



University
of Victoria

SPEED
READING

STUDENT AID

Effects of endowment
losses minimized

Thanks to bridge funding provided by donors and to additional funding from the university, the economic downturn is having less effect than feared on UVic scholarships and bursaries. The vast majority of UVic students seeking financial assistance during the upcoming academic year will receive it. Story, page 2

RESEARCH ON AGING

Really getting to know
Canadian seniors

As people age, how do they cope with changes in their health, their relationships and their finances? That’s what researchers at UVic’s Centre on Aging are hoping to discover as they take part in a national 20-year interdisciplinary study of 50,000 Canadians aged 45 to 85. The \$30-million Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging is one of the world’s largest and most comprehensive studies on the topic. www.clsa-elcv.ca

TEACHING TECHNOLOGY

Clickers in the classroom

Increasingly, UVic instructors are incorporating the use of clicker technology into their courses. It can be a way for instructors to promote learner engagement in large lecture classes and gauge the level of student understanding of concepts. Story, page 2

CLEAN ENERGY RESEARCH

The next wave in energy
production?

UVic’s Institute for Integrated Energy Systems is a partner in a newly announced network of researchers, engineers, entrepreneurs and computer modeling experts who will collect and analyse information on the wave energy potential off western Vancouver Island. The West Coast Wave Collaboration Project, co-funded by the Government of Canada, will use wind, wave and tidal current data to assist developers in the wave energy industry and channel wave energy researchers, and to help guide policy and program development by government and regulators. More: <http://communications.uvic.ca/releases/>

CONVOCATION ADDRESSES

Hear honorary degree
recipients online

Among the inspirational highlights of Convocation are the addresses given by UVic’s honorary degree recipients. This year, audio files of the speeches of all four honorary degree recipients will be available online as soon as possible after the ceremonies. To hear addresses by Dr. Edward Berry, Rebecca MacDonald, Prof. A.J. Stewart Smith, and Dr. David Strangway—as well as those of selected honorary degree recipients from prior years—visit the UVic podcasting page. <http://communications.uvic.ca/podcasting/convocation/>



SPRING CONVOCATION

SPECIAL SECTION STARTS P.5

THE
RING

JUNE 2009

The University of Victoria's community newspaper
ring.uvic.ca



Scannell. PHOTO: DIANA NETHERCOTT

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR’S SILVER MEDAL

Grad medalist defines our ‘love of place’

BY LISA GREWAR

3,024

NUMBER OF
DEGREES,
DIPLOMAS AND
CERTIFICATES
TO BE AWARDED
DURING SPRING
CONVOCATION
2009

“I was shocked to be nominated and to win,” says Leila Scannell, who has received the Lieutenant Governor’s Silver Medal for her thesis on place attachment. “A lot of people at UVic are doing great things.”

According to her supervisor, environmental psychologist Dr. Robert Gifford, Scannell is very deserving of this honour. “I believe everyone can change the future,” he says. “Leila will change it by inspiring students and advancing this newer field of environmental psychology.”

Scannell received her undergraduate degree from the University of British Columbia with a double major in English literature and psychology. The following year, she taught English in Taiwan and then was drawn back to her home province and the University of Victoria to do graduate studies.

“I was excited by the opportunity to work with Dr. Gifford, who is such a well-known and established researcher in environmental psychology. I was also attracted

to UVic by the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, located on campus.”

Her thesis examines how the people of Trail and Nelson, BC, feel about where they live and if those feelings influence their actions in preserving and protecting their environment. She discovered that even though Trail has a lead zinc smelter in the town as opposed to Nelson’s pristine natural setting, the residents of each town feel that the environmental quality of their area is acceptable. In addition, those who are more attached to the natural aspects of either place are more likely to recycle, reuse and reduce environmental hazards in their community.

“My research indicates the longer you live in a place, the more attached you are,” concludes Scannell. “And that when you are attached, you are more likely to believe your environment is better than may be perceived by non-residents.”

Previous research on place attachment has provided mixed results. Gifford adds enthusiastically, “This is an award-winning thesis because it clarifies the relationship

between place attachment and environmental behaviour.”

“The medal gives me momentum to keep going,” says Scannell.

With a graduate fellowship at UVic’s Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, she is now working toward her PhD. She also considers herself very lucky to have received a three-year Joseph-Armand Bomdardier Canada Graduate Scholarship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

She will use the scholarship to conduct research on people’s thoughts about climate change as well as the effectiveness of positive messages in climate change communication.

In the future, she would love to teach and continue doing environmental research anywhere in the world, but she notes she does have a fond place attachment to Victoria.

Scannell thanks her supervisor, Dr. Robert Gifford, and her committee members Dr. Frederick Grouzet and Dr. Naomi Pope.

Webber named 2009 Trudeau Fellow

UVic Law the only Canadian department with three fellows

BY THOMAS WINTERHOFF

University of Victoria law professor Jeremy Webber has been named one of four new Trudeau Fellows by the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation. The prestigious academic honour recognizes his cutting-edge research into the constitutional structure of democratic governance, as well as the opportunities and challenges presented by a culturally diverse society.

Webber has a BA in political science from UBC, common law and civil law degrees from McGill University and a Master of Laws degree from Osgoode Hall. He is currently the director of the Graduate Program in Law and Society at UVic and holds the Canada Research Chair in Law

and Society at the university.

“The great task of any society is how to determine the principles and rules that will govern that society in the face of continual disagreement over what those principles should be,” explains Webber. “In highly diverse societies, such disagreement is often grounded in different cultures of social debate and decision, indeed often in different practical ways of life.”

Webber is a world-renowned scholar and author in the areas of cultural diversity, constitutional theory and Indigenous rights. He has written on labour relations, Indigenous rights in Canada and Australia, the relationship between Quebec and the rest of Canada, issues of nationhood and cultural minorities, and

questions of constitutional design and interpretation. He notes that dealing with our cultural, political, moral and religious differences can be difficult at times, but it is also exhilarating and essential.

“It forces us to reconsider preconceptions. It reveals aspects of our lives that we might otherwise overlook. It challenges us to find ways to live together peacefully and respectfully,” he says. “I am interested in what we need to do to sustain a community, how we should adjust our relationships and how we respond to injustice. This fellowship will enable me to further my research in a whole range of ways, engaging deeply with scholars and graduate students



SEE WEBBER P.4

Webber. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

around the ring

Bike to Work Week: UVic participants 1,000-strong
Fifty-three campus teams and more than 1,000 UVic cycle commuters participated in Bike to Work Week 2009 (May 11–17). The annual province-wide event was an excellent excuse to enjoy good exercise and fresh air, and sample the benefits of commuting by bicycle every day. Employees throughout Victoria pedaled a total of 171,332 km. Bicycles make up over 7 per cent of UVic's total transportation mix.

Changes to senate student appeals process
The senate recently approved several significant changes to the Senate Committee on Appeals' terms of reference and procedural guidelines. The changes are intended to strengthen and improve the student appeal process. The time limit for students to file an appeal before the Senate Committee on Appeals will change from six months to two months effective July 1, 2009. Faculty members, staff and students are encouraged to visit the website of the University Secretary at <http://web.uvic.ca/univsec/> for full details of the changes.



Experiencing UVic
Mikaila and Graeme Montgomery and their parents Glenda and John from Portland, OR, chat with Dr. Mariel Grant of the Department of History at the Faculties Expo event at Experience UVic on May 23. Mikaila has enrolled in the Faculty of Social Sciences. More than 1,250 prospective students and family members participated in the popular and successful campus-wide “test-drive” of the university. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

TEACHING TECHNOLOGY

Click here for answers

BY TARA SHARPE

Laptop keys are not the only buttons that University of Victoria students are pressing in class. Increasingly, instructors are using clicker technology in their courses. Clickers are handheld devices that allow students to respond anonymously to multiple-choice quizzes or other questions posed by instructors during lectures. The technology is similar to the keypad system used for “audience lifeline votes” in TV game shows like *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, but with clickers, students are drawn deeper into course material.

The remote-control device is especially helpful in larger lecture rooms to keep students intrigued about the material and connected to the discussion even if they are a dozen rows away from the lecturer. UVic psychology professor Dr. Martin Smith, who uses clicker technology in classes of more than 300 students, usually finds a way to fit three to six clicker questions into a standard 50-minute session.

“The human mind is not meant to passively soak up concepts for an hour without a break,” says Smith. “The clicker technology doesn’t replace skilful teaching techniques, but it definitely augments them.”

Students can choose buttons A through E and the clicker results are displayed on an overhead screen, usually in a bar graph displaying the spectrum of answers. With built-in anonymity, clicker technology offers shy students a more comfortable means of participating. In addition, instructors can keep track of overall responses and gauge the level of student understanding as coursework progresses, rather than waiting for the next written test. The technology is

being used in universities and colleges across the country.

Designing lectures to engage students is not a new approach, but the ancient Socratic method of inquiry and debate has found a particularly unique expression in the electronic age.

“The clicker technology doesn’t replace skilful teaching techniques, but it definitely augments them.”
—DR. MARTIN SMITH (PSYCHOLOGY)

“In an academic setting, we spend a lot of time promoting individual learning,” says Dr. Ed Ishiguro, UVic professor emeritus (biochemistry) and a scholar with UVic’s Learning and Teaching Centre, who also uses clickers in his lectures. “I design concept questions that promote or, even better, provoke discussion not just in class but also out of class. With this more collaborative style of group learning, we encourage engagement on many levels.”

Smith points out that clicker technology doesn’t only engage students; they are also learning as they proceed from question to answer on the screen. He prefers to wait for the answers rather than “barging into those awkward pauses. This helps socialize students toward knowing they can come up with the answers, and it inspires confidence.”

UVic has identified one standard

device—the iClicker—for campus use. The Learning and Teaching Centre, with assistance from academic planning as well as systems staff, has been involved in creating centralized access and support for UVic clicker users.

UVic faculty and staff have also been clicking away at their keyboards in support: Kathreen Riel of UVic Learning Systems created a UVic clickers website with guidelines and service support including video footage of faculty and students using and talking about the technology (see link below). Dr. Mary Sanseverino (computer science) and Drs. Leslee Francis Pelton and Tim Pelton (curriculum and instruction) were assisted by numerous co-investigators across campus in a research study on the use of clicker technology; available at http://webhome.csc.uvic.ca/~msanseve/class_clickers/.



iClicker. PHOTO: ROBIE LISCOMB

Practice sets of iClickers are available for UVic faculty who wish to pilot the technology. Students can purchase their own iClicker from the UVic Bookstore. For more information, visit <http://iclickerhelp.uvic.ca/>.

STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Effects of endowment losses minimized

The vast majority of UVic students seeking financial assistance during the upcoming academic year will receive it. Nearly 70 per cent of UVic’s undergraduate scholarships and bursaries are part of the university’s base budget and over 96 per cent of graduate student support comes from UVic’s base budget and external sources. None of this assistance is directly affected by the global economic downturn.

The remaining support is funded through the endowments administered by the University of Victoria Foundation board. While the endowments did suffer losses in 2008 as a result of the financial market downturn, most of the funds—60 per cent—are scheduled to award their designated disbursements to students. Forty per cent of the endowment’s funds were reduced to less than the amount of their original donations, and the practice of the foundation is to protect the principal and withhold disbursements until these funds recover. This practice is in place to protect the funds from diminishing over time.

But many of the donors notified about their funds’ status responded by providing bridge funding to enable their funds to make disbursements. Through a combination of their generosity and university funding, many of the funds previously designated as unable to make payments will now also make disbursements.

“Nearly 90 per cent of endowment funds will provide their regular disbursements for 2009/10,” says UVic Associate Vice-President Financial Planning and Operations Kristi Simpson. “As is its usual practice, the foundation will review its spending policy and asset mix this coming year and evaluate if its current approach is still appropriate, based on economic outlooks.”

The university foundation board will continue to steward the funds by actively monitoring their performance and will likely have to wrestle with diminished investment returns next year as well, says Simpson, as national and global economic uncertainty is expected to extend into 2010.

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Life through the eyes of a Bedouin family

Through July 30, UVic’s McPherson Library Gallery features an exhibition of photographs by the al Manaja’as, a Bedouin family of the Howeitat tribe from Humayma, Jordan, a region of great historical cultural interchange. *Inverting the Lens: Photography by the al Manaja’a family, Humayma, Jordan*, was curated by interdisciplinary student Robbyn Gordon Lanning. It features familial self-portraits that show how the al Manaja’as see photography as a way of documenting their lives and experiences for themselves, their families and for cultural outsiders.

Abdullah al Manaja’a and a camel.
PHOTO BY HIS SISTER MUNA AL MANAJA’A, HUMAYMA, 2007
(The names of all the participating women, including “Muna” have been altered at the request of the family.)

LEARNING IN COMMON

BY SUSAN HENDERSON

It’s mid-week, mid-term, and a steady stream of students is entering the Mearns Centre for Learning. Some students are hitting the books and some are heading for the Learning Commons where they can find extra help when they need it most. Though they may not be fully aware of it, they’re taking part in a “preventative” approach to student support—one that is improving student life by helping them before they get overwhelmed and fall behind.

Here in one location students can access resources, services and technology they need for learning, writing and research. This evolution in student learning is possible because other learner-centred service providers on campus are partnering with UVic Libraries. Students can seek out numerous support programs in key learning areas: writing, math, statistics, chemistry, physics, scholarly research methods, computer help and peer tutoring. Previously, these various services supporting learners were only available from providers spread across campus.

The Learning Commons supports learning in a holistic fashion to create active learning spaces. Using the social network model, it brings together teaching assistants, librarians, tutors, instructors and professors—a knowledgeable community dedicated to improving the quality of student learning. Since opening in September 2008, the Learning Commons has been a popular success and continues to

receive positive feedback from faculty and students.

“It’s great that The Writing Centre is available in the library,” says visiting student Kingkan Tanatipanond, who is taking a summer course in English. “If I have a problem, I can find someone to help me. All three tutors I’ve used have different skills and I’ve learned a lot from their examples.”

“The interaction between the graduate students and a community sense that is created through the Learning Commons workshops are priceless,” writes one graduate student on a feedback form. “It takes us out of our isolation . . . to analyze and reflect on our work.”

Average monthly usage statistics show how busy this learning hub is. Each month the Computer Help Desk averages 642 inquiries; Library Technical Help fields 1,129 questions; Physics Help tutors 55 students; Chemistry Help, 170 students; Math and Statistics Help 774 students; the Writing Centre has 569 appointments; and Research and Library Help answers 1,953 reference questions.

But numbers don’t tell the full story. Learning Help run by UVic Counselling Services assists students in the development and practice of efficient study techniques, effective learning methods and high-level thinking skills. They also offer courses

designed to assist students new to university, helping them adapt and thrive. And when student life goes “sideways,” peer helpers, trained in listening and counseling skills, have space in the Learning Commons to provide comfortable, private, confidential and safe spaces for students who need someone to talk to.

The Mearns Centre Learning Commons is named in honour of Dr. Che Woo Lui, chairman of the K. Wah Group of construction companies and hotels in Hong Kong. Lui donated \$1 million to the library expansion project in 2001.

More info: <http://learningcommons.uvic.ca/>



Tutor Kailyn Young (centre) helps Alix Wong and Josh Logan with their math in the Learning Commons.
PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

ringers

Professor Denis Protti (health information science) received an honorary doctorate from City University in London on May 13. The founding director of UVic’s School of Health Information Science—Canada’s leading school of health information science—Protti is an internationally recognized leader in the advancement of health informatics. In 1998 he was commissioned by Her Majesty’s Treasury in England to review the proposed National Health Service (NHS) Information Strategy prior to its release. He later developed the evaluation methodology that was used to monitor the implementation of their national strategy—a process referred to as the Protti Scores.

Dr. Holly Tuokko (psychology) has been appointed director of the Centre on Aging (COAG) for a five-year term beginning July 1. She served as associate director of COAG from 1999–2002.

Dr. Oscar Casiro, head of the Division of Medical Sciences, has been appointed regional associate dean, Vancouver Island, Faculty of Medicine, UBC. He has been associate dean of the Island Medical Program (IMP) based at the University of Victoria since January 2004 and helped to pioneer the UBC Faculty of Medicine’s distributed undergraduate medical education system on Vancouver Island, in collaboration with the University of Victoria and the Vancouver Island Health Authority. As regional associate dean, Casiro will assume strategic leadership of undergraduate and postgraduate medical education on Vancouver Island, including development and implementation of initiatives and policies that support continued integration of medical education opportunities.

Anthony Theocharis (computer science and music) won the \$2,500 top prize in the BCNET Broadband Innovation Challenge in May. The annual competition honours BC’s best and brightest students for innovative, commercially viable computer applications that utilize super broadband networks. Theocharis’s project was a music tagging computer application for recording artists, audio engineers and radio stations. It allows users to search by audio tags and peer-to-peer networks through massive audio files to find the exact genre of music in their search, instantaneously. Second prize went to **Neil Clark** (computer science) for his project “CubeScape: A Scalable Approach for 3D Worlds.”



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PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

This is only a test

Trying out UVic's new Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) are (L-R) Michele McDonald (budget and capital planning), Wendie McHenry (library), Rick Sykes (geography), UVic Manager of Emergency Planning Daphne Donaldson (occupational health, safety and environment) and John Verreault (network services). The EOC is used to help support emergency

response at the scene during a major campus emergency. Sixty UVic staff and faculty members on the EOC team participate in training and exercises throughout the year. Members of UVic's EOC gathered on May 12 to host an orientation and open house in the new space in the Social Sciences and Mathematics Building—within the geography department's geomatics lab.

WEBBER CONTINUED FROM P.1

wrestling with similar issues."

Webber served as dean of law at the University of Sydney in Australia but returned to Canada in 2002 to accept the Canada Research Chair. He says he was attracted to UVic Law because of the faculty's commitment to social justice, its explorations of legal and political theory, and its engagement with Indigenous traditions of law and social order.

Webber is the third UVic Law pro-

fessor to be honoured with a Trudeau Fellowship. Professor Jim Tully (cross-appointed in law) was named a fellow in 2003 and Prof. John Borrows in 2006. Only Université de Montréal has had more Trudeau Fellows than UVic, and no other single academic unit in the country has had three fellows. Each fellowship is for a three-year period and includes a prize of \$150,000, plus a \$75,000 research and public engagement award.

Co-op in the classroom: Completing the learning circle

BY DIANNE GEORGE

UVic is renowned for its focus on experiential learning, and the Faculty of Business, with its philosophy of integration, has developed new ways to transfer workplace learning back into the classroom, to complete the learning circle.

In addition to making co-operative education a required element of the BCom and MBA programs, business also established Canada's first experiential learning officer position in 2006. Jennifer Gill, who now fills that role, works with students on their co-op learning journey.

"I give them ideas on how to connect and leverage their academic and co-op learning experience to prepare for future career paths."

Gill also works with faculty members to share student co-op reports and has developed an online teaching resource site for business instructors. Her most recent initiative encourages final-term students to share their experiences and insight gained through their academic studies, co-op work terms and international exchanges with prospective employers in a poster exhibition event.

Earlier this year, Dr. Lynne Siemens, who had redesigned her Business and Government Relations (Com 440) class, put some of Gill's ideas into practice. Siemens started by assigning 5 per cent of the final grade to the co-op integration project. The assignment included a written paper in which students reflected on an issue related to business-government relations that they encountered while at work. She held in-class discussions about the issues and strategies students used



L-R: Dr. Lynne Siemens, Jennifer Gill, Teresa Sims PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

to manage the issue.

"I was really pleased with the results," Siemens says. "I had students from different faculties in the class, but they all had a co-op or other work experience. This assignment helped to build common ground."

Teresa Sims, a fourth-year BCom student, found the assignment engaged her in unexpected ways. "We do a lot of cases in the program, but I really liked talking about something that I had actually experienced," says Sims. "A case is four or five pages, whereas a work-term is four months. It made the assignment more interesting and opened the door to conversations I might not have had with other students."

In addition to in-class discussion, professors have incorporated the experience in other ways. Some post questions on Blackboard, where

students are asked to relate course concepts to their co-op work term; another invited students to blog about the structure of their co-op organization.

And all that is music to Gill's ears. "Engaging students in discussion about issues that arise in the workplace adds a reflective element. It helps cement their learning and builds critical thinking skills," says Gill.

More than 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students participate in co-operative education at UVic, linking their academic studies to real-world experiences.

UVic faculty members can learn more about integrating student co-op workplace experiences into the classroom by contacting Co-op and Career Services at 250-721-7628. Experiential Learning Officer Jennifer Gill can be reached at 250-853-3750.

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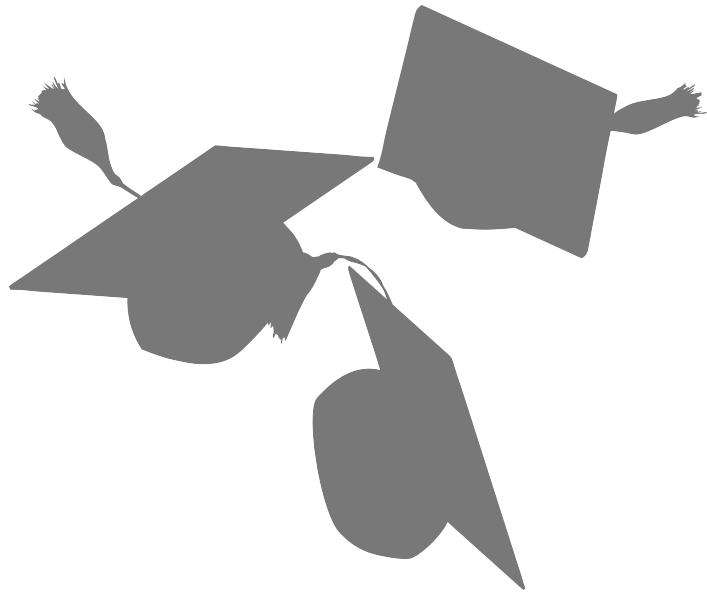
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CONVOCATION 2009

It's a momentous occasion and the culmination of a great deal of hard work for thousands of UVic students. During Spring Convocation, from June 15–18, the University of Victoria will award 3,024 degrees, diplomas and certificates and formally install the university's tenth chancellor, Murray Farmer, BA '68. Congratulations and best wishes to all convocating students. In the following pages, we present profiles of a few of the many outstanding members of this year's graduating class.



(L-R): Ingrid Hansen, Sarah Pelzer, Natasha Sharpe (seated), Madeleine Wilson, Rielle Braid and Brian Culp. PHOTO: DIANA NETHERCOTT

Theatre grads get “bridge” to professional careers

BY ADRIENNE HOLIERHOEK

After graduation, most theatre students expect to have to work hard and “pay their dues” to make it big. But this summer, six graduates from UVic’s Department of Theatre will get an amazing opportunity to break into the national theatre scene with Victoria’s newest professional theatre company, the Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre.

Blue Bridge’s mandate is to mentor young theatre artists with established professionals, offering them the chance to perform major roles alongside of some of Canada’s most respected theatre artists. The idea of founding artistic director and theatre professor Brian Richmond, the theatre company also works closely with the Faculty of Fine Arts to present the Professional Theatre Apprentice-Scholarship Program.

For BFA recipients Rielle Braid and Brian Culp, who will play the parts of Audrey and Antonio in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* (June 9–21), this means the opportunity to work with the esteemed Canadian director Jeannette Lamermont-Morey. “I’m learning a lot,” says Braid. “It’s the perfect step for me. I feel proud to be part of the inaugural season.”

“I really feel this gives me a leg up and a bridge to a career in professional theatre,” says Culp, who transferred to UVic from a community college in Portland. This opportunity has opened

doors to an audition for another production of *As You Like It* in Banff this summer.

As assistant to the costume designer for *As You Like It*, theatre and English double major Natasha Sharpe is also learning on the job. “I’m picking up contacts and information from people who have international experience.” After her experience with Blue Bridge, Sharpe will be taking on the role of co-producing artistic director for the summer season at the Bare Bones Theatre Company in Nelson.

Madeleine Wilson, who has a BFA in theatre specializing in directing, is the assistant to the producing artistic director for Blue Bridge and works closely with Richmond. “I get to see the underbelly of the theatre, from marketing initiatives to equity issues and grant applications. I enjoy seeing the whole picture and then taking care of all of the details that make it happen.”

Two other theatre graduates, Sara Pelzer and Ingrid Hansen, will be involved with Blue Bridge’s production of the musical *The Fantasticks* (August 4–16). Pelzer will be performing the leading role of Luisa while Hansen will be the costume designer.

Hansen, who started in the acting program, fell in love with other areas within theatre. “I realized I wanted to have more creative input into the artistic process. Switching to the comprehensive degree gave me the chance to learn

theatre design and have a wide array of experiences that I feel led me to start my own company, SNAFU Dance Theatre.”

Pelzer grew up in Victoria and wasn’t sure what she wanted to be. “The professors in our department, especially Brian Richmond, helped expand my idea of what I could do as an actor and to see it as a collaboration of different art forms and styles.”

Pelzer and Hansen are also collaborating on the upcoming SNAFU production of *Pretty Little Instincts* for the Fringe circuit later this summer.

Each of the students recognized that UVic was a unique environment to learn in. “You get out of it what you put in,” says Hansen. Culp also made the most of his time here by diversifying his education to include set design and construction, lighting and sound design and operation, as well as acting.

Looking back on her time here, Braid wanted to recognize the support of Phoenix Theatre audience members and recalled meeting one at the Belfry Theatre. “She had followed my time at the Phoenix and recited all the plays I had been in! This city’s theatre community is so supportive and they’re keen to see us succeed.”

Victorians can keep watching UVic’s stars shine this summer on the stages of Blue Bridge Theatre.

Major medal winners

- **Governor General’s Gold Medal**
(top PhD, all faculties)
Dr. Javier Tello, biology
- **Governor General’s Silver Medal**
(top undergraduate, all faculties)
Jennifer Christie, biology
- **Lieutenant Governor’s Silver Medal**
(top master’s thesis, all faculties)
Leila Scannell, psychology
- **Lieutenant Governor’s Silver Medal**
(top master’s other than thesis, all faculties)
Sarah Mead-Willis, English
- **Jubilee Medal for Humanities**
Trent Jonson, Medieval Studies
- **Jubilee Medal for Science**
Eric Cormier, mathematics and statistics
Haitian Xu, physics
- **Jubilee Medal for Social Sciences**
Erin Grant, psychology
- **Maxwell A. Cameron Memorial Award in Education**
Jessica Hepting, elementary education
Gamelle Fitzgibbon, secondary education
- **Canadian Society for Mechanical Engineering Medal**
Jason Kereluk, mechanical engineering (co-op)
- **Department of Computer Science Graduation Medal**
Katherine Epp, computer science (co-op)
- **IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Computer Engineering**
Anthony Kroeker, computer engineering (co-op)
- **IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Electrical Engineering**
Yuanjie Pang, electrical engineering (co-op)
- **IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Software Engineering**
Cecelia Redding, software engineering
- **Law Society Gold Medal and Prize**
Diana Backhouse, law
- **Victoria Medal in Fine Arts**
Jennifer Cador, history in art



Top PhD helping advance reproductive health

BY ROBIE LISCOMB

It’s no wonder that Javier Tello is this year’s recipient of the Governor General’s Gold Medal for outstanding grade point average and dissertation. He received his PhD in biology in May 2008 and has published ten scholarly papers based on his dissertation research in top scientific journals.

“I’ve always been fascinated by biological systems,” Tello explains. And that passion and curiosity has led him to make significant contributions to our understanding of hormone evolution.

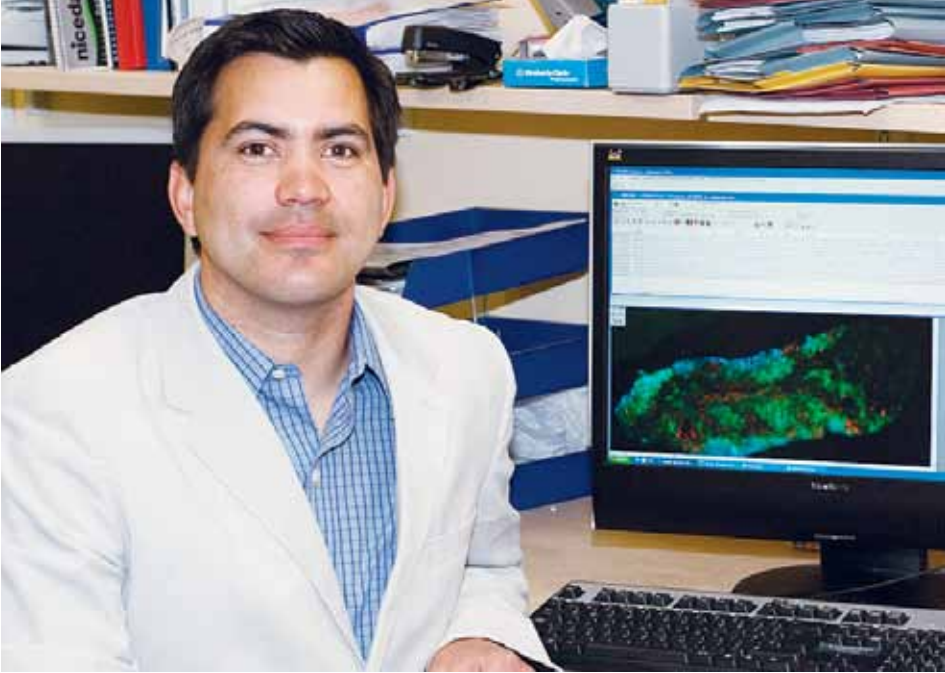
Tello earned his BSc in biochemistry at UVic and then went on for his PhD in molecular biology, working with Dr. Nancy Sherwood. “What I liked about the Department of Biology was the feeling of community where fellow graduate students, post-docs and professors openly discussed their research goals and offered alternate viewpoints that often improved each other’s work,” he says.

For his dissertation, Tello examined genes critical for controlling reproduction. In humans, a master hormone made by nerve cells in the brain triggers a cascade of events in the reproductive system essential for the maturation of

germ cells and the production of sex steroids. Tello discovered that an ancient group of animals without backbones have hormones closely related to this human brain hormone. One animal he studied was the amphioxus, an ancient sea creature that has fascinated scientists for hundreds of years as a possible ancestor to all vertebrates, including humans. Tello found amphioxus not only has the specialized receptors that bind the human brain hormone, but two of these receptors foreshadow all the vertebrate-type receptors. These findings show that the origin of the brain hormone and receptors that control reproduction are more than half a billion years old.

Currently a post-doctoral fellow at the Medical Research Council’s Human Reproductive Sciences Unit in Edinburgh, Scotland, Tello is testing novel treatments to increase the fertility of patients with reproductive diseases and investigating a drug candidate that shows promise as a new contraceptive. He is also investigating the development of specialized neurons in the brain and how they form complex networks during human embryonic growth, setting the stage for reproductive onset during puberty.

Born in Toronto, Tello went to high school in Oak Bay, becoming an excellent rugby player until sidelined by a back injury in his mid 20s. Tello



Tello at his lab in Edinburgh. PHOTO: TED PINNER

hopes to return to Canada to set up his own lab in the field of reproductive endocrinology and neuroendocrinology. “Ideally, it would have close

ties with a clinic, allowing for new discoveries to be translated into useful advances for human health,” he says.

Honorary degrees conferred on four exceptional individuals

BY MIKE MCNENEY Four individuals with distinguished accomplishments in the fields of language, entrepreneurship, physics, and academic leadership are this spring’s honorary degree recipients. Recipients are selected based on exceptional records of distinction and achievement in scholarship, research, teaching, the creative arts or public service.



Dr. Edward Berry

Honorary Doctor of Laws (10 a.m., June 16)

Since the early 1980s, Dr. Edward Berry has taught legal writing and oral judgment delivery to hundreds, if not thousands, of judges in Canada and around the world. His work has been instrumental in reinforcing a principle at the heart of the justice system: that a judge’s reasons for decision should be clear, cogent and comprehensible.

His work with the judiciary sprang from his first career as a highly regarded UVic English professor and Shakespearean scholar. He retired from the university in 2006. His book, *Writing Reasons*, is in its third edition and is the leading textbook on judicial writing in Canada. It provides the foundation for the workshops and seminars he regularly leads.

In 2005, Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin invited him to deliver a writing program for members of the Supreme Court of Canada. Over the course of two days, Berry lectured and met with individual judges to comment on their writing and give them guidance for improvement.



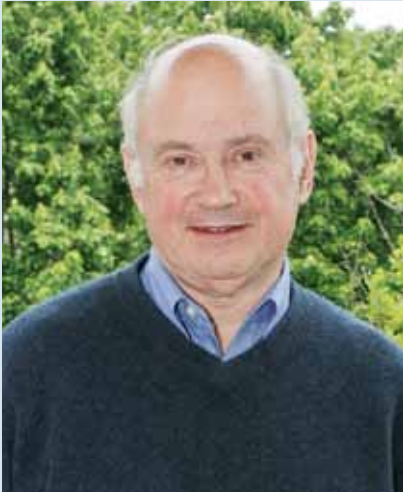
Ms. Rebecca MacDonald

Honorary Doctor of Laws (2:30 p.m., June 15)

Rebecca MacDonald is a self-made entrepreneur who exemplifies success in the face of adversity. Born in Yugoslavia, she came to Toronto in 1974 with training in medicine and classical piano but with few resources and limited English. She discovered a natural flair for sales and started a door-to-door marketing company.

In the 1980s, when Ontario opened natural gas retailing to competition, MacDonald launched Energy Marketing. It grew to become the largest energy marketer in Ontario. Then, in 1996, she started Ontario Energy Savings Corporation, which now has annual sales of approximately \$1.5 billion and has 600 full-time and 600 part-time employees.

MacDonald raised two children as a single parent, following her husband’s death in a 1992 car accident. She has also overcome severe rheumatoid arthritis. In 2002 she gave \$3 million to help build the Rebecca MacDonald Centre for Arthritis and Autoimmune Disease at Toronto’s Mount Sinai Hospital.



Prof. A.J. Stewart Smith

Honorary Doctor of Science (2:30 p.m., June 18)

Prof. A.J. Stewart Smith is a leading researcher in high-energy particle physics and is known in the United States for his influence on national science policy.

A graduate of Victoria College, he continued his education at UBC and earned his PhD from Princeton University in 1966, joining the faculty of Princeton’s physics department the following year. He has held various administrative positions at Princeton, including chair of the physics department, dean for research, and chair of the university research board.

Smith has carried out a number of major experiments and, since 1995, has served as team leader of an international collaboration of 600 scientists from 10 countries participating in a major project based at the Stanford Linear Accelerator.

Smith has also kept an interest in Canadian physics research. In 1998, he chaired a National Research Council review of the TRIUMF lab in Vancouver, with recommendations that led to a stable funding environment for the particle and nuclear physics facility. He was also instrumental in ensuring Canadian involvement (including that of UVic physicists) in the “BaBar” high energy physics experiment.



Dr. David Strangway

Honorary Doctor of Science (2:30 p.m., June 17)

Dr. David Strangway is a noted scientist, respected academic administrator and a senior statesman of Canadian research administration known for his innovative leadership skills.

He joined the University of Toronto in 1968 as an associate professor of physics and in 1970 accepted an invitation from NASA to become its chief of geophysics and physics at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. He was responsible for geophysical aspects of the Apollo moon missions, including experiment selection and attendant astronaut training, site selection and real-time mission support.

He returned to the University of Toronto in 1973, holding a series of senior administrative positions until 1985 when he was named president of UBC. In his 12 years as president, UBC established itself as a world-class academic institution.

Strangway later led the Canada Foundation for Innovation, which allocated \$2.7 billion in research infrastructure to universities, colleges and research hospitals during his six-year term. He also founded Quest University Canada – the country’s first private, secular, not-for-profit liberal arts and science university, located in Squamish.



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S SILVER MEDAL

“Unfinished business” leads to top graduate paper

BY VIVIAN KEREKI

UVic will surely miss Sarah Mead-Willis, this year's winner of the Lieutenant Governor's Silver Medal for best non-thesis graduate paper. The Edmonton-born English student will return to her home town in July to begin an unusual job as the rare book cataloguer at the University of Alberta. “I'm excited but a little nervous,” says the 27-year-old.

It was her exposure to a West Coast artist and writers' exhibit during an internship at the same rare book library that sparked her interest to study literature in BC. Armed with a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in library sciences (both from the UofA), Mead-Willis came to UVic to complete a master's in English. “After my undergraduate degree in English, I felt there was some unfinished business, some academic work to be done,” she comments.

As for the prize-winning essay, Mead-Willis discussed the works of Canadian poet Don McKay, specifically looking at the way he represents

nature in his poems and the idea of the sublime. Though Mead-Willis is a self-described “city person”, she says she has always been interested in the way non-human things are represented in literature.

Mead-Willis acknowledges her supervisors Drs. Jamie Dopp and Nicholas Bradley were extremely responsive and supportive during her studies and the countless drafts of her paper. “They were absolutely bang on with all their suggestions.... I might have had more challenges had it not been for them.” Mead-Willis thinks having fun with her topic may have helped her paper emerge more readable than some. “I didn't use words like ‘problematize,’” she says with a chuckle.

Mead-Willis enjoyed her time in Victoria but admits she gets very focused when in school, leaving little time for serious hobbies. “I'd love to tell you I'm into urban hang-gliding.” Instead, she practices “casual enjoyment,” biking and hiking, and preparing dishes from her current favourite—the cookbook by the Bastion Square restaurant Rebar.



Mead-Willis in the library stacks PHOTO: VIVIAN KEREKI

Though it may be sad for Victoria to lose such a bright individual, we may

catch glimpses of Mead-Willis when she comes back to visit her parents,

who have decided to retire in the Garden City.

JUBILEE MEDAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES

Helping others a driving force for psychology grad

BY ROBIE LISCOMB

A keen interest in science and a desire to help others have propelled honours psychology grad Erin Grant to the top of her class, earning her the 2009 Jubilee Medal in Social Sciences.

Born and raised in Brentwood Bay, Grant rose through the ranks to become a national level gymnast before retiring from competition after being diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in high school.

Academic success was not a foregone conclusion for her. “I found my first couple years at UVic quite challenging,” she says. “But the university was very supportive and was willing to accommodate my disability. Also my family, especially my parents and husband, have provided me with incredible support.”

Grant also won several scholarships during her undergraduate career. “These scholarships paid for my tuition, allowing me to focus on my studies and certainly contributing to my ability to maintain a high academic standard,” she explains.

At university, Grant wanted to choose a field that gave her the opportunity, in her words, “to make a direct and positive impact on the lives of others. I chose psychology because I thought it would allow me to combine my appreciation of the scientific process with my interest in working directly with others to make a positive contribution to their lives.”

A highlight of her experience at UVic has been the opportunity to work closely with her professors. “I was given many opportunities to work one-on-one with researchers



Grant

to learn more about their field of study and receive individualized attention through independent study courses and during my honours thesis. This has not only deepened my understanding of and respect for different areas in psychology, but also allowed me to mature as a student and individual.”

But her university years have not been all study. She enjoyed a one-year sabbatical from university to sail with her family to California, Mexico and Hawaii. Also during her time at UVic Grant volunteered at the Vancouver Island Sexual Health Clinic, the NEED Crisis and Information Line and Operation Trackshoes, a sports festival on campus for people with mental disabilities.

Grant will begin medical school at McMaster University in the fall. “Whichever area of medicine I choose to practice,” she says, “I know my education at UVic and in psychology will greatly contribute to my ability to be a better physician.”

VICTORIA MEDAL IN FINE ARTS

A new world view through art

BY ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

For most students, university is certainly an experience. But for art history graduate Jennifer Cador, it's been literally life-changing.

Cador is this year's winner of the Victoria Medal, given to the top graduating fine arts student. At 39, she began what she originally thought would be a history degree and then master's on the British Renaissance.

“My mother had gone back to school at the age of 39. It always seemed to me really possible; you could go at any age and you didn't have to lock yourself into one career,” says Cador, who left a career in media to take on the new challenge.

In her first year, she discovered the lure of examining history through the lens of visual arts and switched majors to history in art. Not long after, Cador took an Aboriginal art history course with Dr. Victoria Wyatt that changed everything.

“What we talked about was world views—you can't look at this art without understanding the world view that lies behind it,” she says. “To hear these world views which were so different and so holistic, they just made sense to me immediately.”

Cador is married to an Aboriginal man and said her “incredible” courses with Wyatt and instructor Kerry Mason on Aboriginal art not only changed how she thinks, but impacted her whole family's approach to Aboriginal culture.

“It changed the way I see the world,” says Cador, and adds that the classes have also encouraged her husband and son to incorporate Aboriginal teachings into their lives.

In addition to the Victoria Medal, Cador has won a prestigious Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada scholarship for her master's work, which will also be at the University of Victoria.

She noticed that heated debates

arose in class any time a teacher mentioned the infamous George Southwell murals—large frescos painted on the walls of the legislature, now boarded over, that depict Aboriginal people in what many perceive to be a demeaning manner. Those debates became the beginnings of her master's thesis.

“I'm interested in investigating Southwell himself as an artist. He was a giant on the BC art scene at the time,” she says.

She also aims to place Southwell's murals in the context of the larger Canadian mural tradition of the early 1900s.

Cador says support from history in art professors was instrumental in helping her secure the grant—and in inspiring her to investigate the different perspectives held within modern Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal art.

It's a far cry from news media, and exactly where Cador wants to be.



Cador by the Susan Point spindle whorl sculpture in the Fine Arts Building. PHOTO: ROBIE LISCOMB

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SILVER MEDAL

Award-winning student credits work ethic

BY ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

During her time at the University of Victoria, biology graduate Jennifer Christie found the one guiding principle that would spur her on to success: hard work.

Christie is this year's Governor General's Silver Medal winner—an award given to the bachelor's degree candidate at the top of the graduating class based on grades. It's one of many awards she's garnered over the course of her time at UVic.

It began with the transition from high school to university. "It felt like I was making a complete change in lifestyle," she says. "No more cramming the night before." It took some time to get into her study habits, but Christie says that this adjustment was the most difficult and important of her university career.

Over the course of her degree Christie has won the UVic Excellence Scholarship, the Edward J. Savannah Memorial Scholarship and the Harper Scholarship among numerous other awards.

In addition to her own hard work, Christie says she's benefited from UVic's small class sizes and the commitment shown by her professors. "When the lecturer is genuinely interested in the subject matter and excited to be teaching it makes all the difference," she says.

Christie originally chose to study biology with the goal of going on to medicine. "That was before I had any experience in the research field and didn't really understand what kind of careers were available in that area."

A job placement through UVic's co-op program opened her eyes to the wide range of post-degree possibilities.

At UVic's Water and Aquatic Sciences Research Program she conducted a small independent project that looked at the antibacterial resistance of *E. coli* isolates from Okanagan Lake.

Through that experience, Christie discovered a passion for research that led her on to a job at McGill University's Centre for the Study of Host Resistance, where she worked in two areas that are of particular interest to her: immunology and molecular genetics.

"Medicine is still an option that I'm considering, but I do know that I want to be involved in some kind of research," she says of her future academic goals.

But for now, Christie is taking a much deserved break. She's currently travelling through Western Europe and plans on taking the next year to recharge.



Jonson. PHOTO: ROBIE LISCOMB

JUBILEE MEDAL FOR THE HUMANITIES

Passion for Middle Ages takes grad to Oxford

BY MELANIE TROMP HOOVER

Trent Jonson returned to school to find his passion, and—judging by his future plans that include both an MA and a PhD—he found it at UVic somewhere between the 5th and 16th centuries in Medieval history.

"I think it has always been the period of time I was most interested in," says Jonson. "My first courses at UVic confirmed it as I began seeing the continuity between the Middle Ages and our own modern society."

It turns out that passion has paid off for Jonson, who graduates this June with an honours degree in Medieval studies. He will also receive the University of Victoria Jubilee Medal for Humanities award for achieving the highest grade point average in the faculty's 2009 graduating class.

"For me, this award is a validation of sorts for choosing the right path, for going back to school after many years," says Jonson.

Jonson moved west from Alberta 13 years ago to spend a decade working for several BC ministries in Victoria before making the decision to change paths and pursue an academic career.

"Although the work was interesting and I had experienced some success in my career, I wasn't passionate about my work. I always had academic interests, so I decided to return to school and UVic was both the most convenient and

had the program I was looking for," he explains.

After coursework in history and religious studies, Jonson settled on the Medieval studies program because it allowed him to take classes across disciplines that were related to the time period he was most interested in (1050–1350 CE). His diverse research interests include the history and authenticity of relics, codicology (the study of books as physical objects), science and technology in the Middle Ages and Islamic material culture.

"The Medieval studies program turned out to be the perfect fit for me, with great instructors who were extremely accessible and dedicated to their students," says Jonson. "The program, which is expanding the concept of Medieval studies beyond the Latin West, fits with my strategic, big-picture way of thinking."

Although he's back at work for the BC Aboriginal Relations Branch this summer, Jonson intends to expand his pursuits beyond academia while he has the time. "I'm working on my sailing skills as part of a race league crew this summer and I'm taking up both the banjo and guitar," says Jonson, who also claims to be an avid poker player.

In September, Jonson will move abroad to start his MA in philosophy with a focus in Islamic art and archaeology at Oxford University.

MAXWELL CAMERON AWARD IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Teaching is in her genes

BY CRYSTAL BERGERON

For Gamelle FitzGibbon, this year's recipient of the Maxwell Cameron Award in Secondary Education, teaching excellence runs in the family.

As a youngster growing up in Oak Bay with educator parents, teaching was the last thing on her mind. She was set on becoming a dermatologist or a travel writer. "I was always fascinated with skin and loved to read medical books," explains FitzGibbon. "I also really loved to travel and had the privilege of living in several different countries over the years while my parents were teaching overseas."



FitzGibbon. PHOTO: CRYSTAL BERGERON

for art and Spanish and consider teaching.

Today, FitzGibbon graduates from the five-year BEd program with a near-perfect 8.5 GPA. A winner of numerous UVic scholarships and bursaries, she will be certified as a secondary teacher with teaching concentration areas in art and Spanish.

"My international experience makes me a better teacher because I understand simultaneously what it means to be the outsider, the new person, the person with the second language. As a teacher, it's given me empathy and perspective of different

people's situations, cultures and parental expectations," FitzGibbon says.

When asked about her time at UVic, her eyes light up. "UVic is just so beautiful. I love the surroundings. I love the lifestyle. I love the people. I love working with students and faculty who are the cream of the crop."

FitzGibbon is currently on the teacher-on-call list with the Greater Victoria School District. "My dream is to have my own classroom soon," she says. "I'm ready now and excited to be finished. There's a whole world out there with endless opportunities and I'm going to take one of them."

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Hard work opens doors for Aboriginal business grad

BY DIANNE GEORGE

By any measure, Wet'suwet'en student Lisa deWit is an inspiration. She not only graduates this June with a business degree (with distinction), but she is also close to achieving a certified general accounting designation, something normally earned post graduation.

She accomplished this while running a small bookkeeping practice, volunteering and parenting her 11-year-old daughter.

"I had a lot of support from many people, including the Native Student Union," says deWit, who served as their finance counsellor. "They were my family away from home."

In recognition of their support, and in her cultural tradition, she made and gave the NSU her first button blanket, which now hangs in their office.

DeWit says she treated school as a job and completed assignments and studied between classes during the day. "That was the only way for me, because I needed the evenings free for family time." She also held group meetings at her house, and swapped babysitting with other student-parents so she could get out to evening networking events.

"It's important to connect with others, have fun and get involved," she says, speaking from experience. Last year she won a UVic Blue and



deWit. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Gold award for her campus volunteer activities. She also served as a BC Ch'nook Scholar, one of a network of Aboriginal students studying business full-time who also mentor and advise Aboriginal high school students.

"There are a lot of students taking law, social work or education, but not a lot of business students. I'd like to encourage them to think about business.

"My two work terms at KPMG opened many doors for me. My plan is to establish an Aboriginal accounting practice and educate others including practitioners. Many of them think we don't pay taxes. Well I pay taxes every day," she says with a laugh.

UVic has come a long way in improving Aboriginal awareness on campus, she says, but there is still an opportunity for more, particularly in business. She is inspired by her ancestors. "My great grandmother was a witness in the Delgamuuk'w decision, and the women in my family are very strong. I have a responsibility to my daughter to be a strong voice and strive for the day we as Aboriginal people are equal in this country.

"I'm at a crossroads now with a whole new set of doors opening. I want to serve the Aboriginal community and inspire others to see business as an option."

Law grad carves a new path with her studies

BY SAM VANSCHIE

Val Napoleon made many firsts while completing her PhD in Law and Society at UVic.

To begin with, she's the first graduate of the new PhD program offered through the Faculty of Law. Her dissertation focused on a substantive and theoretical treatment of the legal traditions of a northern BC Indigenous people, the Gitksan, one of the plaintiff groups in the seminal Aboriginal title case, Delgamuuk'w. Napoleon also defended her dissertation in Gitwangak, one of the Gitksan communities. This was another first with the Faculty of Law.

"I was able to talk about Gitksan law in Gitksan territory to Gitksan people," Napoleon explains. That's a lot more intimidating than the classroom with a panel of professors that most

PhD candidates see.

But Napoleon has never been one to follow the path of least resistance.

When she began her studies of law at UVic, she was already a grandmother. She earned her LLB in 2001.

"I chose UVic because it has a smaller law school and a real commitment to diversity in its intake of new students," says Napoleon, who is of Cree, Saulteaux and Dunne'za heritage. She was living in Gitksan territory prior to beginning at UVic.

Through the course of her studies she found that she was less interested in the actual practice of law and more interested in legal theory and legal reasoning processes than in legal doctrines.

"I see law as a way to understand the world; it offers us a lot beyond just preparation to be a lawyer," Napoleon explains.

So in 2005 she began teaching in the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Native Studies, where she is cross-appointed at the University of Alberta. Napoleon continues her research and work on Indigenous legal traditions and issues.

Still, she stayed with UVic for her PhD.

"All the people at UVic were really terrific, which is why I continued my studies here," Napoleon said. "Everybody has been so wonderful to me."

Napoleon will convocate with the class of 2009.

Later in the summer she'll join two other Indigenous law professors to co-teach a 300-level pilot course at UVic (yes, another first).

Napoleon's contribution to the course will draw from her thesis research on the Gitksan law and legal theory.



Napoleon. PHOTO: ANDREE BOISSELLE

COMPUTER SCIENCE GRADUATION MEDAL

Math is in her blood

BY MARIA LIRONI

When Katherine Epp was a little girl, she thought she might want to be an accountant like her dad. After all, she'd always liked math.

Actually, perhaps "liked" is a bit of an understatement.

"When I was a kid my mom just could not keep me in those little Golden Book math books," recalls Epp. "I completed two years of math in Grade 1 so I was always ahead of my class. By Grade 2 I was helping the third-grade students with their math. I competed in mathematics competitions in grades 11 and 12 and both years I also won medals in math. So part of the reason I was interested in computer science was that it was a math-related career."

Now the 24-year-old Victoria native has distinguished herself again by not only graduating with an undergraduate degree from the Faculty of Engineering, but also by winning the Department of Computer Science Graduation Medal for having the highest graduating GPA in her class.

The medal is recognition for years of hard work. "Because I was home schooled I was used to setting goals for myself. I was always trying to be on the honour roll," says Epp. "Initially at UVic I had thought that I would be an average student but when I saw that higher marks were achievable I started pushing myself to see what I could do. The first year my GPA was 8.9 and it was the same for the second year but in my third year I achieved a perfect 9."

Epp's determination eventually parlayed into a full-time job in her field. For the last four months she has been developing software for Victoria's Latitude Geographics, a GIS company founded by UVic geography grad Steven Myhill-Jones.

"Although further education is not an immediate plan I am still considering it," says Epp. "In the meantime I am enjoying my job at Latitude Geographics."

As for her summer plans, Epp says she'll be busy working, relaxing and spending time on some of her hobbies including cooking, hiking and reading.

JUBILEE MEDAL FOR SCIENCE CO-WINNER

"Educational spy" shares top science medal

BY VIVIAN KEREKI

Haitian Xu, this year's co-winner of the Jubilee Medal for Science, takes the term "professional development" to a whole new level. While most top science graduates look towards becoming chemists, physicists or biologists, Xu has very different plans for his degree.

Xu, born in Shenzhen, China, decided to study physics in Canada not only to have a different experience, but also to gain first-hand knowledge of the Canadian educational system. Xu works for an educational consultancy company in China and plans to help Chinese students looking to study sciences away from home.

Xu had already completed an electronic engineering degree at the University of Cambridge, so he was well aware of the educational system in the UK.

He applied to a large number of Canadian universities to understand the application process, but quickly chose UVic. "If you're going to be anywhere in Canada, it has to be BC. I was drawn to Victoria because of its small-town feel and British influence." (Xu has since gained an appreciation for hockey too.)

With the aim of helping Chinese students understand Canadian curricula and course structure, Xu provided feedback to his company on a daily basis. He tested marking schemes by inserting small errors into assignments, and he observed lab report standards.

Xu was most impressed with the flexibility regarding course selection at UVic and the ability for



Xu. PHOTO: VIVIAN KEREKI

students to specialize early; most universities in the UK have a rigid course plan.

As for the excellent grades, Xu says scholarships motivate him to maintain his GPA, but he is humble when it comes to his success. "To be honest, I think honours students are more deserving of this award. [Their workload] is pretty hard and too stressful for me."

Don't expect this "educational spy" to hurry back to China with his findings. "If you want to be a competent educational consultant, you really need to get a master's degree. You have to go a step beyond."

Xu is scheduled to begin his master's research here at UVic under the supervision of Dr. Byoung-Chul Choi. He will be studying the dynamic properties of nanomagnets, a hybrid topic between engineering and pure physics—a perfect fit for Xu given his background and his passion for building computers.



Graduate aims to help children on her reserve

BY SUZANNE SMITH

Lila Underwood has always known that she would work with kids. Before enrolling in the Bachelor in Child and Youth Care program, Underwood was a teaching assistant at Bayside Middle School. “When I was a teaching assistant I found that many of my kids would come to me with social/emotional issues that were getting in the way of their ability to learn. Once I helped them with these issues they improved academically,” explains Underwood. These experiences, along with some encouragement from the staff at Bayside, convinced Underwood to enroll in UVic’s child and youth care program. Going to UVic allowed her to continue living on the Pauquachin reserve, which was very important to her, but also sometimes difficult. “The challenge for me was living in two different worlds. We have our own beliefs, values and customs on the reserve which sometimes clash with university culture. For example, when we

have a death in the community everyone stops what they’re doing to help the family in mourning. Being a student I couldn’t always be there for my community because of deadlines and other responsibilities. This was hard for me and for my community, but I had to make sacrifices,” explains Underwood. Despite the challenges, Underwood had very positive experiences at UVic. “I never felt uncomfortable or that I couldn’t have a voice,” she says. “I was part of a core group of students who stayed together throughout the program. We formed a real sense of community and this sense of belonging was really important to me.” Underwood is now working as the Education Manager for the Pauquachin First Nation where she hopes to help more youth graduate from high school and go on to post-secondary education. She is one of about 40 students graduating with the new title of Bachelor in Child and Youth Care. Until now students graduating from this program received a BA in Human and Social Development.



Underwood on the Pauquachin reserve. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

LAW SOCIETY GOLD MEDAL

Top law grad puts litigation to the test

BY SUZANNE SMITH

This summer, Diana Backhouse, recipient of the 2008/09 Law Society Gold Medal and Prize for top GPA, plans to gain a new perspective on litigation. Through a position with the Ontario Court of Appeal, Backhouse will get the opportunity to work directly for a judge summarizing trial information from lower courts, sitting in on hearings and watching litigators in action. Backhouse first became interested in litigation after participating in a competition at UVic.

“One of the most interesting things for me in law school was the mock trial moot court. This competition involves law schools from all over the world. Students are given questions involving international law and they answer them in front of a virtual panel of judges. My question involved terrorism and human rights, which included looking at what constitutes torture,” explains Backhouse. Backhouse grew up in Ontario and came to UVic after completing her undergraduate degree at Queens. “I had no idea what to do after

MAXWELL CAMERON AWARD IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Learning is lifelong

BY CRYSTAL BERGERON


For BEd graduate Jessica Hepting, providing a strong foundation for lifelong learning is the job of every teacher. “My goal is to create a classroom environment where students feel safe, engaged and inspired to embrace their own individuality while working together as a cohesive community,” she says. Hepting, the winner of the Maxwell Cameron award for elementary education, started out as a Malaspina University-College art student after graduating from high school in Qualicum Beach. After one year of studies she left college to travel and experience the cultures of Nepal, India, Thailand and South America. “I’m glad I took a few years off to see the world. It allowed me to enter the program with more maturity and a foundation of life experiences, which personally makes me a better teacher than I would have been had I started earlier,” says the 30-year-old.

A talented artist, Hepting grew up in a creative family. Her mother was a textile artist and her grandmother a potter. Before entering the BEd program she worked in an art studio, painted designer tiles and taught art as a volunteer in several Vancouver elementary schools, which certainly explains her desire to incorporate art into the teaching of all her classroom subjects. “I try to put a creative twist on everything I do with my students, whether it’s math, science or language arts. Children are naturally creative and curious. All too often these days this wonder gets educated out of them. So for me, it’s a goal to inspire them to maintain that natural curiosity,” she says enthusiastically. Currently on call with the Sooke School



Hepting. PHOTO: CRYSTAL BERGERON

District, Hepting looks forward to gaining a few years of teaching experience before entering graduate studies. For her, learning never ends. “I’ve had a huge growth in confidence during my time at UVic. I think that, just as with any form of learning, as you learn and develop as a teacher, there is a continual growth. With this growth comes confidence, and with this confidence comes an eternal hunger for deeper understanding and continued learning.” For Hepting, this learning, growth and development will not end with the completion of her university degree. “Each and every day that I am out in a classroom I learn so much from the children. I continue to be inspired, I continue to learn, and I continue to transform.”



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For further information visit the web site at www.PacificClimate.org Applications via email to: climate@uvic.ca





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Ethan Coward and Julia Templeman explore a Sidney tidepool on the beach near the Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre. PHOTO: TED KUZEMSKI/SODC

UVic partners with new Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre

On June 20, when the curtain rises on BC’s newest attraction—the Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre in Sidney—the ocean and its fascinating creatures will be the stars of the show, but UVic will be playing a supporting role. The University recently signed a memorandum of agreement with the society that operates the centre to jointly explore opportunities to work together to advance dissemination of knowledge about the oceans.

And the results of this partnership will be evident starting on opening

day, when visitors will be treated to a special exhibit that focuses on UVic’s cutting-edge oceans research, including the VENUS Project—the Victoria Experimental Network Under the Sea. VENUS is the cabled ocean observatory that, for the past three years, has been delivering real-time information from the sea floor of Saanich Inlet and, more recently, the Strait of Georgia. VENUS Project Director Dr. Verena Tunnicliffe serves on the board of directors of the Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre.

The centre will showcase live marine life of the Salish Sea in 17 massive aquarium habitats. Visitors will encounter thousands of fish, invertebrates and marine plant life at home in 87 tonnes of seawater behind huge acrylic viewing panels.

The Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre is located in the Sidney Pier building at 9811 Seaport Place on the Sidney waterfront and will be open daily starting June 20.

More info about the Ocean Discovery Centre: www.oceandiscovery.ca/

Next generation of climate leaders converges on UVic

From June 24 to 28, the University of Victoria is hosting the second annual World Student Environmental Summit (WSES). More than 40 students from universities around the world will converge on campus to discuss one of the most pressing questions of our day: what can we do to combat global climate change?

The four-day summit will feature three key themes: energy, university sustainability and global response to climate change. Students from as far away as New Zealand, China and Ethiopia will participate in workshops, debates and other special events.

Last year, UVic biology and environmental studies student Jill Doucette and UVic business student Chantal Orr represented Canada at



the first annual summit in Kyoto, Japan. This year, Doucette and Orr are co-chairs of the summit.

WikiEarth, a unique user-friendly collaborative website for earth data and peer-reviewed scientific research, will be unveiled at the summit. During the summit, a student proposal will be developed to recommend best global practices for on-campus sustainability, positive environmental policy and environmental education.

Delegates will have an opportunity to hear esteemed international keynote speakers including Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, Nobel Laureate and

Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), who will digitally present at the summit, and Dr. Mukesh Kapila, advisor to the World Bank on climate change and to the UN for disaster reduction and humanitarian affairs, who will present at the closing ceremony.

Most events are open only to delegates, but everyone is welcome to join the opening and closing ceremonies as well as the plenary sessions presented by: UVic earth and ocean sciences professor Dr. Andrew Weaver (IPCC author); Ms. Leith Sharp (founding director of Harvard’s Green Campus Initiative); UVic business professor Dr. Ana Maria Peredo (BC Institute for Co-operative Studies).

More info: www.2009wses.com



Food and drink pairing Wednesday workshops

Dunlop House, Lansdowne

- June 24 – BBQ with Summer Cocktails
- July 15 – Desserts and Wine Pairings
- July 29 – Tapas and Sangria

Check camosun.ca/ce for information and registration details.



calendar highlights

Events free unless otherwise indicated.
For a complete list of events, visit the online calendar at www.uvic.ca/events

TUESDAY, JUNE 16

at the galleries
uvac.uvic.ca
250-721-6562

■ **Exhibit** Until September 25. *Gathering: 25th Anniversary Masters and Doctoral Art Education.* Honouring Dr. Margaret Travis and showcasing artworks produced by graduate students and faculty in the Faculty of Education. Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery. 250-721-8298

■ **Exhibit** Until July 30. *Inverting the Lens: Photographs by the al Manaja’a family, Humayma, Jordan.* Photographs created by members of the al Manaja’a family in collaboration with UVic interdisciplinary student, Robbyn Gordon Lanning describe their experiences of community, place, family, relationship and identity as seen through their own lenses. McPherson Library Gallery.

■ **Exhibit** Until August 16. *MFA 2009 Visual Arts Graduate Student Exhibition.* A variety of works from soapstone sculptures in the form of everyday objects, to paintings of ghostly young women, to abstract wooden structures from the studios of recently graduated MFA students Allison Cake, Katie Lyle, Shelly Penfold, Sara Robichaud and Ethan Wills. Legacy Art Gallery and Café. 630 Yates Street 250-381-7670

■ **Film** 7:30 p.m. *Hawaiian Starlight—Exploring the Universe from Mauna Kea.* Film and commentary by astronomer/filmmaker Dr. Jean-Charles Cuillandre (Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope). The film takes the audience on a spectacular tour of the world’s premier astronomical observing site. Science Bldg. B150. 250-721-7744

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

■ **Lansdowne Lecture** 7 p.m. *Restoring the Earth: Avoiding “Peak Soil.”* Dr. Jim Harris (Cranfield Univ., Bedfordshire, UK). Strong Bldg. 103. 250-472-4387

MONDAY, JUNE 22

■ **Conference** *BC Healthy Minds—Healthy Campuses.* Showcasing leading-edge initiatives, programs and practices designed to nurture the development of mentally healthy campus communities in BC. MacLaurin Bldg. Registration deadline June 12. \$30–\$120. 250-721-6474

SATURDAY, JUNE 27

■ **Other** 11 a.m.–2 p.m. *Kids’ Safety Day.* Bring your kids out for free fun activities related to safety. Face painting, games, bike safety rodeo, hot dogs and juice. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Presented by Campus Security Services. Parking lot 3. 250-721-8981

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Dr. Hans Tammemagi (environmental studies) had two books published by Oxford University Press in March. In *Air: Our Planet's Ailing Atmosphere*, he explores the history and evolution of the atmosphere, dealing with key issues associated with the changing character of one of the most basic components of life on Earth. A new edition of Tammemagi's *Half-lives: A Guide to Nuclear Technology in Canada* updates the only book to consider this subject, evaluating nuclear technology as a potential source of clean energy as well as its applications in medicine and industry.

Cole McFarlane, Vikes men's soccer player, and Vikes women's basketball team member **Kayla Dykstra** will both represent Canada at this summer's Federation Internationale du Sport Universitaire (FISU) Universiade in Belgrade, Serbia. McFarlane netted 11 goals last season to lead the Vikes to the program's 11th conference title. He was subsequently named Canada West All-Star, Canada West MVP and CIS All-Canadian. Dykstra is CIS basketball player of the year, the first Vikes player in over two decades to win women's basketball MVP honours. She led the Canada West conference in points and set a new team single-season record for rebounds.

UVic-based digital history projects are winning recognition. **The British Colonist Online Project**, a partnership between UVic and the *Times Colonist* that puts decades of BC's colonial history online, has won an Award of Recognition for a major contribution to BC heritage from the BC Heritage Society and an Award of Merit from the Hallmark Society. The project website, launched late last year to mark the 150th anniversary of the *Times Colonist* newspaper, contains over 100,000 pages of one of Western Canada's oldest daily newspapers. UVic on its own has won an Award of Merit from the Hallmark Society for Colonial Despatches (sic), a project that digitized transcripts of government documents that passed between Victoria and London during the city's colonial period. More: <http://library.uvic.ca/site/spcoll/digit/colonist/> and <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>

CONVOCATION 2009

JUBILEE MEDAL FOR SCIENCE (CO-WINNER)

Solving real-world problems—by the numbers

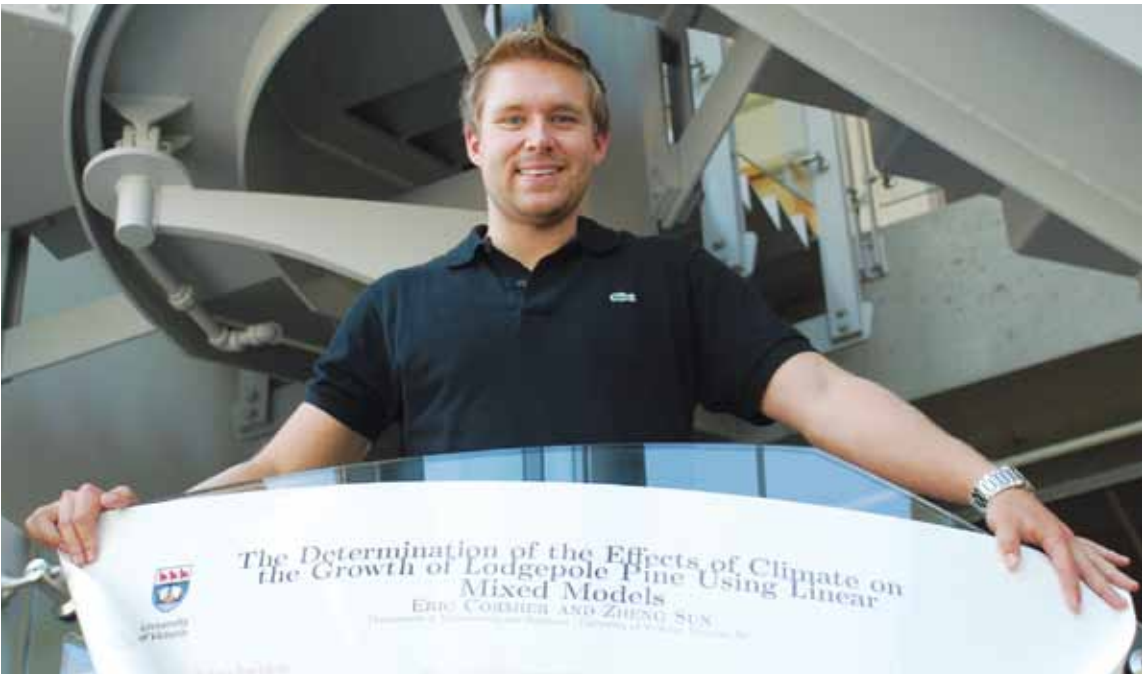
BY MELANIE TROMP HOOVER

Numbers and estimates may not be the first tools that come to mind when you think of modern medicine, but these are the instruments that may help a UVic grad solve some of the health sector's biggest questions.

"I really enjoy using mathematics to solve real-world problems in a prestigious field like medicine—it gives you the ability to do amazing things," says Eric Cormier, who graduates this month as co-winner of the Jubilee Medal for Science and with an honours BSc in mathematics and statistics. "Statistics are a way to use math to learn from data, and their applications are everywhere."

For Cormier, statistics' current application is a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)-funded summer work term on campus. This is the second research award that Cormier has taken on as an undergraduate at UVic, this time working with Dr. Farouk Nathoo (math and statistics) to model multi-state processes in modern medicine.

"If there are three stages—healthy, sick and dead, for example—I work on estimating the probability of moving from state to state," explains Cormier. "I'm trying to figure out if current estimates of, say, a recovering stroke patient moving from a poor to moderate to excellent quality of life are accurate." This type of work contributes to a doc-



Cormier with his award-winning poster. PHOTO: ROBIE LISCOMB

tor's ability to plan patient-specific recovery (based on variables like age, severity of illness, etc.).

Cormier recently took his research on the road, presenting a case study on how climate change has affected lodgepole pine growth with partner Zheng Sun at the annual Statistics Society of Canada meeting in Vancouver on June 1.

Cormier and Sun took home first prize in the nationwide poster competition, a particularly motivating

win for Cormier who was one of the few undergraduate students invited to attend.

Originally from Nelson, BC, Cormier moved west to take advantage of Victoria's location and the reputation of UVic's mathematics and statistics programs.

"I came to UVic and was amazed by all the opportunities presented to me, like the research projects through NSERC that allowed me to use what I was learning to make money," explains

Cormier, who also worked as a tutor, instructor and teaching assistant during his time at UVic. "It was awesome to have an opportunity to use my expertise to help people with the stuff that I find really interesting."

Cormier isn't sure what area of medicine his work will take him into, but he is ultimately interested in answering questions with numbers. He will begin work on his MSc in biostatistics and epidemiology this September at UBC.

Co-op leads to graduate work in nuclear physics

BY CASSIDY NUNN

When Eric Price arrived at UVic five years ago, he was steering himself toward a career as a personal trainer. After a few chemistry classes, however, his plans changed. He discovered a passion for research through four successful work terms with the Chemistry Co-op Program. Now, as he prepares to graduate with his Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry, you'd think he might be ready for a well-earned break. Instead, the recent recipient of an entrance scholarship for the doctoral program in chemistry at UBC is already hard at work on his PhD.

Price credits the co-op program for providing the opportunity to enrich his studies and gain valuable work experience. "I think the co-op program was the best thing that I did during my degree, and it has definitely helped to influence my life after I finished my degree."

His last two work terms at TRIUMF (the national laboratory for particle and nuclear physics in Vancouver) were instrumental in landing his PhD position. Dr. Mike Adam, a senior



Price

research scientist at TRIUMF, was so impressed with Price's work term that he has become one of his PhD co-supervisors. "I'm excited about the work that he'll produce," says Adam.

One of the tasks that Price enjoyed most during his work terms was learning how to use new technologies. At TRIUMF he was involved in radiochemistry, something that most students don't have the opportunity to try in school. "Working with a company or professor allows you to do a lot of things and learn how to use a

lot of equipment that you wouldn't have the time for during your degree," he says.

While at TRIUMF, Price helped develop radiopharmaceuticals used to diagnose patients with diseases such as cancer and Parkinson's. He says the most rewarding aspect of these work terms was the impact he was having on patients' lives.

For the next few years Price is looking forward to working on his PhD and continuing to contribute to the team at TRIUMF.

More grad profiles at ring.uvic.ca

- **Jason Kereluk**, recipient of the Canadian Society for Mechanical Engineering Medal
- **Ann Rose Kerkovius**, an Inuk from the Copper Inuit Nation, receiving her Master's in Social Work
- **Anthony Kroecker**, recipient of the IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Computer Engineering
- **Yuanjie Pang**, recipient of the IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Electrical Engineering
- **Cecelia Redding**, recipient of the IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Software Engineering
- **Suzanne Vander Wekken**, a co-op graduate in recreation and health education and champion of community health and wellness
- **Lindsay Walton**, a women's studies grad with a passion for social justice

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