



University
of Victoria

SPEED READING

TOWN HALL

April 10: Campus Update

On April 10 from 11 a.m.–noon in David Strong C103 (Matthews/McQueen Theatre), join Vice-President Academic and Provost Valerie Kuehne and Vice-President Finance and Operations Gayle Gorrill as they discuss matters of institutional interest. Kuehne will provide an overview of the Planning and Budget Framework. Gorrill will provide an overview of the Capital Planning process.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Connect U registration open

Registration is now on for the Connect U all-staff conference on May 14 and 15. This annual conference is designed to help staff build professional development skills, learn more about the university, network with colleagues and much more. The conference is free and open to all UVic employees. This year's Connect U kicks off with a pre-conference scavenger hunt on May 7, 12:00–12:45 starting at the MacLaurin Pyramid. Full info and registration at uvic.ca/connectu

UVIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Choose your channel, and stay informed

Did you know that 76 per cent of BC adults under 30 use Facebook every day? Or that 67 per cent of BC adults use Facebook at least weekly? We have compiled a comprehensive list of UVic social media channels so users can connect with faculties, departments, units and groups on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, blogs, Flickr and/or Instagram. See uvic.ca/socialmedia



THE RING

APRIL–MAY 2015

The University of Victoria's
community newspaper

ring.uvic.ca



Meigs. PHOTO: NIK WEST

11

NUMBER OF
UVIC GOVERNOR
GENERAL'S
AWARD
RECIPIENTS IN
LITERATURE AND
VISUAL ARTS

Vibrant UVic artist honoured with Governor General's Award

BY JOHN THRELFALL

Department of Visual Arts professor and nationally renowned painter Sandra Meigs was named one of only eight winners in the annual Governor General's Awards for Visual and Media Arts on March 24.

"It's such an honour to be recognized in this capacity for my career as an artist," says Meigs. "You get benchmarks of recognition as you go along...but this is something very ceremonial, very special."

Highly regarded for her expressive interdisciplinary artworks, Meigs has led a distinguished 35-year contemporary

art career with over 40 solo and 60 group exhibitions in Canada's most culturally relevant institutions. "You can call it a lifetime achievement award, but in a way I see it as the beginning of a new lifetime," says Meigs. "Some artists make brilliant work in their last 20 years, so for me it's less lifetime achievement and more career achievement."

Born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1953, Meigs has lived in Canada since 1973. She earned her BFA at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, and her MA in philosophy at Dalhousie University in 1980. A member of the Royal Canadian Academy

of Artists who also represented Canada in the Fifth Biennale of Sydney, Meigs has been a professor with Visual Arts since 1993 and served as departmental chair from 1997 to 2002.

"We have some of the top contemporary artists in the country here and we have very high standards for all our sessional instructors," she says of the department's dynamic learning environment. "We focus so intensely on studio practice for the students—we look at everything very carefully and talk about it in a constructive

SEE MEIGS P. 3



Darimont. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Outspoken conservationist recognized by BC faculty association

BY ANNE MacLAURIN

UVic wildlife expert Dr. Chris Darimont—a research pioneer on BC's coastal wolves and bears, and a passionate advocate for science-based conservation policy—is this year's winner of the Distinguished Academics Early in Career award from the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC (CUFA-BC).

Darimont, who is the Hakai-Raincoast geography professor in the Faculty of Social Sciences, is an interdisciplinary conservation scientist who has conducted groundbreaking research on the importance of wolves and bears to coastal ecosystems and people. For example, he brought new evidence into the grizzly bear trophy hunting controversy by working with locally owned and operated bear ecotourism companies to take a science-based "inventory" of bears in their area.

Darimont and his students study the

relationships among wildlife, salmon and people on BC's central coast, also known as the Great Bear Rainforest. The research is united by strong partnerships with the four Indigenous Nations (Heiltsuk, Kitasoo/Xais'xais, Wuikinuxv and Nuxalk) of the central coast who hold Indigenous knowledge of the area.

Darimont's professorship and UVic's Applied Conservation Science Lab are supported by two investors: Hakai Institute and Raincoast Conservation Foundation. The Hakai Institute focuses on long-term ecological and community-engaged research while the Raincoast Conservation Foundation provides Darimont a direct route for influencing conservation policy. He was, for instance, an official intervener and expert witness before the Joint Review Panel regarding the Northern Gateway project.

"I've been uplifted by my nominators and supporters, who are the same peo-

ple behind the accomplishments that I'm being singled out for," he says. "So I feel a sense of pleasant responsibility to give back to my partners: students, non-profit colleagues and the young leaders from the sovereign Indigenous nations of our coast."

Darimont began his wildlife research career while he was a biology PhD candidate at UVic, under the supervision of UVic biologist Dr. Tom Reimchen. Darimont says he's donating the \$1,000 cash award to UVic to help establish a new scholarship for Indigenous students.

The CUFA-BC awards program was established in 1995. This is the first year a UVic faculty member has won the Early in Career Award since it was added to the award roster in 2010. CUFA-BC represents approximately 4,600 professors, lecturers, instructors, professional librarians and other academic staff at five research universities.

ringers

Biologist **Dr. Rossi Marx** is being recognized with a Distinguished Service Award from Youth Science Canada for her continued support of the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair (VIRSF). The annual fair fosters scientific inquiry among young people (ages 9–18) and provides young scientists an opportunity to demonstrate their findings. A volunteer with the fair for 25 years, with 11 years as chair of the organizing committee, Marx is responsible for everything from booking facilities, to recruiting judges, to fundraising. The award celebrates her tireless service and immeasurable contributions to science outreach on the island. Marx will receive the award at the 2015 VIRSF, running Apr. 12–13 at UVic.

Dr. Rob Lipson has been reappointed for a further term as Dean of the Faculty of Science. “Dean Lipson has served effectively as the public face of the faculty, promoting science throughout the university, in the community and with external agencies,” says Dr. Valerie Kuehne, Vice-President Academic and Provost. “He recognizes and supports the diverse range of disciplinary and programmatic interests within the faculty and has played an important role in arguing for and supporting research and teaching infrastructure.” His term takes effect July 1, 2016, following a period of administrative leave from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

FINANCIAL PLANNING

2015/16 budget framework approved

The University of Victoria’s Board of Governors has approved a \$338 million balanced operating budget for 2015/16 that focuses on student support and areas of enrolment growth.

Budget pressures continue for the university with a decrease in the provincial operating grant, following two years of reductions, and tuition fee increases limited to two per cent while the costs of salaries, utilities and library acquisitions continue to rise. This creates a long-term financial sustainability challenge as costs are expected to continue to rise at rates greater than revenue increases.

While financial sustainability challenges are expected to continue, UVic’s financial picture has improved substantially from projections in 2014/15 due to significant growth in international students. Without that enrolment increase, UVic would be facing a budget shortfall this year of \$1.3 million and similar shortfalls in the next two years of the Planning and Budget Framework’s three-year planning cycle.

The areas of focus for aligning resources and priorities are enhancing the student experience and student success, augmenting academic resources and student services for international students and strategic initiatives supporting growth in areas of student demand such as engineering, science and social science.

The budget includes a request for approval for an increase in student

residence fees required to fund renewal of our aging residences with investments such as new roofs and mechanical systems. As an ancillary service, residence services do not receive government funding and are operated on a cost-recovery basis.

The board’s vote March 31 followed a discussion by board members about the need for the work to ensure the health and safety of students as well as concern about the affordability of post-secondary education. It was noted that a new bursary is being funded by Residence Services for students living in residence who have unmet financial need.

After inclusion of all other activities, for example research, distributions from the University of Victoria Foundation’s endowment, and ancillary operations such as residences and parking, the total budget for the university is over \$550 million.

The Planning and Budget Framework also highlights three key initiatives: updating the Strategic Research Plan, updating our Campus Plan and enhancing communications through The UVic Edge project and improved internal communications.

For a longer version of this story and to view the 2015/15 Budget Framework, see bit.ly/1516-budget.

RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

UVic centre plays key role in new “omics” network

UVic leadership in genomics and proteomics research took another big leap forward late last month with the announcement of a new national Genomics Innovation Network (GIN).

The \$15.5-million network is made up of 10 nodes, each of which is receiving core operational funding from Genome Canada, with matching funds from various public and private sector partners.

One of the nodes is the Proteomics Centre, which combines the cutting-edge research and service strengths of two BC facilities—the UVic-Genome BC Proteomics Centre and the Proteomics Core Facility at UBC. The unified centre will receive \$2 million in GIN funding.

Proteomics is the study of all the proteins—antibodies, enzymes and structural molecules—that are directed by genes to keep cells functioning and healthy. It is applicable to just about every area of biochemical investigation.

Housed at the Vancouver Island Technology Park and led by UVic biochemist and proteomics pioneer Dr. Christoph Borchers, the UVic-Genome BC Proteomics Centre has provided cutting-edge proteomics technologies to academic and industry clients since 2001, serving researchers in Canada and 24 countries around the world.

Through ongoing investment from Genome Canada, Genome BC and other sources, the UVic centre is now the best-equipped proteomics research facility in Canada, with \$10 million worth of specialized equipment.

This includes 16 mass spectrometers, sophisticated instruments that can identify a protein, or part of a protein, by its molecular weight.

Since 2011, the UVic-Genome BC Proteomics Centre has provided services for more than 300 research projects in health, agriculture, energy, environment and forestry.

Both the UVic and UBC facilities will continue to offer their current services, but the new organizational structure will allow for closer integration, says Borchers, who leads the unified centre. “This new arrangement provides clients with an expanded range of proteomics services in a ‘one-stop shop,’ and creates a central hub for proteomics research in Canada.”

Borchers is currently establishing a clinical proteomics lab at McGill University’s Jewish General Hospital, which will act as a clinical translation partner for the new Proteomics Centre by validating proteomics-based tests on patients.

The Proteomics Centre will also work closely with other GIN nodes to enhance the development and application of genomics and proteomics technologies in Canada.

Borchers is also co-lead of another GIN node, the Alberta-based Metabolomics Innovation Centre, which will receive close to \$2 million in funding.

Participation in the Genomics Innovation Network builds on UVic’s strengths as a national leader in the development, use and application of proteomics technologies for improving human and environmental health.

CENTRE FOR ATHLETICS, RECREATION AND SPECIAL ABILITIES

Opening day excitement builds for CARSA

BY PATTY PITTS

Seven years ago, the potential users of the Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities (CARSA) sat down with members of UVic’s Facilities Management to discuss what they imagined the new facility would look like and do. Now the 17,700-square-metre building is ready to open on May 1 and Vikes Recreation Health and Fitness Programmer Amy Allen can’t wait.

“I’m so done with imagining, let’s just get in there,” she says enthusiastically. “It’s breathtaking. It just has so much going for it.”

The pursuit of excellence in every aspect of human performance is integral to UVic’s vision for CARSA. To recruit and retain outstanding students, faculty and staff and to help them reach their highest potential, the centre builds on the university’s historic strengths as a home of champions. Champions include our elite athletes, our students who value active living and wellness as part of their well-rounded UVic experience and individuals from our broader community.

Allen is not alone in her praise for the first new athletics and recreation facility built at UVic in 40 years. Consulting project manager Nazir Jessa oversaw the largest construction project ever on campus, which at its peak employed 250 workers. While admitting there were “hiccups and challenges” during the multi-year project “when you see the building’s potential and the amount of good use that will come out of it, it’s a job well done.”

CARSA’s state-of-the-art facilities and the new home for CanAssist, UVic’s innovative program that transforms the lives of people living with disabilities, will be housed in a building built to LEED gold certification standard. Among its environmentally-friendly features is the campus’s first geothermal heating system and a centerpiece glass tower that acts as a chimney and releases hot air at the top.

Temperatures are on Allen’s mind too as CARSA’s multiple studios have individual heat controls so sweating cyclists and tranquil yoga enthusiasts can each work out in their own climates. The expanded facilities can host classes as early as 6:45 a.m. for the pre-work crowd and more mid-day classes for those who want a lunch-hour workout.

CanAssist Executive Director Robin Syme expects her organization’s location adjacent to CARSA’s main entrance will

raise awareness about CanAssist’s work and the importance of inclusion. “CanAssist is delighted to be working with the Vikes and community partners to identify new opportunities for individuals with a range of abilities to participate in athletic and recreational programming,” she says.

New generations of athletes will train and compete in CARSA, continuing UVic’s tradition of excellence in varsity sports. The 2,100 seats in the high performance gym surround the action on the court, making game nights more exciting than ever.

With the formal conclusion of the major gifts fundraising campaign, the funding for CARSA, which replaces aging and outdated facilities, has been finalized. University funds, membership fees, donor and sponsorship support, and parking fees will pay for the \$77-million project that includes significant renovation to the McKinnon facility, providing much needed teaching and research space for the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, and a new parkade.

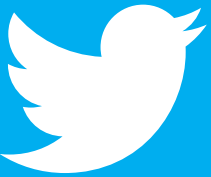
The fundraising campaign raised \$4.5 million, lower than the original goal of \$18 million that was set in 2011. Fundraising for CARSA was new territory. Unlike most previous capital projects, it did not involve government funding, presented fewer naming options and was happening at a time when organizations and individuals were still recovering from a global economic slowdown.

An alternative financial plan is in place with the funds to come from UVic’s investment properties and the existing capital priorities reserve fund. This will not significantly impact any planned UVic capital projects and no construction funding will come from academic budgets or research funding. As well, the shortfall in fundraising will be offset by a portion of the expected proceeds from the sale of Dunsmuir Lodge—a property with a history of supporting health and wellness.

Registration for CARSA’s inaugural spring and summer programs is now open and the full range of options are available at vikesrec.uvic.ca.

“Everyone is welcome to visit CARSA at a community open house May 2 and 3. People can come and try out a program for free those days,” says Allen. “There will be so much more for people to access than there’s been in the past. It’s going to be fantastic for staff, students and faculty and the broader community.”

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Bob Reimer

Student’s community engagement recognized with national award

BY ERIN KING

UVic student Navarana Smith has been named as one of 10 Canadian undergraduates to win a 2015 3M National Student Fellowship, celebrating outstanding student leadership.

Smith’s resume reads like an adventure novel. A child of two biologists who ran an eco-tourism company, Smith spent her childhood exploring the remote wilderness of the Pacific Northwest and the High Arctic. Now a third-year biology and environmental studies student, Smith has travelled to Germany, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Madagascar in the course of her undergrad studies. Closer to home, she spent a semester at the Bamfield Marine Science Centre on Vancouver Island. Her travels have given Smith a sense of her position in the world—a deeper understanding of place and perspective.

“The field school in East Africa challenged me as a student and as a human being,” she recalls. “Immersed in discussions on land claims, foreigner presence, colonial attitudes, and development, I became aware of the immense limitations of my understanding, my discomfort with my privileged background, and my curiosity about the deep complexities in addressing environmental and social sustainability challenges. My self-awareness swelled.”

She began to look for classes that allowed her to engage in community partnerships. “I took this fantastic course [ES 441] in first year that involved consulting an NGO on a proposed restoration project. We collaborated with this NGO on a business plan to try to ensure their project’s success. I came back to UVic incredibly excited about where my degree could lead, and more engaged in my studies.”

Now, Smith wants to strengthen student involvement in community-based research at UVic. “The world needs all the brainpower it can get to grapple with the social and ecological challenges of our time. Yet, students—and people everywhere—are overworked and exhausted. We need to find a way to foster commitments while being realistic about pressures on time,” she says.

One way to do this: make community engagement a priority in course syllabuses. “If more courses had an outreach component—including community-level publications, partnerships, and presentations of assignments—students might have higher retention and greater investment in the academic material.”

In the meantime, Smith works to foster student engagement outside of class. She has coordinated monthly day trips through the Sierra Club for students and community members interested in sustainability



Smith. PHOTO: PROVIDED

themes. With UVic’s student-run environmental magazine, *ESSENCE*, Smith visited classrooms to create interest in joining discussions on social justice and sustainability issues. She helped to coordinate UVic’s Environmental Round Table (UVERT) and in 2013 was selected to represent UVic at the World Student Environmental Summit in Germany.

As part of the 3M fellowship, Smith will travel to Vancouver in June for the annual conference of the Society

for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. While there, she’ll join her fellow awardees in developing a cross-Canadian collaborative project with the goal of enhancing teaching and learning at the post-secondary level.

All this, and Smith still manages to excel academically. When asked how she manages, she shrugs with her characteristic quiet confidence. “I’m lucky to be a part of these communities at UVic,” she says. “Life is busy, but it is also beautiful.”

ringers

Dr. Janni Aragon (political science), director of UVic’s Technology Integrated Learning unit, is one of two 2015 Fellows of the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP), an international society of higher education administrators responsible for high-level planning projects on their campuses. SCUP Fellows complete a planning-related project during their fellowship year. Aragon will focus on the need for increased communication and coordination between academic and service units that support teaching and learning across campus.

Dr. Jane Ye (mathematics) has received the 2015 Krieger-Nelson prize for research excellence from the Canadian Mathematical Society (CMS). The award recognizes outstanding research by a female mathematician in Canada. As an applied mathematician, Ye develops powerful theoretical tools and designs algorithms to attack some complicated optimization questions. She has published over 70 articles and her work has been cited in almost 700 articles. As Krieger-Nelson Prize winner, Ye will receive an Inuit soapstone sculpture and will present a plenary lecture at an upcoming CMS meeting.

Awards honour great teachers, TAs

Two outstanding classroom leaders who are known for their dedication and innovation to the teaching process have been given Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching. Dr. David Blades of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Rebecca Gagan of the Department of English join the ranks of more than 50 outstanding teachers who have received the awards since 1989.

“Each of the recipients represents the finest qualities of teaching. They have gone above and beyond for their students,” said Dale Henley, alumni association president. “They demonstrate high levels of innovation and they’ve taken groundbreaking, scholarly approaches to their teaching methods.”



Blades. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Blades and Gagan were honoured at a special gathering in March co-hosted by the Alumni Association, the Learning and Teaching Centre (LTC) and the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

This year’s recipients of the Andy Farquharson Teaching Excellence Awards for Graduate Students: Emma Nicholls-Allison (chemistry), Kevin Tunnicliffe (English), and Kerry-Lynn Weatherhead (child and youth care). The Farquharson awards are named in honour of the retired School of Social Work professor, former director of the LTC and past recipient of the 3M Teaching Fellowship.

The alumni awards are offered in two categories. The Harry Hickman Award is for faculty members, artists-in-residence or librarians. It is named in memory of the respected scholar, teacher, principal of Victoria College, and acting president of UVic. The Gilian Sherwin Award is for sessional lecturers, lab instructors or senior lab instructors and honours the memory of the former

senior lab instructor in geography.

Blades, recipient of the Hickman awards, is a professor of science education, an appointment he has held since 2002. He is an outstanding educator who inspires students—future teachers—by giving them the confidence to teach a subject that’s often marginalized in elementary schools.

Blades uses innovative teaching methods that provoke thought, and much of his instruction is based on students having hands-on, interactive experiences with the course content. His students learn by doing science as opposed to learning about science. Evaluations by his students are consistently near the top of his department.

Blades has consulted with the Ministry of Education to develop provincial curricula for science teaching and with textbook publishers to develop and review books and materials.

Since 2004, her first year as a sessional instructor, Gagan has demonstrated the ability to turn her classrooms into “profound



Gagan. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

spaces of learning,” according to her nominators.

Gagan has taught writing and literature across a diverse range of courses, developing original curricula and bringing consistent innovation to course design. She typically earns evaluations that are higher than the already high department and faculty average teaching scores.

Her colleagues and students admire Gagan’s deeply considered teaching philosophy. They say she has elevated the teaching culture of the department because of her classroom leadership and her roles as mentor, innovator and facilitator of wider discussions about teaching and learning.

Photos of current and past recipients of Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching are on permanent display in the main stairway of the McPherson Library. Each recipient also receives a \$2,000 cash prize from the Alumni Association.

MEIGS CONTINUED FROM P.1

but critical way, how it’s related to current art context and theoretical ideas of contemporary art. It’s all very exciting. That’s the great strength of UVic’s Visual Arts program—walk through any of the studios and you’ll feel it.”

Meigs also feels that living and working in Victoria is one of the factors that sets her art apart. “There’s not a huge contemporary art community here, and I like the sense of delight or freedom that gives me in my studio,” she says. “I just take what I do here and show it in Toronto and people always say, ‘Oh, that’s so fresh!’”

Meigs is only the second UVic scholar to be awarded a Governor General’s Award for Visual Arts, alongside sculptor and now-Professor Emeritus Mowry Baden in 2006. “This award represents our country’s highest honour in our profession and publicly recognizes a lifetime of achievement and contribution to this field of research,” says Paul Walde, Chair of the Department of Visual Arts.

With 18 catalogue essays and over 60 articles and reviews, Meigs’ artistic output has been covered in influential journals such as *Artforum*, *Canadian Art*, *Border Crossings*, *The Globe & Mail*, *C Magazine*, *Parachute* and the *National Post*. Her most recent major

local exhibition was *The Basement Panoramas* at downtown’s Open Space gallery.

“Just when you think you have a handle on how Sandra will next explore psychological or physical space, her passion and focus changes shape and direction,” notes Dr. Lynne Van Luven, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts. “The University of Victoria is fortunate to have an artist of such strong national and international reputation on its faculty.”

Meigs will be presented with a \$25,000 cash prize and unique commemorative medallion by His Excellency The Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, at a ceremony at Rideau Hall in Ottawa on April 8 and will also participate in a special curated exhibit of 2015 winners at the National Gallery of Canada, running April 9 to Aug. 30.

The Governor General’s Awards in Visual and Media Arts were created in 1999 by the Canada Council for the Arts and the Governor General of Canada. The awards celebrate Canada’s vibrant arts community and recognize remarkable careers in the visual and media arts.



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around the ring



Special convocation for Kathy & Ken Shields

Husband and wife coaching legends Kathy and Ken Shields, who led their teams to a combined 15 national basketball titles at UVic, accepted honorary doctor of laws degrees from the university at a special convocation ceremony on April 2. A crowd of 150 family, friends, former players and staff gathered for the presentation in the ceremonial hall of First Peoples House, a departure from the usual practice of conducting convocation ceremonies in the University Centre. Ken Shields said he was “delighted” to receive the honour in First Peoples House, since a key period of his childhood was spent in Masset. Kathy Shields said they had never given any thought to the possibility of one day receiving the university’s highest academic honour. “This is just so far from anything we thought about. We just did our jobs and enjoyed our passion,” she said. “At the time, we never thought about the (championship) banners or the wins, we just thought about the players and the experiences we had.” Full article: bit.ly/shields-bb

Diversity employer award

UVic has been named one of Canada’s Best Diversity Employers for the fourth year in a row. The winners of the 2015 competition were announced March 31, recognizing 65 organizations across the country for a range of exceptional initiatives to attract and retain employees from diverse communities. UVic was one of only six post-secondary institutions included on the list, and one of two organizations in Victoria. The university was recognized for maintaining a diversity and equity steering committee, hosting an annual diversity research forum, managing a mental health task force, having an Elders-in-residence program to provide students and staff with guidance on Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and many other strategic initiatives. Full article: bit.ly/diverse-uvic-15

Student Mental Health Literacy Training Program

New training sessions have been announced for the Student Mental Health Literacy Program, a campus-wide initiative aimed at enhancing awareness among faculty, sessional instructors, teaching assistants and staff about student mental health issues. Open sessions for faculty and staff with basic training in mental health awareness and response run through April and May. The program is part of the Student Mental Health Strategy launched last year in the Division of Student Affairs. For full details and schedule, see bit.ly/mental-health-15.



2015 CRAIGDARROCH RESEARCH AWARDS

Awards celebrate the drive to make a difference

Coady. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

A historian who is increasing our understanding of Islam. An engineer and a computer scientist who are making our lives easier with new technologies. A nurse who is helping the terminally ill and their families cope. And a performing artist who inspires us to better appreciate the world around us.

These are the winners of this year’s Craigdarroch Research Awards, which salute outstanding research and creative achievement at the University of Victoria. Their accomplishments will be celebrated at an evening reception on campus on May 7.

“These five award recipients exemplify the passion and drive that fuels research and creative activity at UVic,” says Vice-President Research David Castle. “Their accomplishments attest to UVic’s commitment to improving lives, advancing knowledge and bettering society through, for example, developing evidence-based public policy.”

The winners are:

DAVID H. TURPIN GOLD MEDAL FOR CAREER ACHIEVEMENT IN RESEARCH

Andrew Rippin, professor emeritus, history

“It’s vitally important that we in the West find ways to understand a culture that is shared by one-fifth of the world’s population—and one that has such an impact on global events.” These are the words of Andrew Rippin, an internationally renowned authority on the study of the Qur’an—the Muslim holy book—and its core influence on Islamic civilization. Over his 35-year career, his prodigious writings and passion for scholarship have had a fundamental impact on his field, influenced the career path of many young scholars, and helped increase public understanding of Islam at a time that has never been more important than it is today.

CRAIGDARROCH SILVER MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Yang Shi, mechanical engineering

Imagine a world where robotic surgery is performed on a patient in Whitehorse—by a doctor located in Victoria? That world is not far off, thanks

in part to the groundbreaking work of mechanical engineer Yang Shi, an expert in the long-distance control of machines and electrical systems, also known as networked control systems. Since joining UVic in 2009, Shi has quickly established himself as an international force in his field. In 2014 he was named by Thomson Reuters as one of the top one per cent most cited researchers in his field in the world—a remarkable accomplishment for such a young researcher.

CRAIGDARROCH AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

Yvonne Coady, computer science

Scientists monitoring undersea events for early tsunami detection, astronomers peering into the skies millions of miles away, people with disabilities using public transit, and Aboriginal communities learning about their heritage—all of these rely on innovative software infrastructure that computer scientist Yvonne Coady and her team are developing. Working closely with industry, community partners and groups on campus, Coady is transforming the way software developers and users tap into the power of the internet. Her work makes advances in computer systems—such as cloud computing, high-capacity networks, data warehouses and high-performance processors—more readily available to a wide range of academic and everyday users.

CRAIGDARROCH AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

Kelli Stajduhar, nursing

As the Canadian population ages, demands are increasingly being placed on our health care system to provide high-quality, compassionate support. This is especially true for end-of-life care where the needs of patients and



Rippin. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



Stajduhar. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

caregivers are paramount. Nursing researcher Kelli Stajduhar has dedicated her career to ensuring these needs are being met in an evidence-based and coordinated way. Fueled by a deep commitment to the well-being of patients and their family caregivers, Stajduhar blends knowledge development and research with advocacy and

stakeholder engagement to inform and transform policy and practice related to end-of-life care in BC, Canada and beyond.



Shi. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



Butterfield. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

**CRAIGDARROCH AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN
ARTISTIC EXPRESSION**

**Benjamin Butterfield,
music**

Performer, artistic collaborator and educator—Benjamin Butterfield continues to make an indelible impression on the future of Canadian singers and on audiences worldwide. He is a tenor of international renown, with a repertoire ranging from baroque to classical to contemporary. His artistic knowledge and production experience is broad, versatile and widely recognized by peers, critics and audiences for its quality and impact. He has performed

with the world’s top musicians and conductors, and is highly sought-after as a teacher who transforms young singers into emerging professional artists. Many of his students have gone on to give performances with major opera companies and symphonies throughout North America.

The Craigdarroch Research Awards were established in 2003 to recognize outstanding research-focused and creative contributions at UVic. They were named for Craigdarroch Castle, the estate that was once home to UVic’s predecessor institution, Victoria College, from 1921 to 1946.

View Craigdarroch winners' "Faces of UVic Research" videos: bit.ly/uvic-c15

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L-R: Child and Youth Care practicum student Angie Gray, Catherine Bodson-Verhaegen and Felix. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

SUPPORTING STUDENT FAMILIES

**Family Centre
marks 20 years**

BY KATE HILDEBRANDT

Occupying a modest, two-bedroom suite within the Family Housing complex on Lam Circle, the UVic Family Centre was intended as a family health unit. Twenty years later, it has evolved into something much more, says director Elizabeth Quong, “and that’s a good thing.” “You get hooked on what this place can do for people,” says Quong who has managed the centre for eight years. “This is very compelling work.”

That’s due in large part to the learning that happens there—and not just by students. Parents, children, staff and volunteers, as well as practica students, faculty and researchers can all learn and study the reality of cultural differences, acceptance and inclusion which happens here. The centre offers a range of support services as well as health and early learning programs, student practicums, and hosts social events like pancake breakfasts, meet-ups, and lots and lots of play.

Angie Gray, born and raised in Victoria, is a Child and Youth Care practicum student at the centre and a mom living in family housing. She marvels at how the learning has impacted her two school-aged kids. “They are experiencing a level of integration and cultural awareness that I could not give them any other way. We can’t afford to travel the world but here they are gaining a deeper understanding of people with different languages, beliefs and traditions.”

Inclusion and support

Approximately half of all student families come from far-away places such as Egypt, Indonesia, Libya, Bangladesh, Denmark and Belgium—to name just a few. “For many, it’s their first time experiencing a different culture. We recognize the challenges families face in making that adjustment,” says Quong.

And for most, English is a second language. Understandably, some are shy and cautious, aware of their differences and yet connecting significantly around the one thing they have in common: they are families who have invested a great deal toward one parent’s education. Usually the ones in need of moral support are the parents and children most stressed by the move, complicated by loneliness as the studying parent is away from home a good percentage of the time.

“Staff and students are mindful of the elements contributing to family cohesion. We ask what families want and need,” says Quong, “and help with resources and in-

formation both on and off campus. Everyone learns and shares.”

Resources include a public health nurse from Island Health who visits monthly to examine the little ones. The practicum program includes students from UVic’s Schools of Child and Youth Care, Social Work and Nursing, as well as from Camosun College. The centre also serves as a rich source of research and study for UVic graduates wanting to evaluate this model and its varied outcomes and benefits to human health, well-being and social development.

The centre features indoor and outdoor spaces that stimulate learning through play along with numerous programs and meet-ups. There is an Early Learning Program, an After School Club, a Family Learn and Share drop-in, a Mom’s Time Out get-together, and a Knitting Circle where knitting skills are not required. There’s also a monthly Book Club, a toy and book-lending library, clothing exchange, food bank, and plenty of community celebrations.

Still, as Quong points out, the centre is more than the sum of its parts.

“Yes, this is a friendly neighbourhood house with a strong international component. It is also an intimate meeting place where we can break down barriers, too, in gentle ways.” One of UVic’s multi-faith chaplains, Angela Wood, also connects here and refers people to other faith communities, too.

“The Family Centre staff and volunteers have done a great job in creating a warm, welcoming place that successfully engages student families,” says Laurene Shields, HSD associate dean, who helped prepare the proposal that launched the centre 20 years ago.

“This support is precious in that it improves the likelihood for the student member of the family to be successful in their studies. Pretty much everyone involved experiences vast cultural differences, too, which offers profound dynamic learning.”

Catherine Bodson-Verhaegen, a mother who is here with her husband and two children from Belgium, wrote: “How do you feel when arriving from abroad to an empty house with two little ones? Even with loads of info from the website, and established contacts through social media, you still feel lost. The Family Centre was for us a place to meet people from all over the world who were sometimes facing the same challenges. We got all our answers here and that made us feel less far from home.”

**around
the ring**

**Nominate a
sustainability
champion**

Do you work with someone who’s making a special effort to promote sustainability on campus? Initiatives can include waste reduction, energy conservation, promoting sustainable transportation or any of the other sustainability topics covered in the Sustainability Action Plan. Nominations for UVic’s Staff Sustainability Champion Award are open until April 17 at 4:30 p.m. The award will be presented at the Connect U conference opening ceremony on May 14. More info: bit.ly/green-uvic

**Strategic Research Plan
quarterly update**

The first quarterly update on the development of the UVic Strategic Research Plan is now available. So far, the team has met with 350 faculty, staff and students. The update outlines some preliminary messages emerging from the engagement process, as well as results from the Office of Research Services’ survey. PDF of the report: bit.ly/research-plan-1

**Recreation services to
move to CARSA: update
on ISC**

There will be some service disruption at the Ian Stewart Complex (ISC) as recreation staff and operations relocate to CARSA. All attempts will be made to minimize any disruption to clients. The ISC fitness and weight training centre will close Tuesday, April 21 to move equipment destined for CARSA, which officially opens on May 1. Members wishing to work out during this time may use the weight room at McKinnon Gym. Between April 21 and May 1, ISC users can present the UVic cards they use at ISC to Saanich Recreation and Oak Bay Recreation to gain access to their facilities. ISC’s other facilities, including the squash courts and the multipurpose gym, will remain open until regular closing hours on May 1. Full details: bit.ly/ISC-update

**Checked your
emergency kit lately?**

May 3–9 is Emergency Preparedness Week, a perfect time to review what to do in the event of a crisis on campus or at home. “Every member of the campus community needs to be personally prepared, and EP Week is a great time to take a few more steps toward being ready for any kind of crisis—just in case,” says Daphne Donaldson, UVic’s manager of emergency planning. And if you haven’t registered for UVic Emergency Alerts, visit www.uvic.ca/alerts to add your mobile phone for text messaging—and follow @uvicemerg on Twitter. To view and download the university’s campus evacuation map and emergency procedures poster, visit the Emergency Planning website at uvic.ca/services/emergency. For more resources, check the Emergency Management BC website at www.embc.gov.bc.ca.



Heuer at a LHC lab. Photo: CERN

A deeper understanding of the universe

CERN Director General Dr. Rolf Heuer to give inaugural Alan Astbury Public Lecture on April 27.

BY ERIN KING

The world’s most powerful particle accelerator came back online this month after a two-year hiatus. Already credited with the discovery of the Higgs boson (or “God particle”), the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in the CERN facility at Geneva, Switzerland, holds the key to discovering the origin of mass, the nature of dark matter, and much more.

As excitement is re-ignited about the LHC, UVic welcomes Dr. Rolf Heuer, Director General of CERN, to the campus for a public talk on the collider’s potential.

In the LHC, a 27-kilometre tunnel underneath the border between Switzerland and France, protons or lead ions collide at energies approaching the speed of light, effectively recreating the start of the Universe. As the energy dissipates, scientists study the results of these collisions hoping to observe the spontaneous creation of undiscovered particles.

In what is arguably the most significant position in high-energy particle physics, Dr. Heuer leads CERN, the international research collaboration and facility that hosts the LHC.

“Dr. Heuer will explain some of the excitement around the LHC,” says UVic physicist Richard Keeler. “His talk will explore the significance of the Higgs boson discovery and the potential for even more discoveries as the LHC comes back online.”

Dr. Heuer is no stranger to Victoria. He holds an honorary degree from UVic and has retained ties to the university throughout his career. He returns in April as part of the two-day Alan Astbury Memorial Symposium.

“Alan Astbury was a leading international figure in particle physics,” says Keeler. “Dr. Heuer did not hesitate when we asked him to participate in an event honouring Alan’s memory.”

Directly connected to not one, but two Nobel prizes, Alan Astbury was an influential figure. His work contributed directly to the discoveries of the W and

Z bosons in 1983 and later the 2013 Higgs boson discovery, both of which were recognized with Nobel prizes. As Director of TRIUMF 1994–2001, Astbury increased Canada’s influence in international physics research and put the University of Victoria on the map for physicists everywhere.

“The Department of Physics and Astronomy would not be where we are today were it not for Alan Astbury,” explains Keeler. “When he joined UVic in 1983, we were an extremely small particle physics group. I think he saw an opportunity here—a more-or-less clean slate on which he built a legacy of world-class physics research.”

Dr. Rolf Heuer’s talk, “Breaking the wall of the hidden universe—what the discovery of the Higgs boson tells us about Physics, Mankind and the Universe,” takes place in B150, Bob Wright Centre on Monday, April 27 at 7:30 p.m. The event is free to the public, but registration is strongly recommended.

Full info: uvic.ca/astbury



Materials for making a small solenoid.

MAKERSPACES MATTER

Incubators for humanities research

BY TARA SHARPE

The Maker Lab at UVic, housed in the Technology Enterprise Facility, is a collaborative space of new techniques and old technologies involving the invention of imaginative and often outsized revisions of objects that don’t always exist in the world. Because its research is innovative, multi-faceted and occasionally intangible, it does not easily fit a simple definition.

The lab is inspired by experimental art, design and DIY cultures. The lab was launched in September 2012 under the leadership of director Dr. Jentery Sayers (English and CSPT), with funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Canada Foundation for Innovation and the British Columbia Knowledge Development Fund.

The Kits for Cultural History project is a tangible example of what is created there. For instance, one kit includes a Victorian innovation—a late 19th-century decorative stickpin, by fringe engineer and designer Gustave Trouvé, that may never have functioned properly—recreated 100 years later by the UVic team.

Trouvé’s pin is now glassed off in a display case at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London; few people can touch it. The hands-on learning for the UVic team involves one of the main methodologies in the lab: to transform analog artifacts into digital content and then back into tactile form. They remake and reinvigorate antiquated technologies by creating high resolution 3D models and manufacturing them with computer-controlled machines.

The Maker Lab continues to borrow from traditions in cultural criticism. But it also embraces experimentation and consequently reminds us that many technologists of the Victorian period were

also, to quote Sayers, “brilliant magicians.”

This year, the team plans to send 15 to 20 kits via Canada Post to colleagues at universities across North America. The stickpin will be included.

The lab’s research will ultimately “inform policies on the ethics, distribution, licensing and derivation of 3D objects,” says Sayers, policies which currently do not exist in Canada. The lab also trains students in physical computing and desktop fabrication in non-STEM fields. Sayers points out that fabrication and physical computing are popular in STEM fields, but are virtually unknown in the humanities.

The Digital Fabrication Lab (DFL), an extension of the Maker Lab, is now open in the Visual Arts Building. The DFL is the first lab of its kind to encompass the arts and humanities in North America.

“There are far-reaching effects for this type of technology in just about everything we do,” says Department of Visual Arts chair Paul Walde. “Photography was the first area where there was almost a complete paradigm shift towards digital, and we’re now seeing digital technology move into every aspect of visual arts production. This represents a way for us to move forward not only with new sculptural techniques and projects but also printmaking and even certain kinds of painting.”

The DFL will include CNC routers, an industrial grade 3D scanner, a laser cutter, a milling machine, and 3D printers, together with various machining tools.

The Maker Lab and DFL are two of several initiatives at UVic which continue to position the university at the forefront of digital humanities.

The Maker Lab team also presents talks, publishes its findings and facilitates workshops.

More: maker.uvic.ca

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calendar highlights

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

at the galleries

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250-721-6562

■ **Exhibit.** To June 27. *Making a Scene! Victoria's Artists in the 1960s.* The 1960s marked a growing cultural awareness and pride in the contemporary visual arts of Victoria. Events like the BC centennial celebrations in 1958 and Expo '67 created a widespread impetus for experimental cultural production. UVic's Gordon Head campus expanded local arts education, which coincided with the opening of new commercial and public galleries. At the same time a cultural resurgence was taking place in Indigenous art partly supported by the Thunderbird Park carving program as well as new Indigenous-owned and operated galleries and commercial ventures. This exhibition features a selection of work by resident artists including Maxwell Bates, Henry Hunt, Eric Metcalfe, Margaret Peterson, Herbert Siebner, Robin Skelton, and Ina D.D. Uthoff to demonstrate the spontaneous activity and networks that brought contemporary art to the forefront of BC's capital city. Legacy Art Gallery, 630 Yates St. 250-721-6562

■ **Exhibit.** April 9 to May 30. *Bridge Over Troubled Water.* Yoko Takashima with Ruby Arnold. Interactive video and sound installation created by Victoria artist Yoko Takashima, with technical assistance by recent UVic graduate Ruby Arnold. Filmed faces and voices of 40 volunteers singing the Simon and Garfunkel classic "Bridge Over Troubled Water" blend and transform over time in such a way that no identical image or performance will ever be seen. This is the second installment of IN SESSION, a series of exhibitions featuring UVic sessional instructors in the Visual Arts Department. Legacy Art Gallery, 630 Yates St. Small Gallery. 250-721-6562

TUESDAY, APRIL 14

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 6:30 p.m. *Cafe Scientifique. Your World in a Drop of Blood: Personalized Monitoring of Biomarkers in Health and Disease.* Dr. Terry Pearson, UVic. Reservations at cafesciapr14.eventbrite.ca. Hermann's Jazz Club, 753 View St.

■ **VNHS Lecture.** 7:30 p.m. *Chasing Ghana's Ghosts: the Status of Lions and Other Wildlife in West Africa.* Cole Burton will discuss the status of lions and other wildlife in Ghana's Mole National Park, West. Fraser 159

THURSDAY, APRIL 16

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 12:30 p.m. *Facsimiles in the Flesh: Medieval Texts, Faithful Copies.* Dr. Joseph Grossi (UVic). Mearns Centre/McPherson Library A003

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 7:30 p.m. *How Can the European Left Deal with the Threat Posed by Xenophobia?* Part of the UVic City Talks series. Glyn Ford, Labour Member of the European Parliament (1984-2009). Legacy Art Gallery, 630 Yates Street

FRIDAY, APRIL 17

■ **Women's Scholars Lecture.** 12 p.m. *Mitochondrial Dynamics Regulates Stem Cell Self-renewal and Cell Fate Decisions.* Dr. Ruth Slack (U-Ottawa). Medical Sciences 160. 250-853-3723

MONDAY, APRIL 20

■ **CAPI Lecture.** 12:30 p.m. *Myanmar's Reforms: Stunning, Stalled or Stolen?* Dr. Andrew Harding (National Univ. of Singapore). Fraser 265. 250-721-7020

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

■ **VNHS Lecture.** 7:30 p.m. *All Buffleheads Day and the Great Bufflehead Crash—Why?* James Finley's study area includes Shoal Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Sidney and the interior BC grasslands. Fraser 159

MONDAY, APRIL 27

■ **VNHS Lecture.** 7:30 p.m. *Risky Business: Identifying Priorities for Ecosystem-Based Oceans Management.* Miriam O (Fisheries and Oceans Canada). Fraser 159

FRIDAY, MAY 1

■ **Conference.** 8:30 a.m. *We Need to be Carbon Negative, Not Carbon Neutral.* IESVic Alumni Workshop. Workshop to discuss energy systems, the state of the world and technology. Engineering Computer Science. \$100 (plus GST) includes sessions, lunch, breaks, reception and banquet at the Univ. Club. Register at 250-721-6295

FRIDAY, MAY 8

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 12 p.m. *Biomaterials for Cell Transportation and Drug Delivery for the Treatment of Nerve Injury.* Dr. Shelly Sakiyama-Elbert (Washington Univ., St. Louis). Medical Sciences 160

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

■ **HSD Lecture.** 12:30 p.m. *Accessing Elites: Challenges in Interviewing Male Customers of Street Sex Workers.* Dr. Susan Strega (UVic). Cornett A120. RSVP to inforcpd@uvic.ca. 250-721-7049

MONDAY, MAY 25

■ **Other.** Greater Victoria Bike to Work Week. *The Greater Victoria Bike to Work Week returns for its 21st annual event, May 25-31.* Create your workplace team and join us for a week of fun, free events. From daily celebration stations throughout Greater Victoria to our closing BBQ don't miss the party. Also, join in one of our bike skills courses for kids or adults happening throughout the region. Registration: biketoworkvictoria.ca.



Sanseverino

Eclectic Masterminds lecture series returns

This year's series of Masterminds free public lectures traverses an eclectic terrain of ideas. A singer, trombone player and a tuba player meet on stage to play music and tell stories about some of their life-changing musical experiences. A computer scientist compares historical and current photographs of mountain glaciers as part of an investigation into the effects of climate change in the West. A medical anthropologist combines research, storytelling and zombie metaphors as part of a cautionary tale of stress in our culture. And a linguist and app developer uses sound and video to demonstrate how we produce language.

The series is presented by the UVic Retirees Association and the Centre on Aging, with support from the university. The series runs Wednesdays, April 8 through 29, at 7 p.m. in UVic's David Turpin Building, Room A120.

April 15—Woman in the wild

What has a computer scientist learned from hiking with large-format cameras to shoot remote wilderness vistas and retreating glaciers? Mary Sanseverino leads a visual tour of UVic's

Mountain Legacy Project, which investigates environmental change in Western Canada by recreating classic historical mountain photographs.

April 22—Zombie Factory: Culture, stress and sudden death

Failing to recognize our patterns of stress can turn us into virtual zombies—or lead to unexpected death. Using narratives of a spy, an executive and a refugee camp worker, author Peter Stephenson draws on his research as a medical anthropologist to talk about how to shake the grip of stress.

April 29—Seeing speech from the inside

From the mouths of babes to the laryngeal cavities of fluent language speakers around the world, these are the frontiers of exploration that linguist John Esling has probed. Esling will lead a multi-language video and audio tour of phonetics, including laryngoscopic videos that document speech production from the inside.

Info: uvic.ca/masterminds

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day in the life

BY MELANIE GROVES

You would be forgiven if you believed that Daphne Donaldson had invented the phrase “keep calm and carry on.” After a 30-year career at UVic and many years as the university’s emergency planner, she concedes that “the moment I hear a fire truck I hesitate because I wonder if something has occurred. I’m attuned to those sorts of noises.”

“Some people wonder why I like to spend my days thinking about disaster,” she says, “but I think more about being proactive and getting people to recognize that there are simple things they can do to become better prepared. When I see that people are engaged and taking ownership of emergency planning, creating independence, that warms my heart.”

Armed with a BSc degree from UBC and an interest in research, Donaldson was originally hired at UVic in 1985 as a biochemistry/microbiology research assistant working on genetic studies of the parasite that causes sleeping sickness.

When a position opened up in the new Occupational Health and Safety unit in 1988, she shifted gears to become the university’s first chemical/biosafety officer. Following the shootings at Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989, Donaldson was seconded with a colleague from SFU to develop university emergency plans. “That’s when I first became hooked on this,” she says. “I could see that there was so much that needed to be done—the world of emergency planning was a blank canvas and I felt as if I could make a difference.”

“My job is very diverse,” Donaldson says. “There is no typical day—if the phone rings you need to respond.”



Donaldson. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

She spends a significant part of her time meeting with staff, students, faculty, colleagues and suppliers, and making sure UVic’s two Emergency Operations Centres, Emergency Call Centre and emergency supplies are ready for action. Donaldson also develops and delivers staff training and emergency exercises, and is a key member of the university’s Emergency Communications Group.

She has developed strong connections with emergency planners in municipalities, Emergency Management BC and other universities. “I monitor disasters going on in the world and try to learn from those. Probably the best part is how much I learn all the time from other people—being in a learning environment and hearing other

stories and perspectives. It’s challenging because some people believe that nothing will ever happen. I have to use a lot of persuasion and narrative, and it’s so important to maintain a sense of humour.”

One of the highlights of Donaldson’s career was travelling with a UVic contingent to visit the University of Canterbury (UC) in Christchurch, New Zealand after the 2011 earthquake. “It was very powerful not only to learn from UC about their procedures and protocols but also to see the aftermath in their city, which is so like Victoria—that had a big impact on me.” She also cites the day the emergency shipping container arrived—now packed full of supplies on the UVic playing fields—as “im-

mensely fun and exciting.”

Although Donaldson will retire from her UVic position in June, she will by no means retire her passion for emergency planning. “I will miss everything about my job—the challenges, the people and the feeling that, though I’ve provided a framework, there is always so much more to be done.”

She is looking forward to working with the UVic Retirees Association on emergency preparedness, and to do volunteer work with a non-profit agency for animal welfare. “Animals play a big role in my life and I’d like to be able to help,” she says. She also plans to spend quality time with her family, including her beloved Westie, travel more and indulge her passion

for garden photography. “Being immersed in beauty and creating something beautiful is a nice antidote to always thinking about disasters,” she admits.

The former world indoor rowing champion has also dusted off her rower from underneath the emergency kits in her garage. “I’m realizing how important it is to be resilient in a disaster by developing healthy habits, including a good diet, activity and a strong support network.”

Pulling an organic chocolate bar from her bag, Donaldson winks, “And it’s essential to ensure you have emergency chocolate ‘just in case’ for major catastrophes or day-to-day crises—it’s a critical part of keeping calm and carrying on.”

Learning the language of assistance

BY LINDSAY GAGEL

Gerry Luton knows the value of hands-on learning—especially when absorbing something as difficult to grasp as a new language. For the past 27 years Luton has been teaching English to international students through UVic’s English Language Centre (ELC)—and his students find success extends far beyond cue cards, language tapes and textbooks.

Luton’s students gained an appetite for wider involvement in 2002, after an ESL student was attacked while

jogging in Stanley Park, Vancouver. Many of the students identified with the victim, and were deeply affected by the tragedy. “I told them,” Luton recalls, “you can either feel bad about it, or you can do something about it.” So they did something about it.

The students decided to raise money and write condolence letters to the victim’s family. It was an effective motivator for learning to communicate well in English.

“When you have all these students from diverse backgrounds united for a common goal,” explains Luton, “it’s

very powerful.” So he decided to incorporate this kind of dynamic learning in his regular curriculum. The ELC’s “Charity Project” began there.

The project’s structure isn’t hard to grasp: Luton provides the students with a list of reputable charities that he knows have user-friendly websites and accessible materials (Save the Children and War Child are two examples). Students are placed in groups and assigned a charity to research and describe to their classmates. Through a process of negotiation, they eventually choose one charity to support from among 6–8 different options. Students then put together creative presentations which are presented to the other ESL classes (comprising about 300 students of varied English levels) in the English Language Centre. Finally, donations are raised through a two-day bake sale in the Student Union, Clearihue and Continuing Studies Buildings.

The bake sale is the money-maker, but the students are doing a lot more than baking and raising funds. They liaise with the charities, facilitate discussions, design posters, create videos and presentations, deliver public service announcements on CFUV, compose letters to accompany cheques, and write reflective essays.

“This experience definitely made us develop a lot,” wrote Kento Kitada, one of Luton’s students, in a thank-you letter to the teachers and students whose classes they visited. “Thank you for listening to our presentation carefully

and participating in our presentation positively.”

The two classes during Kitada’s term chose to raise funds for Children of Hope Uganda. Over \$1,800 was raised—a record high! Afterwards, Luton received a photo of the Ugandans building a new Assembly Hall / Early Childhood Development classroom in Barlonyo—a project his students’ contribution will help fund.

Luton’s students come from all over the world to learn English at UVic. His most recent classes included students from Japan, Korea, Saudi

Arabia, Mexico, Taiwan, China and Brazil. Not only are friendships formed that can last a lifetime, but many of the students are inspired to be global citizens, taking their experiences organizing for charity back to their home countries.

Since its formal inception in 2004, Luton’s classes have raised over \$33,500 for charitable organizations. Ideally, Luton would like to see his students presenting in classrooms all over campus, not just within the ELC. If you’re interested in collaborating, contact Gerry Luton at gluton@uvic.ca.



Volunteers at ELC bakesale. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



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