



## FEAR AND FORAGING ON THE GULF ISLANDS

P.4

# THE RING

MARCH 2016

The University of Victoria's  
community newspaper

ring.uvic.ca



University  
of Victoria

## SPEED READING

### CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE

#### Holy cognition, Batman!

Why does the Batman legend endure—and what can Batman tell us about how our bodies work and the potential of our own physical abilities? Three renowned Batman authors will discuss everything you ever wanted to know (and more) about this enigmatic superhero at “An Evening with Batman’s Brain: A Comic Con Mash-Up of Popular Culture, Art and Science” at Farquhar Auditorium, 7-9 p.m. on March 16. Seats are going fast to this free, ticketed event, so book now. 250-721-8480 or [ticket@uvic.ca](mailto:ticket@uvic.ca) or [tickets.uvic.ca](http://tickets.uvic.ca).

### COMMUNITY RESEARCH

#### Provost’s Engaged Scholars

On March 10, celebrate the work of UVic faculty members who have integrated scholarship, teaching and real-life community-engagement to nurture positive societal change. 2015 awardees Anne Marshall and Bonnie Leadbeater will share their experiences in community-engaged research followed by a presentation of the 2016 winners. 9–10:30 a.m., University Club



Blades leads an in-class demonstration. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

11

NUMBER OF UVIC  
INSTRUCTORS  
NAMED 3M  
NATIONAL  
TEACHING  
FELLOWS.

### 2016 3M NATIONAL TEACHING FELLOWSHIP

## Championing hands-on science education

Driving tomorrow’s teachers to  
rethink curriculum and the student  
experience

BY SUZANNE AHEARNE

David Blades believes education is a political act and teachers need to be up front about that. “You’re always educating *for* something, *toward* something,” says the professor of science education and curriculum theory.

In February, Blades was awarded a 2016 3M National Teaching Fellowship in recognition of his exceptional teaching and education leadership.

“Children are citizens from the moment they’re born,” Blades says “and as teachers, we need to ask not only what will our children *know* when they graduate, but what do we want them to *be* as citizens?”

In his 37-year career as an educator, Blades has grounded a generation of teachers in educational philosophies of open, experimental, flexible and inquiry-based learning. He has advised the BC Ministry of Education and other governments across Canada about new, more relevant curricula based on experiential, authentic science that includes social justice, science literacy and community-focused teaching.

### Embodying a theory

The professor of curriculum and instruction says in his own classrooms, he models the practices he advocates. When he teaches the history of curriculum theory he embodies an educational theory like a character actor inhabits a role. For example, in his class on Marxist and neo-Marxist curriculum theories, he walks into the classroom wearing a hat, work boots and jeans. He pounds the table and warns graduate students, mostly teachers, that schools are oppressive sites, turning

SEE BLADES P. 5

### IDEAFEST 2016—MAR. 7-12

## Topics to dazzle the mind

Are hotter, drier summers the new norm for BC and what are the implications? How will personalized medicine transform health care? Why does war inspire great art? How have we responded to the Syrian refugee crisis, and can applied theatre help us understand its complexities? What happens when two galaxies collide?

These are just a few of the big questions to be tackled at the University of Victoria’s fifth annual Ideafest, which runs March 7-12. This year the festival offers a total of 50 events in the daytime and evenings, all free and open to the public. Returning are the ever-popular Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Awards (JCURA) fair, the Three Minute Thesis and the Canada Research Chair “Change-makers” panel.

This year’s festival showcases more student



research, more cross-discipline inventiveness and—as always—relevant, timely themes, both local and global. Indigenous scholars will discuss the call to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Art historians will explore the recent destruction of UNESCO world heritage sites. Climate scientists will address the implications for BC of hotter, drier summers. And life sciences experts will de-

SEE IDEAFEST P. 3

### OCEANS RESEARCH

## Funding allows ONC to expand earthquake detection network

The BC government is investing \$5 million in Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) to advance the development and use of earthquake early warning systems in BC.

ONC, a University of Victoria initiative, manages and operates world-leading cabled ocean observatories off the coast of southern BC. More than 200 undersea instruments connected to the internet continuously send data in real-time from a range of seafloor environments.

The one-time funding will allow ONC to add more offshore motion sensors and help integrate them with land-based sensors for more robust collection and analysis of seismic activity off the BC coast. Monitoring earthquakes and getting accurate information to people

quickly is critical to public safety.

ONC currently collects data from offshore and coastal seismic sensors that will link into networks of land-based sensors from other agencies, including those owned by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Natural Resources Canada and the University of British Columbia.

The new investment will bolster the integrated network of earthquake sensors, increase the reliability and effectiveness of the data and analysis that comes from them, and feed it to a centralized source that can immediately deliver early detection notifications prior to the arrival of damaging earthquake tremors.

SEE ONC P. 3



# beyond the ring

## Ontario will cover college tuition for low-income students

Changes in student aid unveiled by the Ontario provincial government last week are “the most radical shift in decades in how one province delivers loans and grants to college and university students” according to *The Globe and Mail*. Suggesting that the overall costs would remain roughly the same, and the shift simplifies and consolidates several loan and grant programs into one program, the government predicted that most college students whose family income is less than \$50,000 a year will receive grants large enough to cover their whole tuition. Grants for university students, who pay higher tuition, may not offset the entire amount.

## Controversy continues over UNBC Chancellor

The Senate of the University of Northern BC passed a non-confidence motion on Feb. 23, protesting the means by which former federal Conservative cabinet minister James Moore was appointed to his new post as UNBC Chancellor by the Board of Governors. Members of the Senate pointed out that pre-appointment consultation required by the University Act was not carried out. The Chair of the Board of Governors has elsewhere indicated that the choice of Moore as head of the institution will not be repealed or reversed.

## We're on Twitter!



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# Changing the culture of campus drinking

A project dedicated to changing the culture of drinking and other substance use among post-secondary students received a funding investment of \$400,000 from the province this Feb.

Co-led by the University of Victoria's Centre for Addictions Research (CARBC) and the Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division, Changing the Culture of Substance Use (CCSU) is a long-term project that's helping 11 campuses across BC access evidence about alcohol and substance use, assess the cultures on their campuses, decide on—and test—ways to influence their campus cultures, develop tools, and share those tools and experiences with other campuses.

“Culture is incredibly complex,” says Dan Reist, CARBC associate di-

rector. “We’ve already seen that life in residence shifts when campus communities openly discuss these issues and acknowledge different perspectives.”

According to the 2013 National College Health Assessment Canadian survey, among post-secondary students who reported drinking the last time they socialized, 26 per cent had seven or more drinks, and 39 per cent of students who drank alcohol in the last year said they later regretted something they did when drinking.

At UVic, one of the first initiatives under the CCSU funding was the ‘e-Check-Up to Go’ product—a personalized online tool to assess alcohol and marijuana risk factors.

For more information about the project, visit [bit.ly/campus-drinking](http://bit.ly/campus-drinking)

# Foundation creates fossil-fuel-free fund

The University of Victoria Foundation trustees decided at their Feb. 23 meeting to establish a pilot fossil-fuel-free fund that will not invest in companies that have proven and probable thermal coal, oil or natural gas reserves. In doing so, the foundation also reaffirmed its decision not to divest or sell fossil-fuel investments related to oil, gas and coal in the main investment fund.

Over the last several years, the foundation has adopted responsible investing practices that consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues, including signing the United Nations’ Principles for Responsible Investment. The foundation's investment managers are now also required to report annually how ESG factors are incorporated into the investment decision-making process.

The foundation, which is a separate entity from the university, manages the \$375-million endowment fund that disburses money for student scholarships, bursaries, awards and also helps fund university projects and programs including the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, a province-wide hub for internationally leading climate change research.

UVic is committing \$25,000 to seed the new fund, which is the amount required to establish an endowment. This will allow smaller donations to be made by individuals or organizations.

The distribution of the endowment will support Campus Sustainability Fund initiatives on campus. The sustainability fund provides one-time allocations, which focus on energy or water saving or a sustainability awareness or learning opportunity. The fund also provides seed money for projects relating to the Sustainability Action Plan.

Addressing the challenge of climate change is a pressing societal issue that has engaged researchers, campus administrators, faculty members, students and staff at UVic for many years.

Besides being home to PICS and

the sustainability-focused Institute for Integrated Energy Systems at the University of Victoria (IESVic), UVic's School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, School of Environmental Studies and Department of Geography have a strong educational and research focus on climate science and the biological, environmental and social consequences of climate change.

In its campus operations, UVic has reduced its own carbon footprint and the Sustainability Action Plan has concrete goals and strategies that have been internationally recognized for their impacts.

At its Jan. 26 meeting, UVic's Board of Governors discussed climate change and responsible investing in response to letters from a group of faculty members and the University of Victoria Students' Society asking that the university divest from investments in fossil-fuel companies. About 40 students were in attendance at the meeting.

Board Chair Erich Mohr thanked the students for attending and showing their commitment. “We share society's concern about climate change. Through research, academic programs and campus operations, UVic is contributing to solutions and reducing its own carbon footprint,” Mohr said.

He said the board had thoroughly reviewed submissions and discussed on a number of occasions—including for the January board meeting—requests for divestment. The board respects the statutory independence of the foundation board and its evolving approach to responsible investment. He also explained the foundation's statutory independence as being separate from the university with specific responsibilities.

“We acknowledge that efforts need to continue on a number of fronts and we will strive to stay informed and contribute to addressing this multi-faceted challenge in keeping with our academic mission of excellence in education and research,” said Mohr.



Aerial view of Dunsmuir Lodge. PHOTO: UVIC ARCHIVES

# Conditional sale of Dunsmuir Lodge

Dunsmuir Lodge is expected to begin life anew, as the non-academic property on the Saanich Peninsula returns to its roots in health and wellness. UVic has reached an agreement for the conditional sale of Dunsmuir Lodge and 25 acres of woodland to Homewood Health of Guelph, Ont.

The agreement with Homewood, a leading Canadian company that provides mental health and addiction treatment services, includes the lodge buildings and 25 acres of surrounding property. Adjacent to John Dean Provincial Park, the Dunsmuir property includes another 75 acres of woodland, which are subject to continuing discussions with Pauquachin First Nation regarding this land.

“UVic and Homewood have many shared values. We respect the wellness, dignity and integrity of all, we believe in cultural diversity and we create opportunities for the greater benefit of society,” says Gayle Gorrill, vice-president of finance and operations. “Homewood will be a good steward of Dunsmuir Lodge and we are pleased that the opportunity continues for First Nations to acquire the majority of the land.”

“The Pauquachin First Nation has a continuing interest in the Dunsmuir lands and we have had positive discussions with the University of Victoria and Homewood Health,” says Pauquachin First Nation Chief Rebecca Harris. “We look forward to further consultation and discussion.”

Homewood Health will provide UVic with excellent opportunities to collaborate on research and educational initiatives on the Saanich Peninsula, says David Castle, vice-president of research. “UVic looks forward to exploring initiatives with Homewood so we can improve lives through

research, learning and services.”

Nestled on the pine slopes of Mount Newton in North Saanich, Dunsmuir was originally known as Gillain Manor, built as a drugs and alcohol rehabilitation centre in 1974. The property was donated to UVic in 1985 by the late George Poole and operated as an educational conference centre until its closure in 2009. The lodge buildings include 45 guest rooms and several meeting and conference spaces.

Homewood intends to use the facility to provide medically based treatment services for mental health, addiction and concurrent disorders. Employers, insurers and individuals support these private-pay programs and those participating would do so voluntarily to accelerate their recovery and return to life and work.

“The University of Victoria has worked closely with us towards our goal to establish our Western Canadian residential services that will provide immediate access to the best mental health and addiction treatment in the country,” says Jagoda Pike, president and CEO of Homewood Health.

The agreement with Homewood remains true to the intent behind the original donation to support the educational mission of UVic, says Gorrill.

The purchase price will be confirmed once the sale agreement is finalized.

Proceeds from the sale of Dunsmuir will go towards the capital costs of the Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities (CARSA), a key priority of the university. The sale agreement is subject to conditions including municipal approvals for zoning and approval by the Ministry of Advanced Education.

## Lawyer & Notary Public



Bob Reimer

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# President and his family fund new graduate fellowship

A new fellowship award is now available to graduate students, thanks to the leadership and personal generosity of UVic President Jamie Cassels and his family.

The Cassels-Shaw Graduate Fellowship was recently approved by the University Senate and the Board of Governors.

The new fellowship (named jointly for Cassels and his wife, Erin Shaw) will be awarded to new and continuing master's or doctoral students selected on academic merit and demonstrated financial need. All departments will be invited to nominate one student from their graduate ranks each year, with the first recipients to be named this coming fall.

“On behalf of the recipients this year and all the years to come, I would like to express our appreciation to Professor Cassels and his family for this extraordinary endowment,” says Dr. David Capson, dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. “We are incredibly grateful

to Jamie for his integrity, generosity and personal commitment to UVic's graduate programs. This fellowship establishes a legacy that will benefit our graduate students for many years to come.”

In 2014, in response to fiscal challenges facing UVic, Cassels requested his employment contract be amended to reduce the compensation he would otherwise receive during his five-year tenure as president. Through a combination of salary freezes, reduced increases and cuts to his administrative leave entitlement, Cassels has arranged to forego a total of \$330,000 in earnings, and requested that the Board of Governors redirect those funds: a third each to CARSA, general revenue, and graduate student scholarships. Subsequently, he and his family made contributions to the fellowship.

For more information on the Cassels-Shaw Graduate Fellowship and other graduate student awards, visit [bit.ly/uvic-awards](http://bit.ly/uvic-awards).



VPFO Gayle Gorrill using the new recycling bins. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

## ‘Sorting-at-source’ office recycling

### Pitching in to reach waste-diversion goals

Sorting and recycling our garbage has become a routine part of our lives at home. What started in 1998 with provincial regulations requiring paper recycling has gradually grown to include yard waste, refundable containers, recyclable tins, glass and plastics, electronics, batteries and, most recently, kitchen scraps. As the regulations have expanded, we have adapted to new requirements and practices and, although it takes more personal effort, we can all agree—it’s the right thing to do.

It’s the right thing to do on campus, as well. UVic’s Sustainability Action Plan and Sustainability Policy call for a campus-wide waste diversion rate of 75 per cent by 2019, with an eventual goal of zero waste. Sorted recycling has been in place across much of the campus since 2011, with sorting stations installed in most classroom buildings and student common areas. That, combined with improved food waste composting, has led to an overall diversion rate of 68 per cent at UVic today.

But, to reach our goals—and to comply with regulations—we need to do more. A university waste audit undertaken in 2012 showed that, at 45 per cent, recycling rates in office areas were significantly lower than that of other areas on campus. That’s about to change. After a successful pilot project in four office buildings in 2013, a new recycling system is now being implemented in all office spaces on campus.

### What’s changing?

During the first week of March, all offices on campus will see the installation of new three-bin recycling stations where waste can be sorted into mixed paper, recyclable cans and plastics, or landfill waste. These stations will be placed in convenient sites

on every floor. As well, each building will have at least one recycling bin for glass, located in a central area, to accommodate recent requirements to separate glass from other recyclables.

At the same time, desk-side waste bins will be removed and replaced with mini-containers that will hang from each desk’s blue recycling bin. All faculty and staff members will be responsible for emptying their own bins at the central sorting stations, at their convenience. Janitorial staff will no longer be emptying desk-side paper and garbage bins, but will instead service the 238 additional sorting stations on a frequent basis. Janitors will also continue to service common areas such as meeting rooms, labs and copy rooms.

Originally intended for a January launch, the program has been delayed to allow Facilities Management and the Office of Campus Planning and Sustainability to respond to questions and concerns raised by some members of the community. Since early January, meetings have taken place with union groups and other members of the community to better inform people of this initiative.

UVic is a recognized leader in developing and implementing sustainable operating practices that reduce the overall impact to our environment. As members of the university community, we all have the responsibility to reduce the large volume of banned recyclable materials that are currently being sent to landfill. Together, our individual efforts can add up to big changes across campus. Please contact Nadia Ariff, waste reduction coordinator ([nariff@uvic.ca](mailto:nariff@uvic.ca)) or Lynn Bartle, implementation project lead ([lbartle@uvic.ca](mailto:lbartle@uvic.ca)) with any questions or suggestions you may have to ensure this project has a successful rollout.

Full program info: [bit.ly/sort-source](http://bit.ly/sort-source)

# ringers

On Feb. 25, this year’s recipients of the annual Victoria Leadership Awards (VLAs) were honoured at the Victoria Conference Centre. **Frank Low** received the UVic Community Leadership Award, which recognizes exceptional leadership in linking the university and the community. Low, a branch manager for RBC Royal Bank, shares his business acumen and wisdom with the students of UVic’s Gustavson School of Business. UVic alumna **Amanda Evans** (BSc ’15) is this year’s recipient of the Vancity Social Innovation Award, which recognizes leadership that challenges the status quo and develops new approaches in the areas of social justice, food security and financial empowerment. UVic is one of three founding partners of the VLAs. Launched in 2004, the awards celebrate local community heroes who help tackle some of the most challenging social, cultural and economic issues in Greater Victoria.

**Dr. Christoph Borchers**, director of the UVic Genome BC Proteomics Centre, has won the Genome BC Award for Scientific Excellence from LifeSciences BC, which represents BC’s biopharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical devices, digital health and greater life sciences community. Borchers is a world-leading expert in the use of mass spectrometry to study the structure and function of proteins. At the UVic centre, Borchers directs a research program that applies proteomics technologies to areas such as medical diagnostics, drug development, forestry and alternative fuels.

Benefactor and former chancellor **Murray Farmer and his wife Lynda**—both of whom joined UVic in opening the Lynda and Murray Farmer Walk of Excellence at CARSA last year—will be honoured by the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce with a lifetime achievement award, presented at a chamber gala event on April 21. Al Hasham, chairman of the chamber, explained that the Farmers’ “business and philanthropic endeavours have had a profound impact on our community,” in the *Times Colonist* newspaper, citing in particular their support of post-secondary education. At the end of his second term as UVic chancellor, Farmer had served an amazing 150 months on the UVic Board of Governors.

## IDEAFEST CONTINUED FROM P.1

scribe how personalized medicine is set to transform health care.

Families will discover more for their kids to see and do, from the high-tech “pop-up” arcade and “hackathon” at the “Games Without Frontiers” event to the low-tech “Write Like Shakespeare” workshop where people of all ages can practise the art of quill-writing with their own home-made ink.

“Ideafest has grown into an incredible celebration of UVic scholarship and is a huge opportunity to share our research with each other and the greater community,” says

Vice-President Research David Castle. “It’s as much about the interaction and exchange as it is about the ideas themselves.”

“In some ways, Ideafest has expanded this year, with more downtown locations, more experiential events and far more students involved in communicating their research,” Castle adds. “I encourage everyone to visit the website and check out the full schedule of events.”

Browse the full program at [uvic.ca/ideafest](http://uvic.ca/ideafest). All events are free, though some require booking tickets. See the website for details.

## ONC CONTINUED FROM P.1

Seconds do count. With just a few seconds of warning, automatic systems can slow down trains, shut down gas lines, halt surgeries and keep fire hall bays open. And people can find a place to drop, cover and hold until the shaking stops.

“We’re thrilled to be working with Emergency Management BC to bring our world-leading ocean

technology to save lives and reduce damage when an earthquake strikes,” says Kate Moran, president and CEO of ONC. “Making earthquake early warning a reality is rooted in ONC’s vision to enhance life on Earth by providing knowledge and leadership that deliver solutions for science, industry and society.”



**DAVE LYNN**




### Navigate the ever-changing market


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Minimum Payout *		\$238	\$278	\$333	\$440	\$485	\$568
Total Payout to Age 100		\$149,371	\$140,709	\$132,680	\$123,817	\$118,119	\$110,366

Accelerated Payout:

Income over 5 years.....	\$1,759	Total 5 year payout.....	\$105,508
Income over 10 years.....	\$926	Total 10 year payout.....	\$111,138
Income over 15 years.....	\$650	Total 15 year payout.....	\$116,958

\* Based on best current GIC of 2.16%. Returns will vary depending on investment vehicle. Monthly income based on \$100,000

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	AGE	55	60	65	71	75	80
<b>Male</b>							
...payments cease at death		\$438	\$488	\$559	\$681	\$794	\$1,002
...10 years guaranteed		\$441	\$480	\$539	\$622	\$685	\$805
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...payments cease at death		\$406	\$445	\$501	\$597	\$692	\$875
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# around the ring

## Sustainability fund expanded

Do you have an idea that would make our campus more sustainable? The Campus Sustainability Fund can help make that idea a reality. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to submit sustainability project proposals, which can include ways to increase sustainability awareness, provide student learning opportunities, or directly reduce energy or water consumption. Projects that are budgeted at less than \$1,000 will be accepted throughout the year. Projects budgeted over \$1,000 will be accepted until March 6, with other intake opportunities later in the year—the next one is expected in the fall. For details, read the full Ring notice at [bit.ly/ring-fund](http://bit.ly/ring-fund). Application info at Campus Planning and Sustainability site: [bit.ly/green-fund](http://bit.ly/green-fund)

## Celebrating UVic authors

Each year UVic faculty, staff, students, alumni and retirees provide an incredible amount of intellectual content reflecting the breadth and diversity of research, teaching, personal and professional interests. UVic Libraries and the UVic Bookstore will celebrate this scholarly publishing at UVic on March 17th from 3–5 p.m. at the UVic Bookstore. Author Panel: Karen Hibbard, Eve Joseph, Frances Backhouse, Troy Wilson and Rob Hancock. Moderator: David Leach, UVic Writing Department.

## Community engagement conference

CUVIC 2016: *Reconciliation, Innovation and Transformation through Engagement* is just over a month away. Register today to take part in this exciting conference, which will focus on how local communities and UVic are responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action around child welfare, education, health, justice and language and culture. CUVIC will take place April 27–29 on campus and around Victoria. Learn more and register at [uvic.ca/cuvic2016](http://uvic.ca/cuvic2016).

## New crosswalks, sidewalks, bus stop

If you’ve noticed lane closures along Ring Road, there’s a good reason. New crosswalks and sidewalks are being installed in front of CARSA on Gabriola Road; at the intersection of Finnerty and Ring Roads, and on University Drive where the Alumni Chip Trail crosses the road. As well, a new BC Transit stop will be coming to the in-bound side of University Drive, at the southern edge of campus, allowing easier access for transit users going to the Phoenix, Fine Arts and Visual Arts buildings. Construction is expected to wrap up this week.



Lindsay Hardcastle (commerce) spent a work term as a sales rep with Carmanah Technologies.

# Carmanah Technologies named 2015 UVic Co-op Employer of the Year

It takes a very special co-operative education (co-op) employer to stand out from the 1,130 organizations that provided outstanding dynamic learning opportunities for UVic co-op students in 2015. Victoria-based LED and solar technology provider Carmanah Technologies Corporation has been named 2015 UVic Co-op Employer of the Year for putting students at the forefront of emerging clean energy technologies, and for welcoming and mentoring them in the workplace in exemplary ways.

Carmanah Technologies has provided positions for an impressive 18 co-op students since 2011 and has hired eight of these former students into full-time positions after graduation. The company, which will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2016, is known for welcoming students into Carmanah’s open and inclusive culture as valued team members rather than temporary employees.

“Carmanah is passionate about co-op,” says Alison Keller, a UVic Bachelor of Commerce graduate, currently on Carmanah’s business development team. “Students are excited to be part of a community-conscious and environmentally engaged workplace, and to see the impact that our products, and their work have on the world around them.”

The organization has hired co-op students from a wide range of UVic programs to work in diverse areas,

including sales, business development, communications, engineering, product development, product design and more. Students are mentored throughout their work terms and are encouraged to learn about all aspects of the company, products and projects—this accelerates their personal growth and career success.

Carmanah has also supported experiential learning right here on campus. Staff regularly volunteer to take part in UVic Co-op and Career’s mock interview clinics, and also assist with the “What can you do with your degree” event series.

“Carmanah Technologies has consistently demonstrated its commitment to fostering exceptional student learning opportunities,” says Dr. Norah McRae, executive director of UVic Co-op and Career. “The quality of students’ work experiences, the mentorship provided by senior staff, the opportunity for professional growth and the focus on developing products that make a positive impact on our communities are just a few of the reasons that we are thrilled to count Carmanah as a valued partner in education.”

*Carmanah Technologies Corporation was formally recognized at Co-op and Career’s Employer Appreciation Reception on Feb. 16, 2016. This year’s runners-up for the Co-op Employer of the Year award are Kiewit and ImmunoPrecise Antibodies.*

# UVic a top diversity employer

The University of Victoria has been named one of Canada’s Best Diversity Employers, for the fifth year in a row. The winners of the 2016 competition were announced Feb. 24, 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 seven post-secondary institutions included on the list, and the only organization in Victoria. The university was recognized for: hosting its annual diversity research forum and diversity writing contest; preserving, in UVic’s libraries and archives, the history and accomplishments of pioneering individuals and organizations in transgender activism; the opening in 2015 of CARSA, with its accommodations for transgendered individuals, and expanded space for CanAssist’s work to improve the lives of people with disabilities; and many other strategic initiatives.

“We are very gratified to once again be acknowledged for UVic’s active commitment to diversity, equity and social justice,” said Valerie Kuehne, UVic’s Vice President Academic and Provost. “Fostering a welcoming learning, teaching and working envi-

ronment is essential to achieving excellence in research and education. As members of this diverse and dynamic learning community, we each have a role to play in creating a supportive and inclusive environment, and it is a testament to UVic’s dedicated people that we have been recognized for what we have achieved so far. We also know that there is more work for us to do and we remain committed to those efforts.”

Current diversity and equity initiatives include the Provost’s Diversity Research Forum, an annual report on equity issues, expansion of diversity and equity resource information for faculty and academic administrators, regular meetings with deans and chairs to review equity submissions, and workshops on equity, diversity and accommodation for academic administrators. As well, the mental health task force has evolved into a regular practice with VPAC and HR collaborating on a mental health information guide for faculty, librarians and staff, an information website for on- and off-campus resources, and training modules for faculty and staff.

UVic equity and diversity initiatives: [uvic.ca/vpacademic/faculty/diversity/](http://uvic.ca/vpacademic/faculty/diversity/) and [web.uvic.ca/eqhr](http://web.uvic.ca/eqhr)



Raccoon. PHOTO: MICHAEL CLINCHY

# What raccoons can teach us about the value of fear

It’s long been known that animals living without fear of predation will thrive and reproduce faster. Think rabbits and deer. What hadn’t been demonstrated is that fear of large carnivores—or lack of it—has ripple effects on the whole web of life.

BC’s Gulf Islands—where the formerly nocturnal raccoon populations now forage unabashedly day and night in intertidal zones—was the site of a creative experiment led by Jason Suraci, a UVic PhD candidate in biology, published this week in *Nature Communications*.

The study, done with co-researchers Liana Zanette (Western University) and Larry Dill (Simon Fraser University), with support of the Raincoast Conservation Foundation, showed that fear itself has a positive impact on ecosystem health.

Raccoons on the Gulf Islands are devastating populations of crabs and fish in the intertidal zone, and nesting songbirds on land. Since the elimination of wolves, bears and cougars from the Islands almost a century ago, dogs are the only animal these raccoons recognize as a threat.

To investigate whether the fear of becoming prey would slow down the pace of their foraging, Suraci and colleagues set up speakers

along tracts of shoreline for a month at a time and intermittently played recordings of barking dogs.

They found that raccoons reduced their foraging time by 66 per cent. In that period, researchers recorded a 61 per cent increase in the abundance of red rock crab and an 81 per cent increase in intertidal fish—a prime target of raccoons.

The study points to something bigger. “Humans have done an excellent job of wiping out large carnivores across the globe and we’re only starting to understand what the ecological consequences of that are,” says Suraci. “One of the major consequences is that when you take away the large carnivores, you get outbreaks of the species that they eat—herbivores like deer and smaller predators like raccoons. So, understanding the ways in which these large carnivores historically kept their prey in check was very important to restoring these ecosystems.”

“What we’ve shown is that we have to consider the behavioural interactions top predators have with their prey and not just the actual predation—the killing and consumption—when we’re thinking about how to restore ecosystems from which large carnivores have been lost,” says Suraci.

# Honorary Degree for Reconciliation Activist

Mavis Gillie, an advocate for Aboriginal rights and reconciliation, will be granted a UVic honorary degree at a special convocation ceremony on March 9 in the University Club of Victoria.

In her younger years, Gillie spent a decade in the Northwest Territories, where the plight of First Nations peoples captured her attention and ignited her lifelong activism for justice and healing between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

After moving to Victoria and during the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry in the 1970s, Gillie was a founding member of Project North (Victoria Chapter), which offered assistance and support for the Dene and Inuit in their opposition to the pipeline project.

Her later work included aiding First Nations in opposing logging in Haida Gwaii and the Stein River Valley, and organizing support for the Nisga’a Treaty.

Gillie’s activism has been carried out through the Anglican Church, Project North and Aboriginal Neighbours (for which she is also a founding member).

Her honorary degree nomina-



Gillie

tors point to Gillie’s tireless commitment to correct injustice wherever it is found—in government and church policies, community attitudes, or individual bias. They note that she is equally comfortable in Aboriginal communities, churches, corporate boardrooms or the halls of the legislature.

Through all of her work her unassuming, cooperative and respectful approach to finding concrete solutions to the issues have made her loved and revered within First Nations and settler communities.



# Five new research chairs share passion for improving lives

Finding better ways to detect and treat cancer, understanding how to navigate global economies, expanding our knowledge of modern South Asia, helping us make sense of complex datasets, and improving the success of addiction treatment—these are the goals of UVic’s five newest Canada Research Chairs.

The five chairs were announced on Feb. 9 by Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science, as part of a national announcement of new chairholders across the country.

Now in its 16th year, the Canada Research Chairs program helps Canadian universities attract and retain the best scholars in the world and build on existing areas of research strength. The chairs also give students the opportunity to work side by side with researchers who are world leaders or emerging world leaders in their field.

## New ways to fight cancer

Cancer is responsible for 30 per cent of all deaths in Canada and medical physicist Magdalena Bazalova-Carter is determined to reduce that toll. As the Chair in Medical Physics, she’s looking at ways to improve how we diagnose and treat cancer using innovative x-ray technologies—and miniscule particles of gold injected into the bloodstream.

Bazalova-Carter plans to design and build a high-resolution desktop imaging system that chemists, biologists and immunologists worldwide can use to develop and test new imaging techniques. “We know that cell death is enhanced when gold nanoparticles are irradiated with low-energy x-ray beams,” she explains. “We hope to design a new cost-effective, low-energy radiotherapy source for improved patient outcomes.”

## Restoring the forgotten voices of history

Our telling of world history and politics has mostly been thin on marginalized voices. As the Chair in Global and Comparative History Studies, historian Neilesh Bose is expanding our knowledge of decolonization, diasporas and migration, particularly in the context of his main area of re-



Storey. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

search—South Asia.

Bose is exploring the oral histories of Bengali intellectuals at the end of the era of the British Empire who voiced critiques of Marxism as well as the modern state. “I want my work to enable students around the world to have the kinds of discussions that will expand our understanding of modern South Asia and its role in globalization,” he says.

## Exploring global economies

The “emerging economies” of many low and medium-income countries in Asia, Africa, and Central and South America are expected to dominate world markets over the next 20 years. As the Chair in Global Economy, business professor Ravee Chittoor is examining how multinational firms from developed countries such as Canada can operate and succeed in these economies.

“Emerging economies are attractive opportunities for domestic and foreign corporations, but they are also challenging to navigate due to their unique political, economic and

social environments,” says Chittoor. “My interest is to understand how institutional environments influence firm success and performance in these emerging economies.”

## Our new world of “big data”

The rapid growth of computing and social technologies is generating an overwhelming amount of data. As the Chair in Human and Social Aspects of Software Engineering, Margaret-Anne Storey studies how technology can help people explore, understand, visualize and share big data sources and complex information.

Storey is currently looking at how social media can advance a more participatory culture in the software development community. “My goal is to improve software tools that encourage knowledge workers to think and work together, making it easier for people to learn, share knowledge and connect with others,” she says. Other application areas have included biomedicine, security and education.

## New horizons in addictions and recovery

Why do some people forced into alcohol and drug treatment falter, while others succeed? What programs and services are needed to increase success? These are questions epidemiologist and health services researcher Karen Urbanoski intends to answer as the Chair in Substance Use, Addictions and Health Services Research.

“No one has studied whether or how initially resistant people come around to accepting treatment,” says Urbanoski. “Findings will help us move beyond the rhetoric surrounding this controversial and ethically challenging issue and develop effective ways of reducing the burden of addiction.”

Today’s announcement also includes the renewal of computer scientist George Tzanetakis as the Chair in Computer Analysis of Audio and Music. Tzanetakis develops computer-based tools for manipulating large audio collections for more effective interactions between computers, musicians and listeners.

UVic currently has 30 filled Canada Research Chairs.

## BLADES CONTINUED FROM P.1

children into efficient and submissive workers for the capitalist state. “It gives them a real feeling for the literature, and for the flaws in it,” he understates.

As he rounds a curve in his career, his research and teacher education is becoming increasingly focused on ethics and aesthetics.

## Where wondering can lead

Weaving his research into his teaching, Blades recently introduced an experiment of his own into his UVic classroom. “If students were to study some aspect of nature,” he wondered, “*really* studied it, and depicted their journey of understanding from where they were to where they ended up through some form of artistic expression—a painting, a poem, a song, a play—would that affect our understanding of the nature of science?”

The result? In his assessment, about 80 per cent of the students considerably deepened their understanding of the nature of science.

First, of course, he did the assign-

ment himself. He studied snowflakes. Using the principles of scientific inquiry, he conducted multi-source research, and then wrote up his findings. When it came to depicting that aesthetically, he kept coming back to the idea of snowflakes as primarily water, and as fragile and beautiful and individual as human beings. Inspired by his research and his readings in ethics, he wrote a poem about the fragility of life. “My dad had just passed away at the time and I was in that space,” he says.

When it came to telling his class about the assignment and what he learned about snowflakes, he paused: “Am I going to share my poem with my students?”

“It became an incredible moment of teaching for me where I just became completely vulnerable in front of my students,” he recalls. Many students told him how his openness gave them the courage to do the assignment themselves. “Again, it’s modeling. If you’re going to ask them to be vulnerable, you need to be vulnerable first.”

Asked what it brings to the classroom when the teacher is vulnerable, he answers: “Humanness. It

just brings a real humanity to the classroom.”

## The influence of a master teacher

Jayanna Barnes was part of the first Aesthetics Project experiment during her fourth year of the elementary teacher program at UVic, and she writes that being part of it was a “defining moment” in her education. It encouraged her confidence, “ignited an internal drive to succeed” and led her to “engage in a higher order of thinking.”

Julie Lobb, now a French immersion teacher in the Saanich school district, refers to Blades as a “master teacher” and in her 3M letter she summed up Blades’ influence on her this way: “All of my teaching stems from the pedagogical model he introduced to us in class.... I demand that my students take risks in their learning and ask themselves the ‘why’ and ‘to what end’ of the material we cover; I celebrate all forms and levels of authentic curiosity and questioning; I practice humility and self-effacing

warmth when communicating with parents, students in need, or administration; I try to be quick to listen and slow to speak and never hesitate to ask questions or seek mentorship when I’m in unfamiliar territory; I value collaborative thinking and love seeking out new ways to spark interest in science.”

Of the generation of teachers over whom he’s had such an influence, Blades says: “There’s such a positive attitude among them about what education can do. They seem on a mission and I find it thrilling to be with them.”

Blades is UVic’s 11th recipient to be awarded the 3M National Teaching Fellowship.

Past recipients include Prof. Jin-Sun Yoon (Child and Youth Care), 2015; Dr. A.R. (Elango) Elangovan (Gustavson School of Business), 2012; Dr. Gweneth Doane (Nursing), 2006; Prof. Jamie Cassels (Law), 2002; Dr. Marty Wall (Psychology), 2001; Dr. Aaron Devor (Sociology), 2000; Dr. David Berry (Chemistry), 2000; Dr. Thomas Cleary (English), 1994; Dr. Elizabeth Tumasonis (History in Art), 1992; Dr. Andy Farquharson (Social Work), 1986.

# around the ring

## Nominate an honorary degree candidate

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognized and honoured—someone who has achieved great things that reflect UVic’s values? The Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees welcomes suggestions of worthy candidates to receive the university’s highest academic honour. The deadline for submissions, via the Office of the University Secretary, is March 11. [bit.ly/uvic-hdr](http://bit.ly/uvic-hdr)

## Indigenous Academic Plan consultations

UVic is developing its first Indigenous Academic Plan (IAP). The planning committee—co-chaired by Director of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement Dr. Robina Thomas and AVP Academic Planning Dr. Katy Mateer—is seeking feedback on the draft plan from faculty, staff, students and community members. A link to the draft IAP, the schedule for campus consultations, and links to emails to provide feedback are available on the VPAC website at [bit.ly/uvic-iap](http://bit.ly/uvic-iap).

## Draft International Plan Refresh consultations

International Research and Academic Planning group (IRAP), also chaired by Katy Mateer, is working on a refresh of the university’s last international plan (Making a World of Difference: A Plan for Furthering Internationalization) which was developed in 2006. A draft update to the plan is now available on the VPAC website, as is the schedule of formal campus consultations. IRAP is seeking feedback from faculty, staff and students on the plan at these events or by email. Full info: [bit.ly/uvic-iplan](http://bit.ly/uvic-iplan)

## Virtual tours, real-world outcomes

Since its October launch, the UVic virtual campus tour has guided nearly 12,000 visitors around our extraordinary academic environment. Traffic statistics—including 1 in 4 visitors who spend more than 10 minutes exploring the site—are also leading to online enrolment applications (and other calls to action) at a rate that’s double the average for universities using the YouVisit platform. [youvisit.com/uvic](http://youvisit.com/uvic)

## A reminder about lynda.com

A reminder that UVic is piloting the on-line learning video library lynda.com until May 15, 2016. If you haven’t tried the lynda.com service yet, log in at the UVic portal using your NetLink ID to access ‘just-in time learning’ for personal and professional development. If you already use lynda.com, try using the app on the go or developing playlists to enhance your career development and training plans in your unit. [uvic.ca/lynda](http://uvic.ca/lynda)



# MFA exhibition goes solo

Rather than the traditional group exhibit, this year's annual Department of Visual Arts MFA exhibition will be presented as a solo series, featuring staggered exhibits by each graduating MFA in the Visual Arts building's Audain Gallery. Up first is Tristan Zastrow (March 14–18), followed by Ryan Hatfield (March 21–25) and Rachel Vanderzwet (March 28–April 1), with more to come in April. See the Visual Arts event page for more information. [finearts.uvic.ca/visualarts/events/](http://finearts.uvic.ca/visualarts/events/)



Tristan Zastrow (March 14–18)



Ryan Hatfield (March 21–25)



Rachel Vanderzwet (March 28–April 1)

## PHOENIX THEATRE

# Designing a new future—after 28 years at UVic

With *Summer & Smoke*, Allan Stichbury takes a farewell bow from teaching

BY ADRIENNE HOLIERHOEK

After 28 years in the Department of Theatre, design professor Allan Stichbury says his favourite show continues to be whatever he's currently working on. And while his beautiful, Mississippi-inspired set for the Phoenix Theatre production of Tennessee Williams' *Summer and Smoke* (running Mar. 10-19) is no exception to this rule, it will be his final play before retiring from UVic this spring.

Stichbury's path to theatre was a little circuitous, but it started right here at UVic. After high school he traveled the country, with plans of returning to his native Saskatchewan to attend university in the fall. But upon visiting Victoria and learning of UVic's new law school, he decided to stay. But pre-law political science classes didn't capture his imagination. "In 1971, there were not a lot of women in political science courses," he recalls, "but in my English course, there were a number of women from the theatre department, so I began to hang out there. And theatre was much more interesting. So I dropped some other classes and registered for Theatre 100—and by second year, I had changed my major."

At UVic, Stichbury saw his very first play, took up acting and learned how to design and build sets, working with then-design professor Bill West. He realized that he loved it—so much so, that he dropped out of school after

second year and began working at Victoria's Bastion Theatre. After two years, this work experience solidified his resolve to return to school for theatre design, this time at the University of Alberta. Since then, he hasn't looked back. With a career designing scenery and lighting for major theatre and opera institutions across Canada, Stichbury has also designed shows for Broadway, in Washington DC and Bangkok, Thailand.

For *Summer and Smoke*, the director wanted to stay true to the realism exemplified in the original 1948 production, but in a way that would help translate it to a 2016 audience. Instead of having more traditional scene locations on stage left, stage right and centre, Stichbury has designed the various locations using a revolving turntable. "We can maintain the poetic symbolism of having everything on stage at one time, but the revolve allows us to select which scene we feature, and bring that location downstage so that the communication between the actor and the audience is the strongest it can possibly be."

With a vast southern sky and a nod to Mississippi architecture, Stichbury's designs for *Summer and Smoke* have a beautiful and elegant sense of minimalism. But he's clear that, as well as serving the play, his designs for the Phoenix are also about creating opportunities for student learning and exploration. "It's important to use design elements every few years—like a turntable or a cyclorama screen to project a huge sky onto—so that each cohort of students can be introduced to and explore these



Stichbury PHOTO: BURT TIMMERMANS

concepts."

As for retiring, Stichbury feels "it's not stopping. It's about changing your focus and moving on to something else." With a Bangkok University production of *West Side Story* opening at the same time (where Stichbury recently helped set up a UVic exchange program for theatre students), and upcoming plays across Canada, he is definitely not stopping soon. "It will be a variation of what I do. Will it involve teaching? Will it involve designing? Probably." Stichbury pauses and chuckles, "It will probably also involve some time at the beach."

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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](http://events.uvic.ca)

## at the galleries

[uvac.uvic.ca](http://uvac.uvic.ca)  
250-721-6562

■ **Exhibit.** Feb. 13 to May 28. *Emerging Through the Fog. Tsa-qwa-supp and Tlehpik—Together.* This is an exhibition of two Nuu-chah-nulth men, Art Thompson / Tsa-qwa-supp from Ditidaht (1948–2003) and Hjalmer Wenstob / Tlehpik from Tla-o-qui-aht. *Emerging Through The Fog* seeks to honour and commemorate the life and work of the dedicated teacher Tsa-qwa-supp on the occasion of Tlehpik's BFA from UVic's Visual Arts Department. Legacy Art Gallery, Downtown, 630 Yates St.

■ **Exhibit.** Feb. 19–May 16. *New Book Histories: Publishers, Printers and Presses.* Exhibition curated by English 500 students under the supervision of instructor Dr. Janelle Jenstad. A look at the key roles publishers and printers play in both the art and business of book production. Come learn how early publishers remade the codex in the sixteenth century, what drove Dickens to become his own publisher, how *Lady Chatterley's Lover* escaped the censors, and why serial publication mattered. Legacy Maltwood, Mearns Centre–McPherson Library.

## at the theatre

[phoenixtheatres.ca](http://phoenixtheatres.ca)  
250-721-8000

■ **Theatre.** March 10–19. *Summer and Smoke.* By Tennessee Williams. Directed by Alan Brodie (MFA Candidate). Tennessee Williams at his most passionate: love, lust, and social codes of restriction play out in small-town Mississippi at the turn of the 20th century. Recommended for ages 15 and up. Phoenix Theatre. Tickets \$15–\$25. 250-721-8000.

## FRIDAY, MARCH 4

■ **Music.** 12:30 p.m. *Fridaymusic: Brass.* (Mar. 11 Strings; Mar. 18 Student Composers; Apr. 1 Percussion) Featuring School of Music students in a concert of varied repertoire. MacLaurin B125. 250-721-8634

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 2:45 p.m. *Why Talk is Cheap: Voice, Land and the Decolonization of Democracy.* Toby Rollo (UBC). Turpin B215. 250-721-7327

## MONDAY, MARCH 7

■ **Other.** 12 p.m. *Graphic Ideas at UVic!* If you love graphic novels, comics, or cartoons, join us for a comic book fair. Mearns Centre, McPherson Library A025. 250-721-7367

■ **Other.** 4:30 p.m. *Learn to Meditate.* Mondays & Thursdays. Wallace Residences 150. Henri Lock, UVic United Chaplain. 250-472-4159

## TUESDAY, MARCH 8

■ **Colloquium Series.** 10:30 a.m. *Optimizing Aging & Health.* Tapan Mehta (U-Alabama). Medical Sciences 160. Registration required 250-721-6575

■ **Music.** 12:30 p.m. *Tuesdaymusic.* (And March 15/22/29.) Take an afternoon break to enjoy a concert of varied repertoire and instruments featuring School of Music students. MacLaurin B125. Admission by donation. 250-721-8634.

■ **Lansdowne Lecture.** 2:30 p.m. *Gynocine: A History of Women's Cinema* Barbara Zecchi (U- Massachusetts). [Note: This lecture will be presented in Spanish]. Clearihue A211. 250-721-7413

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

■ **Exhibit.** 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. *Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Awards (JCURA) Fair.* Join us in celebrating some of the outstanding research produced by the Undergraduate Research Awards scholars. SUB, Michele Pujol Rm., Upper Lounge and hallway. 250-472-5624

■ **Lansdowne Lecture.** 7 p.m. *Building Otherwise: Gender, Race and Otherness in the Digital Humanities.* Julia Flanders (Northeastern). Turpin A104. 250-721-8754

■ **Distinguished Women Scholar & Orion Lecture.** 8 p.m. *Visiting Artists Series.* Multi-media artist Camille Norment (Norway). Visual Arts A150. 250-721-8011

## THURSDAY, MARCH 10

■ **Lansdowne Lecture.** 1 p.m. *Empire Strikes Back: Understanding the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict.* Serhii Plokhly (Harvard). Clearihue A308. 250-721-7505

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 4:30 p.m. *Shaping Data: Data Modeling in Digital Humanities.* Julia Flanders (Northeastern). Clearihue A212. 250-721-8754

## FRIDAY, MARCH 11

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 12:30 p.m. *I Hope My Data Will Outlive Me! Data Curation for Digital Humanities.* Julia Flanders (Northeastern). Clearihue C115. 250-721-8754

■ **Lansdowne Lecture.** 7 p.m. *Who Killed the Soviet Union? Revisiting the Collapse of a Superpower.* Serhii Plokhly (Harvard). Clearihue A212. 250-721-7505

## SATURDAY, MARCH 12

■ **Lectures.** 10:30 a.m.–3 p.m. *From Papyrus to Pixels: The (Ongoing) History of the Book.* Multiple presentations. Mearns Centre, McPherson Library A005.

## MONDAY, MARCH 14

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 5:30 p.m. *Cafe Scientifique.* Exploration at the Large Hadron Collider. Glimpses into Clean Energy Research: Fuel Cells, Renewable Energy and Smart Grids. Michel Lefebvre and Ned Djilali (UVic). ECS 125. Registration 250-721-7367

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

■ **CAVI Lecture.** 7:30 p.m. *Rome's Illyrican Borderlands Emperors, AD 235–610.* Walter Scheidel (Stanford). UVic Centre A180.

# WordsThaw lit fest returns

BY PATRICK GRACE

Just as the cherry blossoms hit full bloom, *The Malahat Review* will host its annual literary symposium, WordsThaw, from March 16 to 20. Mingle with over 30 poets, novelists, short-story writers, film makers and journalists on campus for the renowned literary quarterly's fourth-annual writing festival.

WordsThaw kicks off with a screening of *The Trick with the Gun* at Cinecenta on Wednesday, Mar. 16—documenting magic's most notorious illusion, the bullet catch, as reinterpreted by the film's writers Christopher Gudgeon and Scott Hamell.

On Thursday, Mar. 17, as part of the Faculty of Humanities' Lansdowne Lecture series, Toronto writer Molly Peacock will present commonalities between the poem's intuition and the essay's savoir-faire in "Fact, Metaphor, and the Single Voice: Where Creative Nonfiction Meets Poetry." This is a free event, open to the public.

Words on Ice—an evening reading ranging from poetry spoken word, fiction to nonfiction—takes place on Friday, Mar. 18 and celebrates the breadth of literature. Featured readers

include Green Party leader Elizabeth May, Victoria City Councillor Jeremy Loveday, Lansdowne Lecturer Molly Peacock, as well as M.A.C. Farrant, Kim Trainor, Jordan Abel, Stella Harvey, and UVic alumni Laura Trunkey and J.D. Zapf.

Saturday events include a full day of panel discussions around creative nonfiction.

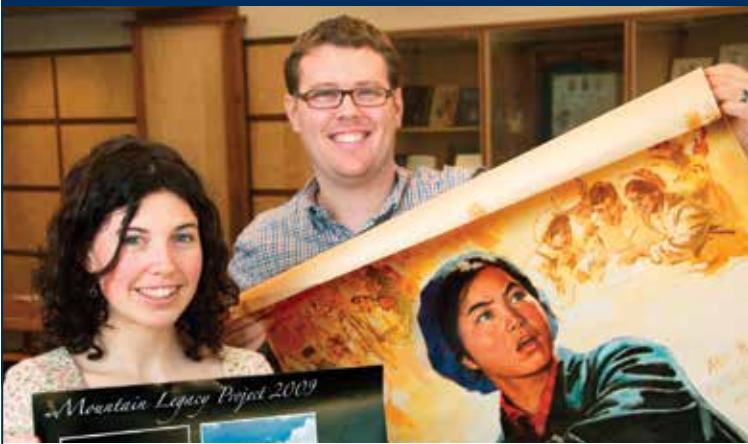
Early-bird registrants are also eligible for a "Brief Encounter"—a 15-minute blue-pencil individual workshop for feedback on works of poetry, fiction, nonfiction, or graphic novel / cartooning. The festival wraps up with Molly Peacock's Master Class on Sunday, Mar. 20. The afternoon workshop will focus on the sonnet as a secret essay, and will be held downtown at the Greater Victoria Public Library (advance registration required).

WordsThaw passes may be purchased in advance for \$35 (\$20 for students) or during the symposium for \$50 (\$25 for students). Individual tickets will be sold at the door to Words on Ice for \$10 (\$5 for students) and to each panel for \$18 (\$12 for students). [malahatreview.ca/wordsthaw](http://malahatreview.ca/wordsthaw)



# ideafest

## MARCH 7-12



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[lrc.uvic.ca](http://lrc.uvic.ca)



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# day in the life

BY KATE VanGIESEN

Becky Cory’s office is surrounded by organized chaos, as people pop their heads in to say hi or ask a couple of questions about current class events. When someone knocks on the door of her office, Becky doesn’t hesitate to respond.

Cory started working with University 101 two months before the first course began, back in 2006. The program offers free, non-credit university courses to people who face significant barriers to post-secondary education.

A full decade later, the ever-changing work environment has become part of the routine for Cory, as she explains there’s no “typical” day. She and the team of facilitators with Uni 101 run three evening classes a week, one for alumni students of the program and two social sciences or humanities classes. Her time is split between program administration, teaching students in the classroom, supporting students who attend, supporting alumni volunteers and supporting work study students. She has a busy schedule but balances it well and meets everyone’s needs.

When Cory explains her favourite part of the job, it’s hard not to notice that her answer could apply equally to everyone involved in the program: “Being engaged with an active learning community.” That’s what brings them all together.

First launched as an accessibility initiative by humanities, social sciences expanded the program with Uni 102 in 2007. Graduates of Uni 101 and 102 can now also register for Uni 201. Those who want to go on to credit classes often transfer to the Humanities Diploma Program. UVic professors and graduate students volunteer to teach classes and the program is funded by the university, individual donors and various fund-



Cory at right, with program graduates. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

raising campaigns.

Asking Cory about how her work enables her to reach out to the community, she points out that the core mission of Uni 101 is outreach and community building.

Many of the students who come through Uni 101 do not have access to a lot of resources in their lives and are often living on really low income. “It makes the environment different than in other credit classes. Typical students have families they can call on, funding to meet their basic needs and the ability to eat regularly,” explains Cory—but Uni 101 students don’t always have that. Due to the students’ limited resources, Uni 101 staff and volunteers work extra hard to provide

a supportive and respectful environment where students can collaborate and build relationships.

This year, Uni 101 is celebrating its 10th anniversary. To date, the program has provided a learning environment for over 350 students. Cory also keeps the students involved post-program by inviting them to volunteer as facilitators and and student leaders in the classroom.

That cycle of participation also fuels Cory’s favourite memory of Uni 101, from last summer.

“We had our first ever alumni-run course in creative writing. It was entirely facilitated and organized by the alumni students of Uni 101.... It really speaks to the strength of the com-

munity that the program is building and the opportunity that students are getting. People get to do things that they have never done before.”

Cory adds, “There was also that time we facilitated a workshop, developed by students, with the UVic Board of Governors about barriers to education. That was pretty great.”

Outside of Uni 101, Cory’s preoccupations veer toward creative arts. She enjoys painting, sewing and photography—and recently started knitting. And even though her schedule is busy, her passion for her work and the Uni 101 program is clear.

“The program is really built on the foundation that people are capable and abundant—and that’s a phrase we use

a lot—people bring what they have in abundance,” Cory explains. “Students bring passion, willingness and the commitment to ask questions and put their ideas out there. This speaks to the dynamic classroom environment that is really enjoyable for them to be a part of. The students are coming in having navigated numerous systems and still being resilient and creative in trying to meet their basic needs.... That’s why we’ve seen such success with students. We want to keep creating that community learning experience.”

*Everyone is welcome at the 10th anniversary celebration of Uni 101 on March 31, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Vertigo (SUB). Please RSVP to uni101@uvic.ca or 250-721-6516.*

## An algorithm for teamwork

Game programming contests drive student interest, experience and skill

BY LINDSAY GAGEL

On Saturday, Feb. 20, UVic played host to a virtual battle, attended by more than 300 students and developers wanting to test their artificial intelligence programming skills. It was the third annual BattleSnake competition.

In the classic arcade game Snake, a player maneuvers a growing “snake” around the computer screen. As the snake grows in size, it becomes more difficult for the player to avoid making the snake run into itself.

BattleSnake builds on this simple game: as the snake eats apples, it grows in size. Run into a wall, your own tail, or another snake’s tail and it’s game over. But there’s a competitive aspect to this version: run head-on into another player’s snake and the longer one consumes the shorter one.

At BattleSnake, teams of two to five programmers code a snake with artificial intelligence, to compete against other teams’ snakes. And the winners claim more than just bragging rights—\$5,000 worth of prizes were awarded throughout the day to teams of various skill levels.

Teams showed up at 11 a.m. to begin strategizing and programming using an app that allows developers to write code together. The main event, showcasing the “intelligent” snakes battling on large screens, kicked off at 6 p.m.

A sport where all competitors win

BattleSnake was sponsored by a San Francisco-based company specializing in app development that frequently hires UVic co-op students. Participants included teams from UVic, Camosun College, Royal Roads University and Vancouver Island University. There were also three teams representing Women in Engineering and Computer Science (WECS) as well as employees of local IT companies.

Programming competitions like BattleSnake get students out of the classroom and engaged in an exciting and creative coding environment with fellow programming students and local developers.

“Programming competitions get students working on code outside of class projects,” explains Aldyn Chwelos, WECS vice-president and third-year computer science student. “I think what makes BattleSnake stand out is how welcoming it is to programmers of all experiences. Coding competitions can seem pretty intimidating and the organizers really made an effort to make it a welcoming environment to anyone.”

“Additionally, having corporate teams compete and provide ‘bounty snakes’—which students could beat for additional prizes—created a fun way to meet and network with some of Victoria’s local tech companies.” This was Chwelos’ second year attending BattleSnake.



Students at the BattleSnake competition. PHOTO: DYLAN MOORE

A team of UVic students took first place. The second-place team was captained by a student who initially formed UVic’s Web Development club, who now owns his own start-up company.

According to Sarah Ing, a fourth-year UVic economics student and co-ordinator of BattleSnake, it’s a great opportunity to gain hands-on experience. “It’s a project that [students] can put on a resume and portfolio when they go out and apply for jobs,” she explains.

### Bragging rights

Windward Code Wars is another big programming competition for students, collecting 75 teams from around the world for bragging rights this year. As in previous years, teams of UVic students competed against teams from Georgia Tech, the University of Maryland and other heavy tech hitters—and a UVic team placed second overall.

“The competitions are definitely a lot of fun,” says Anthony Estey, PhD

candidate and CSC 110 sessional instructor. “From what I saw, the competitions are also really challenging. Not because students are struggling with the technical aspects, but because of the heavy emphasis on teamwork and collaboration.... To me, the emphasis on teamwork and collaboration is where these competitions shine, and why I think they complement the skills these students learn in their courses at UVic so well.”