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On the cover: Sarah Easter photo: UVic Photo Services
Dr. Easter: Courtesy of Elevate Publishing
Book cover photo: Atelier Bee & Jules
Message from the Dean

Big Book of Firsts

WHAT IS THE DISTINCTION between “first” and “next”? A first is often only the initial step along a path, a movement forward which elicits a number of important next steps on the way to success. Whether it is exploring entirely new ways of doing business, or achieving something for the first time within our classrooms, significant firsts are part of the fabric of a place like Gustavson, where innovation is central to our identity.

In this issue, we celebrate a few recent firsts that are significant for the trails our grads are blazing and the new vistas they have opened up within our own community.

This past June we celebrated our first PhD graduate from the Sauder S. Gill Graduate School. Dr. Sarah Easter’s walk across the stage marked a historic moment for our young but thriving PhD program. Through her research into organizational identity and boundary spanning at the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, Easter explored how loosely structured organizations like the Coalition can effectively work together despite differences among stakeholders to achieve their goals. Her work aligns in many ways with the school’s values of social responsibility, sustainability and integrative thinking, and we are proud to have her representing our program.

Other firsts you’ll find sprinkled through the following pages are a first book from professor Mark Colgate, first-time alumni business owners, the first offering of our MBA program in a weekend format and the first time a Gustavson student was hired by a co-op employer.

And those significant “nexts” 1” mentioned? Gustavson is proud to release the results of its 2016 Brand Trust Index. First launched in 2015, and with insights from over 6,300 consumers, the survey highlights the critical role trust plays in business success and provides insight into how trust is built and sustained.

I’m grateful that our school’s culture fosters and supports this kind of innovation, supports and celebrates young thinkers, innovators and integrators, and that out of this community spring any number of truly unique firsts and nexts. This issue of Business Class highlights just a few of the new milestones reached by members of the Gustavson family.

Dr. Saul Klein
Dean & Lansdowne Professor of International Business
deklein@uvic.ca
NW-ACE Honoured as Best in World

THE NORTHWEST ABORIGINAL CANADIAN ENTREPRENEURS (NW-ACE) program, which delivers business skills training in northern BC Indigenous communities, took home the top prize at the Global Best Awards in Oslo, Norway this September. NW-ACE was recognized for the significant impact it’s having on the communities in which it operates.

The annual Global Best Awards are given out by the International Business Education Partnership Network, in collaboration with the Conference Board of Canada, to celebrate the achievements of outstanding education, business and community organization partnerships.

The NW-ACE program is a collaboration between Tribal Resources Investment Corporation (tRICORP), the Gustavson School of Business, industry and government representatives from Aboriginal communities.

“We’re proud of the NW-ACE program and the difference it is making in the lives of our people and in the economic self-reliance of our Aboriginal communities,” says tRICORP CEO Frank Parnell. “This prestigious international honour validates the power in partnership where we work together and learn from each other.”

Go to learn more about NW-ACE visit www.nwace.ca

Defining Coaching

Are you crazy? I’m not going to define coaching. Ask 10 different people and you will get 10 different answers as to what coaching is. For me to create a definition of coaching that I insist you adopt is tedious (and ridiculous). You won’t remember it, and you will like your definition better than mine.

All I need to tell you is the kind of coaching that this book encourages and lays out. If you buy into this approach, I think you will find your coaching to be better off. If not, I will kidnap your youngest child and force them to listen to all the speeches Donald Trump has ever made. Good, we are all together then.

I encourage a particular type of coaching—one that I have seen work. One I wholeheartedly believe in. And, of course, one I simply don’t think exists out there so far—otherwise I would not have written this book. The coaching I endorse has five parts:

1. It is designed as part of a system within an organization, so it feeds off and integrates with everything else that is going on (hiring, organization strategy, performance reviews, etc.).
2. It is based on carefully understanding human behaviour. Managing the psychological context is critical to coaching. What you do before the coaching session may be more important than the coaching itself.
3. It is based on feedback. We live in a feedback-free society, where we find it hard to find the time to assist each other by offering or receiving high-quality feedback. This book, more than anything else, is about using coaching as a tool to create ongoing, high-quality feedback so we can grow. It’s almost as simple as that.
4. I said almost! Coaching in this book takes a very specific athletic approach to coaching. This book espouses using three well-established parts to athletic coaching: technical coaching, mental coaching and physical coaching. Great athletic coaches tap into all three parts. Athletic coaches create high-performing athletes, and we want to create high-performing employees. This book outlines what this looks like from an organizational context.
5. Finally, this book adopts a measurement perspective to coaching. We must measure the outcomes from coaching so we know we are creating high-performing employees. If we don’t measure whether coaching is working or not, we could well be wasting our time.

And that’s it—like my definition? Thought not, have it your way then, stick with your own. By the way, has anyone ever said you are childish?

8 Moments of Power in Coaching

An excerpt from Dr. Mark Colgate’s first book released this October

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Go to learn more about NW-ACE visit www.nwace.ca
My father Frank Hasenfratz [founder of Linamar] has an incredible work ethic. He likes to say he only works half days: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The challenges that the world is facing help us [at Linamar] develop our strategy. These challenges create markets that are going to be important, so if you can help solve those problems, then you’re solving a problem for the world (which is a good thing) and you’re creating a strong business (which is also a good thing).

My advice to someone starting a business is to be bold about the goals that you’re setting for yourself. I think if you set small goals, you’ll achieve small things. And if you set big goals, you’re going to achieve big things. Thirty-five years ago, my father set a goal of hitting $1 billion by the year 2000. And he knew that he wasn’t going to get there focused just in Canada—he needed to expand into North America... and we hit $1 billion in 1999, at which time we set a new goal of $10 billion. And I knew we weren’t going to get there by focusing on North America, we needed to be global. So you set bold goals and you think a bit differently, right?

To me, the most important thing is living every minute of your life. You can do a lot more than you think.

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To me, the most important thing is living every minute of your life. You can do a lot more than you think.

What do you like best about your job? I get the chance to work with many people at all levels on different types of projects. Some projects have been quite high profile so I was able to speak directly with the vice-president, directors and the president. I’m excited about the increased responsibilities of the senior position: coaching junior team members, and assisting my manager by managing project budgets, resources and deliverables so they can focus on client relations.

What specific skills do you think they were considering when they hired you? I really enjoy teamwork, which is something they were definitely looking for in this role. Throughout Gustavson’s program we were given group projects so I got a lot of experience doing this.

What was the interview process? I had to complete a full-day interview with four sessions: a multiple-choice IQ-styled test; a case study to be solved as a group with PwC; watching our behaviour/teamwork skills; a long report summarized in 30 minutes; and a partner interview to see if my personality would be a cultural fit within the company. We also had lunch together to see how we performed in networking situations.

What are your top five tips for recent grads looking to land that first job?
1. Be proactive and keep all your options open (even if it means moving).
2. Build your network by attending information sessions, ask people with experience in the company (you have interest in) for coffee. Even if it doesn’t lead to a job it will open your eyes to what they’re looking for to help you prepare for the interview.
3. Do Internet research both about the company and the people who oversee the interview process there.
4. Be yourself in the interview because people can tell if you’re faking it, and because you are looking for a job and company that is a good fit for yourself.
5. The interviewer might only look at each resume for 20 seconds so important points should be included at the beginning.

Moments with Linda Hasenfratz

A recap of DEYA 2016 by Gaëlle Madevon, BCom ’15

As CEO of Ontario-based Linamar Corporation, she leads 23,000 individuals in 57 facilities around the world, and was the force behind diversifying the global manufacturing business (which produces Skyjack systems and automotive powertrain products). In the process, she grew an $800-million enterprise into a $5.3-billion empire. (which produces Skyjack systems and automotive powertrain products).

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She is none other than Linda Hasenfratz, winner of the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business 2016 Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award (DEYA), and a role model for women in business. She mentors women in leadership into a $5.3-billion empire. (which produces Skyjack systems and automotive powertrain products). In the process, she grew an $800-million enterprise into a $5.3-billion empire.

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Roadmap to a First Career

Bijun Deng, BCom ’14, leaps from the classroom to the boardroom by Carol Crenna

How to land a job after graduation? For many students, this is one of life’s hardest questions. The truth is, there isn’t one answer. There’s no magic formula to follow in order to get the elusive job offer. However, what is exciting is that opportunities are out there as long as you’re willing to chase them. We recently caught up with Bijun Deng, BCom ’14, to find out how she was able to land her first job and what other grads should keep in mind when looking for their first big break.

What was your path to PwC? After completing (over a 16-month period) co-op internships at Shell Canada, Packers Plus and PepsiCo Canada in Calgary, I received my Bachelor of Commerce degree in November 2014. Then I finished the PwC Foundation for the Future grad program in July 2016, and became an associate consultant.

Why did you choose Calgary? Even though I studied in Victoria, when I moved to Calgary, I received my Bachelor of Commerce degree in November 2014. Then I finished the PwC Foundation for the Future grad program in July 2016, and became an associate consultant.

What was the interview process? I had to complete a full-day interview with four sessions: a multiple-choice IQ-styled test; a case study to be solved as a group with PwC; watching our behaviour/teamwork skills; a long report summarized in 30 minutes; and a partner interview to see if my personality would be a cultural fit within the company. We also had lunch together to see how we performed in networking situations.

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Putting Health Care on the

MEDIMAP

Entrepreneur Blake Adam, BCom ’11, turned a bright idea into a successful online start-up

by Natalie Bruckner-Menchelli

“A ny idea can be a great idea, if you think differently, dream big, and commit to seeing it realized.” This quote by Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson perfectly embodies Gustavson alumnus Blake Adam’s approach to business.

“It was a lesson I learned early on during my time at Gustavson,” explains 26-year-old Adam, who last year founded his first company, Medimap: a free online website and soon-to-be app that allows users to search for wait times for walk-in clinics in BC and Ontario. “The entrepreneurship program at Gustavson instills in you an incredibly valuable way of thinking. In some classes we were tasked with coming up with 10 potential business ideas—we didn’t need to provide specific details, just one sentence on how it could be a viable business.”

It was this approach that helped Adam come up with the idea of Medimap, a business built out of his personal frustrations of time wasted going to walk-in clinics, or calling around trying to find a clinic still taking patients for the day.

“At the time I was surprised to find a website or app didn’t already exist that detailed clinic wait times, to be honest,” says Adam. “So I reached out to my family doctor in White Rock, BC, to gauge the response. It is hard to have those discussions when it’s still hypothetical and you don’t have a prototype to show. But the response was extremely positive.”

Rather than sitting on the idea, Adam decided to take a risk and reached out to his friend Jonathan Clark, a software engineer who was struck by its pure “simplicity” as a way to improve access to medical care. The pair then built a platform and began a month-long pilot program with the help of five White Rock clinics.

Adam admits that the initial iteration of Medimap looked quite different. “I originally came from the patient’s perspective, but we soon realized the benefits it provided came from the patient’s perspective but we soon realized the benefits it provided frontline staff at the clinics by freeing up time and reducing the number of calls. We took their feedback and developed the site to make it user-friendly for everyone involved. It was essential for us to be nimble and responsive, and implement suggestions,” says Adam.

Suggestions included sending a reminder every 30 minutes to medical office assistants to update wait times, and offering up-to-date information on clinic operating hours and whether a clinic is still accepting patients for the day. “Feedback and teamwork were crucial in the development phase. The entrepreneurship program taught me the importance of team-based learning. We learned to identify the strengths of others, separate tasks accordingly, set timelines and follow through on our responsibilities that ultimately contributed to the bigger picture of the project—that is exactly what building Medimap has entailed,” Adam says.

With the pilot program successfully completed, it was time to get clinic buy-in, a task Adam explains as “super daunting, as I didn’t know anything about the medical field.” In fact, after graduating from Gustavson in 2011, he went travelling for a year to follow world rugby—a passion of Adam’s and another reason he was drawn to Gustavson “and its great rugby program.” On his return he entered commercial banking, a sector he worked in until early this year when he decided to focus on the business full-time. “As you can see, I didn’t have the tech skills or medical background, it was just an idea on how to make a system more efficient,” he says.

Today, less than a year after the site was launched, Medimap is partnered with 114 clinics across BC and four in Ontario, and Adam plans to take the business nationwide. He adds that a native app is currently in the works—another first for Adam—which will

“If you have an idea, don’t be afraid to take the leap. Creating a successful business is about partnering with the right people, and don’t be afraid to ask for help. You will find people are so generous with their time, and they really want to help see an idea they believe in come to life.”

by natalie Bruckner-Menchelli
First Co-op Employee

The success of Dale Hughes’ three-month stint at RingPartner sets the stage for future students

by Dianne George

D ale Hughes, graduating with a BCom degree in spring 2017, wasn’t sure what to expect when he applied for his first co-op position with online pay-per-call marketing company RingPartner. He had just completed his second year at UVic and had no experience with a tech start-up. His previous work had been as a member of the Coast Capital Savings Youth Team where he worked as a teller and supported community events.

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for future students

RingPartner sets the stage

three-month stint at

The success of Dale Hughes’

employee Elise Howard; gustavson co-op students Elise Howard and Connor Brooks (far right) pose alongside other members of the RingPartner team

(Chronicle from top) Dale Hughes, RingPartner’s first co-op student, in action; gustavson co-op student Elise Howard; Gustavson co-op students Elise Howard (second from left) and Connor Brooks (far right) pose alongside other members of the RingPartner team

“We’re at work more than we are at home with family and friends so it should be challenging and interesting, and fun.”

“Dale was our first co-op student and he really set the bar high for others,” says Williams. “At first, we weren’t really sure what he’d do so we gave him many different jobs: sales, compliance, and social media—with the idea that before he left us, he would give us an outline on how to outsource these tasks. That way we would have a plan in place when he left.”

“At first I would hold back and ask questions or wait for Mike to approve my work,” says Hughes. “But I soon learned that I was being given the responsibility to make the decisions; it was pretty cool that they trusted me, and very rewarding to be actually contributing in that way. RingPartner was a fantastic team and I was very happy to be there. I just had to be open to everything as things changed very quickly. One week I would be on one project, then the next week on another. I learned to roll with the punches.”

The RingPartner team appreciates the enthusiasm and fresh insight that business co-op students bring. “They’ve got talent and they are excited to put their skills to work,” says Williams. “The Gustavson students are quick learners. Dale could figure things out on his own, or we only had to show him or tell him once. And that’s great because with a start-up you don’t have time to analyze and make plans. Dale was able to roll with that.”

After Hughes’ three-month work term was done, he had the opportunity to recommend fellow student Elise Howard as a good fit for the company’s next co-op position. “We hired Elise and were so impressed with her problem solving skills and adaptability, that we offered her a full-time position on our team after graduation,” says Williams.

Since then, the company has taken on two more Gustavson co-op students, and plans to continue searching for talent in the Gustavson program. As testament to the compatibility of the partnership, Hughes and Howard both plan to return to RingPartner in some capacity after graduation.

Creating a group that works well together is all part of the RingPartner strategy to develop and maintain a creative and collaborative environment. Weekly workouts and paddle boating are built into the work schedule; every Tuesday includes a lunch and learn, with Friday afternoons set aside for a “pitch ring” where a company problem or opportunity is pitched out to the team who brainstorm ideas and discuss potential solutions.

“We’re at work more than we are at home with family and friends so it should be challenging and interesting, and fun,” says Williams. And it’s just that attitude that has made RingPartner a go-to company for online marketing, and a standout co-op employer.
A Breath of Fresh Air

Twin tech companies make mobile app magic

By Krista Boehnert

The crowded space of mobile app development may seem like a cutthroat place to launch your first business venture, but for Samarth Mod, MBA ’15, and Rohit Boolchandani, MBA ’14, their love of tech, and passion for mobile apps in particular, make it exactly where they want to be. Pair this passion with a humility and approachability that puts the most confirmed technophobe at ease, and you get a sense of what sets this pair apart from the noise.

Originally from India, Boolchandani and Mod moved to Victoria to attend the Sardis S. Gill Graduate School. During their studies, Boolchandani was hired to create an app for UVic’s Department of Linguistics. The 11-month project sparked an “ah ha” moment for the duo: there was an enormous potential for mobile app development in the non-profit, education and government sector.

During their studies, Boolchandani was hired to create an app for UVic’s Department of Linguistics. The 11-month project sparked an “ah ha” moment for the duo: there was an enormous potential for mobile app development in the non-profit, education and government sector.

And with that epiphany, AirSenze—a Canadian technology company that designs futuristic mobile apps—was born. Setting up shop in Victoria, with its tight-knit tech sector, offered the chance to be mentored by some of the industry’s best—an invaluable asset for a first-time venture. But Mod admits, it took them some time to recognize this advantage. “We were too enthusiastic and had tunnel vision. We thought what we were doing was the best thing ever, and not taking opinions from outside. All those rookie mistakes, we made very early on when we started in 2014, but then we realized our mistakes and started listening to outside opinions and taking new ideas into account and things started to change, for the better, for us.”

That wasn’t the only hard lesson in store for Boolchandani and Mod with their first venture. Despite the solid tech and user-friendly design behind their mobile apps, they discovered that getting an app to market in the non-profit sector can take many months of consultation between the client’s internal stakeholders, delaying the project’s progress. It certainly proved a change of pace from the rapid turnaround time Boolchandani and Mod were used to in the private sector, and while this wasn’t an insurmountable challenge, the slow progression of projects meant a lack of cash flow for the duo. They needed to find a solution quickly or they were facing their worst fear: business start-up failure. Both of them were determined to avoid that at all costs.

“And that’s when we took to Facebook,” Boolchandani says. “We wanted to get his attention, and it worked.” Mod smiles. “I hadn’t even downloaded the app yet, but as soon as James answered saying we should meet to discuss them I said to Rohit, ‘Quick, we have to find something wrong with his app’!”

The meeting between Boolchandani, Mod and DeGreef turned out to be an auspicious one. With DeGreef’s experience in tech start-ups, he quickly recognized all the things the two were doing right. He also understood the challenges of the slower-moving public sector, and how the pair could scale their offerings to a new client base—the faster-moving private sector. FreshWorks Studio was created to cater to companies looking for mobile apps to support their business pursuits, while AirSenze remains active to help government and non-profit entities do the same. The twin tech companies are operated as separate brands to allow Boolchandani and Mod to cater to each client stream’s unique needs.

The pivot to two companies proved to be a game changer for the young upstarts, and the start of a strong partnership with DeGreef, who has joined the companies as Chief Marketing Officer. AirSenze and FreshWorks Studio have grown to house an on-site staff of seven, supported by 100 app developers based in India. By this time next year, the trio predicts those numbers will grow to include a Vancouver office and additional personnel added to their Victoria and India locations. “Many companies are reluctant to outsource,” DeGreef explains, “but having a local team that they liaise with, who has met with them face-to-face to talk about their project, and then relay that information to the international tech development team is a model that works very well.”

In the short time since they launched AirSenze and FreshWorks Studio, in 2013 and 2016 respectively, the twin companies are making a name for themselves in BC’s tech industry, having launched popular mobile apps for the City of Victoria, BC Highways, PetComm and the Vancouver International Wine Festival with many more apps slated for release in the coming months. This year, they were listed in the Top 10 App Developers in Canada by Clutch.

You can expect to have their apps on your phone for the foreseeable future.
On a bright, chilly day in June, Dr. Sarah Easter, PhD ’16, made history when she crossed the convocation stage to receive her PhD, the first awarded by the Sardul S. Gill Graduate School. For Easter, it marked the culmination of four years spent on campus in Victoria and ten spent studying management. For the business school, it marked a significant milestone for the young and flourishing PhD program.

Easter, a Pennsylvania native with an interest in collaboration and a passion for socially-sustainable business, says she’s “always been fascinated by how people work across differences.”

“I come from a faith-based background. Growing up in churches where people are brought together because they share a common faith, yet come from all different backgrounds, I saw the potential as well as the challenges of people organizing around a common belief,” Easter says.

Her interest in bridging differences remained a guiding point on Easter’s compass, although for many years it seemed separate from her professional aspirations. “I thought I wanted to work for a consumer packaged goods company,” Easter recalls, a goal that took her directly into the MBA program at Rollins College after earning her BA in Business Administration from Abilene Christian University.

“It was while I was in my MBA that I discovered the whole idea of social entrepreneurship and sustainability and applying business skill sets in a different way than how I had been trained to use them.”

As her personal and professional interests started to align, Easter began looking for PhD programs to further her exploration of socially-focused organizations and discovered Gustavson.

Once in Victoria, Easter set about articulating her broad interest in working across differences. She knew the sweet spot was at the intersection of cross-cultural management and sustainability, but narrowing it to a focus that would be viable and valuable as a research topic was no mean feat.

“I was really interested in these diverse organizations that are coming together to work on some sort of complex social challenge. The participants involved in such partnerships are still maintaining their own organizations, their own goals, their own values, yet they’re coming together over time to work on a multi-faceted issue in a very loosely structured organization.”

Easter connected with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, a collaborative partnership that combines representatives from over 40 private-sector, public-sector and non-profit organizations. United by the ambitious goal of ending homelessness in Victoria by 2018, the group has nonetheless sometimes found it difficult to stay in accord regarding execution. Opinions differed on everything from what constituted homelessness to the group’s role in reducing it, and their stakeholders brought with them an array of diverse perspectives — making their participation in Easter’s research a perfect fit.

One of the key points that emerged from Easter’s data was the importance of boundary spanners. Boundary spanners (individuals who are able to bridge cross-cultural boundaries within and between organizations) are essential to the success of diverse, loosely-structured groups such as the coalition, or indeed any working environment.

“Once you’re able to understand where someone else is coming from, it makes it a lot easier to speak to what may be of interest to them,” explains Easter. She identified five specific skill sets that those who surfaced as boundary spanners had in common (see p. 28). The most exciting implications to Easter were the trends she saw emerging with the boundary-spanning skills. “What was really neat to me was that there was evidence in the data that these traits were learned over time. So the ability to collaborate successfully across differences is not something that you either have or you don’t have; these skill sets are something you could actually develop over time.”

Although her dissertation presents a unique addition to the literature on boundary spanning and cross-sector partnerships, Easter sees many ways the study could grow to answer additional questions. “I think that diversity presents a lot of opportunity to change things. You need that diversity in order to address today’s complex societal challenges holistically, even though it makes it a lot more challenging to stay synchronized. One thing that was really inspiring to me in my time studying the coalition was that all but one person, in spite of any frustrations they had in terms of trying to work across these differences, thought that Victoria was better for having the coalition. They have a real sense of community spirit in terms of realizing that they needed all these different voices at the table to address this issue in a multi-faceted way, no matter how frustrating it might be sometimes.”

“I’ve always been fascinated with how people work across differences.”
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Facing challenges and taking the steps needed to overcome them will allow grads to draw on their knowledge, experience and grey hair, explains Webster, recalling his own first post-grad job title: graduate trainee. Conversely, today's leaner companies expect "that employees can hit the ground running." Addressing that shift, Gustavson provides practical experience to complement theoretical education. In the classroom, Dr. Brock Smith, whose areas of expertise include marketing strategy, marketing research, tourism and entrepreneurship, explores Ron Coarse's tenet that "firms form when individuals fail" with students. Essentially, organizations exist when it's not possible for individuals to create transactions because of three basic challenges: lack of information, lack of trust or lack of value. Applying this business model to an individual's professional career, the same challenges often exist. For example, young professionals may lack information—there's an element of their job they don't know how to do. Their youth and inexperience can in turn lead to a lack of trust on the part of potential employers.

"How do you get people to trust you when you don't have 30 years of experience and grey hair?" Smith asks. Together, these elements can create a perceived lack of value, which can be accompanied by a lack of confidence as young professionals question, "Can I do this at a professional level?" This Catch-22 situation of needing knowledge and experience to get knowledge and experience can prove daunting to new grads.

Inexperience can also bring ethical issues. A young professional may be unsure how to address questionable research or a product that doesn't work as well as it should. That, coupled with inexperience, can raise questions not only about how to handle the situation, but what's acceptable and what isn't. "They don't have the experience or confidence to say 'No,'" Smith explains. "This is where having a mentor is useful, someone who is knowledgeable about societal norms, etc."

Recognizing a career path is not always smooth. Each step—or misstep—provides information that can be incorporated into a learning experience. Journaling can offer a way to record those experiences to be reflected upon later. Smith suggests. Students also set goals and review them as semesters pass, looking at what's working, what isn't and what needs adapting. It's a practice they're urged to pursue post-graduation to keep them on track. Recognizing a career path is not always smooth. Each step—or misstep—provides information that can be incorporated into a learning experience. Journaling can offer a way to record those experiences to be reflected upon later. Smith suggests.

The mentorship program also helps students explore some of the realities to come and challenge themselves to achieve more. "A good mentor can really give a student a head start," Webster notes. For those unsure of which field to pursue, "I can pair them with a mentor in that field who can give them a real idea of what a day or week or year might look like," Webster says. "It can be quite enlightening."

Speaking to the program's value, some of the mentees have returned to become mentors themselves, creating three "generations." Also emerging are life-long relationships, Webster says. "We talk a lot about the value the mentee receives, but it amazes me how many of the mentors say they get so much and learn so much from the students themselves."
Kelly Adam, BCom '16, had her post-grad plans all figured out—then she went abroad for the first time

For many people, the few years spent at university echo louder than any others throughout their life. For Kelly Adam, one specific element of her study reverberated stronger than she would have imagined possible, spinning the globe on her well-plotted post-grad path to land on unexpected climes. “Now, looking back, it makes so much sense,” Adam remarks. “But I really don’t know how I narrowed in on it.”

The idea first crystallized as she set out to live and study in Europe for the first time. She had a firm vision of what would come next—and it didn’t involve living in Canada. The BCom program’s exchange component had been a decisive factor in Adam’s choice to study at Gustavson, when she met when I was there,” Adam says. “She immersed in another language, Spain left an indelible mark on Adam’s outlook.

A few short months in Madrid changed all that. From its culture, people and relaxed way of life (“you walk by people sitting at their patios having a beer with lunch at 10 a.m.… then come back three hours later and they’re still there!”) to the exciting challenge of being immersed in another language, Spain left an indelible mark on Adam’s outlook.

When did the seed for more time abroad come to a close that the idea fully crystallized. “It was my semester spent in Spain. Back home in Canada and in the final few weeks of her degree, that transformative first voyage to Europe has remained with Adam, who discusses plans for removed from what she envisioned just a short time ago.

“Right now I’m looking at mostly Berlin, Dublin and Copenhagen,” she enthuses of her new post-grad trajectory. “Berlin and Dublin are huge hubs for tech start-ups, so that’s where I hope to be.”

As with so many Gustavson grads, Adam used her exchange semester to experience a new part of the world. And as she concludes with hints of a country-spanning career, potential pursuit of further studies in Europe, and an eagerness for continued exploration and discovery, one thing is for certain: those life-changing first travels will not be her last.   

The Pivot Point

Kelly Adam takes in the view from her perch on a wall in Toledo, Spain
A Fund for the Future

Thanking Marjorie Yeats for her steadfast support of business students

by Amanda Taylor

The lobby of the Business and Economics (BEC) building, a bustling hub where students, faculty and visitors mingle, is a place where conversations happen and ideas unfold. It has recently been given a new name: The Lawrence & Marjorie Yeats Lobby.

What’s in a name? The 30 brushed-aluminum characters gracing the lobby stand testament to an incredible legacy inspired by love and recognition of the opportunities created by education.

As a young woman growing up in rural Saskatchewan on her family-owned farm, Marjorie Yeats dreamed of completing her grade twelve education (equivalent to two years of college-level studies today). Growing up during the Great Depression, money was scarce, but her father had a plan to help his daughter achieve her dream. “Instead of paying a hired hand, he hired me to work in the fields.”

It was a gift Yeats would never forget, and one that she wanted to pay forward to others. Her education opened the door to many exciting life opportunities, bringing her to Victoria and a 40-year career at CIBC. It was also in Victoria that she met her future husband, Lawrence Yeats, her bus driver on her daily commute to work. The two shared a strong work ethic, sense of fun, and the conviction that “business makes the world go ‘round.”

When Lawrence passed away in 1994, Yeats contacted UVic about establishing a bursary. She wanted to support business students who would otherwise not have the opportunity to attend a post-secondary institution. In 1995 she made her first gift to UVic, in honour of her husband’s enterprising spirit. “Lawrence was talented, successful and hardworking, but had never had the opportunity for an education,” Yeats says.

Over the intervening two decades, 83 BCom students have received financial support through the Lawrence and Marjorie Yeats Bursary, and for many it is this financial support that makes their education possible. When asked what she hopes students will achieve through her support, Yeats says she hopes their adventures lead them on an amazing journey, just like the one she and Lawrence had.

“Marjorie’s support has provided our students with the opportunity to realize their dream,” said Dean Saul Klein. “It is our honour to have the school’s welcoming space named after her and Lawrence.”

Bursaries are monetary awards given to students with demonstrated financial need.

More than 1 in 10 students at UVic are helped through a donor-funded award.

In 2015/16 seven new awards were created within Gustavson, which provide students with much-needed financial support.

52% of UVic donors chose to support student awards; many of these individuals received financial support during their time as students and wish to pay it forward.

Did you know?

MESSENGES TO MARJORIE

“Our own journey is just beginning. I can easily say that it wouldn’t have been the same without your support. There is incredible power in knowing that someone you have yet to meet believes in you, your potential and your future.”

- Bona CoKeHyeng, BCom ’16

“I had the privilege of meeting Mrs. Yeats at the lobby naming event and I am grateful for her generosity. The event reminded me that a modest amount can make a significant impact for a self-funded student.”

- Anik Broadbent, BCom ’05

“Even with student loans and working part time it’s difficult to afford school...I will forever be grateful for the opportunity I was given back then and hope someday my success allows me to provide the same for others.”

- Steven Fraser, BCom ’07

“I’ve had the opportunity to meet Marjorie and hear some of her stories, and found her so inspirational. She really lifted the financial burden for me, and allowed me to focus on my studies.”

- Lada Miaous, BCom ’16
On the (Green-Brick) Road to Corporate Sustainability

Daniel Hegg, BCom ’06, shows clients the business case for sustainability

by Rachel Goldsworthy

It’s pretend for a minute that your business is Dorothy, and sustainability is the Emerald City. It feels far off and you haven’t even found the right road yet. It’s tempting to stay safely in Kansas, but if Dorothy had done that, where would we all be? So how does your business find its own path to a sustainable Oz?

Often the first, grassroots, trail is blazed by employees who fill compost buckets and post reminders to switch off lights and computer monitors. These can show bottom-line benefits in cost savings for electricity, for example, as well as environmental savings (less garbage to landfill) and staff engagement (people want to work somewhere that shares their values).

The next large step on the road is more big-picture technologies and tactics, helping firms lay the next green bricks in the road toward fully integrated sustainability.

As Stantec Consulting’s senior sustainability specialist and regional technical leader, Hegg helps business clients develop sustainability frameworks or create sustainability reports, identify carbon-reduction strategies or offsetting opportunities, and more.

“I’m not here to promote the hugging of trees,” says Hegg who, in 2009, earned an MSc in full value accounting from UVic. “My job is to find and prove the business case for sustainability.”

An example? For the past few years, Hegg has been working with Nexteer Automotive. The international firm makes drive trains for Ford and General Motors, which require members of their supply chains to sign on to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). Other Nexteer customers perform random sustainability checks on their suppliers. And the Hong Kong stock exchange, on which Nexteer is traded, requires firms to disclose sustainability performance.

Hegg has now done two CDP reports for Nexteer, plus a sustainability framework, and on Earth Day this year the company released its first sustainability report.

According to author Bob Willard in The New Sustainability Advantage: Seven Business Case Benefits of a Triple Bottom Line, externally required tracking systems and reports like Nexteer’s are often the first step for companies making the transition to more sustainable operations. Willard calls it compliance, and it typically involves obeying regulations without necessarily internalizing the values of environmental sustainability or social responsibility, and often without recognizing the operational efficiencies and broader social benefits of sustainable practices.

This isn’t to imply that people who work at these firms don’t hold those values and recognize the benefits—they do. Hegg says that he’s seeing more awareness of the social cost—what he calls the shadow cost—of carbon. Several cities are early adopters of a relatively new development in sustainability practices, and Hegg is working with them to determine the future damage that could be caused by each tonne of carbon that is released into the atmosphere. Local governments, he explains, are doing this so they can tax themselves now and create a fund to invest in sustainability projects. The District of Saanich is one of these communities.

Saanich decided early on against purchasing carbon offsets and instead investing that money into carbon-reduction projects in municipal operations,” explains Mark Boysen, former sustainability manager for the district, citing examples like low-carbon heating systems, LED lighting and electric vehicles.

“This investment reduces the carbon footprint of the municipality, reduces energy costs and encourages green jobs in Greater Victoria,” he says.

Transparent practices, public accountability and trying new strategies can be big steps for an organization, and Hegg has seen the obstacles they sometimes face.

“People can be afraid of putting a target on a statement that will commit them,” he says. “The fear is, ‘what if we don’t achieve this?’”

Realistically, though, in more than a decade in the field he hasn’t seen anyone’s reputation take a hit for missing an ambitious target.

The younger generation is interested, he points out. They’re involved and they’ve moved way beyond compliance and into a culture of sustainability. However, it’s not enough to have keen junior staff. You need someone senior enough to lead the change. That person doesn’t need a cyclone or ruby slippers in order to make it to Oz, though. The more people there are committed to staying on track towards sustainability, the more the firm can accomplish, and that’s especially true with the growing trend to move beyond compliance. Luckily for the planet, for people, and yes, for profitability, Gustavson alumni like Hegg are out on the trail of new technologies and tactics, helping firms lay the next green bricks in the road toward fully integrated sustainability.

“I’m not here to promote the hugging of trees. My job is to find and prove the business case for sustainability.”

“Sustainability is the Emerald City.”

Daniel Hegg, BCom ’06, shows clients the business case for sustainability.

Sustainability advantage: Seven business case benefits of a triple bottom line.
Calling all Weekend Warriors

UVic’s Weekend MBA has arrived

by Hazen Fowler

In a world where you have as many options for MBA formats as you do deli sandwich combinations, MBA programs are all seeking to integrate education with the ever-elusive ideal of work-life balance. Many of these formats move so far online to provide flexibility that they remove the greatest benefit of an MBA—a cohort of peers to learn from and the relationships that form as a result. For working professionals, whose needs likely won’t be met by a banker’s-hours program, an MBA can mean burning the candle at both ends.

This was one of the issues that the MBA faculty sought to address when they created a new weekend format. The program is a two-year MBA that caters to working professionals looking to get fresh perspective from like-minded people and expand the skill sets relevant to their jobs as business leaders in the BC market.

To connect with this market, the program was developed using design thinking. “We started out by saying ‘Okay, we have this task of designing a new MBA program, how are we going to go about that?’” says Dr. David Dunne, MBA program director. “The first answer that comes to mind is ‘Why don’t we ask the users?’”

Their research involved getting “the employer community to set the frame for what they saw as some of the challenges and deficiencies,” says Dunne, and then asking the school’s current evening MBAs, alumni and prospective applicants exactly what they would want in a program that could better integrate with their personal and professional lives.

The attributes that emerged from the feedback (i.e. applied, balance, access and relevance) led the program to design a weekend format that has students on campus for one intensive weekend each month for 24 months, with additional online support between sessions. Although the students aren’t on campus weekly, they work on course assignments and group projects between in-class weekends.

Another major consideration for the program was ensuring immediately relevant content. Term themes like innovation, sustainability and world-ready, and direct ties to BC industries like natural resources, tourism, public sector, health and IT, would ideally allow students to take classroom discussion and apply it directly at work the next day.

“Our faculty are acutely aware that the people coming into this program are working professionals,” says Tina Belcourt, weekend coordinator. “It was really about finding the general themes that will connect back to their work.”

“Collaboration is also one of the most important values of the program,” says Ian Robertson, associate director. “The input we get from industry employers was that they need people who are really skilled at being able to bridge the communication between groups of stakeholders like government, private sector and First Nations. For students coming out of an MBA program, if they can do that they’ll be in high demand in any sector.”

UVic’s new Weekend MBA aims for a sweet spot between work, life and study to offer a delivery model that appeals to working professionals

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UVic’s new Weekend MBA aims for a sweet spot between work, life and study to offer a delivery model that appeals to working professionals.
5 Skill Sets Used by Star Collaborators

Dr. Sarah Easter, PhD ’16 (p. 16) observed that successful collaborators often have these five traits in common. Nurture your inner boundary spanner by cultivating this quintet of skills.

1. **PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENT**
   - You keep the focus on the similarities, not the differences. You’re good at keeping the common goal of the team or organization top-of-mind.
   - **KEY ABILITIES:**
     - Concentrating on similarities
     - Keeping the issue you’re solving at the forefront

2. **AWARENESS OF COMPLEXITY**
   - You make allowance for the complexity of the problem you’re solving. Recognizing the individual perspectives and backgrounds of the people around the table means you appreciate the nuances of the situation.
   - **KEY ABILITIES:**
     - Recognizing the multi-faceted nature of the issue
     - Separating the individual from the team or organization they represent

3. **BOUNDARY-CROSSING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**
   - You know where you stand on the issue and where others stand, and are able to articulate your position in a way that makes sense to others.
   - **KEY ABILITIES:**
     - Articulating stance in a clear and transparent manner
     - Framing issue appropriately for a given audience

4. **OPENNESS TO ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES**
   - Not only do you want to understand more about other perspectives and beliefs, but you have a knack for asking the right questions.
   - **KEY ABILITIES:**
     - Asking questions and stimulating dialogue
     - Seeking to learn from others

5. **RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION**
   - You know that on a team or within an organization, nothing gets done without everyone. You focus on building relationships with the individual players.
   - **KEY ABILITIES:**
     - Focusing on building relationships with individual players

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**Adventures in Español**

For our MGB students, the learning curve spans classrooms, cultures and countries by Rich Taylor

Heading out on a global pathway that traverses three continents, Master of Global Business (MGB) students are guaranteed to experience a string of firsts. Yet perhaps among the most memorable is the first time these students take a key subject of the MGB program, and apply it in the real world. We’re not talking about principles of international finance, logistics, or supply chains, however, but a more interactive and undeniably crucial global business skill: language. MGB students take lessons in the language of one of their international destinations before departing on a journey with a cohort of colleagues from around the world. This format both encourages applied learning and provides clear practical benefits, as MGB student Amanda Steski succinctly summarizes. “Learning a language gives you an inside view of the culture,” she says. “It can help you approach conversations, meetings or any other interaction with another company differently.”

While living in Lima as she completed the MGB’s Path Three (Canada, the Netherlands, Peru), Steski spent several months putting her journey with a cohort of colleagues differently. “While living in Lima as she completed the MGB’s Path Three (Canada, the Netherlands, Peru), Steski spent several months putting her journey with a cohort of colleagues differently.”

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So while taking textbook knowledge out into the real-world may not always be smooth-sailing, for Steski and Duchesne, that first time speaking Spanish in Peru proved exceptionally valuable. “Learning languages is something that I really love, and if I can pair that up with my business interests and career aspirations, that would be great, and make me very happy.”

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Never Say Never
When was the last time you did something for the first time?
by Wyle Baoween, MBA ’13

In 2010, I saw this TV ad for an airline that ended with the question, “When was the last time you did something for the first time?” And I remember thinking to myself, “I’m old enough that I have probably seen it all. It will be very hard for me to see something for the first time from now on.”

I am so glad to say that I was terribly wrong.

One year after seeing this commercial, I left the Middle Eastern culture I’d grown up in and the desert climate of the Arabian Peninsula and arrived in Victoria. Talk about firsts! The nature, culture and people were so fascinating to me. My first MBA year felt like a Hollywood movie.

Take the following example: you know how awestruck the guests are, arriving in Jurassic Park? That was me, hiking for the first time at Mount Doug, staring up at the enormous trees and being amazed at how green and lush everything was. The deer surprised me about as much as the dinosaurs surprised them, because they just walk around nonchalantly with the people. Crazy! I remember taking hundreds of photos of the first deer I saw on campus and sending them to my family. My sister instantly recalled the movie Heidi (I broke it to her later that Heidi had had goats, not deer). Equally incredible was taking the seaplane to Vancouver, flying over the islands and feeling like I was watching National Geographic.

Add to that, the people. I remember hearing Prof. Chris Graham talk in our first Economics class and thinking “Wow, he speaks fluent English, like these American movies!” The way teachers and students were communicating and interacting with no borders, no “please, sir” or “yes, ma’am” was mind-boggling for me. I would never have spoken to one of my undergrad professors that way, but here it was encouraged.

And then you have this rich social experience called “Christmas.” My first one was full of new experiences, starting with seeing “real-life” Santa (well, real compared to the TV-screen Santas I was used to). Then you have Christmas trees, bells, carols and stockings, which I have to admit are still very exciting. The best thing, though? This experience opened my eyes and made me realize there is still so much to come. Age is just a number, and the world has so much to offer!
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THE GLOBE AND MAIL

PETER B. GUSTAVSON
School of Business

THE WORLD LOOKS DIFFERENT FROM HERE.