lacked courses and resources for studying China, Lai designed and taught courses through the newly minted Continuing Studies program and catalogued the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association’s archives, which date back to 1884, and were donated to the UVic library in 1973.

Researching the history of Victoria’s Chinatown, then considered a slum, brought Lai to engage with and help empower the Asian community, winning greater recognition for the contributions of Chinese immigrants and their descendants as part of the history of the province and the nation. After writing the 1979 report for the City of Victoria that directly resulted in Chinatown being restored rather than bulldozed, Lai helped canvass support for the Gate of Harmonious Interest, erected in 1981, that recognizes the importance of Victoria’s Chinese heritage, and stands today as a reminder of a shared home: Canada’s oldest Chinatown.
Ocean Networks Canada Observatory

From tremor to “the big idea” in ocean science

Many Victoria residents remember Feb. 28, 2001, for the magnitude 6.8 earthquake that rattled nerves in the region. But as the ground shook, dozens of earth and ocean scientists were assembled in Saanich to discuss the vision of an around-the-clock cabled, internet-accessible ocean observatory. Galvanized by the tremor, marine scientists — minus the geophysicists who had raced for their seismic data — sketched out a wish list of real-time ocean technologies required to support interactive experiments by researchers across Canada. Even astrophysicists joined in to help design a web-based marine data “warehouse.” Within a few months, UVic participants had submitted funding proposals to the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the BC Knowledge Development Fund, and the Victoria Experimental Network Under the Sea (VENUS) coastal network was born. It and the subsequent NEPTUNE Canada regional ocean network — which together make up the Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) Observatory — have made UVic a world leader in ocean observation science and engineering. Using innovative engineering, data communication and sensor technologies, the observatory allows all of us — researchers, educators, policy-makers and armchair ocean explorers, no matter where we live — to enter the Pacific Ocean at the click of a mouse.

Earth System Climate Model
Setting the gold standard in climate modelling

Understanding Earth’s climate system is no trivial task. Climate is incredibly complex, involving interactions among the atmosphere, oceans, biosphere, and snow and ice surfaces. Although its implications are often caught up in the cloudy chaos of contemporary politics, the science of climatology took a dramatic step forward in the late 1990s with the development of the UVic Earth System Climate Model, now a standard computational tool used by researchers around the world to study long-term climate change.

Models act as virtual laboratories, allowing researchers to perform climate experiments that can’t be done in the real world. Developed by internationally renowned UVic climate scientist Dr. Andrew Weaver—together with his graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and research associate Michael Eby—the UVic Earth System Climate Model crunches complex datasets to simulate past, present and future climates and climate variability. It is now a central part of modern climate science and has helped put a global spotlight on UVic’s leadership in this increasingly critical field of study.
Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions

An unprecedented climate initiative is born

UVic made national history in January 2008 when it was awarded the largest single contribution to a Canadian university endowment — $94.5 million from the Government of BC — to create the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS). “BC universities have some of the top climate scientists and researchers in the world,” said then-Premier Gordon Campbell, who referred to climate change as “the single largest challenge facing our generation.” LED and hosted by UVic, PICS is a collaboration of BC’s four largest research-intensive universities, government and the private sector. It harnesses the intellectual resources of BC to understand climate-change science, find ways to lessen the impacts of climate change, promote the commercial development of solutions, and stimulate public debate. “That our university [leads] an initiative of this magnitude is due to the tremendous knowledge, expertise and dedication of our faculty, students and staff,” said UVic President David Turpin in 2008. Today, more than 100 researchers collaborate each year under the PICS umbrella on a range of projects in five theme areas — the low-carbon-emissions economy, social mobilization, sustainable communities, resilient ecosystems, and carbon management in BC forests. PICS also publishes policy papers, hosts public events, and develops online short courses for government decision-makers and others.

Bob Wright Centre

A gift to the sea

When Victoria-based businessman Bob Wright began looking for a meaningful way to create a legacy that would support ocean and climate research, he knew he didn’t need to go far. Wright, the self-described “gumboots fisherman” who founded the Oak Bay Marine Group, had made a life and a living from the ocean and wanted to foster a better understanding of climate change, and ocean and atmospheric sciences.

In 2007, UVic President David Turpin met with Wright over lunch at the Oak Bay Marina to discuss the creation of a state-of-the-art science building to support UVic’s world-leading environmental scientists and researchers, and it didn’t take Wright long to make up his mind. “A few weeks later Bob gave me a call,” recalls Turpin. “He said ‘Dave, I’d like to help but I’m not going to give you $10 million. I’m willing to give you $11 million — $10 million for the building and another million for student scholarships.’”

It was an historic donation: the largest cash gift in the university’s history. The Bob Wright Centre — Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences was named to honour his generosity, setting a new benchmark for philanthropic giving at UVic.

Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre

A home for world-class marine science research

In 1969, after years of site searches and discussion, a committee representing the five western Canadian universities — UVic, UBC, SFU, the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary — unanimously recommended Bamfield over five other locations on Vancouver Island to site a new marine lab. With support from the universities, the Western Canadian Universities Marine Biological Society purchased 190 acres of land, including nearly two miles of oceanfront and the historic cable station, the eastern terminus of the decommissioned trans-Pacific telegraph, to found the Bamfield Marine Station.

Repurposing a building designed by Francis Rattenbury, the same architect responsible for the BC Legislature and the Empress Hotel, Bamfield offered unparalleled access to a wide array of unique coastal, marine and rainforest habitats, and exceptional species diversity.

The centre rapidly established itself as Canada’s premier coastal and ocean studies facility, offering unique opportunities for teaching and primary marine research. Renamed the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre in 2001, the centre continues to grow in size, scope and stature. Its focus remains unchanged: to provide year-round research and teaching facilities to scientists from the five western Canadian universities, as well as visiting scientists from every Canadian province and dozens of international institutions.
Mystic Vale is a magnificent environment for quiet reflection, or for a simple walk to retreat from the fast pace of the campus.

ABOVE: An IESVic researcher investigates gas dispersion patterns to improve the safety of next-generation hydrogen fuel cell systems.

RIGHT: Investigating the magnetic refrigeration and liquefaction of hydrogen.

A cleaner, greener path for energy
The Institute for Integrated Energy Systems (IESVic)

In just over two decades, the Institute for Integrated Energy Systems (IESVic) has helped UVic become a global leader in clean fuels and energy. Dr. David Scott, the institute’s founding director, expressed the urgent need for energy-systems research at IESVic’s founding in 1989. "There are two issues that will profoundly shape the next half century,” he predicted. "First, there’s the prospect that man-made climatic instabilities — primarily caused by emissions from today’s energy systems — will irreversibly disrupt the orderly development of civilization. ... Secondly, there’s the need to provide energy services — essential to the development of civilization — from energy systems that reduce, and later eliminate, climatic risk.”

Today, working with public and private sector partners, IESVic faculty and graduate students in a broad spectrum of academic fields are pursuing integrated, feasible solutions to these two issues. In 2008, Science Watch placed UVic fifth worldwide in citation impact in the fields of energy and fuels, due in large part to the research at IESVic.

International collaboration has also grown: in 2010, the institute partnered with 10 top universities and institutes in China to found the Canada-China Clean Energy Research and Training Collaboration. And in 2011 a bi-national PhD program in Renewable Energy was initiated with the University of Oldenburg in Germany.

On Aug. 10, 1993, UVic President David Strong announced that, with the financial support of the province and the District of Saanich, the university had purchased a 4.7-hectare property commonly known as Mystic Vale, near the southeast edge of campus. A new Mystic Vale ecological protection area was created by adding a section of the Hobbs Creek wooded ravine already owned by UVic, protecting the area from development in perpetuity.

While most of the forest within the vale is estimated to be about 150 years old, it also includes trees that are likely between 350 and 500 years old. The habitat supports mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, and includes one of the most spectacular populations of sword ferns anywhere on Southern Vancouver Island. Resident wildlife include bats, owls, eagles, woodpeckers and a variety of songbirds.

According to D. W. Higgins' 1904 book, The Mystic Spring and Other Tales of Western Life, Indigenous peoples believed that the waters of a spring in the vale possessed medicinal properties, and that those who gazed into its waters under a full moon would see the reflection of the person they would marry. While Higgins’ tale may romanticize Indigenous peoples’ ancestral use of Mystic Vale as a sacred site, Mavis Henry of the Saanich Nation explains that the "mythology and legend attached [to Mystic Vale] goes beyond fable and represents real use and real belief systems at work.”

Mystic Vale remains a popular community spot for walkers, joggers and anyone with an appreciation of nature.
Engineering faculty founded

*Training tomorrow’s tech leaders*

UVic’s youngest faculty was founded to respond to a provincial labour shortage, but ended up as a defining feature of the university’s acceleration into a globally recognized research institution. During the 1970s, more than half the engineers hired in BC came from outside the province. But starting in 1984, students were able to enrol in electrical engineering — and later, mechanical engineering and computer science — in Victoria. Historian Peter L. Smith pointed out that prior to the engineering program’s development, “UVic had already arrived on the national scene, ranking sixth in Canada in total [NSERC] awards per grantee and per applicant.” The founding and growth of a new faculty, with new instructors including engineering luminaries like Andreas Antoniou, Sadik Dost and David Scott, meant that the teaching and training of engineering grads happened side-by-side with a blossoming research culture of discovery and innovation.

“Starting the faculty was very exciting,” recalls Antoniou. “We worked with a number of engineers in Victoria, and in fact this program would never have started without their support. They helped change a lot of misconceptions about engineering. Soon people understood that engineering is an important part of environmental solutions, not about building more chimneys.” The growth and diversification of engineering at UVic continues today, with Western Canada’s first biomedical engineering degree students beginning this year, and civil engineering slated to begin in 2013–14.

Jeanne Simpson’s rhodos

*An unusual philanthropic legacy*

In 1966, Jeanne Simpson — pioneer horticulturist, naturalist and Cowichan Lake resident — gifted her 27-acre lakeside property and its plants to UVic. The London University-trained Simpson passionately believed in lifelong learning. In 1974, the university designated the property as a field research centre. “In bequeathing her treasured lakeside forest for university protection and study, she left an enduring legacy in an increasingly uncertain world,” says property caretaker Roger Wiles. Today, the Jeanne S. Simpson Field Studies Resource Centre includes a laboratory, sleeping and cooking facility and 20 acres of undisturbed virgin forest. A base for university field studies and resource management, the property is used for studies in biology, geography, science education and physical education.

Hundreds of plants from Simpson’s extensive collection of rhododendron species — the largest in British Columbia — were transplanted from the property in the early 1970s to a new garden on the Gordon Head campus. “This important collection formed the nucleus of today’s Finnerty Gardens, now recognized as one of Canada’s best collections of rhododendrons,” explains Wiles. Jeanne Simpson’s legacy can be found simultaneously at the heart of campus and deep in our natural West Coast setting.

The great bus pass experiment

*Students take the lead in sustainability*

For today’s UVic students, riding public transit is as easy as swiping their student cards across a card reader at the front of a bus. But it wasn’t until 1976, when student leaders at UVic sat down to work out how BC Transit could better serve the region, that a term transit pass with photo identification arrived in Western Canada — introduced on a trial basis for students. The pilot project led to a monthly student bus pass system, and, after further negotiations between the UVic Students’ Society (UVSS) and BC Transit, the current U-Pass, or universal bus pass, was introduced in 1999. In the student referendum that established the ongoing U-Pass system by allocating student fees in exchange for unlimited access to Victoria region public transit, over two-thirds of UVic students voted for the program.

The arrangement, which was also endorsed by Camosun College students, was the first of its kind in Western Canada. “The student society transformed the transportation to and from campus and shifted the whole campus culture away from the automobile,” says David Clode, former executive director of Student and Ancillary Services. And single-occupancy vehicle trips to campus have fallen dramatically since 1999. Rob Fleming, UVSS chairperson at the time and now MLA for Victoria-Swan Lake, called the U-Pass “the single best incentive to get people out of their cars.” The U-Pass program continues to make transportation to UVic convenient, affordable and sustainable — providing environmental benefits while easing traffic congestion and lowering demand for on-campus parking.
Growing links to Asia

Building academic relations with China

On June 23, 1980, the UVic Board of Governors approved a proposed partnership agreement between UVic and East China Normal University (ECNU). The following May, President Howard Petch led a UVic delegation to Shanghai, where the agreement was signed — making UVic one of the first Canadian universities to establish formal relations with a Chinese university.

Also during that trip, at an extraordinary UVic ceremony in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Petch presented an honorary degree to Mme. Soong Ching-Ling, wife of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen — recognizing her work “from improving the welfare of children, to elevating the status of women, to extending health care to such a large portion of humanity and to supporting the goal of World Peace.” The ceremony was Mme. Soong’s last public appearance; she died a few days later.

“In those early years, the UVic-ECNU collaboration was the largest such relationship between a Chinese university and one anywhere else in the world,” said UVic’s Dr. Jan Walls, former cultural attaché at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing. Under the auspices of this relationship, scores of faculty members and students participated in exchanges, workshops and summer institutes at ECNU, and English-language listening curriculum materials were developed that have since been used by tens of millions of Chinese students.

These events signaled the beginnings of a strong and continuing relationship between UVic and leading universities and organizations throughout Asia, and foreshadowed the establishment of the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives in 1987.
The first of many firsts

*Maclean’s* names UVic a top university

On November 14, 1994, media calls kept President David Strong’s phone ringing. *Maclean’s* magazine’s university rankings issue had just hit the stands and UVic was first in the comprehensive category (tied with Waterloo). It was UVic’s first (but far from last) first-place finish in the magazine’s annual rankings. *Maclean’s* had launched its updated university rankings two years before, and UVic had occupied fourth, and then third place. Over the 20 years since then, UVic has never dropped below fourth place, appearing consistently in a tightly grouped top pack, and usually in first or second place.

Over the decades, the traits that have led to UVic’s success in the *Maclean’s* rankings include its comfortable size and sense of community, strong experiential learning programs, ability to attract research funding, and support for libraries and student financial aid. UVic’s consistent high ranking is a testament to the top calibre of faculty, students and staff at UVic. And although it is only one measure of success (the university uses a wide array of measures such as a regular survey of students and graduates to determine quality of experience), the *Maclean’s* rankings serve as a useful resource for students in choosing a post-secondary institution.

Dramatic growth in research

“Research University of the Decade”

In its relatively short lifespan, UVic has established itself as a research powerhouse in Canada and the world. The statistics and rankings tell the tale. Between 1999 and 2009, the university’s annual research income vaulted from $22.5 million to almost $105 million. And research intensity — defined as research income per full-time faculty member — climbed by almost 290 per cent. This remarkable growth trajectory led Re$earch Infosource in 2010 to name UVic a top performer of the decade among Canadian universities that offer a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs.

In 2012, The Impact Group identified UVic as one of Canada’s most inventive universities, finding that our university ranked second in the country in 2010 in the number of invention disclosures — the precursor to commercialization — per funding dollar. UVic has nearly one disclosure for every 10 faculty members — double the Canadian university average.

Internationally, UVic’s reputation continues to shine. “To be consistently ranked among the premier research universities in Canada and the world is a testament to the passion and energy of our faculty and students,” says Dr. Howard Brunt, vice-president research. “But as wonderful as it is to be ranked so highly, the real evidence of our success lies in the stories of how our research is making a difference in the world around us.”

Fostering a diverse, welcoming campus

UVic becomes a destination university

One of the most compelling stories of the last two decades is the transformation of UVic into a destination university, attracting and welcoming a wealth of students and faculty members from across Canada and around the world. Years of dramatic growth in student enrolment at both the undergraduate and graduate levels have allowed UVic to remain a top choice for students from BC and Vancouver Island while also opening opportunities for out-of-province students to choose our extraordinary West Coast setting, and burgeoning strength in a range of fields, for their studies.

Though it’s unclear when the critical “tipping point” occurred — when UVic began to host more students from afar than from Greater Victoria — there’s no question that it’s given rise to a campus culture that is truly cosmopolitan. More than 75 per cent of UVic students choose to leave their own region to study in Victoria, giving UVic more out-of-province students than any Canadian university west of McGill. The resulting mix of trans-Canadian and international students has helped create a socially and intellectually engaged and connected campus where students feel welcomed and supported.
Commercial innovations save lives

First UVic spin-off company goes public

On July 13, 2004, Sophiris (then named Protox) became the first UVic spin-off company to be publicly traded, appearing on the Toronto Stock Exchange. Over $100 million in investment and partnership agreements have been raised for testing the company’s targeted therapeutics for cancer, benign prostate hyperplasia (BPH) and other proliferative diseases. Sophiris continues to develop these therapeutics, licensed from UVic and Johns Hopkins University, and backed by UVic’s expertise in fostering research partnerships with industry. Its PRX302 therapeutic, developed by emeritus UVic biochemist Dr. Tom Buckley, is undergoing Phase 2 clinical trials, and in the words of one cancer clinician, has the potential to “revolutionize” how doctors treat prostate cancer and BPH. With no other effective prostate therapeutics on the horizon, Buckley’s discoveries stand poised to aid millions of people worldwide.

PRX302 is just one in a long line of life-saving inventions developed by UVic researchers and commercialized for wide use. In 1977 the Mustang Thermofloat coat, developed at UVic and worn as a lifesaving device at sea, became a commercial achievement. Early successes such as this led the university to found UVic Research Partnerships (formerly IDC) in order to better help researchers, industry partners, and funding agencies move socially and commercially relevant innovations like those of Sophiris to the marketplace. These innovations are vital to our economy and our competitiveness on a global scale. Through UVic Research Partnerships, researchers are able to effectively respond to worldwide issues, providing innovative solutions with commercial and often life-saving potential.

On October 22, 2010, more than 200 people celebrated the naming of the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business. This was the first time in UVic’s history that a faculty has been named after an individual. Gustavson has been involved with the Faculty of Business since 2003 as an employer, member of its advisory board, executive-in-residence and chair of the Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award event that he helped establish. His March 2010 gift of $10 million is among the largest received by the university and is the most substantial received by the 20-year-old business school. The funds will be used to finance scholarships, professorships and research, and to support innovation in student programs, all of which will help to ensure the Gustavson School of Business remains competitive with schools across Canada and internationally. Gustavson said the honour was “the highlight of his business career,” further explaining that “to have my name associated with such a great business school as we have here at the University of Victoria is simply unbelievable and something I am very grateful for.”

Just prior to the one-year anniversary of the naming ceremony, the Sardul S. Gill Graduate School of Business was created at the Gustavson school. Gill, a Victoria-born businessman who graduated from UVic’s predecessor Victoria College (and who now describes himself as “happily retired”), made the gift to honour his parents, both Sikh immigrants from Punjab. They encouraged him to pursue an education.
Island Medical Program

UVic welcomes its first medical students

In January 2005, UVic welcomed its first cohort of medical students, thanks to the Island Medical Program (IMP), part of a unique provincial program designed to increase the number of new physicians in BC and provide access to medical education across the province. The distributed learning element of this innovative program — supported by state-of-the-art lecture theatres, laboratories, and problem-based learning rooms at UVic’s Medical Sciences Building — ensures that tomorrow’s doctors are taught by the best medical educators across the province, whether they’re in Victoria, Vancouver, Kelowna or Prince George. In their third and fourth year of study, IMP students are integrated into Vancouver Island Health Authority hospitals and clinics to finish their course of study, and help ground them in the communities they may someday serve. By the end of UVic’s 50th anniversary, over 160 new doctors will have graduated from IMP. Many of these new doctors complete their residencies on Vancouver Island, and others are already practicing in Island communities. Through this unique collaboration with the province and UBC, UVic and IMP are fulfilling a vision — to educate a new generation of young physicians, address physician shortages and improve healthcare on Vancouver Island.

Vancouver Island Technology Park

Acquisition builds UVic’s high-tech footprint

The 2005 UVic purchase of the Vancouver Island Technology Park (VITP) from the provincial government placed the university front and centre in the effort to diversify the economic life of our region by supporting high-technology enterprise.

The acquisition put UVic in the leadership role of owning and managing more technology transfer space than any other BC university, which was great news for spin-off companies and the many graduates and co-op students employed by VITP tenants. By linking local, provincial, national and international resources with emerging tech companies, VITP has continued to shape the growth of the Island’s $1.67-billion-a-year high-tech industry, an economic footprint that surpasses even the $1.19 billion annual activity of local tourism. Beyond its economic impact, VITP is also a showcase for green redevelopment, as Canada’s first LEED Gold certified building. And because the park’s 191,000 square feet of space has been nearly 100 per cent occupied for years, an expansion is planned to accommodate demand for high-tech development space in the future.

Co-operative studies established

Making real-life learning a defining strength

Although “co-op” and “UVic” are nearly synonymous today, the co-operative education program started out as a brave new addition that helped distinguish a young university for its willingness to engage in an educational experiment. When the university’s co-op program first opened its doors in 1976, co-operative education was a fairly new concept; the University of Waterloo was the only other Canadian university to have initiated a program. This didn’t deter UVic faculty members from the departments of chemistry and physics, who proposed the development of a co-op program to the Senate. With the support of then-President Dr. Howard Petch, who had become a strong supporter of co-op while at Waterloo, UVic pioneered the first co-operative education program in Western Canada in 1976, with support from UVic department chairs Dr. Alex McAuley and Dr. Harry Dosso. The program secured 58 placements in its first year, and Dosso recalls its success vividly. “The popularity of the program quickly led to an increase in the number of students in physics, and an unexpected but welcome increase in the number of female students, comprising at least one third of the annual physics co-op graduates. Other departments soon followed physics and chemistry by establishing their own co-op programs.” By 1987, 962 students in 13 program areas were being placed in work term positions and UVic co-op was making a name for itself. Today it includes 13 co-op offices that provide opportunities for about 3,500 students from 47 academic areas each year.
UVic President David Turpin (centre) with Akitsiraq law graduates.

Family care workers from Manitoba who completed their master’s degrees at UVic in 1997. Shortly after graduation, the School of Child and Youth Care launched a diploma program in early childhood education which is taught by the master’s graduates in their own communities.

The rise of Indigenous education across campus

Indigenous knowledge transforms teaching

UVic has become a national leader in Indigenous education through the strength of and shared effort in its many partnerships with Indigenous communities. Rising in profile over the last three decades, these partnerships have enriched the bonds between Indigenous communities and universities and fostered meaningful dialogue about academic scholarship, engaging First Nations communities in setting their own goals and changing the role of post-secondary institutions in Indigenous education.

One of the first major strides forward came in 1982, when UVic’s Faculty of Education founded a First Nations program which helped students in Hazelton, BC, pursue their teaching certificates without leaving their communities — learning and studying at home and travelling to Victoria for short three-week stints during the summer. An enormous range of transformation has proceeded from this drive to help First Nations students become teachers in BC — a sea change that now includes courses in Indigenous learning for all education students, certificate and degree programs in Aboriginal language revitalization, and a growing attention to reciprocal approaches to Indigenous knowledge.

One of these award-winning partnerships was established in 1989 between UVic’s Child and Youth Care program and the Meadow Lake Tribal Council in northern Saskatchewan — a program which has since been recognized by UNESCO as one of 20 leading programs around the world that use Indigenous knowledge. A reciprocal approach to nursing education developed with the Tsawout First Nation won a national award for nursing education in 2008, and UVic’s law program has also become a national leader in Indigenous legal traditions.

National Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2004, was the proud occasion for a moving UVic convocation ceremony in the Inuksuk High School gymnasium in Iqaluit, Nunavut. In the presence of their families and Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, 11 Inuit students from the Akitsiraq law school received their UVic LLB degrees, the result of a unique partnership between UVic’s faculty of law, the Akitsiraq Law School Society and Nunavut Arctic College. The event was the culmination of years of northern dedication to the idea of a locally based Indigenous law program, six years of planning and implementation, and four demanding years of study by a remarkable and talented group of individuals. While continuing to raise families and assist their communities, these students took a full law degree program which combined the UVic curriculum with courses on the law in the North, and incorporated the importance of Inuit law and custom to help guide future legal practice. The students were taught in Iqaluit by Inuit elders and faculty members from UVic and five other Canadian law schools. In eloquent testimony to their dedication to their land and people, today all 11 graduates (10 women, one man) work in the Arctic serving government, Inuit organizations and their communities. “For the first time, university courses were physically offered north of 60,” explained Akitsiraq graduate Siobhan Arnatsiaq-Murphy. “UVic was truly visionary, and broke new ground, forever changing the lives of not only the graduates, but of all the Inuit of Nunavut as we embark on our careers in service to our community — with the gift of an education that was otherwise improbable, impossible and out of reach due to the obstacles we face when having to relocate south for education.”

Iqaluit convocation

Canada’s first Arctic law school
LE,NONET
Charting new paths for Indigenous success

In 2005, UVic entered into the emerging national debate about Indigenous education — not with rhetoric, but with research. Formalizing longstanding efforts to make the campus welcoming to Indigenous students and to support their post-secondary success, UVic drew upon in-house expertise and the guidance of Indigenous partners to create the pilot, or research phase of LE,NONET — named with a Sencoten word for “success after enduring many hardships.”

Aimed at creating a culturally-grounded environment for Indigenous students in a traditional university setting, LE,NONET proved to be different from many Indigenous education programs at other Canadian institutions because the component parts of its program — bursaries, emergency relief funding, peer mentoring, a preparation seminar, community internships, research apprenticeships and a training program for staff and faculty — supported students while also tracking Indigenous student success rates. The qualitative and quantitative research results were unequivocal: graduation rates increased substantially and more than 90 per cent of LE,NONET participants said the program aided their academic success and helped them feel connected, both to their university experience and to their Indigenous identities.

LE,NONET continues as a UVic support program, though its research component is complete. The program’s legacy is demonstrating that Indigenous students can set their own criteria for success, and achieve it in a traditional university setting — just one of the reasons Indigenous enrolment at UVic has jumped to more than ten times its level in 2000.

First Peoples House
An Indigenous space at the heart of campus

Forged by a university commitment to create a friendly and supportive environment for Indigenous students on campus, First Peoples House, designed with extensive consultation with local First Nations and input from the UVic community, opened in 2010. The building’s location established a key Indigenous presence in the heart of the campus — on the academic quad, oriented to cardinal points and close to University Centre to integrate it with important ceremonies like convocation. Designed by Indigenous architect Alfred Waugh, the building reflects the Coast Salish style in features such as rammed earth walls, cedar plank exterior cladding and the ceremonial hall. The building has been recognized internationally as one of the best western red cedar architectural designs, meeting LEED gold certification while also demonstrating effective use of BC wood in its construction.

As part of the building’s opening ceremonies, the unveiling of the iconic whale tail sculpture in the stormwater retention pond remains a strongly spiritual moment for those who were lucky enough to be there. Staff member Aliki Marinakis recalls, “as the eagle down [blessing] was being cast into the wind, a fully grown eagle swooped by all of us, as though called by the song and the down floating in the sun-dappled air. Most of the spectators saw the eagle, and the ripple and effect of awe produced by its presence and visit to the site at that particular moment was tangible. It seemed to say, ‘welcome home’ to this place, to the students, to the carving, and to the building itself.”

First Nations partnerships
Community-driven research a success

Fostering strong community connections and respecting Indigenous priorities in research are the two most important things post-secondary institutions can do when partnering with Indigenous communities. And the successes of UVic’s reciprocal, community-driven research model in Indigenous research can be seen in the longstanding and well-recognized relationships UVic researchers have built with First Nations communities across Canada.

The international reputation of ethnobotanist Dr. Nancy Turner has grown from her work with Indigenous knowledge holders, documenting and preserving their critically important botanical and environmental knowledge, and helping communities protect the traditional ecosystems that sustain them. Similarly, since 1998 the Stó:lō Nation has invited UVic historian Dr. John Lutz to bring students to their community as part of an ethnohistory field school, exploring and documenting histories of local interest and relevance. On completion, the research is recognized as part of the heritage of the band, and also enhances academic knowledge of the community’s history.

Building new paths to dialogue and understanding has also defined UVic’s law program, which has fostered partnerships that have brought it to the forefront of legal scholarship in treaty rights and Indigenous legal traditions.

This spirit of respectful cooperation infuses and informs the many other collaborative research partnerships UVic researchers undertake, which benefit academic and Indigenous communities alike.
A brief list of Faculty of Fine Arts instructors may say as much as the generational legacy they helped create: János Sándor, Mowry Baden, Lorna Crozier, Alan Gowans, Mary Kerr, Ian McDougall, Joan MacLeod, Martin Segger, John Krich, Pat Martin Bates, Jack Hodgins, Anthony Welch, Sandra Meigs, Brian Richmond, Christopher Butterfield — even this slim list is practically a who’s-who of the local and national creative community.

With the establishment of the School of Fine Arts in 1964, and the subsequent transition to full faculty status in 1969, UVic still boasts BC’s only stand-alone fine arts faculty. Spread across four buildings and consisting of five departments (visual arts, theatre, writing, music and history in art) the faculty includes more than 150 instructors and welcomes over 1,200 undergraduate and graduate students each year. It’s also able to offer the most scholarships and bursaries of any faculty, and has the third-largest Indigenous enrolment on campus — as well as being a cornerstone of the vibrant cultural atmosphere on campus and throughout Greater Victoria.

Between the Phoenix Theatre’s full season of dynamic productions and the School of Music’s busy concert schedule — over 150 performances a year — plus the annual exhibitions by visual arts students, the Faculty of Fine Arts continues to stand as both a teaching and creative institution of note.

When it comes to former students making a splash in their field, it’s hard to beat the Department of Writing. From the recent international success of Esi Edugyan — whose second novel, Half-Blood Blues, was nominated for four of the world’s most prestigious fiction writing awards — to best-selling fantasy author Steven Erikson and famed novelist W.P. Kinsella, who hit it out of the ballpark with his 1982 novel Shoeless Joe (which became the Oscar-nominated film Field of Dreams), UVic’s writing program has helped craft numerous success stories, large and small.

What makes the difference? Some say it’s the faculty — including past professors like Jack Hodgins, Patrick Lane, Robin Skelton, Bill Valgardson, Derk Wynand, or current literary luminaries like Governor General’s Award-winning poet Tim Lilburn, Siminovitch Prize-winning playwright Joan MacLeod or acclaimed author Bill Gaston. Others point to the department’s widely regarded workshop process, which offers a more individualized approach for students — and continues to produce the next generation of rising talent, such as £15,000 BBC National Short Story Award winner D. W. Wilson, Journey Prize winner Yasuko Thanh, and Man Booker Scholarship winner Eliza Robertson.

“I studied with so many great teachers,” Edugyan told the local Times Colonist newspaper after winning the 2011 Scotiabank Giller Prize. “The calibre of guidance [at UVic] was so amazing.”
CFUV student radio
Student-run radio hits the airwaves

Student-run campus radio got its start at UVic in September of 1965—broadcasting, appropriately enough, from Y hutch, the former home of the Maritime Naval Communications Centre in the Gordon Head campus’ former military days, with programming beamed to the Student Union Building (SUB) and two student residences on a closed circuit broadcast. This modest initiative fell silent in the early 1970s, disappearing from the airwaves altogether, but came roaring back a decade later when students formed a radio club and, through a fee referendum, convinced their colleagues to support a full-fledged radio station. Working with financial support from the university, the station applied for and received a broadcasting license from the CRTC in 1984 for the new campus-community station, CFUV, at a relatively gentle 49.4 watts on 105.1 FM, broadcasting from the SUB. The station’s first managers, Robert Osborne and Steve Lebitsching, led the effort to gather equipment, train staff, and establish a music library, relying on help from community members, student volunteers, and guidance from the board of directors. In 1989, CFUV increased its transmission to over 2,000 watts and began broadcasting on 101.9 FM. Approximately 28 years after its first FM broadcast, CFUV is still going strong as a diverse, vibrant community member and a welcoming home for students, winning a 2009 College Music Journal award for its support of the local music scene. The station’s broadcast strength was increased 50 per cent in 2011, and programming including live on-air performances by touring bands is available online as well.

Lafayette String Quartet
Acclaimed string quartet comes to Victoria

Celebrating 25 years together is a memorable milestone for any musical group, but 2011 was doubly important for the internationally renowned Lafayette String Quartet (LSQ), as it also marked their 20th anniversary as artists-in-residence at the School of Music. The only all-female ensemble of its kind to still feature the original members—Ann Elliott Goldschmid (violin), Joanna Hood (viola), Pamela Highbaugh Aloni (cello) and Sharon Stanis (violin)—the LSQ at first were reticent about the idea of coming to Canada. Stanis clearly remembers getting the call from UVic. Based out of a pioneering arts academy in Detroit, they had recently been named “Young Artists to Watch” by the prestigious Musical America magazine.

“I’ll never forget,” she recalls. “I couldn’t imagine myself living on an island, having no idea that Vancouver Island was as large as it is. But UVic called a second time and asked us to just come and take the audition.” That audition, of course, not only changed their lives but also laid the foundation for UVic’s acclaimed strings program. Since then, LSQ have become an essential part of the local community, thanks to initiatives like the annual Lafayette Health Awareness Series and their willingness to support fellow artists as mentors and performers.

“UVic took a chance on a five-year-old quartet, and the university has shown a strong commitment to us,” says Stanis. “I feel very fortunate to be here, and to have the privilege of developing the strings program. UVic has provided a real foundation for us.”

The Malahat Review
Setting a gold standard for literary publishing

Published on New Year’s Day 1967, the inaugural issue of the Malahat Review bucked the norms of the era’s university-based literary quarterlies by emphasizing works that broke new ground in poetry, fiction, drama and criticism—from both Canadians and international writers. The two professors behind this fresh approach, Robin Skelton and John Peter, had spent two years planning the birth of a new type of literary magazine—and 44 years later the Malahat Review is not just an iconic literary magazine in Canada, but widely read and respected abroad.

Edited today by John Barton, a highly acclaimed poet with 10 published volumes and a former student of Skelton’s, the Malahat has published 14 works featured in the National Magazine Awards’ roster of finalists during the last five years alone, taking home five gold and four silver awards. The awards confirm not only the formidable stewardship over the years by editors Skelton, Peters, Constance Rooke, Derk Wynand, Marlene Cookshaw and Barton, but also the industry of the writers around the world who see publication in this esteemed UVic-based journal as a jewel in the crown of a successful literary career.
1994 Commonwealth Games
Commonwealth Games leave lasting legacy

In August, 1994, thousands of spectators, athletes and officials in Centennial Stadium witnessed a truly impressive display of sport, pageantry and Canadianism at the XV Commonwealth Games’ opening ceremonies — including a theatrical presentation by First Nations people that culminated in a Thunderbird symbol that covered the entire infield.

For the next 10 days, UVic was the Games’ hub as 2,257 athletes from 63 nations competed in 10 sports in the stadium (transformed to seat 10,000 rather than its usual 5,000) and other venues around Greater Victoria. Unbeknownst to those in the stands, disagreement about the track’s design required a unique modification: to satisfy the Games’ specifications on field turning radius, an extra lane was added to the eight-lane ring.

Among the legacies left by the Commonwealth Games is the athletes’ village off Finnerty Road. Now housing nearly 400 UVic residents a year, the complex was named the David and Dorothy Lam Family Student Housing Complex after the Games to honour the former lieutenant governor. Known unofficially as “the friendly games,” the competition and associated cultural events were broadcast around the world and fittingly concluded with thunderous applause, again at Centennial Stadium, for a parade of the thousands of volunteers.

Athletes on the world stage
Excellence in Olympic & Paralympic games

It takes commitment, dedicated training and sacrifice to reach a world championship or the Olympic podium — as well as the support of family and friends. Several generations of students, trainers, coaches, faculty and staff have celebrated remarkable achievements by UVic athletes and alumni on the world stage. Whether on the rugby and field hockey pitches, on the basketball court, in the water, their pursuit of excellence has resulted in a remarkable number of trips to national and international event podiums.

A total of 161 Vikes athletes, coaches and alumni have represented Canada at the Olympics, winning a total of 37 gold, 22 silver, and 9 bronze medals in Olympic and Paralympic competition. UVic athletes such as alpine skier and alumna Lauren Woolstencroft, who set a record for gold medals at a single Paralympic Games, and swimmer Michael Edgson, who is the most decorated Paralympic athlete in Canadian history, are role models for many.

The dominance of UVic’s rowing program is also evident not just from the number of Olympic medals they’ve won but by the standard of perseverance demonstrated by competitors such as Derek Porter, winner of two Olympic medals, and Silken Laumann, whose Olympic comeback is part of Canadian history. Equally unforgettable are champions like Stephanie Dixon, who, despite being born with one leg, joined the national Paralympic team at 14 and with a sweep of Olympic medals has become one of the best swimmers in the world.
Canadian interuniversity sports
A living, winning tradition in Canada

Great athletes work year-round for the culminating moments of truly championship performance, and Vikes athletes have lived up to that expectation over and over again. The vital exhilaration of both team and individual success has been a central part of the Vikes story since the inception of UVic’s athletics program in 1970. An athletics policy shaped by Ian Stewart and Judge Robert Hutchison, and approved by athletics advocate President Howard Petch, concentrated resources on sports that could take best advantage of the year-long West Coast training environment and local interest — a policy which has helped push UVic to the top level of Canadian interuniversity sport.

After 45 years, competing against 55 other Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) institutions, the Vikes continue to rank in the top five for number of CIS team championships won — making the Vikes one of the most successful university athletic programs in Canada. The women’s basketball team holds more national titles than any competitor, and in women’s field hockey, the Vikes winning tradition puts it consistently among the top three programs in Canada, with 11 national titles. In men’s basketball, the Vikes have brought home seven consecutive national titles, a feat unmatched in CIS sport.

In addition to 71 Canadian team championships, Vikes competitors have had 358 athletes named CIS All-Canadians, 161 have competed at the Olympic or Paralympic Games, and produced an athletic heritage that continues to inspire the efforts of today’s student-athletes.

First-year residence guarantee
Providing a smooth transition to university

When a student leaves home for university, the world becomes a much larger place — full of promise and nearly infinite possibility. It’s a situation that’s made countless memorable moments for UVic students. And UVic’s offer, beginning in 2004, of a guaranteed place in residence for incoming high school students, is a Great Moment in UVic History that has helped make many of those student experiences happen.

The campus boasts nearly 2,300 residences — including a family housing complex to make on-campus living accessible and inviting for families with children. That makes UVic’s residence population larger than 63 incorporated communities in BC.

Dedicated enhancements to residence life programming since 2000 have helped create an environment that fosters learning, personal growth and positive social interaction for studying and socializing beyond the classroom. New on-campus resources including the Mearns Centre for Learning and the Marnie Swanson International Commons give incoming students the support to ensure that new social and educational environments, while demanding, don’t have to be overwhelming. And sustainable local-purchasing initiatives that support our campus food outlets give an increasingly cosmopolitan student body healthy connections to comfort foods and international cuisine alike. It’s enough to make us all want to go back to university!

Alumni Association
A proud community, worldwide

The UVic Alumni Association was incorporated in 1965 under the guidance of community leaders and former Victoria College students, including Victoria lawyer Constance Isherwood, Victoria Mayor and future UVic chancellor Richard B. Wilson, and Brian Tobin, editor of the Victoria Daily Times.

Since then, countless volunteers have given their time to help the association in its mission to lead the worldwide involvement of alumni in UVic life through a variety of programs, services, and events offered in partnership with the university.

The association’s prestigious Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching were the first of their kind on campus when they were introduced in 1989 and the gallery of past recipients lines the main stairway of the McPherson Library.

The alumni association also recognizes the achievements of individual alumni in their careers and community service. Among the many celebrated members of the UVic alumni family are: prize-winning novelist Esi Edugyan (BA ’99), Flickr co-founder Stewart Butterfield (BA ’96), nature photographer Paul Nicklen (BSc ’90), TV and film actor Erin Karpluk (BFA ’00), and Grand Chief Edward John (BA ’74), chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
UVic distributed a total of $32 million to students during 2011/12, including graduate-level fellowships and support and the primarily undergraduate work study, bursaries and scholarships charted above.
Great Moments in UVic History articles based on nominations by:

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