THE UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA ALUMNI MAGAZINE AUTUMN 2025

UVic TORCH

Qwul'sih'yah'maht, Robina Thomas, left, and Kundoqk, Jacquie Green are part of the UVic community working together to create Health for Everyone.

Building the Future

The University of Victoria's Faculty of Law is celebrating a new Indigenous Law wing. The Coast Salish-inspired building provides classrooms and spaces for teaching and learning Indigenous Law. It supports the growing movement of Indigenous Laws empowering communities to reclaim and exercise authority over their own legal systems.

Credit: UVic Photo Services

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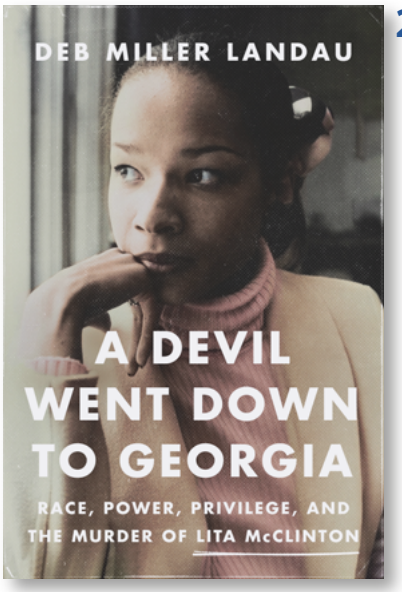
JOE GALLAGHER, who is a leader in Indigenous health and wellness, collaborated on a book with his friend **JOHN MATTERSON**, a settler, to explore truth and reconciliation together.

COVER PHOTO BY NIK WEST, BA '95; NECHAKO PHOTO: THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA, LANTERN FILMS AND EXPERIMENTAL FOREST FILMS

Leaving Space for Wonder

While the job is difficult, **CAMARA VAN BREEMEN** stresses that professionals who work with terminally ill children are not saints or angels—but people with skills and experience.



UVic grad **DEB MILLER LANDAU** wrote an award-winning true-crime book.

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CHRISTINA SPICER takes us for a tour of her favourite stomping grounds in Edinburgh, Scotland.

CAMARA VAN BREEMEN PHOTO COURTESY OF CANUCK PLACE; CHRISTINA SPICER

EDITOR'S NOTE

In the Valley of Lost Devices

Eve Bennett and her team at MeepMeep pivoted their sports-oriented locator to help find lost health devices, like hearing aids, reducing stress on seniors and their caregivers.

BY JENNY MANZER, BA '97

Sometimes, a spark of entrepreneurial inspiration is kindled by one's personal life. Business grad Eve Bennett (née Olynyk) and her husband have nine living grandparents in their families. The couple found their elderly relatives were constantly losing items, but sometimes bristling at using available tracking devices, which can be conspicuous. Bennett asked herself "Why is this a problem that hasn't been solved yet?"

Bennett, BCom '17, is CEO of MeepMeep, a Victoria-based company known for making loonie-sized disc-golf locators. She saw an opportunity to innovate. And her team pivoted quickly. Since April of this year, MeepMeep has launched a pilot project with senior care-home provider Trillium Communities and tested a mini-locator device to track hearing aids.

What they heard from the care sector was "I need this yesterday, basically," says Bennett. The pilot was a success and MeepMeep has several enterprise (business to business) deals in the pipeline. The new locator is sturdy and has a long battery life, but is form-fitted to suit a hearing aid or glasses. Having seniors constantly lose belongings causes stress, agitation and financial hardship—and takes time away from a caregiver's key duties, notes Bennett.

Bennett had noticed that some of MeepMeep's customers were already using the disc-golf locators for television remotes and other objects. Air-tag locators can track objects, but are designed to be an interface between one user with a phone—whereas MeepMeep's new technology works with


Business grad **EVE BENNETT**

a team, or "many to many."

So, a nurse or care aid in a seniors' home could use the device to find objects for five different residents. When a tracked item is lost, a user can initiate a beeping sound or be shown a pin on a map. The technology could also track residents who have wandered away from their homes—a situation associated with often tragic outcomes.

"We envision having a one-stop solution that can have item-finding, person-finding and fall monitoring… like when the iPhone came out and you got rid of having a phone, a camera, a notepad, a calculator, all those things in your purse—that's kind of our brand vision," says Bennett. The team hopes to keep the product affordable.

MeepMeep made the bold leap into this area by necessity. The current trade disputes were decimating their bottom line since 80 per cent of their disc-golf locator customers were in the U.S and materials are sourced from China. MeepMeep, which includes UVic grad Evan Griffin, BCom '22, dove into learning all they could about seniors' care. Next, the team hopes to have the device clear privacy-legislation concerns as they move toward a wider commercial launch.

Bennett credits her time at UVic and the help of the UVic Innovation Centre in helping to launch MeepMeep. She had her first meeting with a patent lawyer at age 10, she recalls. A family friend who was an inventor set it up. "You don't mean to be an entrepreneur," she reflects. "You kind of do it compulsively. You start obsessively pulling this thread of why something doesn't exist until it happens."

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Building Community for Better Health

Making connections and socializing with peers is about more than enjoyment—it is a key determinant of a long and healthy life.

BY GINA WHEATCROFT, DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UVIC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

"Since I arrived at UVic five years ago, our core purpose has been to plan engagement programming that gives alumni community."

Anecdotally, we know we feel better after connecting with friends, or engaging in a lively social gathering where we share ideas and learn. It's good for our brains, body and spirit. Science tells us that, too. Study after study shows that community and connection are key determinants of health and happiness.

As UVic's director of alumni relations, providing grads with a sense of community is one of my main goals every day. Since I arrived at UVic five years ago, our core purpose has been to plan engagement programming that gives alumni community. And today, more than 8,000 alumni take part in a wide range of programs each year, either virtually or in-person.

Want to learn about health and wellbeing? We hosted a session with a physician alum who is an expert in anxiety. Curious about politics and the world we live in? We've lined up experts on global conflicts, climate change and even true crime. If you want to catch your breath and have a brew with another UVic grad—we've got you. We've led coffee gatherings, pub nights and city food tours. We're planning events and opportunities on the Island and around the world—all to fulfill the UVic ideals of lifelong learning and building a strong community.

It seems apropos to mention, and indeed you may already know, that one of UVic's mottos translated from Latin is "a multitude of the wise is the health of the world."

Social connection helps us live longer and healthier lives. Loneliness and isolation increase risk of premature death by 26 per cent and 29 per cent, a 2015 meta-analytic review in *Perspectives on Psychological Science* shows. Research by Julianne Holt-Lunstad published in 2021 suggests that social connection influences health through three main pathways: biology (for example stress hormones), psychology (such as meaning, purpose, hopefulness) and behaviours (physical activity, nutrition, sleep, etc.)

Whether your idea of connection is watching a Vikes' basketball game with fellow grads, volunteering for a beach clean-up or campus event, marching for human rights, listening to alumni play music at a concert, or developing new skills in a course, we are here to help along the way. In recent years, we've also heard your requests for more career advice. We now have a dedicated alumni career educator, career sessions just for grads and a new column called My Career that showcases interesting work journeys.

I've witnessed firsthand how deeply alumni value their connection to UVic and to one another. An alum who I met at one of the coffee chats this summer told me she appreciates being part of our community and meeting all kinds of graduates at events throughout the year.

These programs are more than nostalgia or reminiscing about university days; they're about building community. They're inclusive, accessible and designed to reflect the diverse interests and passions of our alumni. Whether you're volunteering, attending an event, or simply reading a story about a fellow graduate's impact, you're participating in something—a network of people who care about the same things you do.

Like a person, the university changes and grows over time—for example, we've recently added the new Faculty of Health and celebrated a new law building. UVic alumni also change and grow as they develop careers, build families, travel and give back.

We build relationships through shared experiences, continued learning and the opportunity to connect with others who understand where we've come from and where we're going. These are the threads that weave together to form the alumni community. Connection is more than a feeling; it's an essential part of wellness. And at UVic, it's something we're proud to foster every day.

PHOTO MICHAEL KISSINGER

Health for Everyone

We explore the creative ways the UVic community lends their talents and tenacity to making health care more equitable and accessible for all.

PHOTO NIK WEST

Protecting Generations

UVic's Social Work faculty and alumni moved mountains to help communities reclaim child welfare, changing institutions and systems to reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON, MFA '17

For the past 16 years, Sqwulutsultun William Yoachim has been at the forefront of a push for Indigenous communities to reclaim their inherent right to care for their own children.

A member of Snuneymuxw First Nation, Yoachim is executive director of Kw'umut Lelum Child and Family Services in Nanaimo, a fully Delegated Aboriginal Agency under the Child, Family and Community Services Act.

An Indigenous agency rooted in Coast Salish snuw'uy'ulh (teachings), Kw'umut Lelum provides culturally driven family support, caregiving services and community programs and services to nine First Nations on Vancouver Island.

When a family is struggling, Kw'umut Lelum is called first to support parents and children. If children cannot live at home, their extended family and community are brought in to care for them.

"We have such a different narrative than mainstream child welfare," Yoachim says. "Our stats are amazing. We have fewer kids in care—next to none. Things are done properly with consent."

A former youth worker, welder, social worker and Nanaimo city councillor who graduated from the University of Victoria with a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) in 2009, Yoachim credits UVic's Indigenous child welfare specialization for strengthening Kw'umut Lelum's work.

"UVic was bold enough to, back in the day, have an Indigenized specialization in the School of Social Work and that framed our mindsets," he says. "From that mindset, we decolonized our work here."

SQWULUTSULTUN WILLIAM YOACHIM graduated from the University of Victoria with a Bachelor of Social Work in 2009.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

WALKING A NEW PATH TOGETHER

Social work has a long, controversial history among Indigenous people. Scholar Raven Sinclair, in *Wicihitowin: Aboriginal Social Work in Canada*, the first Canadian social work book published in 2009 by First Nations, Inuit and Métis authors, writes Indigenous people in Canada have equated the profession with the theft of children, destruction of families and the deliberate oppression of Indigenous communities. "Social workers were tasked to accompany Indian agents onto reserves to remove children to residential schools and later, in the 1960s and 1970s, to apprehend children deemed to be in need of protection," Sinclair wrote.

Indigenous children are still vastly overrepresented in government care. The 2021 census shows Indigenous children made up 53.8 per cent of all children in foster care in Canada. In BC, 67.5 per cent of children in government care are Indigenous,

while Indigenous people only make up 5.9 per cent of the overall population. Research shows Indigenous people who were in government care as children experience poorer health and socioeconomic outcomes later in life than those who were never in care.

But at UVic, Yoachim met Indigenous social work faculty members who have worked tirelessly to change a colonial system, focusing on strengthening the well-being of Indigenous children, families and communities.

Faculty members Qwul'sih'yah'maht, Robina Thomas, BSW '93, MSW '00, PhD '11 and Kundoqk, Jacquie Green, BSW '98, MPA '00, PhD '13, and now retired Métis scholar Sohki Aski Esquao Jeannine Carrière, along with Indigenous faculty members past and present, have transformed how social work is taught at UVic.

As Canada marks 10 years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the School of Social Work has been quietly leading the way in Indigenization and decolonization efforts for more than two decades, training about 300 graduates in its Indigenous specializations. Their alumni have gone on to become leaders in Indigenous organizations and communities, helping put child welfare back into the hands of Indigenous communities.

This work has rippled across UVic, influencing the creation of First Peoples House, UVic's Indigenous Plan and the Indigenous recognition ceremonies for Indigenous graduates during convocation. "Our first line of accountability is to the Indigenous community," Thomas says. "We do what we do because of our commitment to our community and commitment to Indigenous children."

SHAKING THINGS UP

Social Work professor Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha remembers the day Green walked off the stage at convocation. Thomas turned to Moosa-Mitha and said, "We need to hire Jacquie in the School of Social Work."

Thomas, a member of Lyackson First Nation with Snuy-'ney'muxw and Sto:lo ancestry, had joined UVic in 1998 as a visiting lecturer before being appointed to a tenure-track position. Moosa-Mitha says Thomas shook things up, bringing in residential school Survivors to talk about their experiences and challenging Eurocentric notions of social work. When Green was hired in 1999, she and Thomas became a team. "They were a force to be reckoned with," Moosa-Mitha says. "Now they could have each other."

Social work's first Indigenous faculty Elizabeth Hall, Kathy Absolon, Gord Bruyere and Gale Cyr, and Indigenous instructors including Margaret Kovach had laid the groundwork for

Left to right: **JACQUIE GREEN**, **CINDY BLACKSTOCK** and **JEANNINE CARRIÈRE**.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Indigenization and decolonization efforts in the school. Years earlier, UVic had started delivering decentralized community-based Indigenous social work programs to Indigenous territories across BC. Green's mother, a band social worker, had earned a BSW through such a program and then an MSW. "Jacquie and I were able to step on the shoulders of giants who had started to create a path that allowed us to create the specialization," Thomas says.

Green, from the Haisla Nation, and of Tsmishian/Kemano ancestry, had done the groundwork to create an Indigenous specialization during her master's degree. She had completed a mainstream BSW at UVic and felt it hadn't prepared her for the work she wanted to do. So, for her final master's project, Green travelled across BC, interviewing more than 50 people in Indigenous communities about changes they'd like to see to make social work education better. Thomas and Green continued to consult with local First Nations communities, bringing their needs and perspectives to the Indigenous specialization as they wrote the courses.

WEAVING TOGETHER WORLDVIEWS

Both of Green's parents had attended residential school. She knew the Indigenous specializations had to strengthen the identities of Indigenous students, many of whom were reconnecting with their culture. Students needed a safe place to deal

with the racism they continued to experience, as well as work through intergenerational trauma from residential schools and the child-welfare system. "We needed to include healing components as part of our education. We needed to relearn our ceremonies and cultural practices," Green says.

The pair wrote courses that balanced academic rigour, writing and theory with ceremonial and land-based teachings and being in community. "It was a matter of weaving the two worldviews together," Green says. The duo are now both campus leaders. Thomas is UVic's acting president and vice-chancellor, while Green is the executive director of the Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE).

In the early 2000s, the School of Social Work launched the BSW Indigenous specialization to prepare students for leadership roles as helpers and healers in Indigenous communities and organizations. The school also introduced an Indigenous child-welfare specialization, with an emphasis on the well-being of Indigenous children, families and communities. These undergraduate specializations were open to people with Indigenous ancestry and taught solely by Indigenous faculty members. "We were one of the first in Canada to do this," Green says. "We're the only program where registration for the Indigenous specialization is only for Indigenous students."

Almost 15 years before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission called for social workers to be properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools, the School of Social Work introduced a core third-year course, Introduction to Indigenous Perspectives on Social Work Practice, for all social-work students.

"We did everything we could to ensure more Indigenous children did not get harmed," Thomas says.

BETTER SUPPORTS FOR MÉTIS STUDENTS

The Indigenous specializations have continued to evolve, responding to the needs of students and Indigenous communities. When Sohki Aski Esquao Jeannine Carrière joined UVic in 2005, she brought a Métis lens to her work. Originally from the Red River area of Manitoba and a Sixties Scoop Survivor, Carrière advocated for better supports for Métis students and a stronger presence in social work's curriculum. Cathy Richardson joined the School of Social Work a couple of years later. The two Métis scholars worked together, eventually publishing *Calling Our Families Home* in 2017, the first book written in Canada that described the Métis child-welfare experience. "To bring a Métis presence to a university on the coast was not an easy thing. That's probably of what I'm most proud of," Carrière says. In 2009, the School of Social Work launched a master-level Indigenous specialization. Carrière, Thomas and Green had created the program off the side of their desks.

They formed an Indigenous circle to advise the development of their Indigenous specializations. The school hired more Indigenous faculty members and sessional instructors, as well as academic advisors. They developed supports for Indigenous students that extended faculty wide. In 2013, the three women founded the Indigenous Child Wellbeing Research Network.

Carrière says the whole university began paying more attention to matters related to Métis students and faculty. "I started noticing more Métis faculty, Métis gatherings, Métis Elders at First Peoples House," she says. "The landscape started to change and be a safer place for Métis people."

When Cowichan Tribes asked that the master's program be taught in Duncan in 2009, Thomas says Indigenous faculty members "literally took our curriculum and drove to Duncan" during that first year. "There is a history of us responding to community in that way," Thomas says.

Last year, Cowichan Tribes established its Child and Family Services Authority: Stsi'elh stuhw'ew't-hw tun Smun'eem, becoming the second First Nation in BC to have assumed full responsibility for its child-welfare services. "Our students have gone on and done amazing work," Thomas says. "We learn from the students [and] they learn from us."

GROUNDED IN COMMUNITY

Thomas earned a PhD in Indigenous Governance from UVic. Her dissertation focused on Indigenous women and leadership, so it seems natural that Thomas would one day move into leadership roles. In 2017, Thomas became the inaugural director and executive director of IACE, which serves as a hub for cultural, academic and community connections. There, she helped create UVic's first Indigenous plan.

Green, too, accomplished her own firsts. In 2013, she became the first Indigenous person to become director of the School of Social Work and the first Indigenous person in Canada to head a mainstream post-secondary social-work program.

A year earlier, Green became the first person to defend a PhD at her Haisla community, near Kitimat. One hundred people watched her defend her dissertation, an auto-ethnography that drew on Haisla traditions, culture and language, and more than 500 people gathered to celebrate in the feast hall.

Bringing an anti-oppressive approach to her leadership in social work, Green introduced consensus decision-making. She decolonized the school's admissions process to ensure Indigenous, Black and other racialized students received fair consideration beyond their GPA when applying. The influence of these two women continued to extend beyond social work when in

2021, Thomas was named UVic's first Vice President Indigenous, and Green was appointed to IACE in 2022.

Current School of Social Work Director Gayle Ployer says Indigenous faculty members have been instrumental in shaping the work around Indigenization and decolonization at UVic.

"I don't think it's the school. It's the Indigenous community and Indigenous faculty that have been at our school," Ployer says.

When Thomas and Green realized that many of their Indigenous students were first-generation university graduates, they organized special recognition ceremonies to celebrate the occasion. The ceremony would eventually be taken on by IACE in the First Peoples House, becoming a regular part of UVic's convocation, and a highlight for Indigenous graduates.

The origin of the First Peoples House, a home away from home for Indigenous students, came from Indigenous faculty members and students within the former Faculty of Human and Social Development, which included the School of Social Work.

Ployer has felt, in many ways, like a witness.

"My experience is, they have a dream, then they do it," she says. "The rest of us follow."

COMMITMENT TO TRANSFORMATION

Like their mentors, social-work graduates are carrying forward the responsibility to lead with vision, compassion and a commitment to transformation.

Thomas had encouraged Yoachim to apply for the role at Kw'umut Lelum. The organization has continued to grow under his leadership. Last year, Kw'umut Lelum opened Orca Lelum Youth Wellness Centre, BC's first culturally appropriate detox and treatment services for Indigenous youth aged 12 to 19. "I am so proud of how we have Indigenized our practices," Yoachim says. "Through all the good work we've done here, we haven't gotten away from our Indigenous Coast Salish values."

The School of Social Work has been talking about Indigenous children, community and family wellness for a long time. Now as part of the Faculty of Health, Indigenous social-work faculty members Cheryl Aro, Billie Allan, Amanda LaVallee and Jenny Morgan are carrying forward that legacy, turning their focus to health and wellness.

"My hope is that the School of Social Work can play a central role in sharing their expertise in the field of health broadly and in the work we've done focusing on children's well-being," says Thomas.

Yoachim says he hopes UVic will help change the narrative in health, as it has done in Indigenous child welfare. "Not with lip service," he says, "but with action."

LORI BULL graduated in 2009 with a Bachelor of Social Work, specializing in Indigenous child welfare.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Alumna spotlight: Answering the ancestors' call

In the Kwak'wala language, Sasamans means "our children." Lori Bull, a member of the 'Namgis First Nation and executive director of Sasamans Society in northern Vancouver Island, understands the importance of keeping Indigenous children in their community.

A Sixties Scoop Survivor, Bull was taken as an infant from her mother, a residential school Survivor, and placed into foster care with her brother in 1971, where she spent the first four years of her life.

After being adopted by parents from the 'Namgis First Nation, Bull and her brother grew up in Alert Bay, where her biological mother, who is originally from the Dzawada'enuxw First Nation in Kingcome Inlet, went to residential school.

"We were within our community and culture and within the language that was able to shape who we are now," Bull says. "Even though we weren't with our own biological family, we were still within our community."

When Bull graduated high school, she bristled at the idea of going to university. But her experience as a child in care drew her to social work. "It was like a calling," she says.

In 2009, Bull graduated from the University of Victoria with a Bachelor of Social Work, specializing in Indigenous child welfare. Then, in 2016, Bull returned to UVic for her master's degree in the School of Social Work's Indigenous specialization.

She vowed to never work in government child welfare. Bull now oversees Sasamans Society in Campbell River, a community-driven organization that provides services to strengthen families and children in a culturally appropriate way.

"I credit everything I am today to the Indigenous specialization at UVic," Bull says. "That program really helped me to develop as an Indigenous woman doing this work in community."

JOHN BEALE with a group of children in the Tigray Region of northern Ethiopia.

Putting Vaccines Within Reach

UVic Economics grad John Beale works with the non-profit Global Health Labs to provide novel technology that keeps vaccines cool in remote regions—with the potential to save millions of children's lives.

BY DAMON VAN DER LINDE • ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOHN BEALE

On a hot day in 2017, in a remote village in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Kwilu Province, dozens of parents gathered with their babies and young children in the shade of a large tree. One by one, the children received something potentially life-changing—their first-ever vaccines.

At the centre of the gathering was Blandine Mbwey, a community vaccinator who had left at dawn, walking 10 kilometres from the nearest health centre in a town called Pay Kongila. Time is rarely on her side. Typically, after carrying fragile vaccines in a cooler lined with ice packs, she needs to begin vaccinations immediately before the doses spoil in the tropical heat. And once finished, she must hurry back to the health centre's refrigerator before the remaining vaccines lose their potency.

That day, however, was different. Accompanying Mbwey was John Beale, who was helping to test a new portable, self-powered vaccine transport system called Indigo. Unlike conventional coolers, Indigo doesn't rely on ice. Instead, it uses advanced insulation and battery-free evaporative cooling to maintain a safe temperature range for more than five days.

"The issue with ice is that you need a fridge to make it," Beale explains. "In rural Congo, there is no grid providing reliable electricity. Vaccinators may be on foot for days at a time, so Indigo allows them to carry enough doses to cover multiple villages before returning home."

Beale leads Partner Engagement at Global Health Labs (GH Labs), a Seattle-based non-profit funded by Gates Ventures and working closely with the Gates Foundation. GH Labs designs tools that can be deployed in the world's most resource-constrained settings—places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where millions live without regular access to health

care. "What keeps me going is the fortitude of the people in the field," he reflects.

MORE THAN A PHYSICAL DISTANCE

Vaccines may travel thousands of kilometres from international manufacturing facilities to reach a nation's capital, then hundreds more to regional health centres. Yet, as Beale explains, the greatest challenge often lies in the final stretch of that journey. "The challenge of the last mile is more than physical distance," he says. "It's the infrastructural, economic and logistical barriers that prevent people in remote areas from accessing health care."

Most vaccines must be stored between 2° C and 8° C. Too warm, and they spoil. Too cold, and they freeze, losing their potency. Conventional coolers stay within that narrow range for only about 24 hours—limiting vaccinators to one-day journeys and leaving millions of children beyond their reach.

Because the Indigo vaccine carrier has extended their range dramatically, the impact is profound: children in communities once deemed unreachable can now be immunized. "I grew up with the principle that every kid should have access to basic health care," Beale says, crediting his physician parents for shaping that conviction. "I think we absolutely have a moral obligation to protect kids."

A JOURNEY BEGINS AT UVIC

Beale's journey toward global health began decades earlier, as an undergraduate at the University of Victoria. In the early 1980s, he enrolled in anthropology, driven by curiosity about how people live and connect across cultures. Midway through his studies, he took a break and spent a year backpacking across India. "I was pretty much off-grid," he recalls. "When I came back to UVic, I was fascinated by economic forces at every level—community, regional and global."

That curiosity led him to switch majors to economics, a decision that shaped the questions guiding his career: why some societies thrive while others struggle and how policies and systems can either open doors or close them.

It was also at UVic that he met his wife, Megan Bonner, in a course on Southeast Asian Economies. The day after their final exams, the two married at the Interfaith Chapel (now the Multifaith Centre), financing their next adventure by tree planting before moving abroad.

"Three months after graduation, we went to Japan," he says. "We haven't been Canadian residents since, but we look forward to coming home to Victoria one day." Over the decades, Beale's career has spanned more than 20 countries and multiple industries—from semiconductors to mobile telecommunications to global health. While Beale has not yet returned to live in Canada for more than 30 years, his positive experiences with UVic have come full circle as all of his children are now UVic alumni.

A health centre in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Vaccines often travel thousands of miles to reach remote villages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Kwilu Province.

"I've had the incredible fortune to work all over the world," he says. "Most of my career has been about where human need meets innovation." In the tech sector, that meant identifying how new chips and software could expand what a phone could do for its user. In global health, it means collaborating with engineers to design devices that bridge gaps in health care delivery for underserved populations.

At GH Labs, Beale's role is to connect innovation with impact—helping new ideas survive the realities of the field. "My job is to take the designs in prototype form and evaluate them in the field in order to identify what gaps there might be in that capability and performance so that we can improve on it further, while also cultivating interest for those designs deemed successful."

A MISSION OF HEALTH EQUITY

For Beale, focusing on immunization is both pragmatic and moral. Vaccines are among the most effective public-health interventions in history, yet every year, 1.5 million children under five still die from diseases that vaccines could prevent.

"If you can get a child past the age of five, they have a much better chance of surviving into adulthood," he notes. "Immunization is a very cost-effective way of saving lives."

In some countries, fewer than half of all children receive a full course of vaccines, and many receive only partial protection. The gap is significant in rural areas, where poor roads, unreliable power and long distances make delivery extraordinarily difficult.

Beale acknowledges that global health work can also be affected by shifting government priorities and funding cycles. "You have to approach this work with a glass-half-full perspective. Being a hopeless optimist is part of the gig," he says.

"I have been driven by the notion of health equity, and that my kids are no different from kids in a remote community in terms of what they have rights to."

TRACKING THE IMPACT

Nearly 10 years after Beale's first visit to Pay Kongila, the Indigo system is now in use throughout DRC, and many other countries. Vaccinators across sub-Saharan Africa have been able to extend immunization coverage to previously unreachable communities. Based on lessons learned from the field, GH Labs' engineers have continued refining the technology.

"It can take years to prove a technology works in remote locations where there are limited resources," he says. "And then you need to engage not just governments, but also global health organizations like UNICEF, which often finance national health programs."

While studies measuring the Indigo vaccine carrier's long-term impact are still underway, early signs are promising. In Borno, Nigeria, the device has been fully adopted by the state health ministry after successful trials showed increased vaccine availability, higher vaccination rates and reduced transport time and cost. The results, Beale says, speak to a broader vision that extends well beyond any single technology. "Stronger health for communities globally is better for everybody."

Road Lawyer

UVic grad Michelle Kinney is a frontrunner in family and fertility law, working to simplify and modernize legislation as well as making services more accessible with a unique office on wheels.

BY MICHAEL KISSINGER, BED '94

"Digital nomad lawyer" **MICHELLE KINNEY** sits in her trusty mobile office, Vanna White.

UVic Law grad Michelle Kinney thrives on being at the forefront of change—and it shows in how she runs both her practice and her life. As the definition of what constitutes a family has evolved, so too has the law—at least in BC, and elsewhere in Canada—in part because of the work of Kinney, LLB '06.

As one of the architects of the *BC Family Law Act*, which modernized family law in the province and provided a template for the federal *Divorce Act*, Kinney has worked with the BC and Nunavut governments and in her private family and fertility law practice to further law-reform initiatives. Law reform is her passion project, she says. And as families continue to evolve, Kinney is helping the law adapt and reflect these societal changes.

"It's important for me to feel like I am contributing and that I'm doing something that matters and is meaningful," Kinney says. "I love law reform. I love being the change."

UNCONVENTIONAL PATH

Growing up on her family's apple orchard in Summerland, BC, Kinney never envisioned becoming a lawyer. She rode horses and was an avid reader. Although she did well in school, she also had a taste for adventure. After high school, she and a friend travelled across North America hopping freight trains. "We were these two little hippie girls, and we would go to all these Rainbow Gatherings," she recalls.

PHOTO MICHAEL KISSINGER

In the summer of 1993, Kinney heard about anti-logging protests in Clayoquot Sound and returned to Canada to take part. Those protests would become the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history until surpassed by the 2021 Fairy Creek blockades.

Kinney and her friend were among the 856 people arrested that summer, and she served three weeks in a men's minimum-security prison in Nanaimo because there was no room in the women's prison. "I remember thinking at the time that I can volunteer to get arrested—because that's essentially what you did—because it's not like I'm going to be a cop or a lawyer," she laughs. Kinney adds that although she doesn't have a criminal record, she does have to disclose her incarceration when she applies to any law society.

After her release from jail, Kinney criss-crossed the country with stops in Quebec and Salt Spring Island before returning to Summerland as a single mom, living in a trailer on her parents' property and working at a grocery store. "I remember one day it hitting: 'This is not going to be my life.' So, I started upgrading my education."

With no education fund or savings of any consequence, she moved to Victoria with her four-year-old son and enrolled in UVic to study Sociology, Professional Writing and Women's Studies.

While at UVic, she became involved in the UVic Student Society (UVSS), where she served as director of services, before becoming the chairperson.

"That two years was what changed my whole life path."

A TASTE FOR THE LAW

During Kinney's time on the board in the early 2000s, the student society became embroiled in controversy. An annual audit and subsequent investigation found that the UVSS Business and Operations Manager at the time had been falsifying statements and stole money from the society, contributing to a deficit of more than $400,000.

"I was thrown into a situation that I never would've put myself into—dealing with lawyers and accountants. We had to fire people. We had to restructure. We had to negotiate loans with the university," Kinney says. "Eventually our new general manager, who is still a friend of mine, said, 'You're going to start being the spokesperson. And I think you should think about going to law school.'"

After some consideration, Kinney applied and was accepted. However, money was tight. As a single mom without child support and faced with rising tuition costs, she considered dropping out after her first year. She says getting into subsidized family housing saved her.

"When I started law school, I think there were six moms at the start, and only two of us actually managed to get through law school."

Upon graduating, she took an articling position with a family lawyer in Victoria. "Up until that point I thought, 'I'm not going into family law.' It's too close to my own personal experiences. But I really feel family law chose me."

After articling, Kinney joined the BC government, starting as an analyst with the social assistance legal policy department and rising to manager, before an opportunity came up working on a family law reform project.

Kinney joined the justice department team tasked with examining and modernizing family law in BC. Part of the impetus was to make the law easier to understand, using simple language and with less legalese, to move away from adversarial dynamics by encouraging dispute resolution and to recognize and adapt to the reality that family units come in different shapes and sizes from what people traditionally thought when the laws were first created.

BC's new *Family Law Act* was enacted in 2013. Less than a decade later, the federal government amended its *Divorce Act*, incorporating principles like those found in the *Family Law Act*, particularly around parenting, family violence, conflict resolution and prioritizing what's in the best interest of the child.

It remains the highlight of her career, Kinney says. "I'm really proud of the BC Family Law reforms. I think we changed the world a bit. We changed how law is done in BC, which has set off a wave across Canada."

HEALTH EQUITY

Another focus of Kinney's career has been her work in fertility law, which primarily deals with building families through assisted reproduction. Since it involves everything from surrogacy arrangements between straight couples, same-sex couples,

even polyamorous family units, it's an extremely nuanced area of law, which can differ from province to province and country to country, Kinney says.

"It's really critical because you need to make sure everyone actually understands the law, understands what they're getting into and is on the same page."

For Kinney, family and fertility law are about health equity—about removing barriers to access the law and creating a more just playing field that reflects a wider view of society.

"I think all of family law is equality law," she says. "A narrow and rigid a view of what constitutes a family inevitably creates inequalities… If there is a small box, outside of that box is the inequality."

OPEN ROAD

Kinney has added another element to making the law more accessible to her clients.

In 2020, she moved to Iqaluit to work in the Government of Nunavut's Department of Justice where there was a noted shortage of lawyers. As part of her work there, she travelled around Nunavut to consult on how the laws could better address family violence and support families. When Kinney left Nunavut, she solo travelled internationally and re-envisioned her career. Faced with the COVID pandemic and recognizing the challenges of accessing legal services in the North, she developed an online service model providing remote legal services.

She's now back in Victoria so she can be closer to her son and his family, including her young grandson. She considers herself a "digital nomad lawyer." Although she maintains a home office, she's just as likely to meet with clients online from her mobile headquarters—a tricked-out 2003 right-hand-drive Mitsubishi Delica van imported from Japan that she's named "Vanna White."

Harkening back to her hippie days riding the rails across North America, Kinney is free to hit the road whenever she wants and see where the highway takes her.

"Most of the time I out myself and say [to clients], 'Just so you know, I'm working out of my camper van,' and people love it."

Despite the freedom of the open road, Kinney remains busy. She's currently leading a project with the Law Society of Nunavut to create training on family violence for frontline workers. She works as a mediator with the Northwest Territories Family Mediation Program. And through her private practice, she helps separating clients mediate creative outcomes and provides legal support for intentional family-building. She says she also does her best to help people understand that "cohabitation agreements are sexy!"

All family law is equality law, says Michelle Kinney.

PHOTO MICHAEL KISSINGER

In addition to doing education talks around fertility law, family law and law reform, Kinney recently co-taught a Family Law course at UVic Law with her friend and fellow lawyer Christine Murray. And, fittingly, a few weeks after this interview, she and Vanna White pulled up stakes and headed for the Yukon.

"I've never been a traditional lawyer. I've never taken the traditional path even through law," Kinney says. "…I feel proud of myself for coming from being basically a young welfare mom to where I am now—at a place that I can do things like give back. I'm proud of myself for making it, because sometimes I look back and I think, goodness, how did I do that?"

Leaving Space for Wonder

While the job is difficult, Camara van Breemen, MN '07, stresses that professionals who work with terminally ill children are not saints or angels—but people with skills and experience.

BY JENNY MANZER, BA '97

CAMARA VAN BREEMEN makes home and hospital visits with a therapy dog named Gaia.

When Camara van Breemen was 21 and a new graduate, she moved to Texas as there were few nursing jobs in Canada at the time. She worked in pediatric oncology and found she loved it. Most of the children were cured and left the cancer centre—but some relapsed and returned. She became aware of a room that few wanted to enter. Inside, was a family facing a reality so piercing and painful that most parents can't bear to think of it. Inside the room was a terminally ill child, the one who would never go home.

Van Breemen was curious about that room and how she might be of service to those families. She learned all she could from mentors about providing comfort. After leaving Texas, she did some travel nursing and moved to Northern Ireland. She remembers sitting on her porch steps in the dark of early morning due to the time change having a phone interview to work at a new facility in Vancouver. Van Breemen was hired and has been at Canuck Place Children's Hospice since the doors opened in 1995, marking decades of service to families experiencing the worst thing imaginable.

Canuck Place offers a creative range of services. A family might need a place to stay and rest while their child with complex medical issues is undergoing treatment or having follow-up appointments with specialists. Children in the program and

PHOTO COURTESY OF CANUCK PLACE

their siblings and parents can attend recreation-therapy events and opportunities at the hospices, camps or in their community. Family members are supported in memory making and creating legacy for their child. After the death, the work with the family continues. They are not abandoned in their grief.

"I think it comes down to a few things about why I do this work, and partly I can do it because I've been taught how to do it and I work in a team. You know, there's skills in this work. It's not just about holding hands but being in the sadness and helping someone's emotional and physical pain. I know words to say when a child is diagnosed with a serious illness. I have been trained to," says van Breemen, a nurse practitioner and Director of Community Care and Provincial Outreach at Canuck Place.

Canuck Place is available to children under 19 who have a life-limiting or life-threathening illness. Van Breemen makes home or hospital visits along with a yellow Labrador-Retriever cross named Gaia. While we are doing a virtual interview, Gaia heaves herself up from her bed, thinking she is needed, and points her sweet face to the camera.

Van Breemen grew up learning from her mother that when there is suffering, you go and help. She was raised on a farm in Pincher Creek, Alberta. At the age of four, van Breemen remembers going to see her great grandmother in the old-age home. When her grandfather had a stroke, van Breemen was involved in his care. There was no fear or reluctance.

"You know, lots of people don't bother going to visit the elderly or don't have experience in doing that. But I was… my mom always said, you know, if there's sadness or suffering, then you show up. That's what you do."

Van Breemen's parents, including her father—who made gentle fun of her lack of enthusiasm for farming—insisted she attend university. After earning an undergraduate degree, van Breemen ended up taking the brand new nurse practitioner program at UVic. Van Breemen is still grateful for the flexibility of an online program that allowed her to nuture two babies while completing her Masters in Nursing in 2007.

One thing that stands out to her today is the fact that healthcare is and should be interdisciplinary. All the professions work best when collaborating. At the time of her training, nurse practitioners were treated as second class. That has changed, she says. Now van Breemen teaches healthcare providers about communication. She is a mentor to many.

Pediatric palliative care is very different than caring for dying adults, she says. For one, only about 300 children die each year in BC compared to about 30,000 adults. Parents often must fulfill their child's complex care needs for years. The care for children is expansive and creative, she says. Canuck Place has a unique funding model, built on 60 per cent donations and 40 per cent public funding—which gives their team flexibility in approach.

While van Breemen may physically walk into "the room" alone, or with Gaia, she knows she has her training, and her team, backing her up. She says part of the issue of palliative care is that we immediately think of the bigness of it all, the suffering, and asking "What if it were me?"

"But being able to navigate the illness is actually being able to navigate the day-to-day." She says she was recently driving to see a family whom she hadn't met—and she knew the child was close to the end. She struggled with some anxiety, wondering how she could support them.

"And I have to tell myself I just need to enter and be with them. Where they are right now. I just have to see where they are right now. And think–how can I (we) help?"

All of us want to help those suffering, but often feel paralyzed. Instead of asking "Is there anything I could do?" van Breemen's mother would perceive a need, say a load of laundry to wash—and do it. There are dozens of things needed in a family each day. For example, taking on pick-ups or drop-offs for an ill child's sibling could be a huge help, she notes.

She believes we should all learn about palliative care—we will all face death—but for nurses, she recommends finding mentors. "Ask families what they need. Be curious and humble." And seek out mentors to learn from, she advises. "Go into the room together."

Van Breemen's work recently earned her the 2025 Courageous Provider Award from the Courageous Parents Network, an international non-profit group of parents with dying children. She says one reason she has been able to do such difficult work for so long is self kindess. "I don't go, 'Why me, why them?' I say, 'How do I help?' 'How do we?'"

She also gives herself space to be sad about what she sees. She realizes that she does not have to hold it all. The rest of her life includes her husband, her children and a boat named *Mabel*, after her grandmother. She enjoys hosting dinner parties and having house guests. She also does international work with a group called Two Worlds Cancer Collaboration.

"I really do see more love than anybody else," she reflects. "I do see sadness, I do see suffering, but when you see a mom hold their child for the last time you've seen more love than you can even imagine. So that is restorative as well to people who do this work."

Her work with the children is a story where the ending is already known. But we actually don't know the mysteries that are going to happen before that, she says. "I mean, medicine likes to be very sure of itself, but this is an area where humility and leaving space for wonder is actually really helpful, you know?"

She says in this case, the patient is in charge. "Dying is way bigger than us. You know, we shouldn't try and be in charge of it. So, all we can do is accompany."

The Art of Health

UVic double alumna Lyana Patrick helps decolonize education through work on issues of Indigenous health and justice. The Simon Fraser University professor is also a filmmaker, whose new work, *Nechako*, tells a story of Indigenous community resilience.

BY JOHN THRELFALL, BA '96

When Alcan built the Kenney Dam in the 1950s, 70 per cent of the Nechako River was diverted into an artificial reservoir, severely impacting the lives of local Stellat'en and Saik'uz na.

These days, UVic double alumna Lyana Patrick is a picture of success in multiple arenas. She's a lauded professor at Simon Fraser University, specializing in issues surrounding Indigenous health and justice. She's also an award-winning filmmaker whose new documentary, N*echako: It Will Be A Big River Again*, is lighting up screens across the country.

But once, Patrick was a young journalism student struggling to land a University of Victoria co-op position. "I couldn't get a job to save my life," she laughs. "I was very shy and nervous and interviewed terribly."

Patrick is a member of BC's Stellat'en First Nation, near Fraser Lake, but mostly grew up in Vanderhoof. She was drawn to UVic because of the Writing department's co-op program. "At the time, you could still get a job at a community newspaper, so my dream was to be a journalist."

But, unable to secure that co-op position, she fell back on her writing skills and secured a co-op position with the *Native Voice*—an acclaimed Indigenous newspaper. During that time, she wrote about the Kenney Dam and the efforts of the Aluminum Company of Canada (Alcan) to divert the Nechako River for the benefit of its aluminum smelter, at the cost of both the Stellat'en and Saik'uz nations.

Patrick went on to earn a BA double-majoring in Creative Writing and History in 1997 and later an MA in Indigenous Governance in 2004. Now, 30 years after her article, she returned to

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the topic of the multi-generational legal struggle to create her feature-length documentary, *Nechako*.

"For me, the most important thing is hearing voices that haven't been heard and telling stories that people want to tell," she says. "Those are my motivating factors in everything I do, and that's pretty much what *Nechako* was about—understanding what the community's priorities were, talking about the court case, showing that we're still here on these lands, living with love and strength."

RESISTANCE IS FAR FROM FUTILE

When Alcan built the Kenney Dam in the 1950s, 70 per cent of the Nechako River was diverted into an artificial reservoir, severely impacting the lives of local Stellat'en and Saik'uz nations and leading to decades of resistance, including legal actions against both the federal and provincial governments and Rio Tinto Alcan, a subsidiary of global mining conglomerate Rio Tinto.

The film is rooted in Patrick's experiences of resilience and adaptation, with Patrick's father, a former Stellat'en chief, also featured in the documentary. *Nechako* follows both the flow of the river and the community's ongoing fight to restore their way of life amidst large-scale environmental destruction and corporate rule.

"There's an expectation of understanding and engaging with this Western system, on top of knowing your own traditions and cultures and histories," she says. "It's really hard work and I just wanted to show that kind of love and care and attention that I was fortunate to witness as I made this film."

The story of *Nechako* is grounded in the kind of Indigenous community health and justice work Patrick specializes in, but she honed her production skills during a co-op term she did land in the '90s working on CBC's *North of 60*.

TELLING INDIGENOUS STORIES

A long-running TV series set in the fictional Northwest Territories community of Lynx River, *North of 60* offered breakout roles to Indigenous actors like Tantoo Cardinal, Tom Jackson, Michael Horse and Adam Beach, as well as behind-the-scenes opportunities for students like Patrick.

"I've always had a very strong curiosity about hearing people's stories," Patrick says. "While journalism is incredibly

Archie Patrick, Deane Carlson and William Wissler.

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Filmmaker **LYANA PATRICK**.

important, visual storytelling offers a combination of all the elements: context, background, history, relationships. Being at *North of 60* allowed me to witness the work done in the different departments—story, editing, directing—and I found a lot of power in bringing these elements together when thinking about a story and who was telling it."

Working on *North of 60* also marked the first time she'd ever seen Indigenous screenwriters telling stories from their own perspectives. "I realized I wanted to tell stories that were community-centred and community-driven, and when my path went in the more academic direction I knew I wanted to integrate storytelling into my work."

Building on that experience, her master's work included information about community-based Indigenous filmmakers and the importance of place. "At that point, Indigenous people hadn't had the opportunity to tell our own stories yet… now, there are incredible Indigenous filmmakers making major inroads into film and television."

She then augmented her UVic degrees with a year of film studies at the University of Washington's Native Voices documentary film program, which led to her first short film, *Travels Across the Medicine Line,* about how the Canada/US border bisected the Indigenous nations who lived along it. She continued to integrate film, video and visual approaches while pursuing her PhD in Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia.

Her PhD cohort included a colleague and now good friend, Jessica Hallenbeck, who ended up starting the documentary film company Lantern Productions, with whom Patrick has spent a decade producing Indigenous-focused, client-driven videos as well as three short films for Knowledge Network. Combined, all that experience has led her back to *Nechako*. Creating the film was a five-year process to tell a story 70 years in the making—that she first explored as a UVic undergrad.

FIGHTING THE NOTION OF DEFICIT

While the story of *Nechako* is personal to her, it's also universal in the environmental and legal struggles it represents. "We're doing this for everybody, because we all impact each other," she says. "The whole idea is a holistic perspective of interconnectedness—that's the message most First Nations are trying to convey—and I feel like we're contributing to that."

But Patrick also feels it's about telling a familiar story in a different way. "This is the kind of health research I challenge in my day-to-day life, that deficit approach where it's about community or individual dysfunction. Traditionally, it's about showing negative health statistics and how sick everybody is compared to the rest of the population—but the fact is our community has a lot of strengths and there's a reason we're still here."

Ultimately, she feels *Nechako* challenges negative ideas and stereotypes about Indigenous people that still endure in Canadian society. "I actually see a whole movement towards self-determination and self-governance," she says. "There's so much to learn from our history and from what we're continuing to do… amplifying that message is how we can move forward. It's how we'll survive what's coming."

Nechako is currently playing at film festivals across Canada, including the opening night of Toronto's Planet in Focus environmental film fest (where *Nechako* won the Mark Haslam Award), Vancouver's DOXA fest and an in-person screening at UVic's Cinecenta in November 2025. Patrick is heartened by audience reactions to *Nechako*.

"It's had an excellent reception," she says. "Especially from people who don't know anything about this story. It's been really affirming to discover that this is a story people want to know more about and are motivated to do something about."

While she has ideas for other documentaries (including one possibly involving Metchosin's William Head Institution), the experience of making *Nechako* has also offered Patrick the chance to reflect on her own personal journey.

"A few months back I found an article that had been written 30 years ago for UVic's *Ring* [newspaper] about my co-op experience, and it said I wanted to be a film director," she laughs. "It might have taken a while, but I did finally direct a feature-length film—so, you know, sometimes our dreams take a little bit longer to realize!"

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Now You Know Me

UVic alumnus Joe Gallagher, who is a leader in Indigenous health and wellness, collaborated on a book with his friend John Matterson, a settler, to explore truth and reconciliation together.

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON, MFA '17

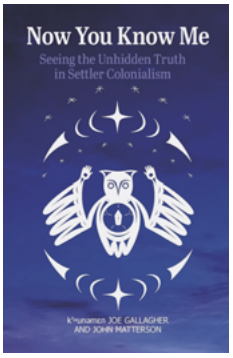
JOE GALLAGHER and **JOHN MATTERSON** on Orange Shirt Day.

A few weeks before COVID-19 stopped the world, k̓ʷunəmɛn Joe Gallagher and John Matterson met in a downtown Vancouver pub for the first time in 35 years.

The two men played on the same soccer team when they were 13 years old. They went to high school together and hung out from time to time. When they enrolled at the University of Victoria as undergrads, they became roommates for a year.

Gallagher is Coast Salish from the Tla'amin First Nation, where he was raised on BC's Sunshine Coast, just north of Powell River. Matterson is a white settler who grew up in Powell River on traditional Tla'amin territory. Although they are from the same small town, they grew up in different worlds.

Not long after the two men reconnected, in 2019, Matterson proudly watched Gallagher cross the stage at UVic, wearing a traditional Tla'amin cedar hat, to receive an honorary doctorate of laws. Gallagher was recognized for the work he had done in advancing the title and rights of his own Tla'amin Nation and the leadership he provided in establishing the First Nations Health Governance partnership between BC First Nations and the federal and provincial governments. Matterson, who had been diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2015, reflected on the impact of his own work after a long career in finance and technology.



"I realized I had put a lot of effort into making a lot of rich people richer," writes Matterson. "Joe was making a difference in improving people's health and wellness, and I wanted to be part of something like that."

FRIENDS WHO BECAME CO-AUTHORS

That brief reunion in Vancouver evolved into long Zoom calls over the pandemic. Gallagher had started researching his family history, and the two men decided to lean into the issues they were discussing and write a book together. "It became a way we could reframe our friendship by getting to know each other on a different set of terms," Gallagher says.

The resulting book, *Now You Know Me: Seeing the Unhidden Truth in Settler Colonialism*, is a powerful testament to friendship and what truth and reconciliation really means. Told in alternating voices, the book follows Matterson's journey as he comes to better understand his friend and the impact of colonialism on Gallagher's life. Despite the racism and trauma Gallagher faced growing up, Matterson learns how his friend drew on Coast Salish culture and knowledge to become a leader in First Nations health and wellness.

FINDING AN IDENTITY

Soccer plays an influential and joyful role in *Now You Know Me*. For Gallagher, soccer is more than a game. It gave Gallagher a way to develop a Tla'amin identity and to learn traditional teachings that he has applied to his life beyond sports. Although Gallagher's parents both fluently spoke the Tla'amin Nation's language ʔayʔajuθəm (pronounced eye-uh-joo-thum), the impact of residential schools and the racism his community faced meant much of Tla'amin culture was not passed onto Gallagher and his siblings.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Through soccer, Gallagher was inspired by many great Tla'amin soccer role models and learned Tla'amin teachings, including to honour those who came before you, being your best and showing humility. He learned words from his language, which players used on the field. Tla'amin teams were fast-paced, skilled and played the sport with flair. "Sports brought out the warriors within our people, who picked up the sport and performed at an extremely high standard," he writes.

Gallagher trained hard the summer before he began at UVic. He initially made UVic's Junior Varsity Norseman and became a starter on the varsity team early in the season, going on to earn most improved player two seasons in a row.

JOURNEY TO GRADUATION

Playing varsity sports gave Gallagher a sense of belonging and privilege at a time when few supports were available at UVic for Indigenous students—and he was able to finish his degree in leisure studies. "It was a hell of a journey to get me to graduate," Gallagher says. "I probably wouldn't have made it if I didn't have a soccer identity."

While UVic soccer helped boost his confidence, it was the "Native ball" tournaments that Gallagher loved most. "I cared more about those tournaments than I cared about UVic," recalls Gallagher. "The style was so different and free-flowing and provided a rare space where I could be proud of who I was and where I am from."

Soccer helped him survive and then thrive as a young Tla'amin man—and he went on to play on several highly competitive teams in the international arena.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE VALUED

After UVic, the friends took different paths. Matterson, who studied business at UVic for a year before moving to Vancouver, became a Certified General Accountant. He eventually became an executive in the BC forest industry and later in international tech companies, living and working in Michigan, California and Singapore.

Gallagher graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from UVic in 1987, and he returned to his community. On and off the pitch, Gallagher was a trailblazer. After working with youth in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver and later at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Gallagher moved onto leadership roles in governmental and First Nations organizations.

He worked in health care, community development, economic development and intergovernmental affairs. Gallagher served as director of programs at Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, BC Region. He became chief negotiator in the early 2000s for his own nation's treaty negotiations through the Sliammon Treaty Society.

From 2006 to 2019, Gallagher served in executive leadership roles in health, including leading the First Nations Health Authority, the first and only health authority of its kind in Canada, supporting the health and wellness of more than 200 First Nations.

When Gallagher's niece, Makara, died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in 2012, Gallagher advocated for culturally appropriate care. This led to systemic changes for how the BC Coroners Service handles the death of infants.

Throughout it all, Gallagher has kept Indigenous knowledge about health and wellness top of mind. Health refers to being free from sickness or injury, Gallagher says, whereas wellness means being in a state of good health. "We have many First Nations teachings that contribute to achieving and living our best lives—to achieve the right balance of health and wellness," he says.

Gallagher is vice-president of Indigenous Health and Cultural Safety at the Provincial Health Services Authority in BC and operates Qoqoq Consulting Ltd. There is a long way to go in addressing systemic racism and achieving equitable healthcare for Indigenous people. Gallagher says we all have a role to play in fulfilling the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and recommendations from the 2020 report, *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health Care*.

BUILDING BRIDGES

They grew up in different worlds, but these two friends have built a bridge—and provided a blueprint for others. Matterson hopes other settlers can start their own journeys. "This story of two communities happens all over Canada," Matterson says. "How do we change people who grew up like me?"

As Matterson reckons with the true history of Canada throughout the book, he confronts the privileges he enjoys as a white settler and challenges the deeply engrained stereotypes and biases he had toward Indigenous people. *Now You Know Me* offers an example of how settlers can move from a place of ignorance to allyship with Indigenous people.

For Gallagher, writing the book gave him an opportunity to reflect on his family and community's history, and his long career in Indigenous health and wellness. At the end of *Now You Know Me*, Gallagher quotes the Coast Salish Knowledge Keeper Sulksun, who says we are all medicine. We get to choose, Sulksun says, whether we are good medicine or bad medicine for one another.

Crime Story

Writing grad Deb Miller Landau has earned acclaim for her true-crime account of the shocking murder of Lita McClinton, a case involving racial bias, domestic violence and other difficult issues.

BY JOHN THRELFALL, BA '96

An article **DEB MILLER LANDAU** wrote in 2004 became the basis of her 2024 true crime book, *A Devil Went Down to Georgia.*

Every journalist is always on the lookout for their next great story. For Vancouver-born Deb Miller Landau, a magazine article on a cold case in the American South became the assignment of a lifetime, leading Miller Landau to write an entire book on the explosive, racially charged case—and even become a sought-after expert on the case.

As a professional writer, Miller Landau, BFA '96, has had a remarkable career: working as a news reporter and copywriter, writing travel guides and magazine features, creating corporate content and eventually teaching journalism. But it was her 5,000-word, 2004 magazine article "Social Disgraces" about the 1987 murder of American Black socialite Lita McClinton that put her in the public eye. It catapulted her into the spotlight when it was anthologized in Harper Perennial's *Best American Crime Writing* and then became the basis for her 2024 book, *A Devil Went Down to Georgia: Race, Power, Privilege, and the Murder of Lita McClinton* (Pegasus Books).

Now based in Portland, Ore., Miller Landau grew up in North Vancouver before enrolling in UVic's Writing department in the early '90s. Having taken a couple of years off to travel Europe and the Middle East after high school, Miller Landau recalls being an older student who felt "a bit out of place" at UVic. She was also a rower, so she was going to poetry readings until 2 a.m. then getting up at 5 a.m. to go to Elk Lake. She says she has no regrets.

She was particularly influenced by her classes with non-fiction experts Stephen Hume and Stephen Osborne. "They were just real writers working in the field and they both pushed doing honest work and finding your voice," she says. "And, as my career has mostly been in non-fiction, that really resonated with me."

"It's hard to develop an honest, authentic voice right out of high school," she says. "But I knew more about the world and was clear on what I wanted to do. Before I graduated, Hume said I should go to the Northwest Territories and be a big fish in a small pond, but I wanted to take the world by storm and write big stories, so I went to California and instead became the small fish in a big pond," she chuckles. "I actually just emailed him a couple of months ago to thank him for all of his teachings."

That pond initially involved splashing into an entry-level position at the *Mill Valley Herald* newspaper in Marin County, just north of San Francisco. It was a "sink or swim" job where she wrote everything and made little money—but learned a lot. She then moved on to Lonely Planet Publications, where she eventually edited and wrote more than three dozen travel guides. After marrying, she and her husband moved to Atlanta where, after publishing some travel stories with *Atlanta* magazine, the editor offered her the chance to do an update on a nearly 20-year-old murder case.

A SENSATIONAL STORY

When Lita McClinton was gunned down on her doorstep by a hit man pretending to deliver roses at 8 a.m., it sent shockwaves through the affluent Atlanta suburb where she lived. While the actual hitman remained elusive, it didn't take investigators long to trace a string of clues back to Lita's ex-husband Jim Sullivan: a white millionaire originally from working-class Boston. Jim had already taken up with another woman and was in the midst of a potentially expensive divorce from Lita when he decided to pay ex-con Tony Harwood $12,500 to "take care" of her... and then didn't even bother to show up for his late wife's funeral.

But far from being an open-and-shut case, the murder investigation was hampered by racial bias in the initial court proceedings, a lack of direct evidence and Sullivan's subsequent escape from the country to Costa Rica and then Thailand. It would take nearly 20 years and an international manhunt

PHOTO MATT H. KING

before Sullivan was finally arrested and convicted in 2006 of five crimes that "caused or directed another to commit the murder" of Lita McClinton.

Yet while the crime itself occurred back when Reagan, Mulroney and Thatcher were the political leaders of the day, it was the events of the past few years—including Black Lives Matter, the #metoo movement and the pandemic—that helped shaped Miller Landau's original article into *A Devil Went Down to Georgia*, the first complete account of the entire case. The fascinating book was selected to be part of UVic alumni's book club this year, with Miller Landau even giving an author talk.

NEW INSIGHTS ON AN OLD CASE

Miller Landau recalls when she got the original assignment from her *Atlanta* editor. "They wanted somebody with fresh eyes to do a retrospective on the case because Sullivan had just been caught in Thailand," she recalls. "So, all my experience to date—travel writing, research skills, finding my voice, managing my time—all got put to the test."

At the time, Miller Landau had no idea the impact this story would have on her career. "Then the article was published and got anthologized in *Best American Crime Writing*, and it became one of the biggest stories of my life," she says. Indeed, she's since become an on-camera expert for various TV and news outlets, including Dateline, *America's Most Wanted* and *FBI: Criminal Pursuit*, among many others.

During the pandemic, Miller Landau decided to pull out her box of original notes and transform the entire saga into a book. One of the hardest aspects of the project was contacting Lita's family. "By this point, they'd had to live with the case for almost 40 years... I remember Lita's mom saying to me, 'Just tell an honest story'—that felt like a big north star for me," she says. "In particular, this case teaches us a lot about things that we're still reckoning with today: domestic violence, race relations, power dynamics between men and women and the inherent injustices of the criminal justice system. But if you don't have that view of being far away from it all, you can't see the whole picture."

HOLDING THE THREAD

Miller Landau says this big-picture approach was essential as she developed *A Devil Went Down to Georgia*. Despite the 15-year time lapse between her original article and the book, Miller Landau says she never lost interest in the case. "I always kept tabs on what was happening," she says. "But it never fully got quiet because I would get asked to be on news shows about it, and I've kept in touch with a few of the key players, especially when [suspected hit man] Tony Harwood got out of prison."

While the case may have been cold, 2024 was a hot time to publish a true-crime book, given the current slew of podcasts, books and TV shows. Yet despite her success—*A Devil Went Down to Georgia* now claims the coveted number-one spot on the Oprah Daily "best true crime books of all time" list—Miller Landau has some issues with the genre itself.

"Overwhelmingly, women are the victims of violent crime and yet they are also overwhelmingly the consumers of it," she says. "And women are more drawn to true-crime podcasts and books, but traditionally it's mostly been covered by male writers: there were 20 writers when I was anthologized in *Best American Crime Writing* but I was the only woman, and again I'm the only woman among six nominees for the 2025 Edgar Allen Poe Award, which are like the Oscars of mystery/crime writing."

But she's hoping that's a trend that's changing, given the number of female-fronted podcasts out there. "I think more women are getting into the true-crime content-creation space today because they are more drawn to understanding and empathizing with what happened in the situation," she says. "That's made it potentially more fascinating and more accessible to a lot more people."

Miller Landau bookends *A Devil Went Down to Georgia* with a tense scene where she comes face-to-face with Tony Harwood, the man who orchestrated the hit on—and quite possibly actually killed—Lita McClinton. "When I finally met him, he was so much less than what I had envisioned him to be: he's now 74, he's spent 20 years in prison, he's got back problems... but that's the moment I find really fascinating as a journalist: when you finally connect with somebody, everything about them changes and you can't help but see them as more human."

Which brings her right back to her days in UVic's Writing department. "You know, I taught magazine writing at the University of Oregon for a couple semesters, and the students were all about emailing or texting for their interviews. But I told them, 'No, you have to get out there and see people, hear how they talk, discover their mannerisms.' I mean, it was probably totally irresponsible of me to go meet Tony in person, in a parking lot, by myself—but that's the juice, that's the Stephen Hume way: find what you love and go get it."

Care Package

UVic grad Janna Malo and team have built the new Allies Integrated Health Clinic to provide inclusive, equity-given care to suit a range of needs in the community.

JANNA MALO, BA '11, launched Allies Integrated Health Clinic in Victoria.

Name: Janna Malo

UVic degrees: BA in Psychology, 2011

My business: Allies Integrated Health Clinic

Where it's located: 101 Burnside Rd. West, Victoria

What we do: Inclusive, trauma-informed, affirming, collaborative, accessible, holistic, empowering community-rooted care.

Our team is: Compassionate, collaborative, equity-driven, trauma-informed and radically inclusive. Including acupuncture, massage therapy, naturopathic medicine, somatic counselling, mental-health support, holistic healing, sliding-scale acupuncture and IV lounge.

Why we're unique: Allies offers inclusive care that's thoughtful, affirming and grounded in respect. Our clinic is built to reduce barriers and make space for each person's unique needs and experiences. We prioritize trauma-informed and gender-affirming practices, and we approach every treatment with curiosity, collaboration and care. Whether you're coming in for acupuncture, counselling, massage or naturopathic support, you'll be met with practitioners who listen without judgment and work with you to create a plan that fits. We're always learning, always evolving and deeply committed to creating a clinic where people feel safe, valued and empowered, just as they are.

Our ideal customer is: Our ideal customer values collaboration, inclusivity and providers who listen with respect and curiosity. They may have faced barriers in other healthcare settings or simply seek a space where their identity, boundaries and experiences are honoured. Whether they're accessing support for transition, chronic stress, recovery or general well-being, they're drawn to affirming, accessible and individualized care. They appreciate a relational approach that centres trust, transparency and consent. They're looking for a team that communicates clearly, adapts to their needs and holds space for their full self with care and consistency.

Our business mantra: Safer, inclusive and empowering care for all.

I wasn't expecting... to feel so seen and supported by the community right away, while also navigating how slowly the client base is growing. It's a strange contrast—being cheered on and still waiting for the momentum to catch up.

Right now, our biggest challenge is: Turning community excitement and encouragement into consistent bookings. The support is there, the need is real, but building trust, visibility and word-of-mouth takes time. We're working to stay patient, keep showing up, and let the momentum build naturally, without losing heart in the slow growth.

We'll know we're successful when: The clinic feels alive with steady flow, when practitioners are thriving, patients are returning and referring and the space is being used in the way we imagined: as a hub for healing, connection and truly inclusive care. When people say, "I've never felt this safe in a clinic before," we'll know we've built what we set out to create.

Where to find us: Allies Integrated Health; Online at: alliesintegrated.health
Phone: 778-445-3106 Email: hello@alliesintegrated.health

Find us on: Instagram and Facebook @alliesintegratedhealth for updates, events and a peek into clinic life.

Bottom line: We're building a clinic where people feel respected, included and supported. The care is thoughtful, the team is committed and the mission is clear—create a space where everyone can access the care they deserve.

PHOTO JORDON CHATTON MEDIA

WHERE I LIVE

Edinburgh

From castles and canals to the charms of Old Town, Christina Spicer says there's something magical about Scotland's capital.

UVIC ALUMNI GIVE US A TOUR OF WHERE THEY LIVE AROUND THE WORLD

A walk and a view of Edinburgh from the crags is hard to beat.

Name: Christina Spicer

Age: 36

UVic degree: BA '16 (History and Political Science)

Current hometown: Edinburgh, Scotland

How long I've lived here: It has been six years at the end of August.

Occupation: Senior Policy Advisor at the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland (or Scotland Office) at the UK Government.

What brought me here: A post-graduate degree at the University of Edinburgh. I had a childhood dream of going to school in a castle and an academic dream to get a degree at one of the top universities in the world.

What I like about it: There is something mystical and magical about Edinburgh—the buildings, architecture, history—it somehow takes a hold of you. The amount that Edinburgh, or Edinburgh natives, have given the world is fascinating. Sherlock Holmes, the telephone, chloroform as general anesthetic, the flushing toilet, the car speedometer—all from one concentrated city on an island in the North Sea.

What I wish was different: More sun! I also don't know if I'll ever get used to the constant wind.

How it compares to the last place I lived: In many ways, it is very similar to Victoria, primarily its proximity to water and mountains. The main difference is the number of steps here—always a good workout walking anywhere!

Favourite activities: Cycling along the canal, bringing a book to a 17th century pub in Old Town, kayaking in the North Sea, hiking in the Highlands ("bagging Munros") and exploring castles.

PHOTOS CHRISTINA SPICER

Favourite neighbourhood: Old Town is just so rich in history. You can't go a few steps without stumbling on something of substantial significance. You can walk the streets for years and always seem to find something new. Old Town also nicely transitions into South Side, which is where I live. There is a bit of a rivalry between the neighbourhoods on either side of the Royal Mile, but I'm definitely South Side for life!

Favourite restaurants: Ardfern (perfect wine and small plates), Chez Jules (an Edinburgh institution) and Down the Hatch (the Canadian bar!).

Best place to grab a drink: The cocktail bars in Edinburgh are some of the best in the UK. Hey Palu is a favourite for girls' night with my fellow Edinburgh-based UVic alum bestie. For coffee, definitely Common Coffee, a local roastery independently owned (by a good friend of mine). Their cafe is Mayvn Cafe in the Eden Locke Hotel.

Hidden gem: The Hermitage of Braid (or the Braids as locals call it) is a great park and a bit outside of the centre of town, so it's the perfect place to go for a walk.

First place I'd take a visitor: The walk around Holyrood Park is breathtaking and is a great spot to get your bearings of the city. Arthur's Seat [an ancient extinct volcano] is obviously the top hit, but I think the crags are the better walk and the views off the edge are my favourite in the city. It is crazy to think there is a 650-acre park in the middle of Edinburgh!

Best place to take in the views: Besides the crags in Holyrood Park, Cafe Calton on the top of Calton Hill has the best view of the city—why not enjoy it with a spritz!

Favourite place to chill: The Meadows. I'm lucky enough to live on what I think is the best park in the city. It is also so full of life and is the perfect spot to have a barbecue, order pizza, have after-work drinks or just hang out with friends.

Best place to people-watch: Honestly, the whole city! The Meadows, Princes Street Gardens, Grassmarket—to name a few. But I also saw the King and Camilla when I stepped outside my front door in South Side and Benedict Cumberbatch with his family at the Christmas Market, so people-watching is prime here.

When you should visit: Early spring is generally the best weather and early enough in the tourist season. The amount of tourists who visit Edinburgh is overwhelming, especially during the Fringe festival, which doubles the city's population—so as a local, I definitely wouldn't recommend August if you want to see the city in its "natural" state!

Dunnottar Castle outside Edinburgh.

PHOTO CHRISTINA SPICER

Princes Street is a shopping thoroughfare that divides New Town from Old Town.

PHOTOS CHRISTINA SPICER

GIVING BACK

Living with Intention

MA grad Vivian Binnema believes it's never too early to consider a legacy. Her planned gift to UVic reflects the values that guide her life.

BY DAMON VAN DER LINDE

UVic grad **VIVIAN BINNEMA** at a 2022 event she helped organize for new immigrants to Calgary.

For Vivian Binnema, leaving a gift to the University of Victoria in her will is about more than what she leaves behind, it's about living with intention today.

"Estate planning has been a powerful exercise for thinking about what I value," she says.

Binnema, who earned her Master of Arts in English from UVic, has spent the past decade of her career as a communications professional with the Alberta government. Her work has spanned multiple departments, including public health, labour, immigration and justice. In each role, she has relied heavily on the analytical and writing skills she developed in graduate school.

"Working on policy initiatives means reading lengthy, complex documents, developing communication strategies and thinking through their implications for the public," she says.

"The reading skills, the synthesizing of information and being able to repackage it under a tight deadline—I think I needed my graduate degree for that level of work."

'IT'S JUST PART OF ADULTING'

Early in her career, Binnema's financial advisor encouraged her to think ahead and make estate planning part of her long-term goals.

"I was in my 30s, and my advisor said, 'It's just part of adulting.' That really stuck with me," she says. "It made the idea of creating a will feel less intimidating and more like a responsible, empowering step."

Motivated by the positive experience she had at UVic in shaping and supporting her professional path, Binnema was drawn to give back to a university that continues to reflect her values. A legacy gift, also known as a "planned gift," is a charitable contribution arranged during one's lifetime and typically gifted through an individual's will. These gifts come in many forms, and some can offer tax benefits during a donor's lifetime.

"When I think about my legacy, supporting post-secondary institutions feels especially meaningful," she says. "They represent hope and possibility—places where research is advancing and students are pursuing their dreams. It's a way to invest in the future, which feels like a wonderful thing to leave behind."

Binnema chose to support the Faculty of Health with her legacy gift, inspired by both her family and professional background.

"My mom was a registered nurse, and one of my first postings in the Alberta government was with the public health team, which was deeply fulfilling work for me," she says.

NEVER TOO EARLY TO MAKE A PLAN

Supported by the UVic legacy giving team, Binnema also discovered that making a planned gift didn't have to be complicated.

"It was a relatively smooth process, and the legacy team was great to work with. Everyone I met was cheerful, loved talking to people, and genuinely wanted to help," she says.

Binnema hopes more people—especially younger alumni—will consider setting up a will and including a gift to their favourite charity in it.

"It's a good idea to have a will, even if you're likely to live for a long time. You just never know what could happen, and it makes your family's life easier if you have something in writing."

And for anyone feeling overwhelmed by the idea of having it all figured out, she recommends taking any step that will move them in the right direction.

"If people feel intimidated, my personal advice would be to not worry about all the details," Vivian says. "I don't have a list of where every possession is going, and I haven't planned out my funeral. But I do have the basics in place around my financial intentions, and that's a great place to start."

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Class Notes

News and photos from around the alumni world

KENNETH BLACKWELL

1960s

KENNETH BLACKWELL, BA '66, received an honorary Doctor of Letters from McMaster University last year. As McMaster's Russell Archivist, he is the world's foremost Bertrand Russell scholar, serving as both steward for the vast Bertrand Russell Archive at McMaster and an influential champion of Russell studies. Blackwell founded and has edited the journal *Russell* for more than five decades. He has also edited two volumes of *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell* and led the development of a database of more than 130,000 letters written by or to Russell.

In June, **MARTIN SEGGER**, BA '69, was among five honorees

MARTIN SEGGER

inducted into the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada College of Fellows. Segger's five-decade career as an architectural historian, preservationist, civic advocate, professor, author and museum curatorial specialist has placed him amongst the leaders of recent and current distinguished Canadian architectural advocates and educators. He is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Global Studies at the University of Victoria.

1970s

Dr. **ROBIN LOVE**, BSc '79, received the Order of BC for his visionary leadership and mentorship, while transforming palliative care and inspiring a global standard of compassionate, equitable end-of-life care.

DR. ROBIN LOVE

SHIRLEY MARTIN, BA '73, recently released her sixth book, *Calm Harbour, Turbulent Seas*, which explores the rich and vibrant history of Ucluelet and surrounding area. Caroline Woodward, author of *Light Years*, writes: "[Martin's] abiding sense of justice and respect for all members of her community

shines through this major contribution to West Coast history, often turbulent, like the seas that pound its shores." *Calm Harbour, Turbulent Seas* has shown up on the BC bestseller list and is published by Harbour Publishing.

Martin is a member of the Writers' Union of Canada and the Federation of BC Writers. As a lifelong resident of Ucluelet, she draws on her deep connection to local history and is a longtime director of the Ucluelet and Area Historical Society. She writes poetry and prose, and her five previous books are all written for children. More information at shirleymartinwrites.com.

MARGARET (MATHEWS) PARLOR, BA '73, was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal in recognition of her volunteer work on behalf of Canadians with Fibromyalgia and/or Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (formerly referred to as chronic fatigue syndrome).

DENNIS E. BOLEN, BA '77, is author of the new book *Amaranthine Chevrolet* (Dundurn Press). Set in 1967, the novel follows a 15-year-old boy on a self-assigned quest to drive a 1942 Chevrolet pickup truck from Kincaid, Sask. to the west coast of Vancouver Island. Bolen has written several novels, short-story collections and one volume of poetry. His fiction explores the experience of varied careers: social worker, university instructor, arts journalist, accounts clerk, mill worker and farm hand. He lives in Victoria.

GEORGE ABBOTT, MA '78 in political science; PhD '19 in political science, has a new book out: *Understanding British Columbia's Colonial Past and Why It Matters*. The book examines BC's history of Indigenous relations from the colonial era to the present time and is published by Purich Books/UBC Press.

1980s

Chief **ROBERT LOUIE (SIMO)**, OC, JD '82, received the Order of BC for his transformative leadership in Indigenous self-governance and economic development, setting a national standard for community empowerment and prosperity.

A new historical novel by **JOHN CORRY**, BA '87, traces its origins to an English Lit class the author took at UVic in the 1980s. Corry says he was inspired by an English professor to learn more about the life and writing of Geoffrey Chaucer. Fast forward through a career in film and communications as well as raising a family, Corry recently released *The Storyteller's War: Geoffrey Chaucer, Reluctant Spy*. "History, romance and danger

collide in this gripping tale of intrigue, loyalty and love in medieval Europe." More details at jccorry.com.

DULCIE MCCALLUM, LLB '81, has a new book called *The Audacity of Inclusion: Fighting for the Equality of Persons Labelled Intellectually Disabled*. Krista Carr, executive vice-president of Inclusion Canada, calls it "a gem of a book that captures the resilience and determination of families and self-advocates fighting for meaningful equality and full inclusion for every person." McCallum received a 1997 ɬiɬəl ʔa kʷs ƛ̓kʷəxnəq Skʷukʷəlstənəƛ̓ | SIÁMĆEŁ | Distinguished Alumni Award and is a former Ombudsperson for the Province of BC. The *Audacity of Inclusion* has now been added to the UVic library collection. More details at theaudacityofinclusion.com.

PAULA JOHANSON, BA '83, MA '13, Cert '17, likes to keep busy. To date, she has written 49 books, 42 of which were published by educational publishers. You can read about them at paulajohanson.blogspot.com. Her press, Doublejoy Books, has re-released some of these books, as well as some of Johnson's newer works, including *No Parent is an Island*, *Science Critters* and the intriguingly titled *Bat Poop Sparkles*. More info at doublejoybooks.com.

1990s

Congratulations to **SEAN HOLMAN**, BA '99, this year's recipient of the Jack Webster Foundation's Bill Good Award. The annual award honours a BC individual or organization that makes a significant contribution to journalism in the province or addresses a community's needs and benefits via journalism. Holman is the Wayne Crookes Professor in Environmental and Climate Journalism in UVic's Department of Writing. In 2023, the Holman-helmed Climate Disaster Project won a National Newspaper Award. Judges applauded the trauma-informed approach to journalism, as well as the structure of the project and its many partnerships. They said it was a model of cooperation that can be replicated in other newsrooms as they shrink.

Saanich's director of planning **LINDSAY CHASE**, BA '97, has been designated as a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners, Canada's highest honour for planning professionals. Chase was inducted into the College of Fellows for her outstanding and sustained contributions to the planning profession, locally and nationally. At the district of Saanich, she's led many planning initiatives, including championing the rapid deployment of non-market housing and implementation bylaws, with several projects already at the development permit application and building permit stage. Chase pointed to the adoption of Saanich's updated official community plan and making process improvements with her planning team as highlights of her time with the district so far.

JANIS CLEUGH, BA '93, is among a group Lower Mainland community journalists who have founded the cooperative Save Our Local News in wake of Glacier Media's recent closing of community newspapers in the Tri-Cities, Burnaby and New Westminster. The cooperative aims to raise $100,000 to launch a new publication with the support

JANIS CLEUGH (right)

of Unifor and the Union Cooperative Initiative, which helps kickstart worker led co-ops. They are modelling their approach after a successful co-op rescue in Quebec that saved six dailies and 300 jobs in 2019, as well as CHEK News in Victoria. More info at saveourlocalnews.ca.

Science grad **SARAH BOON**, BSc '99, has released her first book, *Meltdown: The Making and Breaking of a Field Scientist*, published by University of Alberta Press. The book follows Boon's travels in remote Arctic

and western landscapes for her field research, the female mentors she met along the way and the difficulties of being a woman in academic science. Details at meltdown.ca.

The TV adaptation of the prize-winning novel *Washington Black* by UVic Writing grad **ESI EDUGYAN**, BFA '99, premiered on streaming service Disney+ over the summer. *Washington Black* follows the 19th century adventures of George Washington "Wash" Black and his escape from slavery. The eight-episode mini-series was adapted by Selwyn Seyfu Hinds, and stars Ernest Kingsley Jr. as Wash and Emmy-winning actor Sterling K. Brown as narrator Medwin Harris.

LAURIE BRINKLOW, BA '93, is Co-ordinator, Master of Arts in Island Studies and Chair, Institute of Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island. She was recently named to the Order of Prince Edward Island, PEI's highest civilian honour.

2000s

English and Medieval Studies grad **NOËLLE PHILLIPS**, BA '03, recently published her first non-academic book, *Brewmasters and Brewery Creek: A History of Craft Beer in Vancouver, Then and Now*. This project came after the publication of her two academic books in a similar field (*Craft Beer Culture and Modern Medievalism: Brewing Dissent* and *Beer and*

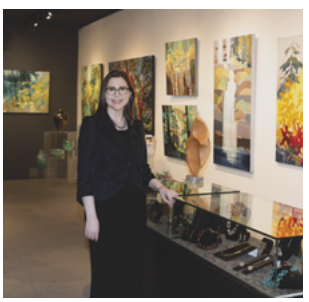
NOËLLE PHILLIPS

NOËLLE PHILLIPS PHOTO JEFFERY NORDSTROM

Brewing in Medieval Culture and Contemporary Medievalism).

This newest book was selected for an Honourable Mention for the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Historical Writing, given by the BC Historical Federation. On top of that, Phillips is also a beer judge and Certified Cicerone. She'll be participating in the UVic Medieval Studies Conference in February 2026, sharing her knowledge of historical and contemporary beer with attendees.

Fine Arts grad **KATHLEEN PRINCE**, BA '09, MA '11, is the



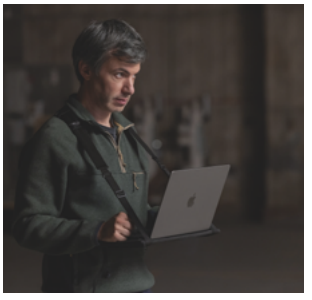
KATHLEEN PRINCE

new owner of the Avenue Gallery. She's been with the art gallery since 2014, serving as manager since 2022. Located in the heart of Oak Bay Village, the Avenue Gallery is one of the premier boutique art galleries in Western Canada, representing a diverse range of established and emerging artists working in painting, sculpture, ceramics, glass and jewellery. Established in 2002, its mission is to champion Canadian fine art and to provide an exceptional experience for collectors and art lovers alike. Details at the theavenuegallery.com.

Congratulations to UVic triple grad and Distinguished Alumni Award recipient **DAMINEH AKHAVAN**, BEng '05, BSc '06, MBA '10, for receiving a King Charles III Coronation Medal. The award is given to individuals who've "made a significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region or community of Canada, or have made an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to Canada."

Akhavan is a senior engineer at De Havilland Aircraft of Canada with over 20 years of technical experience in the aerospace industry, as is the co-founder and CEO of Global Women in STEM promoting human rights and challenging the status quo in STEM and Health through education, innovation, advocacy and action. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Physics, a Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA in International Business from the University of Victoria.

UVic business grad turned comedian **NATHAN FIELDER**, BCom '05, was nominated for two prime time Emmy Awards this year for his critically acclaimed TV show *The Rehearsal*, which wrapped up its second jaw-dropping season (if you know, you know) earlier this year. Fielder and his show were nominated for Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series and Outstanding Writing for a Comedy Series, losing out to fellow Canadian Seth Rogen and *The Studio* in both instances.



NATHAN FIELDER

2010s

Judge **JAMES CLOVER**, MPA '19, served 25 years as a police officer with the Edmonton Police Service and has been a lecturer in the Faculty of Health & Community Studies at MacEwan University since 2015. He recently co-authored the book *Routledge International Handbook of Critical Policing Studies*, which brings together scholars and practitioners to critically explore the full continuum of safety governance from police reforms to the redistribution of policing resources to the replacement of state police. In 2018, Clover was awarded the International Police Officer of the Year by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police for his work in the field of law enforcement and public health. Clover has collaborated with organizations around the globe including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative. In 2021, he was named a Police Fellow with the Global Law Enforcement and Public Health Association.

JAMES CLOVER

"Proud UVic Psychology alumna" **JANNA MALO**, BA '11, recently opened a new multidisciplinary health clinic in Victoria called Allies Integrated Health. Allies is rooted in inclusive, trauma-informed and community-centred care and offers services such as acupuncture, naturopathic medicine, massage and counselling, with a strong focus on accessibility and people-first values. The clinic's goal is to create a welcoming space for those who've often felt overlooked in traditional healthcare, especially queer, neurodivergent and equity-deserving individuals. Allies also employs other alumni, including Dr. **JENNA DHILLON**, BSc '19, who completed her Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Biology at UVic before becoming a naturopathic doctor.

Bilingual musician, comedian and UVic Creative Writing grad **LOU LAURENCE** (**LAUREN CLINTON**), BA '11, has released her debut vocal jazz album. *Montréal Romantic* showcases the

LOU LAURENCE (LAUREN CLINTON)

NATHAN FIELDER PHOTO JOHN P. JOHNSON/HBO

performer's conversational, jazzy musical style "with a voice that blends the soulful tones of Amy Winehouse and the raw passion of Janis Joplin." This year she performed at Just For Laughs, Vancouver Fringe, Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival and Prague Fringe. Her lead single, "Montréal on a Dating App," is billed as "a dreamy tale of modern dating in a multilingual city."

2020s

Congratulations to UVic Writing grad **MARTIN BAUMAN**, MFA '21, whose book *Hell of a Ride* won the Margaret & John Savage First Book Award (Non-Fiction) and

was a runner-up for the Evelyn Richardson Non-Fiction Award—the highest honour for a non-fiction book in Nova Scotia. *Hell of a Ride* details Bauman's 7,000-km solo bike ride across Canada in which he grapples with family trauma, mental illness and his relationship with his father. Bauman wrote about his cycling trip for a "Vox Alumni" column in the fall 2022 edition of *Torch* magazine.

CASSIDY LUTEIJN

A new exhibit at the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, BC marks the curatorial debut of UVic Fine Arts in Visual Arts grad **CASSIDY LUTEIJN**, BFA '20. *Geoffrey Farmer: Phantom Scripts* highlights the Canadian multidisciplinary artist's inventive approach to installation. Fragments from Farmer's past work in the museum's permanent collection are reimagined as living scripts, unfolding in dialogue with memory, history and place. Details at audainartmuseum.com.

What's New With You?

Be in the next Class Notes. Send news and photos to: torch@uvic.ca

Farewells

Former UVic Alumni Association president **HAMISH SIMPSON** died peacefully at the age of 89, surrounded by his family on Salt Spring Island this past May.

Simpson and his family were pioneers in Canadian education. His father, Ian, founded Glenlyon Preparatory School in 1932, and Hamish took over as headmaster from 1960 to 1982, when he left GPS to become the headmaster at Pearson College. After four years at Pearson, he and his family moved to Toronto, where he was headmaster of Upper Canada College Preparatory School until he retired to Salt Spring Island with his wife Tricia in 2000. Throughout his career, his heart remained deeply connected to Glenlyon and Glenlyon Norfolk School, and he maintained close contact with many governors, staff and alumni. He regularly attended school events and loved being invited back to meet with current students.

IAN W. MAYNARD, MA '86, passed away at his home in March after a 15-month battle with cancer. He leaves behind a legacy of excellence in research, applied practice and mentorship as a pioneering figure in sport and exercise psychology.

Maynard began his career as a physical-education teacher, dedicating seven years to teaching before pursuing a master's degree in Sport Psychology at the University of Victoria. He later earned his PhD in Psychology from the University of Southampton, marking the beginning of an illustrious academic journey.

He served as Professor of Sport Psychology at Sheffield Hallam

IAN MAYNARD

University from 1999 to 2017, where he also served as Director of the Research Centre for Sport and Exercise Science. In 2017, he became the Founding Professor of Sport, Rehabilitation and Exercise Science at the University of Essex, where he continued to influence the next generation of sport psychologists. Over his career, Maynard published over 130 peer-reviewed journal articles and served as editor of *The Sport Psychologist* and *The Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*.

A highly respected applied practitioner, Maynard worked with elite athletes and teams across multiple sports. He served as a sport psychologist at two Olympic Games (Barcelona and Athens), two Commonwealth Games (Victoria and Manchester) and numerous world championships. He was a consultant for organizations such as the British Olympic Association, British Swimming, the Great Britain Diving Squad, England Bowls, Professional Game Match Officials Ltd (English Elite Soccer Referees) and the English Golf Union, among many others.

Above all, he was a loving husband to Rachel and father to Chloe and Jack. His family was at the heart of his life, and his warmth, humour and guidance will be dearly missed by those who knew and loved him.

Outside, Looking In

A UVic geography field school helped Sarah Boon foster a love of the outdoors that sustained her through personal turbulence and later fuelled her writing career.

BY SARAH BOON, BSC '99

SARAH BOON's new book, *Meltdown: The Making and Breaking of a Field Scientist*, documents her fieldwork adventures and mental-health struggles, and how both have permeated her life.

Sarah Boon's UVic field experience led her to a PhD in Arctic glaciology.

I started my degree at UVic wanting to be a writer, as I was a bookish, outdoorsy introvert. But after a disappointing first year I considered quitting. I muddled through my second year, then signed up for a third-year Geography field school in the Canadian Rockies. This course was a watershed moment for me, as I realized that maybe I could have career outdoors, working in mountain environments while writing on the side.

Despite my initial desire to be a writer, my UVic field experience led me to a PhD in Arctic glaciology. It was fantastic. Three summers spent traversing, observing and monitoring an Arctic glacier that few people had ever seen. Listening to the glacier rumble like a freight train beneath our feet as it woke up after its winter slumber. Watching water spew out of the glacier surface like a Yellowstone geyser. Twenty-four hours of sunlight meant long days mapping the surface streams I was studying, climbing the almost vertical glacier snout to wait for the inevitable spring outburst flood. I was hooked.

Over the next few years, I did glacier fieldwork in the North Coast Mountains, where I shared chopper time with the same professor who had taught my field course. I set up some weather stations, then came back to collect them in the fall. We had to scare away a riled-up grizzly who was in the midst of dismantling one of the stations. During my first temporary faculty job, I worked in the remote interior of BC, measuring snowpack in different forest types. My limited budget meant my husband and dogs (shepherd cross and retriever) were my field crew; we snowshoed into my research sites with the dogs happily bounding beside us. In 2007, and now a tenure-track cold regions hydrology professor, I joined a large research project underway in the Southern Rocky Mountains, looking at snowpack after wildfire. It was great to be back working in the mountains again. Though I wasn't on a glacier, I was still working with snow and water.

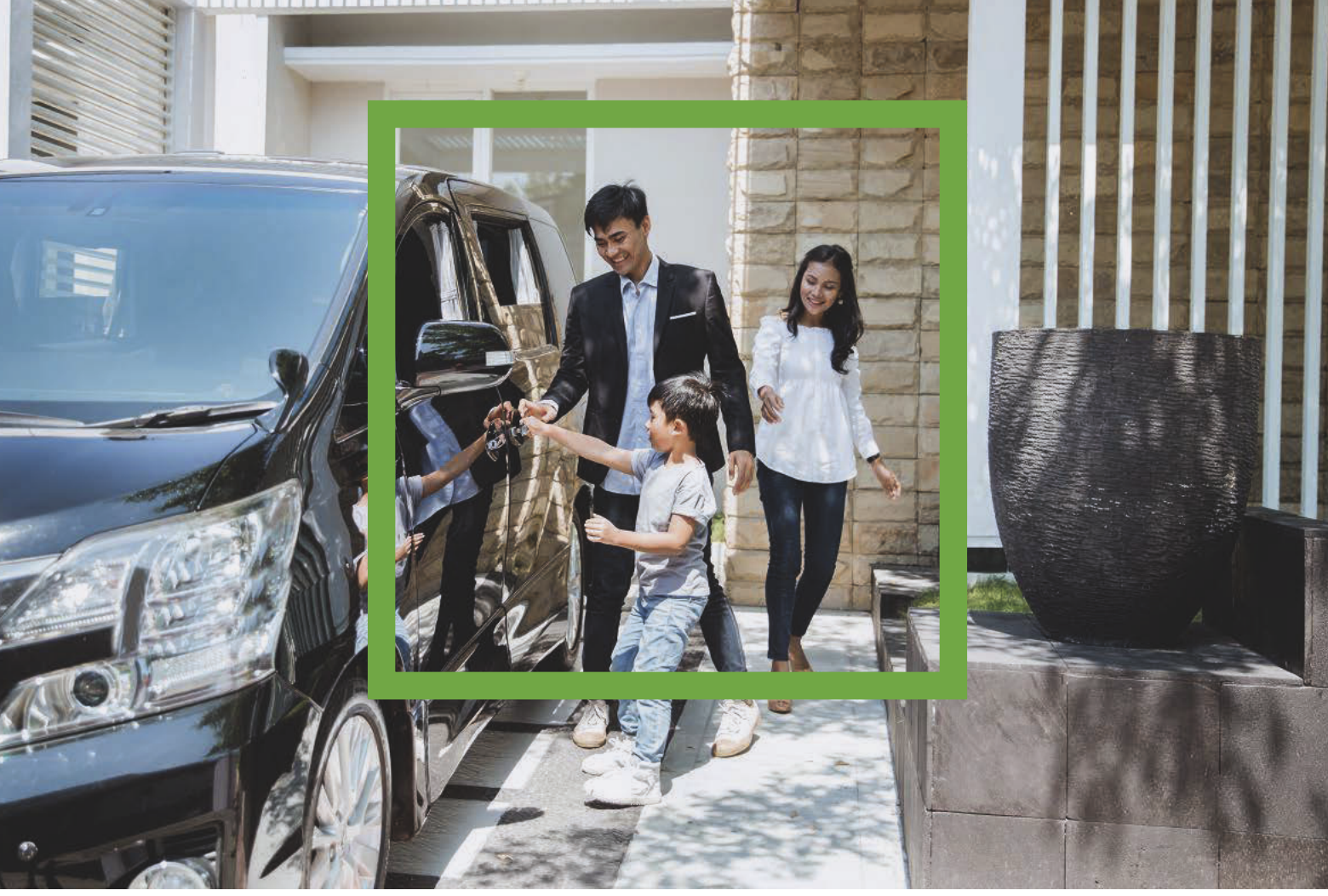
Throughout this time, I was also teaching field classes, sharing my passion for the outdoors with my students. It was great to see them enjoy it as much as I had, and to see them find their "aha" moments whether measuring streams or surveying floodplains. Life was mostly good.

But all was not well, and my dream career of working in the mountains came to a sudden end. A time bomb went off in my brain, and I was diagnosed with a mental illness (bipolar II; anxiety disorder). I couldn't do my job anymore. I had crippling depression and got terrible anxiety before teaching, and my brain couldn't function well enough to calculate and analyze data, let alone interpret it. It was a heartbreaking change, as I lost both my fieldwork adventures and my research community. Suddenly I was no longer an academic. I had spent my life working towards being a field scientist, to have it all taken away in a matter of months.

As crushing as it was to lose my career, there was a small silver lining: as a form of therapy, I returned to writing. With my illness, I can only write a bit each day, but that's enough for me. Writing has helped me get through some difficult times, and I've managed to turn my career of outdoor adventure into a book. *Meltdown: The Making and Breaking of a Field Scientist*, documents my fieldwork adventures and mental health struggles, and how both have permeated my life.

Freelance writer and editor Sarah Boon, PhD, earned a degree in geography with a minor in environmental studies from UVic in 1999. Her book, *Meltdown: The Making and Breaking of a Field Scientist* (University of Alberta Press), was published in June of this year.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SARAH BOON



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Birthday Boat

In November, UVic's RV *John Strickland* celebrated 50 years of marine and oceanographic research and teaching. Designed for the complex coastal waters of British Columbia, the research vessel and floating classroom continues to be a key part of UVic's biology and Earth and ocean sciences departments.