Inuit law grads celebrate at Arctic convocation

by Patty Pitts

There were tears, cheers and smiles as bright as the 24-hour northern sun shine at the first graduates of the Akitsiraq law program accepted their University of Victoria law degrees at a special convocation in Iqaluit, Nunavut, on June 21.

In a ceremony that combined Inuit and academic traditions, the 11 students were praised and congratu lated by Canada’s Governor General Adrienne Clarkson and Nunavut Premier Paul Okalik, who were both in attendance.

Proud friends and family members of the graduates, who completed their studies based in Iqaluit, filled the In uksuk High School gymnasium. Inuit drummers led the academic procession and the ceremony closed with the singing of O Canada in English and Inuktitut by Susan Iglukark, a sister of one of the graduates.

“Happy National Aboriginal Day,” said Clarkson to the cheers and applause of the crowd. “This is a wonderful day for Canada. Today’s convocation of the Akitsiraq law school completes a dramatic process—and perhaps an unprecedented one—in which the larger culture has moved to accommodate the needs and ways of a much smaller one. Southern people and institutions have made the adjust ment to the northern reality.”

Speaking mainly in Inuktitut, Okalik—currently the only Inuk lawyer in the territory—also referred to June 21 as “one special day” and spoke of his pride in seeing the Inuit students complete a program that seemed like an impossible dream just a decade ago.

Akitsiraq’s elder-in-residence, Lucien Ulukannuq, was presented with an honorary doctor of laws degree at the ceremony in recognition of his sustained efforts to preserve Inuit traditional knowledge, culture and language.

He provided students with Inuktitut language education and counselled, mentored and advised them during the program.

Madam Justice Beverley Browne, senior judge of the Nunavut Court of Justice, also received an honorary law degree. As one of the grassroots organiz ers of the Akitsiraq law school program, she worked for 10 years to help make the Arctic law school a reality.

“We are gathered today to cel ebrate one of those extraordinary suc cesses that, I think, could only happen in Canada,” said UVic President Dr. David Turpin at the ceremony. “The triumphs that we mark today—the graduation of 11 new leaders for Na navut—shows that together we have managed to overcome geographic distance, cultural differences, and long economic odds.”

The government of Nunavut, the

SEE LAW GRADS P.3

contract signed for VENUS project installation

by Valerie Shore

The University of Victoria has signed a contract with Global Marine Systems Ltd. in conjunction with its Canadian subcontractor, OceanWorks International Corp., to install the first leg of a subsea cable observatory in Saanich Inlet.

The $10-million Victoria Experimental Network Under the Sea (VENUS) project, led by UVic, will be a 50-km network of underwater fibre-optic cable and instruments. It will provide scientists and the general public with around-the-clock biological, oceanographic and geological information and images from the depths of Saanich Inlet and the Strait of Georgia.

Working with the VENUS project team, Global Marine and OceanWorks will design, manufacture and deploy the Saanich Inlet array. Installation in Saanich Inlet, with landfall at the Institute of Ocean Sciences in Patricks Bay, is scheduled for this October.

“Global Marine and OceanWorks have demonstrated a thorough understanding of the issues around this installation and what we need them to do,” says Dr. Martin Taylor, UVic’s vice president re search. “We look forward to working with them on this project.”

Global Marine, based in Eng land, is an international marine technology and engineering company that specializes in the maintenance of submarine telecommunication cables. OceanWorks, located in North Vancouver, is a leading interna tional supplier of specialized subsea work systems.

The partners were selected after a rigorous evaluation proc ess. Winning factors included: experience with underwater cable infrastructure; an interest in commercializing technology developed through the project; and the ability to maximize the science goals of the project. Another key factor was a com mitment by the partners to draw on local and B.C. businesses for much of the material, supplies support and skilled personnel.

“Even beyond construction of the underwater array, the VENUS project will provide a focal point for B.C. and Canadian marine technology industries to develop new products, services and expertise that can be exported around the world,” says Taylor.

The Global Marine-OceanWorks contract features many improvements over the initial VENUS design concept, including

SEE VENUS P.7

Students benefit from $3.6 million surprise gift

A daughter’s love and devotion to her father has resulted in the single largest donation for student awards ever given to the University of Victoria.

The faculty of engineering has received an unexpected $3.6 million donation from the estate of the late Phyllis Summerhayes for a $20,000 scholarship that will attract some of the most talented students to engineering and will provide financial aid and awards to about 50 engineering students every year.

Phyllis Summerhayes was a mining engineer who died in Victoria in October, 2004 at the age of 96.

“Her scholarship will provide fi nancial aid and awards to about 50 engineering students every year,” says Cameron. “She was a meticulous bookkeeper and a very savvy investor. She lived a very quiet life, but amassed a substantial fortune over the years. We know that she was deeply devoted to her father.”

A daughter’s love and devotion to her father has resulted in the single largest donation for student awards ever given to the University of Victoria.

The $3.6 million surprise gift

For teaching award

David Clenman

dressing up in costume

bribing the history of music to life
A professor and an instructor who both go the extra mile to enlighten and engage their first-year students have been selected the 2005 winners of the Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching.

Dr. Martin Smith is the recipient of the Harry Hickman Award (for regular faculty, librarians or assistants-in-residence) based on his innovative and inclusive approaches to teaching large groups in his Psychology 100 lectures.

School of music instructor David Clenman is the first winner of the Gillian Sherwin Award (for sessional and lab instructors, and limited-term faculty). Clenman brings the history of music to life—by coming to class in costume, for example, or by leading students in medieval dance—in his Listening to Music 115 class for non-music majors.

Smith and Clenman will each receive a $2,000 cash prize. As well, their photos will be permanently displayed in the main stairwell of the McPherson Library, along with the 53 past winners of the Excellence in Teaching award, which was first presented in 1989.

Smith says the art of teaching to large groups—500 students in each of two sections per term—brings the obvious challenges associated with the sheer size of the classes, the diversity of the students (from engineering students to psychology majors) and the technological expectations of the modern student. “They want a quick, well-produced presentation, not just a talking head. Some lecturers can do that well, but I can’t.”

In a typically fast-paced lecture, Smith combines computer presentations with video clips and class discussions that see him move up and down the aisles. He also does his best to put names to the crowd by asking students to provide digital phones which he tries to memorise. “It’s a simple thing, but studies have proven that when students are called by name it encourages learning and they feel like part of the process,” says Smith, a member of the psychology department since 1991. “It’s like the theme from Cheers—you want to go where everybody knows your name.”

Clenman, in the name of classical music appreciation, frequently comes to class in costumes related to the day’s topic. A discussion about music of the Renaissance will begin with him entering class in full 15th-century armour. A lecture on Stravinsky’s ballet music brings him to class, bravely, in a tutu.

“Learning should be fun and I try to make it as experiential as possible,” says Clenman. “I don’t want students to be spectators. So, I’ll bring in costumes, or get them to dance or sing or play instruments.”

Clenman, who also teaches music theory, has been noted in peer reviews for his ’intellectual and musical wizardry’.

The Harry Hickman Award is named for the well-regarded Victoria College and Uvic instructor and administrator. The award for instructors is named in memory of Gillian Sherwin, an inspiring senior lab instructor who worked in the geography department for 21 years.

The awards will be formally presented Nov. 22 during the Legacy Awards dinner at the Victoria Conference Centre. The event will also spotlight outstanding alumni, Sports Hall of Fame inductees and Blue and Gold award-winning students (see story, p.6).

Contributed by faculty colleague Juliana Saxton.
Law grads celebrate at Arctic convocation continued from p.1

The idea for the Akitsiraq law program came from a group of judges, court workers, legal interpreters, Inuit bureaucrats, lawyers and college instructors in the territory. Two of the program organizing committee members were UVic law students who had spent time in Nunavut, one on a co-op work placement with the Nunavut Court of Justice. In 1999, a proposal by the Akitsiraq Law School Society for an Arctic law school for Inuit students was presented to law schools in Canada. UVic, quick to see the potential of this innovative approach to legal education, agreed to be a partner in the project, along with the law school society and Nunavut Arctic College.

The curriculum included the mandatory first-year law curriculum, 29 units of upper-year course work, integrated co-op style work/training opportunities, and courses in traditional Inuit law, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and Inuit language training. The students were taught by Inuit elders and faculty members from UVic's law faculty, as well as professors from five other Canadian law schools in Iqaluit at the Nunatta campus of Nunavut Arctic College. Prior to being called to the bar, the Akitsiraq graduates are articling with law firms in the North and in Ottawa, the Canadian and Nunavut departments of justice, the Nunavut Court of Justice, the Legal Services Board and Nunavut Turnagain Inc., the private corporation established in 1993 to ensure that promises made in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement are carried out. One student, Madeleine Redfern, will be clerking in September in the Supreme Court of Canada with Madam Justice Louise Charron.

“These graduates are likely to become the future leaders and builders of Nunavut,” says UVic’s dean of law Andrew Petter. “One of the major challenges facing indigenous students is the great distances they are often required to travel to obtain a university education. Through the Akitsiraq program, these exceptional students were able to earn their degrees while remaining close to their families and culture in the territory that will now benefit from their legal knowledge.”

The Akitsiraq law program graduates, dubbed “the Famous Eleven” at their graduation by Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, are: Lillian Aglukark, Madeleine Alexander-Redfern, Sadhan Amitsia-Murphy, Henry Coman, Susan Essau, Sandra Inutiq, Connee Merkosak, Sandra Omik, Aaju Peter, Opal Roberts and Naomi Willman.

Faculties honour their teaching and research stars

Each year, several faculties acknowledge excellence in research or teaching with special funding for the following year. This year, recipients in the faculties of humanities, science, social sciences, and education.

Dr. Eike-Henner Kluge (philosophy) is the winner of the faculty of humanities Award for Research Excellence. Kluge is a leading expert in biomedical ethics and health informatics.

Dr. Joseph Kess (linguistics) receives the faculty’s Excellence in Teaching Award. Kess is the Chair in Japan and Asia-Pacific Relations in the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiative.

Dr. Ed Hibougo (biochemistry & molecular biology) and Dr. David Berg (chemistry) are co-winners of the faculty of science award for Excellence in Teaching. Hibougo teaches biochemistry and human health and introductory microbiology. Berg teaches primarily second-year inorganic chemistry.

Dr. Robin Hicks (chemistry) is the winner of the faculty’s Award for Excellence in Research. Hicks manipulates molecules to make new organic compounds with novel electronic, magnetic or optical properties.

Dr. Martin Smith (psychology) receives the Teaching Excellence Award in the faculty of social sciences. He teaches evolutionary psychology and co-ordinates the introductory psychology class.

Dr. Cecilia Benoit (sociology) is the faculty’s Research Excellence Award winner. She’s working on a series of studies that look at marginalized populations and their working conditions, health status, and access to health services.

The faculty of education’s Award for Teaching Excellence goes to Dr. Tim Hopper (physical education). He uses school-integrated teacher education in which his students observe him teaching in elementary and secondary schools.

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Board of governors elects new chair

The University of Victoria’s board of governors has a new chair. Trudh Brown, Q.C., has been elected to the position for one year, effective July 1.

A graduate of the University of British Columbia, Brown has practised law in the Victoria area since 1973 and is currently a partner in the firm of Brown Henderson. She’s a director of the B.C. Law Institute and Pacific Sports Trust, a trustee of the Nana Foundation, and co-chair of the National Family Law Program. She joined the board in 2002.

Public relations consultant Flitton is vice-chair of the board, also effective July 1. She’s been a board member since 2001.

The 15-member board of governors is one of the two primary governing bodies of the university. It includes elected faculty, staff and student representatives and eight members appointed by the provincial government.

New to the board as of July 1 are faculty representatives Peter Driessen (electrical and computer engineering/music) and Peter Liddell (Germanic and Russian studies), staff representative Sarah Webb (facilities management) and student Erik Hamel. This is Driessen’s 13th year at UVic. He has served on the senate and on the executive of the faculty association. Liddell has been academic director of the humanities computing and media centre since 1986. He has served on the senate (2000-04) and as chair of the senate committee on the university budget (2001-04).

Webb has been the university’s sustainability co-ordinator since 2003. She works with academic and support units to implement educational programs and operational changes on the UVic campus. She has served two terms on the senate and her off-campus involvements include the Bike to Work Society, the Vines of Life Water Society and her local community association. Webb takes the place of Katherine Williams who, subsequent to her election to the board this spring, left her job at UVic.

Hamel is a fourth-year humanities student who currently serves on the campus planning committee. He has served on the provincial government planning and priorities committee.

Two University of Victoria faculty members—Dr. Yvonne Coady (computing and information) and Dr. Mitia Sima (electrical and computer engineering)—are recipients of New Opportunities Fund grants from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). Coady will use $78,500 to set up a UVic ubiquitous computing lab (UBicLab). Ubiquitous computing is the concept of building computers into everyday working and living environments to such an extent that data, rich media (advanced technology used in Internet advertising) and network access become constant and transparently available.

The lab will support research into the development of reliable system software and into some of the structural flaws plaguing integration of today’s complex system infrastructure software.

Sima’s $125,242 grant will be used to set up a reconfigurable computing lab (RCLab). Reconfigurable computing gives end users the freedom to adapt a processor’s architecture to the characteristics of the program they want to run. For example, the computer can act as a media processor for watching DVDs and the next minute as a text editor, without compromising quality, efficiency or speed.

The CFI is an independent corporation established by the federal government to energize the ability of universities, colleges, research hospitals and non-profit research institutions to carry out world-class research that will benefit Canadians.
Committee begins search for VP external relations

A committee has been struck to begin the search for a vice president external relations to succeed Faye Whightman, who recently assumed the leadership of the Vancouver Foundation.

The 11-person committee, chaired by President David Tairian, will begin meeting in late July. One of its first tasks is to review and update the position description developed in 2001. UVic has evolved over the last four years, as have its roles in the community and its relationships with external constituencies. There have also been significant changes in the division of external relations, including the recent creation of the position of associate vice president, development and alumni.

The search committee invites input from members of the university community, including alumni, parents and friends, on the challenges and opportunities the university faces in its external relations, the requirements of the position, and the qualities and experience it should seek in potential candidates.

The search committee membership and the 2005 job description are available online at www.uvic.ca/uvicnews.

Anyone wishing to provide input is invited to write by Aug. 15 to the search committee c/o the university secretary, Business and Economics Building, PO Box 1700 STN CSC, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y2, e-mail at usec@uvic.ca, or fax (250) 721-6223.
A UCIC physicist seeks to improve the accuracy of radiation therapy

by Shannon McCallum

Anyone who has had radiation therapy for cancer, or has seen relatives or friends go through it, knows how unpleasant the side effects can be.

UCIC’s Dr. Andrew Jirasek wants to change that. As a medical physicist he studies how radiation interacts with biological materials, and his goal is to make radiation therapy a more accurate, effective and less debilitating tool for treating cancer patients.

Radiation therapy is used in about half of all cancer cases. It works by destroying the genetic material of tumour cells, preventing them from replicating and causing the tumour to shrink or disappear. Side effects—such as fatigue, nausea, hair loss and skin irritation—occur when the radiation damages surrounding healthy cells and tissue.

The goal of improved radiation therapies is to maximize damage to cancer cells while minimizing damage to the surrounding healthy cells and, consequently, limiting the side effects.

“This is easier said than done,” says Jirasek. “We know that different organs and tissues tolerate different amounts of radiation. Add to this that tumours tend to be oddly shaped, and the task of targeting cancerous tissue with the proper dose while avoiding healthy tissue can be a challenge.”

Modern radiation techniques are now sophisticated enough to deliver radiation that conforms to the complex, three-dimensional shape of tumours. This helps reduce the dose to healthy tissue and minimize side effects.

“What we can’t do as well is confirm, by measurement, how well the radiation doses have hit their intended mark,” says Jirasek. “This creates some uncertainty about exactly where the radiation has been deposited.”

To reduce this uncertainty, Jirasek is collaborating with researchers at the BC Cancer Agency’s Vancouver Island Centre, where he recently set up one of his two research labs. Their project uses jelly-like substances that absorb radiation in the same way as human tissue. These “gel dosimeters” also include special materials that form distinctive molecules when hit by radiation. By counting the number of molecules formed after a dose of radiation, Jirasek and his colleagues can measure the exact amount of radiation absorbed.

“The therapeutic benefit is that treatment plans and doses can be verified more quantitatively,” says Jirasek. “It will allow us to say with more confidence that the dose we think we’re giving is actually what the patient is receiving.”

Jirasek’s lab is also working on research to personalize radiation doses. “Two people of the same age and gender with the same type of cancer and similar-sized tumours can respond very differently to the same dose of radiation,” he explains.

Since DNA is what makes individuals unique, it could help explain these variations. To find out, Jirasek has developed a method that monitors changes in the molecular structure of DNA as it’s bombarded with varying doses of radiation.

“We’ve taken radiation therapy to a point where it is very effective, but the doses we use are conservative ones a point where it is very effective, but the doses we use are conservative ones,” says Jirasek. “Now we want to personalize treatments for individual patients, organs and tissues. That’s where the next wave of radiation therapy research is headed.”

For another little girl in Vancouver she’s designing a laser pointer-activated system that will change the volume and track on an iPod. The laser pointers are carefully selected to make sure they won’t damage eyes.

UVATT is a group of UVic faculty, staff and students who design, build and test customized devices for those with special needs. To date, the team has developed more than 25 new technologies, ranging from tricycles with special needs to communication systems.

“Just seeing Melissa’s smile is heartwarming, but this project also sums up what makes UVATT so special,” says Dr. Nigel Livingston, the group’s director. “Not only are we producing devices that make a positive difference to people’s lives, but we’re also providing students with a unique and incredibly rewarding work experience.”

The team’s work is inspiring others off-campus, as well. The cloth wrapping over the detector box and Melissa’s headband were made by Norma Haskett, a volunteer sewer in the community who has contributed her time and skills to a number of UVATT projects.

For more information on UVATT visit web.uvic.ca/uvatt.
Alumni office moves off-campus
The six members of the UVic alumni services office are moving this month to new digs at 3930 Shelbourne Street, near McKenzie Avenue. “Since our small unit can function independently it made sense for us to move temporarily and allow all of the development staff to be housed under one roof,” explains Dan Jones, director of alumni services. Specifically, this move frees up space for the Capital Campaign team, who are raising funds for our new buildings on campus, including the science building, the social science and mathematics building, and the First Peoples House. The move is just a temporary one, and the office will move back to campus once these new buildings are ready for occupancy. In the meantime, the Alumni Association will still call the Alumni House home and alumni will be able to obtain their alumni benefits cards at the Alumni House front desk. Alumni services contact information remains unchanged.

UVic helps develop hydrogen safety guidelines
Cheri Neid-Dyke and Peter Oshkai (both from IESVic, mechanical engineering) are collaborating with the universities of Quebec (Trois Rivieres), Concordia, Toronto and Calgary on a hydrogen safety and infrastructure study for zero emission, hydrogen-powered vehicles. The UVic component of the work, to be conducted at IESVic, will focus on computational modelling and experimental measurements of compressible hydrogen jets. “Basically, we’re studying how hydrogen behaves in the atmosphere if it leaks from a pipeline or a storage tank,” explains Oshkai. “This will help to establish safety guidelines for fuelling stations, pipelines, vehicles, etc.” The study is part of a national research initiative—entitled Auto 21 Network of Excellence—for the federal government and more than 120 industry, government and institutional partners. For more information visit www.auto21.ca.

Plant Sale profits bloom
The UVic Plant Sale, held on Mother’s Day in the McKinnon Plant Sale profits bloom

Criminals on tape
People opposed to the use of closed circuit TV surveillance (CCTV) in public places should look to themselves and not “big brother,” says a UVic graduate student in sociology. For his master’s thesis, Kevin Walby researched the rise of open-street CCTV surveillance in Canada. He found that there are now 12 operational CCTV systems in Canada, primarily in Ontario, and 18 other municipalities are planning to have CCTV or have in the past. “They might not seem like a lot, but Canada doesn’t have many big cities,” he says. CCTV presents an ethical dilemma, he argues, because “by resisting CCTV, we’re resisting ourselves, in a sense. It’s often other community members who want to use this crime control tool, it’s not always the state.” He also feels that CCTV doesn’t deal with the social forces that lead to criminal behaviour. “The technology is about locating crime and sweeping it off the streets and into jail,” he says. Walby’s research involved analysing more than 150 Canadian media articles about CCTV, examining privacy legislation in government documents, and sending open-ended questionnaires to municipal police services using or planning to use CCTV.

Sailing venture wins innovation competition
This year’s Peter Thomas Innovation Project, where UVic business entrepreneurship students have just 10 days to design a profitable business, saw two eco-friendly sun and surf ventures take first and second place in the “most sustainable” category and two other teams win the “most profit” award. “The innovation project is a bit like The Apprentice,” says business professor Brock Smith, “except we’ve been doing this for eight years and no one gets fired. Students just get fired-up on their new found entrepreneurial skills.” With just $5 in capital, the Sail With Us Sailing venture wins innovation competition

Harvest time
Songhees lands manager Cheryl Bryce holds up a bowl of camas bulbs freshly harvested from a campus meadow near Gordon Head Road. The Songhees (Lekwungen) Nation, supported by UVic’s school of environmental studies, hosted a traditional harvest and pit-cook in the meadow on June 22. Various First Nations came to witness and take part in the event. The day included drumming, singing and a discussion on food security and access to traditional foods. UVic is in the heart of Lekwungen traditional territory where camas was an important and plentiful source of carbohydrates and an essential resource for trade.
NEW HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY APPROVED

The University of Victoria now has an overarching human rights policy to link and guide the university’s existing human rights policies. The policy was approved by the board of governors after more than a year of development and consultation by the university’s director of human rights, director of equity, and assistant university secretary.

The policy stems from recommendations on the 2003 equity and fairness review and also links to UVic’s strategic plan, says Cindy Player, the university’s director of human rights. “For UVic to be a university of choice for outstanding students, faculty, and staff,” she says, quoting from the preamble to *A Vision for the Future*, “requires a vig- orous commitment to human rights and fairness.”

The policy articulates the university’s commitment to human rights, equity, fairness and enhanced diversity. It refles the university’s responsibility and desire to comply fully with human rights legislation and to prevent discrimination, resolve complaints, and educate the university community.

The policy was reviewed by the educational equity and employment equity working groups and the wider community provided feedback through the web. In response to this feedback, some language was clar- i
d and a process to issue an annual “report card” evaluating the effectiveness of the policy was developed. The policy will also undergo a comprehensive review after three years.

The new human rights policy will be posted on the university secretary website at web.uvic.ca/univsec.

University leads in energy conservation

When it comes to saving energy, the University of Victoria is a leader among universities.

Last month, the university received a 2005 Power Smart Excellence Award from B.C. Hydro for being in an elite group of provincial businesses and organizations that have significantly reduced energy consumption. UVic has been a Power Smart Partner since the mid-1990s.

“A Power Smart Partner are those businesses or institutions that are committed to adopting energy efficiency as a management practice,” says UVic sustainability co-ordinator Sarah Webb. “The excellence awards are given out to those partners who have achieved substantial reductions in energy consumption.”

UVic was the fi rst institution in B.C. to initiate a campus-wide voltage optimization project, says Webb. Voltage optimization involves adjusting the voltages on transformers to reduce energy consumption. “Voltage optimization was a big part of our success this year. Our facilities management department and our consultants, Elite Engineering, piloted the project last fall and subsequently it was carried into a Power Smart program for other schools and hospitals.”

Lighting and mechanical retrofits across campus have also contributed to reduced energy consumption. During the 2004-05 academic year, UVic used 5.4 million kilowatt hours, or enough to power 540 Vancouver Island homes for a year, says Webb.

VENUS continued from p.1

faster communication rates, higher instrument capacity, and lower main- tenance costs.

The second leg of the VENUS network, the Strait of Georgia, is scheduled for installation in fall, 2006. To meet the project budget, a cable array planned for Juan de Fuca Strait will not be deployed at this time.

VENUS is the shallow-water testbed for the larger North-East Pacifi c Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments (NEPTUNE) project, which will lay a 3,000-km network of powered fi ber-optic cable on the seabed over the Juan de Fuca plate to link and guide the university’s researchers.

UVic is a Canada Foundation for Innovation and the B.C. Knowledge Development Fund. For more information on the VENUS project visit www.venus.uvic.ca.

Calendar highlights

Events free unless otherwise indicated.
For a complete list of events, see www.uvic.ca/events

Saturday, July 9

Music 7 p.m. UVic Society for In- dian Classical Art presents Kathak: Revisit, a classical style of dance from North India. Tickets $40 at Munro’s Books or at the door.

Saturday, July 16

Book Launch Extravaganza 1:30-3 p.m. Harry Potter & the Half Blood Prince. Features reading, contests, Harry Potter torte, science “magic” with Science Venture, and three chances to win the new book.

Mint lectures by UVic law profes- sor Rebecca Johnson and a UVic history in art graduate student. Co- sponsored by the UVic Graduate Students’ Society and the Greater Victoria Public Library. Cinecenta. 7-11-1061

Fall 2005 Ring Schedule

Calendar items should be sent by 6 p.m. on the copy deadline date shown below to UVic Communications (CSDW# CH# 721-8005, e-mail: ucom@uvic.ca). Entries are not included in the online calendar (www.uvic.ca/events). For more information call 721-6562.

UVic Student Union Village 1910-1920

Fall 2005 Calendar

UVic, student extruded medical cards accepted at both locations

Liquor Store Open!

Reservations 477-2689
2581 Pandora St.
www.maltwood.uvic.ca

721-3400
UVic Student Union Village
Westhove Pub

10% off repairs with valid student card (some restrictions apply)

full service gas pumps at self-serve prices

fast friendly attention

for all your car repair needs
Students stymied about their futures can get a helping hand and a nudge in the right direction at a new transition centre.

The Student Transition Centre, which officially launched June 7, will build on existing programs such as New Student Orientation and Grad Year Connections, which help students make the most of their first and last years, respectively.

The new centre will offer advice and information to all students throughout the fall and winter sessions, says student affairs co-ordinator Sue Corner.

“Life is filled with transitions,” she says. “Once you’re here, you still have to decide on degree options, plan for graduation, and more. This new centre is intended to support students in their transitions through university by providing information that will help them find their way around the institution. If you’re a student and you’re not sure where to go, come to us.”

The drop-in centre will be open September to April, Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Workshops will be offered from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays, and will cover topics ranging from academic issues and retention to wellness to social activities. The centre is also working with the peer helping program to assist students on a one-to-one basis.

New transition centre helps point students in the right direction

by Shannon McCallum

For most of us, the words “climate change” conjure up images of rising temperatures and melting glaciers. But for Dr. Diana Varela, a biological oceanographer at the University of Victoria, what comes to mind are microscopic floating algae called phytoplankton.

Found throughout the world’s oceans, phytoplankton form the basis of the marine food chain. They’re eaten by small fish, which in turn are eaten by larger fish. Humans catch and eat many of these large fish.

But the influence of phytoplankton goes far beyond our dinner plates. “Phytoplankton are tiny in size but big in impact,” says Varela. “They exert a global influence on climate by removing carbon—one of the main culprits in global warming—from the atmosphere.”

Like land plants, phytoplankton grow through photosynthesis by taking up dissolved nutrients and carbon dioxide, and releasing oxygen. When phytoplankton die and sink to the ocean floor, they’re eaten by small fish, which in turn are eaten by larger fish. Humans catch and eat many of these large fish.

The nitrogen cycle gives us insight into the carbon cycle because phytoplankton tend to use carbon and nitrogen in known ratios—so the amount of each determines the amount of the other available for use by phytoplankton.

In her lab to determine how a reduction in coastal nutrient levels affects phytoplankton growth, Varela uses growth chambers and other specialized instruments in her lab to determine how a variety of phytoplankton species acquire nitrogen and other nutrients under different environmental conditions. She also participates in oceanographic research cruises to study phytoplankton in areas such as Queen Charlotte Sound, Smitich Inlet and the Gulf of Alaska.

“The ocean is hugely under-sampled,” says Varela. “In general, we know that coastal regions are more biologically rich than the open ocean, but within coastal inlets and on smaller scales, not much is known. Nutrient cycles in these areas are complicated because nutrients come from numerous sources including rivers, deep ocean upwellings and pollution.”

“We need to understand the details of these smaller-scale cycles better if we want to determine how much carbon is being removed from the atmosphere into deeper waters,” says Varela.

Like land plants, phytoplankton fix nitrogen into usable forms of nitrogen. In ecosystems with higher nutrient uptake, such as coastal regions, there are large exports of organic matter to the ocean floor. In ammonium-based ecosystems there is very little sink of carbon to the ocean floor. “If we can find out what forms of nitrogen the phytoplankton are using,” says Varela, “we can get a better measure of how much carbon is being removed from the atmosphere into deeper waters.”

Varela received her bachelor’s degree in marine science from the University of British Columbia in 1999 and her Ph.D. in oceanography from the University of Victoria in 2005. She is the first person to earn a Ph.D. in this area from UVic’s faculty of education. The university has played a very active role in offering teachers the opportunity to continue their learning and assume leadership positions in the province’s schools.

This new program will build on the expertise to give participants the skills they need for their demanding yet rewarding profession.”

The professional specialization certificate in school management and leadership (CSML) continues throughout the 2005-06 school year and concludes in the summer of 2006. It combines face-to-face instruction with online learning.

With 40 to 60 percent of the province’s principals, vice-principals and district staff eligible to retire in the next five years, the program is addressing the need to educate the individuals who will take their places. For more information on the program visit www.educ.uvic.ca/edmil/index.html.

New certificate program trains future school leaders

Students make the most of their first and only graduate-level certificate program for the next leaders of B.C.’s schools this summer.

Funded by the provincial government and provided through U Vic’s department of educational psychology and leadership studies, the program begins with a 10-day intensive institute in August.

“U Vic is very pleased to be part of this partnership to help prepare educators to be our future leaders,” says dean of education Dr. Budd Hall. “The university has played a very active role in offering teachers the opportunity to continue their learning and assume leadership positions in the province’s schools.

This new program will build on the expertise to give participants the skills they need for their demanding yet rewarding profession.”

The professional specialization certificate in school management and leadership (CSML) continues