A human rights activist from Iran and a Canadian who became the focal point for human rights abuses in the aftermath of 9/11 will both be coming to campus as part of the President’s Distinguished Lectures program. Shirin Ebadi, the first Iranian and first Muslim woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, will speak on March 3 at noon in the University Centre Farquhar Auditorium. The focus of her presentation will be women’s rights and religious freedom.

As a lawyer, judge, lecturer, writer and academic, Ebadi is credited as being a driving force behind family law reform in Iran through her work to seek changes in divorce law and inheritance legislation.

In recognising her in 2003, the Nobel Prize committee noted that she had “never heeded the threat to her own safety” throughout her work to seek changes in divorce law and inheritance legislation.

Battle won and to campus as part of the President’s Distinguished Lectures program.

The University of Victoria will be the home base of a province-wide research institute on climate change solutions.

BC Premier Gordon Campbell announced on Jan. 25 that his government will seek legislative approval for $94.5 million to create the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), to be hosted and led by U Vic.

The institute will be a collaboration among the province’s four research-intensive universities, government and the private sector and will focus on finding innovative ways to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It will also promote the commercial development of climate change solutions and provide the public with information and ideas on how to reduce individual greenhouse gas emissions.

“BC universities have some of the top climate scientists and researchers in the world,” said Campbell, who refers to climate change as “the single largest challenge facing our generation.”

“This institute will bring together those academics, along with others from around the world, with business and the private sector to develop new policy alternatives, to find ways to educate and encourage greener lifestyles, and to develop new, green technologies into products that can be used by consumers around the globe.”

“The institute holds enormous promise for British Columbia,” says U Vic President David Turpin. “It will provide a valuable resource to government and to the private sector as a single window to access the considerable intellectual capacity found in British Columbia’s research-intensive universities.”

The institute’s operations will be guided by an advisory board made up of public and private sector stakeholders. The institute director and secretariat will be housed in existing space on the UVic campus.

“With an advisory board of industry leaders and senior government officials, the institute will be in an unprecedented position to frame questions and provide answers on immediate technological, economic, regulatory and public policy challenges,” says Turpin.

**Nobel winner to discuss women’s rights**

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Turpin. “This commitment and University and the University of Pacific Northwest. finding climate change solutions and research can be undertaken, notes in the world.” and staff at UVic who helped make and dedication of faculty, students leader in climate research played a continuity are critical if BC is to at- this happen,” says Turpin. tive of this magnitude is due to the UVic to lead new climate institute projects, salaries, and graduate fel- this was signed projects, which is available online at pics.uvic.ca.

The agreement sets out a consistent process for reviewing and revising policies, says University Policy Re- view Officer Carrie Anderson. “The goal is to make university policies more current, relevant and user-friendly.” In the future, policies that are out of date or no longer relevant may be rescinded, while others may be com- bined or made more comprehensive. Change is already under way, and a number of policies were rescinded by the board of governors in January. The policy website at http://web. uvic.ca/univsec/pol_pro/index.html will also be revamped to make poli- cies more accessible to the university community.

The new policy is available online at http://web.uvic.ca/univsec/draft- policiesuniversitypolicies.htm. If you have questions or comments, please contact Carrie Anderson at policy@ uvic.ca or 721-6144.
Digital diagnosis

UVic research helps the health care sector cut down on paperwork

By Melanie Tromp

Emergency rooms and doctors’ offices are among the few places in North America where computers are still hard to spot. This may not be the case for long. Patient records are going digital, and University of Victoria-based research is helping to ease the transition.

“Record-keeping in health care is one of the most complex areas in which to introduce new technology,” says UVic health information science professor Dr. Andre Kushniruk, who has spent 15 years studying how we interact with information systems.

“You ascend to a computer to do it changes a lot of things,” he says. “If I’m a doctor using the system, it could have a fundamental effect on how I interact with the patient, the questions I ask, and even how I make my diagnosis.”

Many hospitals and medical offices currently use a hybrid system of paper and computers, giving doctors access to records that have often been documented twice and may not always match up. This is known as “double-charting” and can lead to inefficiencies and duplicated information.

“The technological shift to electronic health records (EHRs) involves the online documentation of each medical and laboratory visit, including symptoms, diagnoses, prescriptions, referrals and allergies. EHRs will streamline the industry, offer easier access to health information for doctors, and increase patient safety.”

Kushniruk heads up a team of interdisciplinary researchers who are easing the transition toward digital records in two ways: educating medical and nursing students about the new technology, and pre-testing the different systems available by measuring doctor and patient experiences with the new technology.

The Canadian government has spent billions of dollars promoting these new technologies, notes Kushniruk. However, with the plethora of incompatible programs available, “there are some really good systems (and some bad ones).”

Before new information systems are specified and released publicly, Kushniruk observes and videotapes interactions between the doctor and patient, while the doctor uses the system, to assess the areas where safety is improved.

“Once you have this basic information, you can layer other functions into a program, such as surveillance systems that will help doctors on the front line determine if there is an epidemic and alert others in the health care system,” he says.

Automated technology will also alert doctors to patient allergies and allow them to access medical histories, “The possibilities for improving health care using EHRs are considerable,” notes Kushniruk. “These include improving access to vital patient information when and where it is needed, streamlining health care work, avoiding duplication of information and improving patient safety.”

Through their research, Kushniruk and his colleagues have identified the need for more education on the benefits and pitfalls of technology. With funding from the BC Ministry of Health and from Hewlett Packard, the team has created the Electronic Health Record Educational Portal, a remotely accessible server that gives students real-life examples of patient cases in electronic form.

“The earlier medical students get exposure to the systems and the different types available, the sooner they’ll have a better understanding of how this can work in their practice,” he says.

By March of 2008, the web-based portal will be linked to each of the medical and nursing education programs on Vancouver Island, using a record system designed and donated by UVic graduate student Dr. Ron Joe and his colleague Dr. Tony Otto. The School of Health Information Science is the only school in Canada providing this unique training opportunity.
By Tara Sharpe

The University of Victoria’s 2007 United Way campaign has blown the tops off the large billboard thermometers that have been heating up on campus since last September.

“As mid January, total collections had topped out at approximately $252,500, easily surpassing the university’s largest-ever campaign goal of $250,000. “We’ve seen such an incredible degree of enthusiasm and generosity from the campus community,” says Clint Hamilton, the UVic 2007 United Way campaign chair and UVic’s director of athletics and recreation, “and the results will make a good ‘Go Team!’ cheer for next year’s campaign. Together we can keep the momentum going.”

Despite losing a competition with Royal Roads University based on increase in per capita contributions and participation rates, UVic faculty, staff and students helped drive our campaign to a record level through individual donations and successful fund-raising initiatives.

For individual donations, campaign advocates encouraged one-on-one conversations with colleagues about the United Way. A number of fund-raising events contributed to the successful campaign, including the Dr. Zonk wacky chemistry show ($2,016), the annual book sale hosted by McPherson Library staff ($5,190), the annual Hearts and Hands crafts fair ($1,485), the Engineering Students Society’s VW Rabbit Push ($1,009), the sale proceeds from local band Two Old Goats’ CD ($1,530), the September barbecue launch event ($2,395) and more.

At the end of last year, the philanthropic spirit was echoed on campus by the two annual “Food for Fines” initiatives: UVic library staff waived a total of $3,160 in fines, UVic Campus Security Services reduced a total of 319 fines in December, and both programs resulted in canned goods and food donations to those in need over the holiday season.

Throughout the 2007 United Way campaign, prize draws added to the excitement and sense of friendly competition. Generous prize donations were received from various sponsors; information about the prizes is available at http://unitedway.uvic.ca/prizes.htm.

The United Way thermometers will be packed away until the next round of United Way campaign giving, but the real winners—the one-in-three Victorians who are helped by the United Way—will have a chance to feel the warmth of what a quarter of a million dollars can bring for the organization engaged in a variety of poverty reduction programs aimed at women and children.

Before arriving, I was not exactly sure what to expect of the place or the work. I was hoping to use my legal skills but said that I was willing to do anything that the organization needed. As it happened, what they really needed was someone to speak about child labour awareness campaigns in the local primary schools.

When people from Western countries think of child labour, we often think of children toil- ing for long hours in sweatshops. But child labour is so much more than that. It is the five-year-old sent to fetch water with a 20-litre jerry can, the young boy helping his father fish or make bricks, the orphan working 12-hour days crushing stones, the 14-year-old house girl no longer in school, the children who miss class every Friday to sell food on the roadside and the young boys and girls kidnapped and traded for use as soldiers and sex slaves in areas of conflict.

The program was met with resistance by some of the teachers and school staff afraid that we would impose our Western values on their children. I was told that culturally, African children are expected to work, which is true. The challenge faced then was to draw that fine line between the type of work that children can do versus the type of work that we call child labour.

I had to do this without imposing my own values as a Canadian and yet still maintaining the international standards of children’s rights that Uganda has committed to upholding.

When all was said and done, the program was well received by both students and staff. As the end of each school presentation, we helped the students elect child rights support groups in hopes that those groups would provide a means for further dialogue and monitoring of child labour and other forms of child abuse in the schools.

Because this program is completely unfunded, however, the organization will likely face challenges in monitoring and supporting this work in the long term—a common problem for small non-governmental organizations in Uganda that are almost completely reliant on foreign support.

For me, I feel that I gained much more than I gave. Thanks to a variety of funders, including the Student International Activities Fund, One World Scholarship, Department of Justice, Brampton Endowment and Devlin Gallais, I met so many beautiful and bright children who never stop trying despite any odds, and made many friends that I will keep for life.

If anyone would like more information on the Entebbe Women Association or my work there, please e-mail cchunick@googlemail.com.

Letter from Uganda

By Carly Chunick, fourth-year UVic Law Co-op student

Entebbe is a sprawling, sleepy town on the Ugandan shore of Lake Victoria. I was there from September to November as the country was attempting to west ernize and impress for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting it was hosting in Novem ber. It was the final term of my law degree, and I wanted one last adventure before embarking on my career. So I went to Uganda to volunteer at Entebbe Women Association, a local non-profit organization engaged in a variety of poverty reduction programs aimed at women and children.

Before arriving, I was not exactly sure what to expect of the place or the work. I was hoping to use my legal skills but said that I was willing to do anything that the organization needed. As it happened, what they really needed was someone to speak about child labour awareness campaigns in the local primary schools.

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If anyone would like more information on the Entebbe Women Association or my work there, please e-mail cchunick@gmail.com.
New UVic website coming soon

Thank you to everyone who has provided feedback on the UVic website redesign to date. Comments have been flowing in since a link to the “in progress” site (http://wwwdev.uvic.ca) was posted on the UVic home page in January. The site has been tested with several external audience segments, and overall, the reception to the new approach to UVic’s web presence has been positive, with high marks for ease of use from high school students in particular.

Many useful suggestions on the new design have also been received from the campus community. In order to incorporate your suggestions, and make the site as useful as it can be to UVic’s on- and off-campus communities, the launch of the new site will take place in mid-March. After the launch, current students, faculty and staff will be able to bookmark the Students, Faculty and Staff internal home page, which provides easy access to commonly requested features and services that are currently on the existing university home page.

The deadline for feedback on the new design is February 15. Please send your comments and suggestions to webcoor@uvic.ca.

New grad course advances local health research

By Suzanne Smith

When a child ends up in intensive care, they’re not the only ones who need attention. This is also a very distressing time for their parents. Thanks to a hands-on research course at UVic, psychology graduate student Rachel Yeung has helped the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) begin identifying effective care-giving strategies for parents whose children have been admitted to intensive care.

Last year Rachel Yeung and six other graduate students enrolled in Practicum in Applied Health Research and Knowledge Transfer, an interdisciplinary course facilitated by the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Knowledge Mobilization Unit, (an initiative of UVic Research and York University that is funded by SSHRC and CIHR). The course, funded by the BC Child and Youth Health Research Network, was developed as a result of a partnership with the Vancouver Island Health Authority.

“I took this course because I wanted the opportunity to work collaboratively within the community on a project with the potential to be on-going,” explains Yeung. “This experience allowed me to apply my knowledge in research design and methodology to a real-life problem and learn directly from health practitioners working in the field.”

Yeung’s course assignment involved working with Drs. Amanda Barclay and Raphael Beck, two Victoria General Hospital pediatric intensive care doctors—known in the medical community as pediatric intensivists—to develop a needs assessment survey that measured parent satisfaction. The goal of the survey was to assess whether or not the hospital’s pediatric intensive care unit, the only service of its kind on Vancouver Island, is currently meeting the needs of parents and children in the region and, if not, what improvements should be made. Specifically the survey was to measure the parent’s degree of satisfaction with the technical skills of the staff, the staff’s ability to keeping them informed about their children’s condition, the responsiveness of the staff to the emotional needs of the parents and their children, and the parents’ overall level of satisfaction with the intensive care services.

Yeung conducted an extensive literature review to identify previous measures of parent satisfaction relevant to the questions identified by VIHA and the pediatric intensive care unit. Then, through consultation with Barclay and Beck, she developed other new measures for the survey and developed procedures for administering the survey and conducting the survey one time this year, and the two pediatric intensivists were pleased with the results. In fact, they have expressed an interest in working with Yeung on future research projects.

Course co-instructor Dr. Bonnie Leadbeater (psychology) is thrilled with Yeung’s success and the other impressive achievements of her classmates.

“This class is about doing something real that matters to the community. In classes like this the level of responsibility goes up a notch—both for the instructors and for the students. The students’ work isn’t just being graded, it’s being used to help make the world a better place,” says Leadbeater.

Wayne Mirc, director of chronic disease prevention evaluation with the Population Health Division of the Ministry of Health and co-instructor of this course, agrees with Leadbeater.

“This course really exceeded our expectations—we are so proud of the students. A course like this gives students hands-on research knowledge and allows them to work directly with people in the field. This kind of experience can only benefit students when they are seeking employment down the road,” says Mirc.

VIHA is also pleased with the students’ results. Peter Kirk, VIHA’s director of research and academic development, explains that by “building VIHA’s research capacity, the students are helping the organization to conduct more research which will ultimately benefit the people of Vancouver Island.”

Some of the other student research projects included a review of best practices for addressing the problems of youth who are suffering from mental health issues and substance abuse; the production of a questionnaire to measure couples’ awareness of the dangers of alcohol use during pregnancy; and an assessment of a position at Nanaimo General Hospital dedicated to helping facilitate communication between the people at emergency to other parts of the hospital.

A second Practicum in Applied Health Research and Knowledge Transfer will be offered in September 2008. A course with a similar format also facilitated by the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Knowledge Mobilization Unit will be offered in May 2008. Entitled Special Topics in Applied Research in BC Wildlife, Ecosystems and Parks, it was developed through a partnership with the Environmental Stewardship Division of the BC Ministry of Environment.

Are you intrigued by science? Want to know more about the fascinating research going on at UVic?

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Fees: $20 plus GST for an individual session or attend all three for $50 plus GST Course Code: AS9397 2008S C00

Call 472-4747 to register or visit www.continuingstudies.uvic.ca/

Islands in the Sun

Wednesday, February 13: 7 to 9 pm
Dr. Neville Winchester, Department of Biology, presents a visually stimulating and highly motivating presentation concerned with exploring and conserving global environments.

What Is Life, the Universe and Everything Made of?

Wednesday, March 5: 7 to 9 pm
Dr. Michael Lefebvre, Department of Physics and Astronomy will introduce you to how physicists probe the very fabric of nature with high-energy particle collisions, and boldly look where no one has looked before.
Students registering in March for 2008 UVic summer studies courses will be the first to benefit from a new, streamlined online registration system that replaces several outdated systems. Part of Project Nova, the new Banner system will provide students with one-stop access to registration, course information, student information and personal timetables.

The team behind the new system is identifying more than 200 UVic staff who are responsible for all aspects of the registration and admission process on campus and offering numerous training sessions to address their various needs. Over 70 different sessions addressing nine different registration and admissions areas are scheduled and registration is brisk. Students will access the new system via uSource or http://registrar.uvic.ca. Online tutorials will assist them with navigation and additional staff and students will be hired to provide more online and phone assistance during extended office hours as students adjust to the new format.

Members of the campus community interested in learning the latest about Project Nova’s ongoing progress are invited to information sessions on Feb. 14 and 29 from 11 a.m. to noon in the Campus View Room in the Cadboro Commons Building.

Clicking back in time
UVic Libraries put BC history online

By Patty Pitts

The University of Victoria’s Special Collections and Archives are celebrating the province’s 150th birthday by making significant materials in their collections accessible with just the click of a mouse. With the assistance of a grant from the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, UVic is digitizing books, maps and other documents that are especially relevant to Victoria’s and the province’s early history.

“UVic’s Special Collections is a pioneer in making raw history available online,” says Dr. John Lutz (history). “The maps, books and extremely rare ephemera being made available will help students and researchers understand the impact of the gold rush on Victoria and its subsequent growth. Victoria was the entry point for the British Columbia gold fields and, of all the communities in BC, it benefited the most.”

Materials chosen for the project include: five original hand-coloured maps of Vancouver Island circa 1855–9 made by the colony’s surveyor-general, Joseph D. Pemberton; six early tourist pamphlets of Victoria, including captioned photographs; Victoria Illustrated (1891), a rare book published by The Colonist containing many contemporary illustrations and tables depicting Victoria life, people, resources, industry and architecture; and the diary of Victoria pioneer and amateur historian Frank Sylvester (1834–1908) containing 150 entries on contemporary life, travels and ships in Victoria during that period. Other documents and ephemera of Sylvester’s, including historical essays, photographs and business records, will also be digitized.

“The Ike Barber grant has made it possible to hire a graduate student who will digitize some very challenging documents,” says UVic’s Digital Projects Librarian Chris Peter. “The library will in turn store these data in its new digital management system so that users can find specific images and text through a simple Google search.”

The documents will be available on the library’s image display system at http://contentdm.library.uvic.ca:8000/cdm4/browse.php.

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At the galleries
www.maltwood.uvic.ca
721-5665


At the theatres
www.phoenixtheatres.ca
721-8000

Thursday, February 21
Centre on Aging’s Community Forum 12:30 p.m. Life Journey — A Celebration of Life. History and Our Own Story. keynote addressee by Dr. Bob Tate, Unit of Manitoba. Closing keynote — Changes on the Horizon — What You Need to Know About Advance Care Planning in BC, by Laura Watts, national director of Canadian Centre for Elder Law Studies, UBC. Strong Bldg. Seniors and students $12.15, others $15.10. 721-6569

Monday, February 25
Sessions in Spirituality Lecture 12:30 p.m. Spirituality in the Midst of Suffering. Reverend Al Tylicki, spiritual leader and executive director of Our Place Society. Interfaith Chapel. 721-8358

Tuesday, February 26

Health Information Science Open House 9:30 to 1:30. Find out about educational, co-op and career opportunities. Human & Social Development A300. 721-8776

Friday, February 29
Music 12:30 p.m. Fridaymusic. School of Music windwood studios. Maclaurin B135. 721-7904

Tuesday, February 12
Alumni Week Until Feb. 9. A series of campus-based events and lots of great prizes. Visit alumni.uvic.ca for details and event costs. 721-7935

Other 10 a.m. Body Image Awareness Day — Embracing Your Natural Size. Art Show and student panel. Student Union Bldg. Michele Pujol Ram.

Institute for Dispute Resolution Lecture 12:30 p.m. Resolving the Marshes of Southern Iraq. Mau- reen Maloney, UVic. Fraser 158. 472-4531

Asia Pacific Initiatives Lecture 12:30 p.m. Our Lifeboat: China and the World’s Environment and Development. Dr. Arthur Hanson, distinguished fellow and former president of the International Institute for Sustainable Development. China Fraser 145. 721-7020.

Friday, February 8
Music 12:30 p.m. Fridaymusic. School of Music chamber ensembles. Maclaurin B135. 721-7904

Thursday, February 21
Centre on Aging’s Community Forum 12:30 a.m. Life Journey — A Celebration of Life, History and Our Own Story. keynote addressee by Bob Tate, Unit of Manitoba. Closing keynote — Changes on the Horizon — What You Need to Know About Advance Care Planning in BC, by Laura Watts, national director of Canadian Centre for Elder Law Studies, UBC. Strong Bldg. Seniors and students $12.15, others $15.10. 721-6569

Monday, February 25
Sessions in Spirituality Lecture 12:30 p.m. Spirituality in the Midst of Suffering. Reverend Al Tylicki, spiritual leader and executive director of Our Place Society. Interfaith Chapel. 721-8358

Tuesday, February 26

Health Information Science Open House 9:30 to 1:30. Find out about educational, co-op and career opportunities. Human & Social Development A300. 721-8776

Friday, February 29
Music 12:30 p.m. Fridaymusic. School of Music windwood studios. Maclaurin B135. 721-7904

Tuesday, February 12
Alumni Week Until Feb. 9. A series of campus-based events and lots of great prizes. Visit alumni.uvic.ca for details and event costs. 721-7935

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Friday, February 8
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Tuesday, February 12
Career Services 4:30 p.m. Take ACTion. Meet the Applied Career Transitions program coordinators and find out how to develop and manage your career. Strong C128. 721-8421

Friday, February 15
Music 12:30 p.m. Fridaymusic. School of Music string ensembles. Maclaurin B135. 721-7904

use of child soldiers, led by Senator Romeo Dallaire.

Leadbeater has also taken the lead in Victoria, by developing and evaluating the influential anti-bullying WITS program (WITS stands for Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, and Seek help) which helps young people both handle and prevent bullying in Greater Victoria schools.

She joined UVic’s Department of Psychology in 1997 and is the director of UVic’s Centre for Youth and Society as well as co-director of the BC Child and Youth Health Research Network.

Through her leadership, UVic researchers and community partners including the Rock Solid Foundation and Prostitutes’ Empowerment Education Resource Society are working together to improve the well-being of young people in our city. Leadbeater has also served as a member of the Victoria mayor’s expert panel on homelessness.

Verwoord is currently a bachelor of education student at UVic. Her passion for education, equality and social justice is demonstrated through her numerous volunteer commitments including with an NGO in New Delhi, India, and with Canadian community organizations including the Women in Need Society, Canadian Red Cross, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Mines Action Canada.

While volunteering with the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Verwoord introduced Little Ravens Reading Hour in 2003, a culturally relevant Aboriginal preschool reading program, and received a Raise a Reader grant to purchase books for the program. She currently sits on the UVic senate.

The nominees from UVic for the 2008 Victoria’s Leadership Awards included Trudi Brown, UVic’s Board of Governors; Dr. Elaine Gallagher, director of UVic’s Centre on Aging; Dale Gann, acting president of UVic Properties; Jonathan Morris, an international master of arts student in child and youth care; Jessica Page, a fourth-year biology student; Prof. Chris Tollefson, founding executive director of UVic’s Environmental Law Clinic; Dr. Holly Tsuchiko, neuropsychologist and professor in UVic’s Department of Psychology and Centre on Aging; Powerna Sukhawatanaakul, a fourth-year honours psychology student; and Mark Walsh, a two-term school trustee who recently returned to UVic to complete an honours undergraduate degree.

Leadership Victoria is a local association providing skills develop-}
Get your groceries, support a worthy cause

Want to see a great example of how University of Victoria ingenuity is directly improving lives in the community?

Then plan to do your grocery shopping at the Fort and Foul Bay Safeway store on Feb. 16 and March 8.

Between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on both Saturdays, members of UVic’s CanAssist team will be on hand at the store to greet shoppers and demonstrate some of their many achievements. The team is a partner in the store’s 2008 Safeway We Care campaign, which has chosen children and families living with physical and developmental disabilities as this year’s community fundraising theme.

CanAssist, formerly known as UVATT, works with individuals, families and organizations to develop customized devices and technologies for people with special needs. The team involves students, faculty and staff from more than 20 departments and programs across campus, as well as community volunteers such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, engineers, seamstresses and machinists.

CanAssist projects include tricycles for children with physical and visual impairments, high-tech wheelchair modifications and eye-tracking communication systems. Clients range from visually impaired children to adults with advanced neuromuscular degenerative diseases such as multiple sclerosis and ALS.

Unique in North America, CanAssist responds to community requests from across Greater Victoria and around the world. A significant portion of its funding comes from donations, which are used to develop and deliver assistive technologies that aren’t available from any other source.

The Feb. 16 event is “Charity Checkouts Day” in which Safeway customers who donate to CanAssist by topping up their grocery bill will receive coupons for Eating Right Round Up Shopping Night. On March 8, customers can purchase coupon books worth more than $100 in savings, with all proceeds going to CanAssist.

In addition, from now until March 31, money collected in donation boxes at the Fort and Foul Bay store’s check-out counters will go to CanAssist.

“This partnership is a tremendous opportunity for the CanAssist team to raise its profile in the community,” says Doug Tidson, CanAssist’s associate director. "With this exposure, we hope to increase our donor and volunteer base and create greater awareness that CanAssist is available to help families in need. We’re very grateful to the staff at the Fort and Foul Bay Safeway store for their wonderful support of our program.

For more information on CanAssist, or to volunteer or donate, call 721-7300 or visit www.canassist.ca.

DID YOU KNOW?

* Nearly one in eight Canadians, or 3.8 million people, has a disability. In BC, 570,000 people, or almost one in seven, live with a disability.

* Since it was created in 1999, CanAssist has developed over 75 new technologies and provided direct assistance to more than 600 clients—infants, children, adults and seniors.

A Day in the Life of Greig Cosier

Cosier sees him at work from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. As a custodian at UVic for the past 17 years, Cosier works when most people have gone home, but that hasn’t stopped him from being an active member of the university community.

Cosier has worked in several campus buildings and is currently located in University Centre. “My work is guided by the policies of health and safety and professional cleaning,” he explains. “I clean washrooms, open areas, single offices, kitchens, foyers; I also clean windows and do floor and carpet care and I secure the building.”

Cosier is interested in the work being done in Admissions and Records, Graduate Admissions and the International Office. “I had no idea what they do until I started to clean there,” he says. “And I’ve come to admire them all for the work they all do.”

While working in Cunningham, he started an award for the hardest-working graduate student, based on who was still working at midnight when he was cleaning. Now that he has moved to a different building, several professors choose the recipient, who receives the UVic’s Custodian’s Trophy given by Cosier on behalf of all the janitors. He donates a dinner for 12 to the winner, to enjoy a meal with friends. He also donates unused funds to microbiology. “I love supporting the sciences,” he says, and enjoys attending biology and microbiology symposiums “and the parties afterwards.”

Cosier’s first encounter with UVic was in the 1960s when he was one of the first participants in the psychology department’s pioneering rehab centre for learning disabilities. When he returned as a custodian in 1991, he met the centre’s head, who was pleased to see him working at UVic.

Outside work, most of Cosier’s time is spent “giving back to the community” as he describes it. His favourite hobby is being Chuckles the Clown, which he started doing free or six years ago. “It makes people’s day,” he laughs. Several times a year, he wears his outfit downtown. “The kids follow me, can’t hook, parents love it.” He creates his costume from things he finds at Value Village, including over-sized shoes that he painted. A dressmaker recently made him some fancy new clown trousers. He wears a big, pumpkin orange wig, but no face paint, as it is too hard to wash off before it’s time to go to work.

The Day in the Life series features the diversity of UVic employees who, often working behind the scenes, contribute so much to university life. If you would like to suggest someone to profile, please contact Linda Sproule-Jones at 721-8786 or sproulel@uvic.ca.