When Melina Laboucan, 33, member of the Lubicon Cree First Nation, came to UVic’s Indigenous Governance (IGov) program in 2013, she had already made a name for herself and her community advocating with Greenpeace Canada, serving as an activist with the Nobel Women’s Initiative, and speaking and writing for numerous like-minded organizations on Indigenous and environmental issues.

Having grown up in the shadow of one of the largest oil and gas extraction plants in the world—the Alberta tar sands—Laboucan has shared her compelling, eye-witness account of the impact (including one of the worst oil spill disasters in the history of Alberta) the oil industry has had on her Indigenous community of Little Buffalo.

"Since 1978, over $14-billion has been taken out of our traditional territory. Yet my family still goes without running water," Laboucan told the Breaking Ground delegation in 2012, a reporting arm of the Nobel Women’s Initiative.

Today, Little Buffalo is home to an inspiring 80-panel solar project that generates 20.8 kilowatts of energy. The project powers a health centre with excess flowing into the community’s energy mix. "There are plans for an even larger project to generate more clean energy and revenue for the community," says Laboucan. "This is just the first phase."

Jane Fonda, 77, two-time Oscar-winning film actor, TV star, former fitness guru, and a known activist, helped sponsor Laboucan's project last summer while taking part in a March for Jobs, Justice and the Climate just prior to Toronto hosting the Climate Summit of the Americas.

"The Pitapan solar project is a beacon of hope and change," says Laboucan. "The transition to renewable energy frees communities from becoming sacrifice zones for our global addiction to oil. By installing solar panels in Little Buffalo we have initiated our first steps towards energy sovereignty and have proven that it is possible to be powered by the sun."

To learn more about PITAPAN, go to lubiconsolar.ca.
DEAN’S MESSAGE

Just like Halley’s Comet, this sort of thing comes around very often. Which is why I hope you can set aside time to attend HSD’s Ideafest event and bring a friend.

Dr. Cathy Worthington
Professor, School of Public Health and Social Policy, Faculty Lead for HSD Research Centre
Bio / Cathy has spent more than 20 years working in partnership with community agencies to conduct research on HIV and health and to help develop services for people living with or at risk of HIV. She joined UVic in 2011 and has remained involved in HIV research in Victoria and BC. Her work is part of a larger Canadian research effort that is making a difference in the lives of those affected by HIV around the world. Today, Cathy mentors future generations of HIV researchers and community partners as a leader in two national research networks.

Educational Pathway
BA (Honors), Trent University, Administrative and Policy Studies, 1985
MSc, University of Toronto, Health Administration, 1989
PhD, University of Toronto, Social Work, 2001

Facilitator: Dr. Michael Prince

Landdowne Professor of Social Policy
Bio / Michael joined UVic in 1987 and has served in a number of capacities including dean and associate dean of HSD. Today he teaches courses on disability, public health, social policy, and public administration. Michael has authored, co-authored, and edited numerous books, publications, articles in scholarly journals, and courses on opinion pieces for newspapers and professional periodicals. He works as a policy consultant to federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal government agencies, four Royal commissions, and to a number of parliamentary committees. Michael is also an active volunteer and media commentator.

Educational Pathway
BA, Public Administration, Carleton University, 1975
MPA, Public Administration, Queen’s University, 1976
PhD, Politics University of Exeter, 1979

Presenters

Dr. Andre Kashniruk
Director, School of Health Information Science
How health informatics is improving our care system and our health.

Dr. Zhila Vaghefi
Assistant Professor, School of Public Health and Social Policy
Supporting the rights of the child impacts the well-being of everyone, everywhere.

Dr. Ziba Javad
Assistant Professor, School of Social Work
Some cannot afford dental treatment. Wallace conducts research with community service groups to create equitable change to health and dental care services, especially for those living in poverty. His earlier work led to the development of the Coaldale Community Dental Clinic. As the number of similar clinics increases across BC, Wallace now questions are their ‘good intentions’ and the dental care system from its sole to care, and its need for change.

Dr. Bruce Wallace
Associate Professor, School of Social Work
Community-based research leads to dental services for vulnerable people.

Dr. Jeff Cernavski
Associate Director and Associate Professor, Indigenous Governance program
Every day acts of resurgence and renewal.

PROFESSOR JIN-SUN YOON

Professor, School of Social Work, and Faculty Lead for the Indigenous Student Support Centre
Canada’s true history has been made public to the world through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Report in 2015. Jin-Sun offers a way towards understanding how to reconcile this hard truth as a settler. She will share her own immigration story from Korea to Canada and what led her lifelong research into reconciliation development. Jin-Sun will explain how first nations and others can work on reconciliation and how it serves as a training model for human service providers.

Supporting Indigenous students impacts the person, the family, and the community.

Dr. Shauna Underwood
Indigenous Advisor, Indigenous Student Support Centre

SHANGTONG ZIBA

PhD, Human Nutrition/Pediatrics, UBC, 2007

MSc, University of Toronto, Health and Social Policy, 2005

PhD, University of Alberta, 2005

BA, Sociology, University of Manitoba, 1998

MSW, Social Work, UBC, 1995

PhD, Human Ecology, University of Alberta, 2005

Dr. Shauna Underwood
Indigenous Advisor, Indigenous Student Support Centre

Supporting Indigenous students impacts the person, the family, and the community.

Speaking in general terms, Shauna shares her experience assisting Indigenous students to be successful in their studies, to graduate and go on to be successful within their chosen profession. She helps to uphold sacred life stories and creates opportunities to honour their cultural values as a way to enhance their learning.

Bio / Shauna is Co-Centre for the Bells Band in Wanake, and is also a member of the Sami Tribe in Washington with roots from the Nen Pece Tribe in Idaho. Shauna deeply values her culture and practices her Coated Sakhe and Nen Pecce culture every day.

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Meet the HSD Research Support Team

RESEARCH FUNDING DOESN’T JUST HAPPEN.

The four women with the HSD Research Centre—the only faculty-based research support service of its kind at UVic—will tell you that every funded study involves a complex series of steps to manage the process, from application to fund administration to reporting back to funding agencies. Given the community-based focus of much of HSD’s research, many initiatives involve more than one researcher, faculty, school, research centre, or community partner.

"What makes our service unique," says Dr. Cathy Worthington, faculty lead for the centre and an experienced researcher in her own right, "is the relationships established between our team and the researchers who utilize centre support." The staff work closely with faculty, community or knowledge-user partners, research assistants, postdoctoral fellows, and other university units, and these relationships are integral to the centre’s success.

"Speaking as a researcher," says Worthington, "I would much rather spend my time developing research ideas and planning methodology then filling in forms and navigating administrative processes.”

Shawna McNabb, the centre’s Administrative Officer, recalls the collaborative journey of launching this service. "It was a great opportunity to share with HSD researchers about our open access approach to supporting their work. We’re immersed in the intricacies of the University’s complex research processes so our researchers don’t have to be," says McNabb.

While the team, including newcomer Heather Cumming, strives to ensure all necessary information is in place so funding applications and accounting documents are processed seamlessly, it took time for some to see the value in the unit, says Emma Stuart, the centre’s Research Coordinator, who has worked alongside McNabb since March 2014.

"Many of our researchers conduct multi-layered, years-long projects which require considerable attention and understanding," says Stuart.

Dr. Budd Hall, professor of Community Development with the School of Public Administration, has worked with the research centre on both the pre and post grant side.

"The HSD research support team has been and remains a brilliant partner in our work with the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research. Their professionalism, talent and insights have literally made the difference between getting—or not getting—our grant funding." Hall currently holds a $200,000 SSHRC Partnership Development Grant, and just submitted a letter of intent to their partnership program. He hopes to be awarded up to $2.5 million to continue his work in international community-based training.

HSD Research Centre statistics for 2015

Number of funding proposals submitted: 85
Grants awarded: 25
Number of HSD researchers served: 65
Research granting agencies: 10
Research-related documents processed: 528