Cashmere co-op: not as cushy as it sounds
Ariel Mishkin (BCom ’16) wanted international work experience but nobody could have guessed just how much experience there would be in her second co-op term. Heck, even dinner was extreme!
“The most radical thing I learned throughout my internship at Nans Cashmere in Mongolia,” Ariel says, “was how to adjust to different work expectations. There were times I hired people to do a project and they disappeared on a random holiday for 6 months. Through most of my internship, the clothing I was supposed to sell hadn’t even been designed.
“I had to rethink everything,” she continues, “to adapt what I had learned in the classroom to a society that doesn’t have the rigid expectations of North American life. I found that their freedom created by being nomads could even be used as a competitive advantage. Nans Cashmere was the real deal, and everything I was seeing and experiencing I could share with potential customers across the globe. We stopped trying to be something else and enjoyed what made us unique. I no longer fought against cultural differences, but embraced them.
“I now hope to continue promoting other companies like Nans Cashmere and continue working for other sustainable and transparency oriented apparel companies.”
But Ariel’s experiential learning went way, way further.
“Through a series of fortunate events*, my roommate and I met the best Koomii (throat-singing) instructor of all of Mongolia, who spent two evenings teaching us without a translator. He then invited us to his family’s home for a traditional dinner: boiled blood-filled intestines, stomach, and colon of a sheep.”
As you receive this Communiqué, Ariel is representing Nans Cashmere at New York Fashion Week where there will be very little sheep intestine on the menu.
You can learn more about Ariel’s co-op term in her wonderful video report.

*Editor’s note: these “fortunate events” involved backpacking and hitching rides across deserts, steppes, and a mountain range to a village with no English speakers or cell phone reception. I think “determined perseverance” might be a better descriptor.

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Cut costs, cut carbon: eight cases
Eight companies right here in BC that have cut costs and cut carbon, on Climate Smart’s latest video.
The PNE makes smarter ice and saves $6000 a year; Continental Roofing developed an app that cuts travel time, 15% of fuel costs, and 35% of emissions; Vancity captures waste heat from servers and cut 90% of its heating energy load.

Five key messages from businesses to business schools
1. Business doesn’t need sustainability professionals, but rather professionals who can make sustainable decisions in any role.
2. Business can see that graduates are increasingly interested in the topic of sustainability and are seeing more applications from better applicants.
3. Business can do more to integrate sustainability in the recruiting process.
4. Business schools must give businesses a clear reason to want to work with them.
5. Business schools should know what business’s sustainability needs are today, and prepare for what they may be in the future.
Details are on the PRME blog this week.

Fundraiser for Nepalese farmers
USC Canada is organizing walkers and runners to help seed-saving farmers in Nepal recover from the earthquakes as part of the GoodLife Fitness Victoria Marathon, half marathon, 8 km or 1.25 km kids race on October 11. Send an email to r4b@usc-canada.org to receive the details before you register.