We’ve got mail
Postcards from globe-trotting alumni

Hot wheels
Grad turns a love of biking into a global affair

On Americans
Your outlook: international or irrational?

Dancing with stars
Todd Cameron reps TV’s top musical talent

p.16
An Annual Report and a confused look is never a good thing.

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COVER PHOTO Lee Cherry
For those who truly shine.

Are you among UVic Business’ best and brightest? Do you know someone who is? Don’t wait a moment more to share news of your success, or that of your fellow alumni. Complete a nomination form now for the UVic Business Alumni Award of Excellence, which celebrates alumni achievements at the local, regional, national or global level. This prestigious award highlights achievements and recognizes career successes and it looks good on your resumé!

This year, outshine the rest.
www.business.uvic.ca/alumni/award
Deadline Oct. 31, 2009
As I write this editorial, I’m mindful of the economic turmoil sweeping the world. The business world has shifted dramatically in the last six months, and the situation is confounding the world’s experts. The uncertainty takes a toll on our collective psyches, and universities are no exception. As with other universities, we have been affected by market conditions. Unfortunately we have seen a decline in the value of our endowments, which will affect all areas of operations, including funds available for scholarships and bursaries.

At UVic Business we expect to see an increase in enrolment, as education is a counter-cyclical industry. Going back to school is a good strategy for individuals looking for ways to enhance their skills and weather the economic storm. However, during difficult financial times, it’s not unusual for corporations and organizations to cut back on employee education programs. This can be a mistake. Encouraging and funding employees to train in areas that promote creativity and innovation are proven ways to help a firm remain productive and sustainable. In tough times organizations have excess capacity, and it actually makes sense to develop managerial skills at a time when it is least disruptive to business. Bad times inevitably end, and organizations that use lean times to build their strengths are best able to capitalize on the rebound that follows.

Similarly, operating in lean times requires more efficiency in practices—slack that may be enjoyed in boom times disappears. Management skill development is crucial to ensuring an organization functions as efficiently as possible without sacrificing its effectiveness in the market. For organizations, times of crisis and economic downturn provide opportunities to question assumptions about the strategy of the unit, and the philosophy and overall focus of the entity. Even though it might sound counter-intuitive, it may be wise to use this time to explore alternative approaches, markets or processes that have not been previously considered.

Within the faculty, we are sharpening our strategic focus for the 2009-2012 period and reviewing our approach to education. Along with the financial crisis, there has been a steady climb in commentary about business education; it’s more important than ever to review our curriculum and approach to learning. Through our strategic planning process we have reaffirmed our vision and values. We still believe that an education must be international in scope so we can appreciate the diversity and complexity of the world in which we live; it must be integrative so we gain a deeper understanding of the interaction of the various business functions, and it must prepare us to be creative and innovative so we can bring new perspectives, take risks and try new things. In 2004, we became the first business school in North America to embed courses in sustainability into our core programs. Now we feel it deserves special prominence and are establishing our commitment to being socially responsible as our fourth philosophical pillar. We also believe that an education must be lived, not just learned through lectures and cases; thus our experiential approach is embedded in everything we do.

In this issue of Business Class, we feature alumni who are living and working internationally, or who have returned to Canada from a career abroad. We also celebrate entrepreneurship through an article about Sir Terry Matthews, our sixth Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year. Dr. Angela Downey, health economist and new associate professor in accounting, shares some of her research insights in a piece entitled Good Health is Good Business. As always, we value your input and look forward to your comments and story ideas. Give us your opinion on the changes we have made to the magazine—for example, the new cover page. Let us know what you think.

Best regards,

Ali Dastmalchian
Professor and Dean
dastmal@uvic.ca
McMafia: A Journey Through the Global Criminal Underworld
Misha Glenny
Knopf, 2008, 400 pages

Misha Glenny delves into the dark underground—and sometimes not so underground—world of global crime syndicates. Their web is intricate and widespread, and includes trade in everything from untaxed cigarettes and illegal narcotics to humans. Glenny’s journey spans the globe as he researches the pitfalls of a connected world. It is now much easier for businesses to connect, but it’s also easier for criminals to connect too. For example, on a trip to San Paulo, we’re privy to a meeting between the author, an expert hacker and an “orange”—a person who arranges in-person meetings for criminals who know each other only through their alter egos in cyberspace.

One of the most interesting chapters in the book focuses on the marijuana trade in British Columbia. Affectionately known as “BC bud,” BC marijuana is some of the most sought-after cannabis in the world, and the BC drug trade accounts for six percent of the province’s GDP. The author talks to a drug smuggler who explains how he routinely takes drugs across the border into the US, where the value can double, or even quadruple what he would get for it in Canada. As a result, many Canadians are joining the cannabis trade, and Western Canada is now home to the largest per-capita concentration of organized criminal syndicates in the world.

Glenny’s style is conversational and very readable. Because his book is based on data gathered from over 300 interviews with individuals on both sides of the law, readers feel like they are sitting at the table listening in. It makes for an intimate, horrifying, eye-opening and world-view-changing read.

By Krista Boehnert, Alumni Officer

The Truth About Social Networking: Online Networking for Professional Success
Patrice-Anne Rutledge
FT Press, 2008, 224 pages

Bestselling author and Certified eMarketer (CeM) Patrice-Anne Rutledge outlines how to use social networks effectively for job seeking, recruiting, online promotions and communications. According to Rutledge, hundreds of millions of people around the world use social networking in a single month. They vary from young individuals to senior citizens, and from job seekers to small business owners, artists, political activists and everything in between. The world is gathering online and Rutledge provides a field guide for joining in.

Among other issues, Rutledge discusses marketing to the millennial generation, online privacy issues, the onset of corporate social networks (or the virtual water cooler) and mobile social networks. Mobile applications are springing up everywhere—from well-established players like Facebook to start-up companies. The idea is that people are on the go, away from their computers, but they still want to be connected.

Online social networks for niche markets are becoming more and more popular. Examples include CaféMom, a networking site for mothers, and Dogster, for dog lovers. Just like the proliferation of special-interest TV channels, the social networking market is branching out beyond basic sites to ones for specific target audiences.

And word to the wise—Big Brother really is watching. Many recruiters now Google candidates, and your online life makes your past an open book. From unprofessional pictures and comments you’ve made on blogs to what others online say about you, your electronic footprint can come back to haunt you, so be careful what you put out there.

Rutledge gives concise, practical advice that readers can immediately implement in their online practices. A must-have guidebook for navigating social media.

Editor’s note: Join the social networking revolution by signing up for the UVic Business LinkedIn group at: www.linkedin.com; group name: “UVic Faculty of Business.”
In the name of a Rose

Donor establishes scholarship to honour trailblazing mother

By John Atkinson

Every once in a while, people come along who have that X factor: an inner drive to succeed and push back boundaries; a yearning to trail-blaze and make the world a better place—and a desire to inspire others to do the same. Rose Won Lau was one such person.

Throughout her life, Rose championed the cause for Chinese people to be treated as equals in the world. Kenzie Kwong, Rose’s 53-year-old daughter, set up the Rose Won Lau Business Scholarship at UVic in honour of her mother in 2007.

“She also wanted Chinese women in particular to believe in themselves, be brave and become the best they could be,” says Kwong, who is an organization development consultant in Hong Kong.

Born Rose Won in Victoria on September 7, 1914, young Rose had to bounce back from losing both her parents to health issues before her 10th birthday—with oldest sister Irene serving as stand-in mom to seven siblings. Rose flourished nonetheless, always at the top of her class academically and in sports, despite the gender inequalities of the time.

In 1932, when she was 18 years old, Rose accompanied her sister Pauline to China for Pauline’s marriage in Taishan, a city in Guangdong province, 140 kilometres west of Hong Kong. Rose decided to put down roots and became a teacher in the city—no small feat for a single woman at the time, much less a teenage orphan. She maintained her spirit and independence, standing her ground when villagers sneered at her for wearing a skirt (because her legs were exposed) or laughed at her for playing tennis with men.

“Have no fear, you can always do it if you put your mind to it,’ was one of [my mother’s] favourite phrases,” says Kwong. Rose knew she was different, but that was the whole point; she wanted to be.

She built a new life for herself in China, marrying Lau Im-Cheung in 1936 and making homes in Taishan, Meixian, Guangzhou and Shanghai, before eventually settling in Hong Kong. Between mid-1937 and late-1939, she also lived through a war—the Japanese invasion of China—known as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident.

Daughter Kenzie arrived in August 1955, and Rose devoted her time and energy to raising her child, becoming an inspirational figure of support to family and friends over the years.

“She exemplified strength of character, love of family and helping those in need,” says Kwong’s cousin Jim Wong, while cousin Sebbie Dick adds: “She had such a positive influence on so many and taught me to be confident, independent and caring.”

Widowed in 1987, Rose suffered a stroke in 1996, but made a 90 per cent recovery within months. She passed away of natural causes at the age of 91 in January 2006.

Kwong decided to set up a scholarship in Victoria because it was where her mother’s amazing journey had started almost a century ago. Her plan was resoundingly endorsed by both Wong (now in Calgary) and Dick (Las Vegas), whose lives were also influenced and inspired by “Great Aunt Rose.” The scholarship, which gives preference to female students of Chinese ancestry, will offer financial assistance of up to $6,000 for students planning to study or do a co-op work term in China. Kwong says the opportunity is all about rediscovering heritage, while developing both sports and life skills—in the spirit of its namesake.

“I want the students to feel proud that they’ve been awarded this scholarship, not for the money but for what it represents—my mother’s hopes and dreams,” says Kwong, who has two grown children of her own. “I would also like those selected to become ambassadors for China, explaining the country to friends and acquaintances so that misunderstandings are reduced and respect greatly increased.”

For more information on the Rose Won Lau Business Scholarship visit: www.business.uvic.ca/discover/support/scholarships.
We asked our alumni to send us stories about living and working abroad—whether they’re overseas now or back home after a memorable experience in another country, we wanted to know what they loved about their travels and what they’re doing now.

Here’s what we learned: UVic Business grads are forging connections across the globe, learning to adapt to different cultural norms and representing the school and its programs with pride.

**Ben Page, BCom ’05 (Entrepreneurship)**
I moved to Seoul, Korea three years ago, attracted to the hustle and bustle of living in an Asian megalopolis.

Living in Seoul has its ups and downs—space is limited, the air quality is terrible and the culture can be challenging to adjust to. On the other hand, there is always something exciting happening and the work opportunities facilitate a very comfortable lifestyle. I entered the work market as a corporate English instructor and later became business development manager for Teach Away, a Canadian teacher recruitment company. More recently I joined Fleishman Hillard, an international PR company, as an editor. I leave Korea in the fall in search of a new opportunity, but have no regrets about my choice to move to Seoul. Korea is a remarkable country and a great opportunity for a young business person looking for adventure.

**Debbie Gonsalves, MBA’98**
Working and living abroad is truly one of the most enriching experiences anyone can have—on both professional and personal levels. In August 2007, I had the opportunity with my company, Sun Life Financial, to transfer from Toronto and set up corporate communications in the Hong Kong regional office. Sun Life, a life and health insurance company, operates worldwide, with Asian operations in Hong Kong, the Philippines and Indonesia, and joint ventures in China and India.

This was not my first venture to Asia—as a UVic MBA student I took advantage of the internship program offered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where I spent...
five weeks working for Scotiabank. It was an awesome experience that gave me a taste of what I would be getting into. My 16 months in Asia gave me an opportunity to gain a truly global perspective. I had many “aha” moments while I was there, and I would like to share three of them:

**One size does not fit all.** Many people in the West talk about Asia as if it were a single entity. Nothing could be further from the truth. Each country I came into contact with through the course of my work had a unique identity and culture, with a fascinating history and outlook. That means, of course, that while some generalizations may be useful, the unique needs and requirements of individuals and corporations must be considered when you interact or do business with them.

**Asia has been and still is a growth market.** One of my “aha” moments was discovering the sheer magnitude of current economic activity, as well as the growth potential that still exists in Asia. While this doesn’t apply as much to the more developed economies like Hong Kong, certainly the rapid population growth and emerging middle class in India and China represent a lot of potential for growth that the West hasn’t experienced in decades. And a growth economy means things move fast. Companies that lag or are not attuned to changes in the market or environment risk being left behind.

**Traditional values are alive and well.** For example, the Sun Life regional office moved to a different location just after I arrived in Hong Kong. Shortly after the move, we had a grand opening ceremony complete with a lion dance (a ceremonial dance where two people perform in a lion costume) and ceremonial pig-cutting (yes, a whole pig)—the purpose being to bring luck and prosperity to the workplace. I felt honoured to be a part of that.

People ask me if I would ever consider returning to Asia. The answer is: you bet I would. The best thing about living in an environment unlike your own is how it changes your perspective and challenges you to think differently than you used to. And in my opinion, that’s one of the best ways to appreciate and learn about others and the world around you.

**Lisa Fedorak, MBA ‘02**

In September 2008, I relocated to Dubai with PricewaterhouseCoopers’ Real Estate advisory practice in the UAE.

As a career move it has been an invaluable experience. So far I’ve worked with clients from the UAE, Kuwait, Palestine and Saudi Arabia on large-scale projects I would never have had the opportunity to work on otherwise.

Life-wise, Dubai isn’t a hard adjustment. A female colleague from the UK told me, “Dubai is more western than any western city I’ve ever been in,” and for the most part this is true. Dubai is a mix of ultra-modern skyscrapers, luxury hotels, nightclubs and shopping malls, with pockets of traditional neighbourhoods. It’s also a very transient society. After six months in Dubai, I’m considered a veteran. Overall it’s an interesting city to live in and I’m taking advantage of being based here to see as much of the Middle East as possible.

**Barry Larson, BCom ’95 (IB)**

I know all about postcards. In fact, as head of strategy for media at Royal Mail, the United Kingdom’s national postal operator, I ensure 82 million letters and postcards get delivered every day.

It’s been an interesting journey from UVic to London. After completing my degree, I joined a Victoria-based technology company and found myself travelling the world doing licensing deals. When I reached a natural career break, I headed off to historic Edinburgh University, founded in 1582, to complete my MBA.

More time in the software business followed, but five years ago, an opportunity to join Royal Mail and be part of the biggest turnaround in British history came along. When I joined, the Mail was making headlines for losing a million pounds a day and having an all-time-low quality of service. I wanted to be part of the team that turned that situation around, which we did. In fact, last quarter was the first time in 20 years that all four companies within the group made a profit.

My most interesting assignments here include negotiating and signing a $1.5-billion deal covering all of the postal services used by Her Majesty’s Government, having a meeting at 10 Downing Street and representing the UK at the Universal Postal Union, a branch of the United Nations, in Bern, Switzerland. These days I stay busy planning how to grow the $10-billion retail letters business now that the postal market is fully open to competition. I’m also an adviser to the UK’s Direct Marketing...
Association and have completed the media strategies program at Harvard Business School. If you’re ever in London, look me up on UVic’s group on LinkedIn.

Costas Herodotou, BCom ’00

On an early spring afternoon in 2002, I sat down in my Victoria Internet café and started typing a letter entitled “Opportunity Cost.” In the letter, addressed to myself, I was trying to make sense of everything that had happened in my life after the dot-com bust that had led me to New York to raise capital in October of 2000. I’d ended up running another dot-com company in that city for six months before I returned to Victoria to start the Internet café out of my office/apartment. After a year and a half of running the café, things had started getting complicated with my lease and I had to make a decision: continue fighting to run the café in an effort to show investors that the mother company was still alive, or let it go, return to my home country of Cyprus and start fresh.

The latter was the smarter choice. Within a year of my return home, I had gotten married, gone through a couple of jobs and started my own trading company. My first deal for the trading company occurred while I was employed at a medium-size home-improvement store (something like Canadian Tire). I sourced promotional gifts for my employer from a web portal, stocks of which I owned during my time in Canada. After that, I visited China for the first time, which opened doors to many more products and opportunities, and led to me establishing a promotional-gift business.

Today I supply vessels around the world with personal protective equipment and have an office in Shanghai. I also maintain the promotional gift business and enjoy repeat customers like McDonald’s. Even though my operation is small and focused, my company enjoys a good reputation and steady growth. My studies at UVic (and Camosun) helped me a lot, and I hope one day I will have the chance to offer at least as much as I have gained from these two institutions.

Mack Adams, BCom ’98 (Entrepreneurship)

It was my sixth day living in South India, and I’d jumped on board a minibus for an office visit to a local waterfall. As it was my first trip outside the city limits of Bangalore, I was looking forward to experiencing the infamous roads and non-stop honking. Who knew that about two hours later I would be crawling out the window of said minibus after it crashed into the back of a much larger vehicle at about 40 kilometres an hour? If that wasn’t enough, the driver, after making sure his navigator wasn’t too badly crushed in the accident, fled the scene at a sprint.

From the highs of seeing the Taj Mahal, to the lows of being bed-ridden with multiple bouts of food poisoning, my time in India ranks as the most intense, challenging, enlightening and memorable year of my career. At ThoughtWorks, the global information technology consultancy where I was working, building positive relationships with my colleagues inside and outside the office was key to my work. This can be difficult when there are language differences and a divergent set of cultural norms. However, there were a few approaches I used that resulted in positive impacts at work and lasting friendships I cherish to this day:

Trade in alternate currencies. One of the advantages of working in a foreign land is that you are a foreigner, and you bring all sorts of interesting things with you just by being there. It’s important to trade on these “currencies” as a way of developing bonds. I relied extensively on music to help start conversations or share ideas. When I discovered locals coveted old-school heavy rock, my years listening to Metallica and Alice in Chains came in very handy. I also designated my work area as the “Canadian Embassy,” with flags and pictures of the homeland, which was a way for me to stay in touch and showcase a country people often knew little about.
**Go for a walk.** One of the challenges of a short business trip is that you often spend all your time at the office or in your hotel, and none engaging with the local scene. In a place like India, just popping out for a walk or finding a new restaurant can be a little daunting. But tasting streetside chai, visiting the Bull Temple, eating dosas for breakfast and jumping into an impromptu cricket match are worthwhile activities that contribute to your development and relationships. You need to block out some time in your schedule for out-of-office activities, and find a colleague who’s willing to take you off the beaten path.

**Try to understand cultural norms.** This is an area where spending time at the bookstore or watching movies is really helpful. I read some great books that stuck with me like glue while I was immersed in the environment—religious works, contemporary fiction and historical accounts all proved invaluable at filling in parts of the world that just didn’t come up in conversation. My favourites included *White Mughals* by William Dalrymple, *India Unbound* by Gurcharan Das and *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry. In a nation where millions go to the movies each day, seeing at least one Bollywood smash hit is also well worth the effort—even if you can’t understand a word of it.

**Show respect.** Your way is not the best way; it’s just your way. While in India I found myself to be more direct, outspoken and individually focused than my colleagues, who could often be more deferential, consensus-driven, conflict-averse and in less of a rush. However, put this in the context of a 5,000-year-old nation and you quickly realize that many things are part of the fabric of society and won’t be changing any time soon. By offering respect and a healthy dose of curiosity, you’ll not only be more effective; you’ll be more open to learning new things yourself.

An open mind and a big smile are what get you through the ups and downs, and I wouldn’t trade my time abroad for anything. The relationships I formed during this time remain important to me professionally and personally. At the end of the day, people are people, and they’re the key to keeping the world turning. Phir milenge and good luck!

**Patrice Donalds, MBA ’01**

It has been eight years since I said “au revoir” to Victoria and moved back home to the Cayman Islands, but I return in my mind as often as I can. I’ve made several real return trips to Canada: to enjoy a Christmas shopping spree in Toronto, attend a Christmas class reunion, participate in a conference in New Brunswick, visit friends and attend a wedding in Surrey.

It’s my fervent hope that the next trip I make will see me calling Victoria home—at least for a little while. I will always be a Caribbean girl at heart, but even as I sit here, with the outside temperature at 27 degrees, I miss taking the Quadra bus to Yates Street, shopping at Reitmans, walking in the inner harbour and enjoying hot coffee with good friends when the temperature dropped (no, the sun hasn’t gotten to me).

Since my graduation in 2001, I have enjoyed three life transformations: working for the government on cultural policy development as assistant secretary (culture), serving as coordinator of development and training at the Department of Tourism and filling the role of assistant store manager at Automotive Art (Cayman) Ltd., where I’m now employed as the only woman on a seven-member management team.

Victoria is where I matured into the person I am today. I learned to navigate three different living situations, developed friendships that are still strong today and came to appreciate the Pacific almost as much as I do the Caribbean Sea. It was the farthest I had ever been from home on my own, and I believe my classmates thought I was daft to give up the sea, sand and sun just for an education. I’m not daft, because Victoria has grown on me and I think, given the chance, my family will feel the same... soon. BC
If the measure of a successful career is how well someone is able to marry passions and interests with working life, then Charles Russell (BCom ’95, IB) receives top marks. In Russell’s case, he has parlayed a lifelong love of biking into a varied, exciting and globe-trotting career in sporting goods marketing and sales; one that started in the biking mecca of British Columbia and has included stops in metropolitan Toronto, California and Switzerland.

“I remember going to a trade show when I was 21 and I saw these guys who worked for Sierra Designs standing around and looking cool, and I thought, ‘I want that,’” says the personable 42-year-old Russell, chuckling over the phone from the Vancouver offices of Rocky Mountain Bicycles, where last summer he accepted a position as director of sales, marketing and product.

Russell would eventually get a piece of that outdoor sales and marketing lifestyle, and a lot more—and his business studies at UVic would play a major role in his career development. It didn’t happen overnight, however, and by Russell’s own admission he was a late-blooming undergrad.

After graduating high school in Victoria in 1984, Russell started bike racing, and quickly fell in love with the sport and lifestyle. He enjoyed considerable success as a Category 2 road racer, with a number of top-10 finishes. For a time he dreamed of cracking Category 1 and pursuing a professional bike-racing career. However, after turning 22, he was growing weary of hand-to-mouth living, scraping together enough change to travel from race to race and pay for bike parts and maintenance. With little in the way of logistical and financial support for aspiring bike racers in Canada, Russell decided it was time to move on to a new chapter in his...
life. Yet he was confident this chapter would be closely linked to his love of sport. So, after retiring from full-time racing, he headed north to Whitehorse and landed a job working retail for the Hogan family, the Yukon entrepreneurs who went on to develop the highly successful Coast Mountain Sports franchise. Diving headlong into climbing, mountain biking and other adrenaline pursuits, Russell got his first true taste of the outdoor retail business, and it was an apprenticeship that left him wanting more.

“The sporting goods business was always what I wanted to do but it didn’t seem like there was much available,” says Russell. Although experience on the sales floor helped to crystallize his future plans, by the time he was 25 Russell had decided a return to the classroom was key to launching his career to the next level. With this in mind, he moved back to Vancouver Island and enrolled in UVic’s Faculty of Business. Living in Victoria, the city where he had spent his early years, was an easy sell. There was also a practical component to this decision: he was attracted by the UVic Business international exchange and co-op programs, which would give him firsthand experience with business environments in foreign countries. Participation in the international business program opened his eyes to the world of commerce and included an exchange at the University of Puebla in Mexico and a position with Vincor, one of Canada’s largest wine producers.

By the time Russell graduated in 1995, a combination of academic and real-world job experience had positioned him well to resume his trajectory into sporting good retail management. After graduation he landed a position with Bell Sports Canada, home of brands like Mountain Hardware, Oakley and Sorel. Over the next four years, he cut his teeth as a sales rep in BC, before moving east to help grow the firm’s sales territory in Toronto by more than 30 per cent. In 2001 he was promoted to European sales manager for Bell Sports, managing and directing a sales team responsible for some US$20 million in revenue. In July of that same year he moved on to the role of US sales director, overseeing a team of 34 independent sales agents generating US$30 million in revenue. By the following year, Russell was eager for new challenges. Career doors were opening, many of which appealed to his aptitude for and experience in the international market.

Keeping this in mind, he accepted a job with Sugoi Performance Apparel in the spring of 2002, with the grandiose title of global sales director. During a successful tenure with Sugoi, he and his team boosted annual sales by 15 per cent in each of the following four years. In 2005, US-based bike manufacturer Cannondale Bicycle Corporation purchased Sugoi. March of 2006 saw Russell heading across the Atlantic with his wife and two young children to assume the role of Cannondale’s vice-president of European sales in Basel, Switzerland.

“Participation in the international business program at UVic showed my interest, but I got the job in Switzerland because I really wanted it,” Russell says of the decision to continue his career in Europe.

Working for Cannondale in Switzerland was like a dream practicum in international finance and marketing. It was also a crash course in the cultural nuances of Europe that only field experience could provide. From a business perspective, Russell found Europe to be fascinatingly complex, a diverse continent where often the only common thread between member nations is the euro currency. Historic cultural and patriotic rivalries ran deep and strong. He encountered many managers in his business dealings who were surprisingly parochial in their approach, keen to lead a country in their chosen area of business but with little desire to adopt what he calls “pan-European responsibilities.” For someone like Russell, without ingrained cultural or political allegiances to the continent, it was fertile ground for business and career development.

“Being Canadian I could travel around without any cultural or historical baggage. I had a plethora of opportunities and I could have stayed in Europe, made a lot of money and had a fabulous life,” he says. “The lingua franca of business is definitely English and there are lots of opportunities for people who want to help Europe grow as an economic force.”

Despite opportunities for career advancement that presented themselves in Europe, as an avid mountain biker, skier and guy with strong ties to BC, he was once again feeling the pull of the West Coast. His kids had spent two years in Swiss schools and he sensed the time was right to move his family back to North America. He pondered offers for work in the sport retail management sector that could have landed him in Boulder, Colorado or California’s Bay Area.

Ultimately Russell decided to follow his instincts and last August joined the management team at Rocky Mountain
Bicycles, the venerable homegrown company credited with producing the first Canadian “fat tire” bike back in the early 1980s. After 25 years in the biking biz, Rocky Mountain was a brand with household recognition in the bike industry, but definitely in need of a little burnishing.

The opportunity to strengthen Rocky Mountain’s product and brand position was just the kind of challenge Russell was looking for—a challenge that has only been compounded by the current economic crisis that has retailers around the globe staring at red ink and shrinking bottom lines. As if the market meltdown wasn’t enough to keep him up at night, he stepped into senior management at Rocky Mountain just as the bike industry was heading into the annual overdrive season of selling and showing new product. He had to hit the ground in full stride, and over the past six months has spent more than his fair share of time on planes and in airport departure lounges as he meets with dealers and distributors around North America and liaises with Rocky Mountain’s Quebec-based owner.

“I’ve had my foot flat on the gas since I got here,” he says. His overseas experience in the bike industry will serve him well at Rocky Mountain, a firm that has always had strong brand recognition in countries like Germany. His first order of business, however, has been to focus on the domestic market, strengthening the company’s sales and marketing presence in North America. This is something he says his studies at UVic taught him—own the domestic market first and foremost before casting your company vision too widely.

In these challenging times Russell has spent a lot of time circling the wagons and micromanaging expenses. As for the prospects of the biking industry, he’s upbeat. Historically, he says, the pedal bike business has weathered economic downturns well. People who love bikes and biking tend to allocate resources to the sport even in stringent economic times. And if it means people will spend less time in cars and more time on bikes, that can translate into a positive on a bike company’s balance sheet.

As for his future plans, Russell is looking forward to settling with his family in Vancouver, with some of the best mountain biking on the planet virtually in his backyard. He envisions his career continuing to grow in a similar direction, thriving in general management, “running a successful and profitable business and helping a solid team around him grow and develop.” And though much has transpired in his work and personal life since his cap-and-gown commencement at UVic, Russell says his studies are as relevant today as they were when he graduated.

“To be honest I use my commerce degree every day,” Russell says. “I draw a direct link between my success in the bicycle industry, my education at UVic and my time as a bike racer.”

Opposite page: Charles Russell in Venice. Russell and his family lived and travelled overseas for several years as part of his career in sporting goods marketing and sales.
Right: The whole family in Greece, including Russell’s son Evan, wife Karlin and daughter Kristen.
Below: Russell and the kids take a break to plan their next adventure in Venice.
That Hollywood

UVic MBA turned L.A. talent agent reps the best in the musical and dance-show biz

By Brent Furdyk

Hollywood’s depiction of talent agents has generally not been a positive one—as personified by Jeremy Piven’s Emmy-winning portrayal of avaricious agent Ari Gold in HBO’s show-biz satire Entourage. Ask the average person to describe an agent, and you’re likely to hear words like “aggressive,” “abusive” and perhaps even “blood-sucking bully.” But just how accurate is this image of Hollywood’s “ten-per-centers” when compared to the reality?

“Very accurate, actually,” says Todd Cameron (MBA ’03) with a chuckle, noting the Entourage character is actually based on a real person, legendary Endeavor Talent Agency founder Ari Emanuel (brother of Rahm Emanuel, currently serving as US President Barack Obama’s Chief of Staff).
Cameron is currently an agent with L.A.-based Abrams Artists Agency, one of the world’s top 10 talent agencies. And while he will vouch for the accuracy of the stereotype, he makes it clear that not every agent is cut from that same cloth. As he describes it, his industry plays a crucial role in Hollywood’s star-making machinery by serving as a conduit between those who have talent and those who want it—and will pay top dollar for it.

“The buyers can be networks, studios, producers, advertisers’ agencies,” says Cameron. “Through our relationships with buyers and through understanding their wants and needs, we then have a roster of talent that we have signed to exclusive agreements with the agency, and we try to procure the best jobs for them.”

Of course, there’s a lot more to being an agent than finding jobs for clients, from contract negotiations and strategic career planning to staying abreast of entertainment trends to ensure your roster of talent is well-positioned to take full advantage of upcoming opportunities.

Right now, Cameron’s primary focus is the booming reality TV sector. “My top client is Brian Friedman, who works on the UK’s No. 1 show, The X Factor, created by and featuring American Idol’s Simon Cowell,” he says.

In addition, Cameron has been at the forefront of one of television’s hottest recent trends and one of its hottest shows: Dancing With the Stars. Not only does Cameron represent four of the dancers (Maksim Chmerkovskiy, Tony Dovolani, Edyta Sliwinska and Alec Mazo), he has also been deeply involved with the show since its earliest days, when ABC decided to adapt the BBC hit Strictly Come Dancing for US television.

“When I first heard about Dancing With the Stars coming to America, I was involved with the BBC from the get-go. They needed dance experts and talents and I had those talents, and made sure I was knocking on the door right off the bat. My relationship with the BBC is a very, very good one, because now it’s expanded to the [original UK] show, and I’ve got a client who’s going to be working on that show as well.”

As Cameron explains, his keen appreciation for dance has not only fuelled his success, but launched him onto this career path in the first place. After attaining his MBA, Cameron was “working in Trail, BC, as the general manager of a wholesale food distribution facility for an Italian family-run grocery chain,” he laughs. “Before that I was a buyer for Safeway. I had no direct connection to [the entertainment industry] other than my girlfriend at the time, who was a dancer. Through her, I got to know some people, then eventually came to L.A. and got involved in this world.”

Cameron decided to head to Los Angeles for what he thought would be a short working vacation. “I ended up staying six years,” he says with a laugh.

Initially, he found work with a smaller agency specifically focused on dancers and choreographers. His efforts on behalf of his clients didn’t go unnoticed, and he was eventually approached to join Abrams Artists Agency. “The owner, Harry Abrams, is a deep appreciator of dance as an art form,” says Cameron. “He also remembers the days when the musical motion pictures and the people associated with musicals were the biggest-ticket items around.”

Although the Hollywood musical had been considered moribund for decades, the success of films such as Chicago and last year’s Mamma Mia are indicative of a resurgence in the genre, and Cameron finds himself perfectly positioned to ride this wave. “I spoke with a studio executive last week who indicated that, just for their one studio, they’ve got five musical motion pictures in development,” he says. “That’s what’s on the horizon.”

Cameron credits his UVic Business education with giving him the foundation on which to carve out his Hollywood career. “I specialized in services management at UVic, and this is a service-based industry. It opened the door for me to come down here because of the company looking for someone with a business background—a technical business background—to help its business grow.”

Still, he admits that Hollywood-style business is a far cry from
what’s taught at business school. “Conventional business logic would dictate that you make decisions based on modelling and projections and past experiences,” he explains. “In the entertainment business, because of its creativity and because of the fame associated with it, decisions are based a lot on emotion and on ego. It’s really like being a senator in Caesar’s court. It’s a game of alliances and coalitions; it’s a game of positioning [and] game theory when negotiating on behalf of your clients, etc. So it’s an interesting business.”

Yet Cameron’s business background has allowed him to bring a unique perspective to Hollywood that has seen him thrive. “Agents who handle the type of talent I handle typically come from within the industry; they were actors, dancers or choreographers themselves at one time, which is great. They understand the art form amazingly, but they may be lacking in the business aspect of it. Having that background, I think, sets me apart from other agents and opened the door for me to get my job in the first place."

And while he admits the technical aspect of his MBA studies may not have come into play during his time as a talent agent, Cameron is adamant that what he learned at UVic has been helpful on a deeply intuitive level.

“It’s being able to understand and intuitively know that, for example, Dancing With the Stars is the No. 2 television show in the world, so what kind of advertising dollars do they generate?” he says, adding international sales and merchandising also figure into the equation. “You add it up and at the end of the day you understand what the total gross per-episode income generation is for that series. With that knowledge, you can break it down. How much does it cost to physically produce an episode? Of that, how much does the talent get? I think many of the agents out there don’t think that way, don’t break it down that way. They look at it from the perspective of, ‘Well, this is a quote, this is a comparable quote; what can I absolutely extract from this without regard to the overall economics of the productions?’”

Looking toward the future, Cameron says he’s passionate about continuing to grow his particular segment of the entertainment industry. “Five years from now, I see the movie musical and the people doing it to be the A-list of the industry. We’ve deviated from that for a long time, really since the heyday of the musical back in the 1950s. Now dance is at the forefront— it’s a consumable art form that the public is becoming reacquainted with. People are appreciating it and becoming more deft at discerning the difference between real talent and what’s just movement.”

Predicting an explosion of dance-based musical entertainment, Cameron sees the demand for the type of talent he represents on the rise. “I see dance as its own consumable art form increasing as well,” he says. “But it takes a unique set of talent in order to produce those things well. If you look at the success of Disney’s High School Musical, a lot of it has to do with the fact that the director, Kenny Ortega, is and was a choreographer who really understands dance. It’s the appreciation and understanding of dance and movement as an art form that’s important, and reflects how well a director will be able to interpret that and capture it in a way that will read well on the motion-picture screen or the TV screen. I envision that some of my clients will transition from the world of dance to eventually become directors of motion pictures and television, as well as stage.”

While Cameron confirms that Hollywood has no shortage of Ari Gold-style agents, he says he’s not one of them. “My philosophy on the entertainment business differs from the typical agent, who wants to suck as much blood out of that stone as possible. And to a certain extent, there’s a lot of blood to be sucked. But at the end of the day we want to make sure that everybody is comfortable with the cost structures associated with talent . . . and has money to ensure that products are produced well. Oftentimes you’ll see that studios have spent an enormous amount of money on the talent, and the production quality suffers. So I don’t buy into that philosophy, because we’re all in this business not just to make money, but also to make great products, which, if you do, you should make the money as well.”

As the L.A. resident points out, the biggest challenges he’s faced have been cultural, not professional. “I didn’t expect it, but there is a big cultural difference between Canada and the United States,” he says. “You don’t expect it because as a Canadian you kind of consider yourself like an American; like you can go to America and people won’t know you’re a Canadian. And for the most part, that’s true. But we have our own cultural identity—our social programs and our social fabric really set us apart from Americans in fundamental ways. . . . It’s more ‘us’ than here in the States, where it’s more ‘me.’ I think Canadians are more modest and more humble. It felt strange for the first couple of years, and I almost wasn’t sure I was going to stay.”

And right now? “I miss Canada a lot,” he says. “But right now I’m staring out my window at a completely blue sky while palm trees sway back and forth. L.A. is a nice city to live in for that reason. And it’s where this business’s heart is. So, to pursue it on the level that I hope to pursue it, this is where I’ve got to be.”
Organizations have used integrated worksite health promotion (WHP)—policies that encourage employees to choose lifestyles that improve health—for years now. But more and more organizations are using bottom-line motivations for their health promotion activities. This trend is likely driven by evidence that creating an environment that encourages employees to take more responsibility for improving their lifestyle choices can have a significant positive impact on productivity, absenteeism rates and morale and, key in today’s cost climate, reduce employee benefit costs. Reviews of WHP studies reveal sick time can be reduced by 28 per cent, health care costs cut by 26 per cent and workers’ compensation lowered by 30 per cent.

But these benefits don’t come easy, and some organizations that attempt to institutionalize a culture of wellness fail to achieve the expected results. The question is: why do some organizations succeed where others fail?

Recent research undertaken by a team of Canadian academicians is trying to answer this question. Dr. Ali Dastmalchian and I, from the University of Victoria, along with Dr. Helen Kelley from the University of Lethbridge and Dr. David Sharp from the Ivey School of Business, have gathered data from 75 Canadian organizations deemed to have exemplary WHP programs. When we looked behind the results of these organizations, this is what we found:

**Change preparedness:** All of the groups in our sample embarked on a process of organizational change. Of some surprise was the amount of readiness activity the organizations in our sample undertook. They created awareness of a gap between the current state of employee well-being and a state these individuals could potentially achieve. With a high level of management support, the implementation team designed a program of health promotion activities that met the needs of the employee base. The readiness process contributed to employee self-efficacy, and provided insights into the benefits of the program for the employees. The organizations also trained and supported multiple agents to lead and foster the change.

Normally in a change process, there is an extensive period of adoption, or “trying on for size.” The adoption stage in our exemplary firms was very short.

**A bottom-line case for wellness:** Normally we see WHP emanating over time out of HR departments, health-and-safety departments or even newly designed departments created specifically to plan, design and implement WHP. The process starts with an assessment of employees’ current health status through questionnaires, and then creates a program of activities that meets employee needs based on health status.

One unanticipated finding was a turnaround in this normal approach. The last few years have seen increasing calls to provide a business justification for WHP. These firms were doing just that. They began the process by examining their benefit costs. For example, if an analysis of employees’ use of pharmaceuticals revealed the organization’s employee base had a high prescription rate for stress and depression-related drugs, the organization would design its WHP activities to reduce pharmaceutical use, the main goal being a reduction in benefit costs. In this approach, a change process is still used to create readiness and institutionalize change, but the motivation is considerably different than it has been in the past for most organizations developing WHP.

We have labelled the traditional approach to WHP “soft” wellness and the bottom-line approach “hard” wellness. It remains to be seen if this new bottom-up, cost-driven approach is successful in improving employees’ lifestyle choices, and whether it influences more organizations to consider the idea of building a wellness culture. It seems to be working for some Canadian organizations. BC

Dr. Angela Downey is an associate professor of accounting at UVic. She is also a health economist and has been researching worksite health promotion for nearly two decades.
Timing is everything
Founder of Mitel Networks named sixth distinguished entrepreneur
By Dianne George

Timing in life is just about everything, says Sir Terry Matthews, co-founder of Mitel Corporation, a world leader in the design and manufacture of enterprise voice systems. Matthews, who has been named 2009 UVic Business Distinguished Entrepreneur, shared a few secrets of his success when he visited the campus February 23 to discuss a unique internship opportunity for business and engineering students.

Matthews might have had a much more prosaic career if it weren’t for an accident of timing. In 1970 at the age of 25, he arrived in Canada for what was originally planned to be a summer vacation. But he fell in love with the lush green Ottawa River Parkway and received a job offer from Microsystems International worth three times the salary he was earning in his native Wales, so he decided to stay.

Around the same time, Canada’s housing industry was growing rapidly—townhomes were sprouting up everywhere, all with front lawns that needed a regular mow. Seizing the opportunity, Matthews, and friend and fellow Brit Michael Cowpland, launched Mitel Networks with the idea of importing lawn mowers to Canada. However, the transatlantic shipping process worked against them. “Our shipment of mowers was lost at sea and while we waited, winter descended and covered our green lawns with snow,” recalls Matthews.

The next coincidence occurred with the deregulation of the American telephone giant AT&T. Matthews quit his job with Microsystems International to respond to the demand for telephone equipment. With the introduction of the touch-tone receiver, and later the software-driven PBX call-routing system, Matthews and Cowpland used Mitel (Mike and Terry’s Lawn Mowers) to revolutionize the telecommunications industry. After first raising $4,000 as seed capital and later borrowing $120,000 from friends and family, they worked day and night to get the systems to market faster and cheaper than anyone else. The strategy paid off, and 10 years later the company and its investors, who were given a $1 share for every $1,000 invested, were worth millions.

“And that’s the secret,” says Matthews. “Timing, hard work, smarts and partners. Using that formula, I’ve either founded or invested in over 80 companies, and none have gone bankrupt. Most have done very well.”

In addition to Mitel, in 1986 Matthews founded Newbridge Networks, a leader in the worldwide data networking industry (which had revenues in excess of $1.8 billion when he sold it in 2000), and March Networks, a provider of video and data applications used for security surveillance, monitoring, analysis and business optimization. He is also founder and chair of Wesley Clover, a world-class investment group with offices in the UK, the US, Canada, the United Arab Emirates and Russia, and investments in technology, real estate and leisure.

Under the internship available through Matthews’ Ottawa-based Wesley Clover Technologies operation, selected students and recent graduates are given a business idea and work in teams of four or five to bring a product to market in 12 to 18 months or less. Anyone who takes Matthews up on his offer earns a lower-than-market salary, plus an equity stake in the nascent company. Participants in the Wesley Clover “boot camp” don’t need a lot of money—Matthews puts them up on his estate and doesn’t give
them much time for play. What he does do is expose them to a team of engineers and a network of customers, potential investors and mentors, and a host of others who help groom the young entrepreneurs.

Matthews, who put Kanata, Ontario on the map with Mitel, firmly believes that within 10 years Victoria could become a similar centre of technology. “You have the university; now you need a cluster of tech companies where one might achieve a billion dollars a year in revenue.” He’s betting that one of those companies might belong to a Wesley Clover graduate.

An engineer by education, Matthews has been fixing and building things all of his life. He holds an honours degree in electronics from the University of Wales, Swansea and is a fellow of the Institute of Electrical Engineers and of the Royal Academy of Engineering. He has been awarded honorary doctorates by several universities, including the University of Wales, Glamorgan and Swansea, and Carleton University in Ottawa. In 1994, he was appointed as an officer of the Order of the British Empire, and in the 2001 Queen’s Birthday Honours, he was awarded a knighthood.

Matthews will receive the Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year award at a gala event May 19 at Victoria Conference Centre. He joins an elite circle of distinguished entrepreneurs: Clive Beddow, a founding shareholder and executive chair of WestJet (2008); David Black, founder of Canada’s largest privately owned newspaper publishing company (2007); Gwyn Morgan, who established EnCana Corp. as the country’s largest energy company (2006); Dave Ritchie, chairman of Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers (2005); and Jeff Mallett, former president and chief operating officer of Yahoo (2004).

The award, introduced by the UVic Business Board of Advisers in 2004, recognizes an inspirational entrepreneur who has had a significant and positive impact on the global community through his or her business leadership. BC
Leave your mark for future generations.
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Just ask Business students Kamal Johal and Devon MacPherson.
Kamal and Devon both received awards that helped them achieve their education goals.

“I am so thankful that there are people in the community who believe in the importance of education and are willing to support me so that I can achieve my dreams.”

Devon MacPherson is a 4th year BCom student in the Commerce Program (with Entrepreneurship specialization)

“Student recipients, such as myself, are truly appreciative of your support. It makes a significant impact on more than just a financial level. Knowing that there are individuals that want to give encourages me to give back.”

Kamal Johal is a 4th year BCom student in the Commerce Program (with an International Business specialization).

Your generosity will help ensure that future generations of talented students like Kamal and Devon receive a quality education. You can establish a fund in your name, or the name of a loved one, to support any university program you wish.

Find out how you can create a lasting legacy in your will or estate plan by contacting Natasha Benn, Planned Giving Development Officer at 250-721-6001 or by e-mail at nbenn@uvic.ca
“I hate people from your country. I find them ignorant and lazy.”

This is an absurd, idiotic comment that no one who graduated from a decent business school or had an IQ above a paperweight would ever make, especially in the workplace. It pains me to type it in jest. It would be instant business suicide to say something this stupid in the workplace, yet as a Canadian, you might be surprised how often this actually occurs.

Just take the first sentence and insert “the US.” Be honest, does it sound as harsh as if you had inserted China, Japan or Germany? When you think about working internationally, how far do you have to fly? How many countries does “international” actually include?

As Canadians, we are more likely to work with Americans than any other nationality. We share the largest border in the world and thousands of people hop across every day to chase love and work. But this familiarity and cross-pollination can lead to problems.

During my MBA program, a professor asked what our first impression of Americans was, and someone quickly spoke up with a one-word answer: “Ignorant!” What if the professor had asked the same question about Germans? Although a dual citizen, I’m not overly sensitive. However, would you hire someone who insulted 87 per cent of your clients?

On another occasion, I had a potential employee go on a 30-minute diatribe at a work function about Americans being stupid, fat, lazy, worthless and arrogant. I tried to interrupt to prevent further embarrassment, but at this point he was frothing at the mouth with excitement—not even a weapon of mass destruction was going to slow him down. In his defence, he didn’t know I could potentially be his boss, and he had been hanging out at the bar with a guy named Jack Daniel for a few hours.

I’m not saying you have to like the US or anyone that lives there, but at least be professional enough to fake it at work and not jeopardize your career. That’s not to say you can’t make fun of Americans; I have plenty of employees, friends and colleagues who understand the right and wrong way to make fun of someone. As a matter of course, you should avoid sweeping negative generalizations about any culture. It’s one thing to tell someone you think he’s ignorant, but it’s something completely different to include his mother, sister, grandparents and “W.” OK. I might spot you W. bc
Alumni in profile

Jeffrey Harris
By Dianne George

Jeff Harris (MBA ’95) has added another entry to his very impressive résumé. Along with leading KPMG’s venture capital/mid-market advisory services practice for the San Francisco Bay area, he recently received the 2008 UVic Business Alumni Award of Excellence.

“Jeff exemplifies the qualities we instil in our students, and is a great ambassador for our program,” says Dr. Ali Dastmalchian, professor and dean. “He has put our program onto the radar of KPMG-USA and has been instrumental in mentoring and recruiting UVic business students.”

Harris is a partner in IT advisory services and specializes in large-scale transformational projects for both top-tier and emerging clients. He is the national product champion for KPMG’s Systems Stabilization and Improvement methodology, a structured approach he developed for designing and executing process improvements, and he is also a top national trainer for KPMG.

Harris also helped form, and now chairs, the UVic Business Alumni Chapter in Northern California, which has grown rapidly since inception.

Harris speaks highly of the UVic Business grads at KPMG and says they are, “so valued in fact that the extra outlay associated with recruiting and hiring a UVic graduate—for example, relocation and immigration costs—in comparison to local schools [the University of California in Berkeley; University of Southern California and even Stanford] has been an investment worth making.”

When recruiting, Harris seeks individuals with good writing and speaking skills, and the ability to listen. “This is an area where students should focus as they may have a great idea but if they can’t communicate it effectively, it can engender the opposite perception of both the idea and the individual,” he says.

“Students interested in working in the US or who have international career aspirations in professional services, should be aware of individual country differences,” he adds.

When not at the office, Harris can be found enjoying the California lifestyle, playing ice hockey, golfing and enjoying the sights and sounds of the Bay area.

For more of this interview, visit www.business.uvic.ca/alumni.

Class notes

2007
Ben Coles, MBA and his wife Emma are thrilled to welcome their son Jacob (Jack to his friends), to complete the pair they started with young Samuel last year. Jacob joins the family in moving to the Lower Mainland as his father takes a new position with the sales management team of Black Press.

Dharam Domalpalli, MBA (IB) is on a fast track with Brookfield LePage Johnson Controls, a leader in the facilities management industry. After less than a year of working on the company’s accommodation and real estate services contract in BC as a senior technical adviser, he has been promoted to the position of strategic information manager at the corporate head office in Markham, Ontario. He has successfully worked on the transition of CIBC and now is gearing up for the transition of TD Bank in Canada and the US. BLJC currently delivers services to clients with portfolios larger than 130 million square feet of space. “I eat, sleep and breathe real estate,” says Domalpalli.

2006
Christian D. Kittleson, MBA left international consulting firm BearingPoint in December 2008 to accept the position of director of financial operations for VIH Aviation Group. VIH Aviation Group is one of the world’s largest helicopter services companies, with a fleet of 70-plus helicopters operating in countries around the globe, and in a wide range of sectors from offshore oil and gas platform passenger transportation in the Gulf of Mexico and Newfoundland to heli-skiing in the Rocky Mountains.

2003
Andrea Tang (née Ko), BCom (IB) obtained her chartered accountant designation in 2007 and was recently promoted to manager at Norgaard Neale Camden, Chartered Accountants, in Victoria, BC. Tang provides a wide range of assurance, accounting, small business advisory and Canadian tax return preparation services to individuals, corporations and trusts.

Call for class notes
Keep your classmates up to date by sharing news about yourself. Photos always welcome; 300 dpi works best. Deadline: July 15, 2009. Email: boehnert@uvic.ca.
It’s hard to believe, but **Leanne Wingenbach** (BCom ’05) doesn’t necessarily think of herself as a numbers person. Wingenbach, who won the Western Canada gold medal in the 2008 Uniform Final Evaluation (UFE) exams for chartered accountant designation, says most business students—numbers people or not—would benefit from getting a CA.

“I think a lot of people have the impression that accountants mainly deal with numbers, but it’s so much more than that,” she says.

Wingenbach has been enjoying national exposure as a result of her gold-medal win, including a front-page article in Spotlight U, a magazine published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta. “It’s been interesting,” she says. “CAs will actually recognize me.”

Wingenbach decided to get her CA designation after doing a co-op term at Hudson LLP, a Calgary public-practice accounting firm. She says her time at UVic helped a lot with the UFE, which consists largely of scenario- or case-based questions. “UVic Business is pretty case-based and I think that helped throughout the process, because I was so used to writing cases,” she says.

Wingenbach joined Calgary-based Longbow Capital Inc., a venture-capital company specializing in oil and gas, this January. So far she’s enjoying the role, which differs from public practice in that she has one client, as opposed to many.

With the new job and her CA designation under her belt, Wingenbach is looking forward to some much-needed R&R, including skiing, and camping this summer. “It’s been so busy, so it’s nice to just take a breather and have my evenings and weekends free,” she says.

**Editor’s note:** UVic graduates achieved the highest pass rate of universities in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba on the 2008 Chartered Accountant Uniform Final Evaluation (UFE) exams, which lead to the CA designation. Of the 33 UVic candidates, 90.9 per cent passed the UFE. The national pass rate was 71.7 per cent.
Four years ago Paul Monger (MBA ’03), then director of development for Domino’s Pizza, was sitting in a boardroom looking at industry data when something occurred to him: of the 7,500 pizzerias in Canada, over half are independent. If even 20 per cent of those independent pizzerias get together, they could take a serious bite out of Domino’s market share. Bound by a non-competition agreement, he filed the idea away.

Now president of Franworks Growth Corp., Monger is poised to launch a service that does just what he contemplated back in 2005—link independent pizzerias through a branded network that allows hungry customers across Canada to call one number to order a pizza. The closest member pizzeria bakes and delivers the grub.

“We tell the story and create the brand, and market each one almost as a franchisor, allowing these pizza shops to retain their independence while enjoying the benefits of being in a large chain,” says Monger, who specialized in service management.

The service (name top-secret at press time) is due to launch this summer. Members will enjoy brand recognition, marketing support and increased sales, while preserving their own systems at the shop level. Florists across the continent have united in similar fashion under brands like FTD, and flooring companies under brands like CarpetOne.

Monger joined the Calgary-based Franworks three years ago as an employee. He recently became an owner, based out of the company’s Surrey, BC office. Asked if his was a normal trajectory for Franworks, Monger replies: “I don’t know about normal, I’m just a very entrepreneurial person.”

Entrepreneurial indeed, especially for a guy who did his undergraduate degree in geography. He says he always had an interest in business, and has had jobs since he was 11. “I guess I was always that guy in high school who was organizing the ski trips to Mont Tremblant and Blue Mountain (we were living in Ontario at the time),” he says.

Monger bought his first store when he was 21, right after graduation—a buy-and-sell shop called Cash Converters. A previous employer had approached him with the idea of bringing the Australian brand to Canada. He stuck with the shop for six years, but found himself wanting to move beyond the franchisee level.

“I really enjoyed what I did. I spent many 100-plus-hour weeks at it, but my passion was to create and lead, and I really saw myself long-term at the franchisor level,” says Monger. “I knew I needed the education to open some of those doors.”

Enter the UVic MBA program, which he credits with opening doors, and giving him a theoretical complement to his practical experience. He chose UVic partly for the West Coast lifestyle, and partly for the international elements of the MBA program, like a potential stint overseas (he ended up spending two weeks in Korea) and a high proportion of international students.

Sub-sandwich company Quiznos hired Monger as director of franchise development just before his 2003 graduation. “The MBA was a large part of why I got hired and it allowed me to stand out from other candidates,” says Monger. He later moved on to Domino’s as director of development.

In between Quiznos and Domino’s, Monger started up Leaseboys, an online company that allows customers to get out of car leases, with fellow UVic MBA Matthew Hoffman. Monger still owns and runs the business as a side project. “My lesson learned there was that my expertise is in franchising,” says Monger. “You’re always more successful and have more fun when you do something you enjoy and are an expert in.”

And now Monger is doing just that for Franworks. With a new success on the horizon, he’s bringing together hands-on franchise expertise with his knowledge of branding, not to mention his entrepreneurial spirit. “I always knew I would end up backing owning my own business,” he says, and there’s no question: he’s right where he should be. BC
Dear fellow alumni,

We’re looking for class reps from each grad year for both the BCom and MBA programs. Because alumni are spread out around the world, we need several reps from each grad year to become ambassadors, or “class champions.” These champions will help us with specific projects, to help all grads get more out of their degrees:

**Promoting the UVic Business job postings service to fellow alumni:** By encouraging fellow grads (or their companies’ HR departments) to post business-specific jobs on our career site, we’re helping new and experienced grads find exciting new career opportunities. If you know alumni and students who are job hunting, tell them to visit the site: [www.business.uvic.ca/co-op_career/jobs/career_postings](http://www.business.uvic.ca/co-op_career/jobs/career_postings).

**Encouraging fellow grads to participate in the alumni network:** Students about to enter the workforce value the opportunity to speak with alumni in their field of interest; using the network we can connect them with experienced professionals for an informational interview. An accurate, robust and active alumni network provides grads with networking, peer-to-peer consultation and business partnership opportunities.

We need class champions to motivate fellow alumni to update their contact information with UVic Business, as well as join our LinkedIn alumni group. Visit [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) — group name: UVic faculty of Business — so that students and grads alike can enjoy the benefits of a strong alumni network.

**Getting the word out about events:** Class champions will help promote alumni events to members of their grad year. Alumni events are a lot more fun to attend when you know your old classmates will be there—the class champions will help get the word out.

We don’t anticipate this being a large time commitment. We’re simply looking for individuals who want to stay connected, and are willing to assist with getting the word out about the initiatives identified above to strengthen our alumni network.

If you are interested, please contact alumni officer Krista Boehnert at: boehnert@uvic.ca.

Sincerely,

Simon and Cristina Rose
Victoria Business Alumni Chapter Chairs

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**New Toronto alumni chapter chair**

We are pleased to announce **Gord Hundal** (MBA ’98), as our new Toronto alumni chapter chair. If you wish to contact him regarding alumni events in the Toronto area please email him: ghundal1@cogeco.ca.

As regional vice-president for the Toronto Northwest market at RBC Royal Bank, Gurinder Singh Hundal (known as Gord) is currently responsible for RBC’s personal, financial planning and small business clients in the Toronto Northwest area.

Born and raised in Victoria, BC, Hundal, a first-generation Canadian, has also lived abroad, spending time in both England and Malaysia. After completing his bachelor’s degree in the sciences at UVic, Hundal went on to earn his MBA before moving into the financial world.

Hundal joined RBC eight years ago as a credit analyst and progressed to the role of senior relationship manager, where he worked with several private and public companies in the BC knowledge-based and technology industries. He moved to Toronto four years ago to work with the company’s financing products team in the commercial financial services business.

A sports enthusiast who is married with two children, Hundal spends his personal time at his son’s hockey games and his daughter’s ballet recitals, and coaches his children’s respective soccer teams.

**Open letter from Victoria alumni chapter chairs**

**Re: class champions**

Dear fellow alumni,

We’re looking for class reps from each grad year for both the BCom and MBA programs. Because alumni are spread out around the world, we need several reps from each grad year to become ambassadors, or “class champions.” These champions will help us with specific projects, to help all grads get more out of their degrees:

**Promoting the UVic Business job postings service to fellow alumni:** By encouraging fellow grads (or their companies’ HR departments) to post business-specific jobs on our career site, we’re helping new and experienced grads find exciting new career opportunities. If you know alumni and students who are job hunting, tell them to visit the site: [www.business.uvic.ca/co-op_career/jobs/career_postings](http://www.business.uvic.ca/co-op_career/jobs/career_postings).

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Sincerely,

Simon and Cristina Rose
Victoria Business Alumni Chapter Chairs

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**KEEP IN TOUCH:** UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION to ensure you receive the latest information about UVic Business alumni events. You can also sign up for a permanent UVic alumni email address to ensure you don’t lose contact with classmates. Visit the UVic Alumni Association website at: [alumni.uvic.ca/services/addressupdate.php](http://alumni.uvic.ca/services/addressupdate.php).


**ALSO,** 2010 marks the Faculty’s 20th anniversary—join us in the celebrations!
Much-lauded prof retires

In January 2009, faculty and staff wished Roger Wolff a well-deserved retirement from his day-to-day life as a professor. At his retirement dinner, Dr. Wolff was lauded as an outstanding educator and the administrator who helped UVic Business transition from a business school to a business faculty. In his remarks, Dr. Ali Dastmalchian said Wolff’s tenure was marked by difficult economic times and a freeze on tuition rates, and noted he was the driving force behind establishing the faculty’s international focus. Wolff was the genesis for the “2+2” program and a passionate advocate for the entrepreneurship specialization. Wolff began his career in 1969 as assistant professor in the University of Toronto Faculty of Management. In addition to teaching, he held a number of leadership positions at the U of T: research director of the Joint Program in Transportation, vice-provost for professional faculties, dean of the Faculty of Management and director of international programs for the Faculty of Management. During the past 15 years, Wolff maintained a strong connection with the business community. He advised many corporations and governments on management information systems, transportation planning, decision support systems and forecasting. He also supported advanced education by working with governments to complete external reviews of university faculties and departments.

Wolff served as chair of the Canadian Federation of Business School Deans, and he sat on many boards, including the Canadian Club, the Institute of Canadian Bankers and the CA School of Business board of directors.

Despite his specialization in operations management, he worked tirelessly on behalf of the accounting profession. He was awarded an honorary CA designation for his contribution in 2005, one of only 11 such designations awarded in the BC institute’s 100-year history.

While Wolff is planning to spend more time on his other great passions—his grandchildren and golf—he will continue to teach the occasional class at UVic Business, thus ensuring a few more students benefit from his wisdom and guidance.

Business Board of Advisers

A tip of the hat to David Black, who will be inducted into the BC Laureate Hall of Fame on May 21, 2009. The Business Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding individuals who make equally outstanding contributions to free enterprise and society. He joins a list of exceptional leaders that includes Charles Woodward, Don Rix, Tong Louie, Irving Barber, Wendy McDonald and Jimmy Pattison. Black was the first chair of the UVic Business Board of Advisers, and was named 2007 Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year.

I ♥ Custom House

Congratulations to Peter Gustavson and the Custom House team for receiving a Platinum Canada’s 50 Best Managed Companies award for the eighth consecutive year. This national award is sponsored by Deloitte and Touche, and recognizes companies that operate at the highest level of business performance. Gustavson is a member of the UVic Board of Advisers and chair of the Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award committee.

Congratulations to:

Captain Marcel Hallé, who was awarded the Order of Military Merit in February 2009. The Order recognizes distinctive merit and exceptional service displayed by the men and women of the Canadian Forces, both regular and reserve, and honours them for their commitment to Canada.

Gwyn Morgan, 2006 UVic Business Distinguished Entrepreneur, received the 2008 Canadian Engineering Leadership Award from the Schulich School of Engineering.

Dave Schneider, past chair of the UVic Business Board of Advisers, was nominated for Leadership Victoria’s UVic Community Leadership Award.

Cedric Steele and Eric Donald were nominated for Leadership Victoria Rotary Community Leadership Awards. All nominees and award winners were recognized on February 5, 2009.
Award brings star into spotlight

Our champions

Go team: Leading right to the end of the competition, Team Victoria placed second in the annual Financial Post MBA Portfolio Management Competition. The challenge, faced by MBA students from 16 Canadian universities, began on October 1, 2008 and ended on January 16, 2009. Each team was responsible for managing an initial investment of $100,000. Team Victoria finished with a revised portfolio value of $120,051.85, a 20 per cent increase. According to the Financial Post news article, only the top three finishers—the Richard Ivey School of Business, Victoria and Concordia—finished in the black; all others ended the competition in the red. The three teams also destroyed the S&P/TSX composite index, which dropped by 23 per cent over the competition.

Challenge conquered: UVic Business students finished in the top three at the 2009 Western Canadian Certified Financial Analyst (CFA) Investment Research Challenge. Under the leadership of Dr. Angela Downey and Tony Gage (member of the UVic Board of Governors), our team of MBA and BCom students completed a company and industry analysis and report over a three-month period, competing with teams from BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan. More information on the challenge is available on the CFA Institute website: www.cfainstitute.org.

In memoriam

UVic Business lost an exceptional friend with the passing of Denis Racine in January 2009. He was an active board member, serving as an executive mentor for more than 15 years, and a member of the Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Committee since its inception in 2004. Racine was previously director of communications for BC Buildings Corporation and national president of the Canadian Public Relations Society. Most recently he served as manager of the Canadian Tour’s annual Times Colonist Open golf tournament. He was an inspiration to many and served the community with distinction. BC
As a business student at the University of Victoria, I can’t help but contemplate the effect current economic conditions will have on my future and that of my peers. I’m fortunate to have a co-op position with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, but many of my friends and colleagues are currently facing serious barriers to achieving their career goals.

In spite of the current economic dilemma, there are opportunities for those willing to be creative, apply their originality and bring a diverse set of skills to a disenchanted workforce and economy. In response to the downturn, consumer purchasing behaviour is shifting, creating a market for fresh, innovative minds to develop products and services that people want and need. For example, consumers are postponing large discretionary purchases, such as new vehicles, while sales of smaller luxuries, such as home entertainment products, prosper. Frugality is a normal reaction for consumers in a recession, but this doesn’t mean they’ll stop spending altogether.

The current business structure is also rapidly adjusting to the cooling economy, and this is apparent in increased layoffs, terminations and the like. Many who held these positions are moving to other jobs, returning to school or, if eligible, electing to retire early. When the economy recovers, there will be a demand for us to fill these vacant positions.

Many benefits have arisen from the recession. Vehicles are cheaper, stock prices have dropped significantly, creating investment opportunities, and many other goods and services are being offered at lower prices. Real estate prices are also dropping to a more attainable level.

The current global state is a wake-up call for business people around the world to approach business differently. We’ve seen some of the world’s largest businesses and financial institutions go bankrupt or fall into financial distress due to years of using unsustainable business techniques. In the future, I’m certain students will sit in the very classrooms I now occupy and learn about the mistakes that caused the present recession.

From an academic standpoint, the fact that the economic crisis has been placed under a microscope and incorporated into our course material is evidence that the problem is beginning to correct itself. Critical and even harsh analysis of the way events have unfolded over the past year in economies around the world helps to foster a new way of thinking among students, providing us with tools that will be critical in a post-recession era.

Educational institutions have a further role to play, and need to consider creating business programs that prepare tomorrow’s business leaders for real-life situations. Although traditional business courses are fundamental, unconventional business courses that stimulate creativity, ideas and innovation are needed.

Another fundamental issue raised by these events is regulation. Out of this recession, I hope to see regulatory practice entrenched into business practices. The glorification of short-term profits over long-term economic stability needs to be replaced by foresight and responsibility. Students are beginning to get a business education in which they’re taught to think critically about the “triple bottom line” and to question practices that don’t align with economic, social and environmental concerns. This new era of education and thinking is crucial to the long-term health of our economy.

Jarett Vermette is a third-year UVic BCom student.
The Victoria Conference Centre (VCC) has focused on professional association conferences for over two decades and can now accommodate up to 1200 delegate conferences with the recent expansion.

The VCC is proud to partner with the University of Victoria to attract national and international conferences to Victoria.

The VCC is a proud host/sponsor of the following upcoming UVIC-led conferences:
- Canadian Forum on Public Procurement - 2009
- Canadian Banner Users Conference - 2010

The VCC is also pleased to be a host/sponsor for the UVIC Vikes Awards Banquet and Hall of Fame 2009

Please contact us to find out more about how we can help you to bring your professional association conference to the city.

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