Welcome to our new students!

UVic Orientation is underway. Upcoming events include the UVSS Campus Kickoff (Sept. 6–8), Thunderfest (Sept. 8), Week of Welcome for Indigenous Students (Sept. 11–14), Clubs and Course Union Days (Sept. 13–14) and Vikes Fit Week (Oct. 2–6). See more at uvic.ca/orientation

TOWN HALL EVENT

UVic looks ahead

Mark your calendar for the next President’s Campus Update on Sept. 15, from noon to 1:30 p.m., in the atrium of the Continuing Studies Building. The town hall-style event is an opportunity to review highlights from the past year, learn more about the current post-secondary environment and a special focus for this installment—UVic’s upcoming strategic planning process. For more details on that process and how you can contribute your thoughts and ideas to it, see story on p. 3.

PARKING CHANGES

Parking enforcement goes high tech

Goodbye plastic parking permits, hello new technology. Over the summer, Campus Security Services introduced Pay-by-License parking, and is now using License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology to manage compliance. Look for a marked parking services vehicle driving around campus parking areas. It uses a camera system to capture images of license plates (800 per hour) and compares them to a database of vehicles that have paid for parking. Campus Security officers will continue to patrol campus parking areas on foot to enhance overall safety for the campus community. Info: uvic.ca/security/parking

European field school "a transformative experience" for students

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

The moment of reclamation came for Ethan Calof at Ravensbrück Memorial Site near Berlin, Germany. There, the graduate student in UVic’s Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies stayed with other students participating in a new summer field school, housed in the same place as the former concentration camp’s guards 72 years earlier.

As the site of atrocities during the Second World War against groups including Jewish people, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and the LGBT community, Ravensbrück was challenging for Calof, who is of Jewish descent. But he decided to reclaim the space. For me, the answer is trying to go deeper than the superficial knowledge we have. Just understanding can help initiate a dialogue—it can grow into empathy. —CHORONG KIM, MA STUDENT

U Vic launches its first Indigenous Plan

As a key event during the Indigenous Week of Welcome (Sept. 11–14), UVic is launching its first Indigenous Plan.

"The plan places Indigenous students, faculty, staff and their communities at its heart and will guide our work over the coming years," says UVic President and Vice-Chancellor Jamie Cassels. "Building on all our earlier work and achievements, this plan sets out ambitious goals and clear accountability to increase educational opportunities and success for Indigenous students and further develop education, research, outreach and engagement initiatives and programs with an Indigenous focus.

The Indigenous Plan is a result of more than two years’ work and consultation on and off campus. "It’s been an honour to engage with so many people in the process of developing this plan, and we look forward to collaborating with you on the hard work to come," says Robina Thomas, interim executive director of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement. "Our Elders-in-residence remind us to be guided by the foundational teachings common to Coast Salish peoples, particularly to ‘bring in our good feelings’ when implementing this plan so that our work is done with a good mind and heart."

UVic has increased Indigenous student recruitment and retention through innovative programming, including the LE,NO NET program which provides bursaries, mentoring and community-based internships. Accelerated efforts in these areas are part of UVic’s response to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

SEE INDIGENOUS PLAN P. 3

SEE FIELD SCHOOL P. 2
University begins implementation of sexualized violence policy

The university is in the early stages of implementing UVic’s new sexualized violence policy with the creation of a central resource office, the hiring of a coordinator of education and response, and production of user-friendly materials to support the policy’s goals and objectives.

“The university is working hard to realize the expectations set out in the policy to make our campus safer from all forms of sexualized violence,” says UVic President Jamie Cassels.

“We want every member of our community to be informed about the policy and the values it upholds and to consider what each of us can do to contribute to an environment where consent and respect are fundamental principles and practices at UVic.”

The annual Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Policy and related procedures were approved in the spring and took effect May 17, 2017. It covers education and prevention, support and resources, and fair and consistent responses to incidents of sexualized violence.

A committee of 21 diverse campus members developed the policy after a year of extensive consultations, research and deliberations. It applies to all members of the campus community as well as visitors.

The policy is being implemented through Equity and Human Rights (EQRH) which recently has reorganized its structure and redefined staff roles and responsibilities. As part of that restructuring, a sexualized violence resource office has been created where all members of the university community can seek advice, access support and resources, and make a report of a sexualized violence incident.

A newly hired Sexualized Violence Mediation and Prevention Coordinator is working with key university units to coordinate education, prevention and response. Early initiatives include producing an easily understood overview of the policy and a primer on what to do if someone discloses to you an incident of sexualized violence.

“We’re working on a comprehen- sive university-wide education and training strategy that will in turn be tailored to the needs of different groups on campus,” says Leah Shumka, who started in the coordinator position in late June.

“As an initial piece, we’re providing people with information about how to receive a disclosure, which is the process when someone tells someone else about an incidence of sexualized violence, very often as a means of ac- ccessing support. We want all campus community members to respond to a disclosure in a way that prioritizes their safety and dignity and provides them with options and choices in forms of support and how to proceed.”

The policy and its implementation plan is the latest step taken by UVic to address sexualized violence. The edu- cation and training builds on existing programs such as bystander training, the annual Sexual Violence Awareness Week (a collaboration between Student Affairs, the UVic Students’ Society and the Anti-Violence Project, among others) and recently completed trauma-informed training for units on campus most likely to have initial contact with people who have experi- enced sexualized violence.

UVic has also introduced specific professional staff positions in Student Affairs that provide students impacted by sexualized violence with highly trained, dedicated supports.

For more information on the policy and its implementation contact EQHR at eqhr@uvic.ca or 250-721-8021.

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UVic begins new strategic plan process

The University of Victoria is ready to sharpen its focus and determine its future direction through an inclusive strategic planning process. As we look to the future, the development of a new strategic framework provides an important opportunity for campus community members to reflect on the changing post-secondary environment, discuss new opportunities and work together to develop strategic directions for the next five years (2018–2023).

“This is our opportunity to create a new plan that is distinctive to the specific circumstances, strengths and ambitions of UVic,” says President Jamie Cassels. “It must answer the questions: what does ‘being the best’ look like for UVic and how do we get there? I look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas on our future.”

The new plan will build on the substantial planning and consultation that has been completed to create subsidiary plans such as the Strategic Research Plan, Campus Plan, Indigenous Plan and International Plan over the last three years. As a result, it will be less detailed and operational than the university’s previous strategic plans.

The new plan will serve as an ambitious framework of commitments, aspirations and directions, identifying opportunities and differentiating strengths upon which the university can build for the future. A draft strategic plan will be ready for review in early winter 2018, with an approved plan by summer 2018.

Visit uvic.ca стратегicplan for details on the process and how to get involved. Written submissions are also welcome.

Learn more about the strategic planning process at the President’s Campus Update, Sept. 15, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Continuing Studies Building atrium.

Indigenous Plan

The plan builds on UVic’s long-standing commitment to Indigenous education through programs in areas such as Indigenous governance, Aboriginal health leadership, social work, child and youth care, language revitalization and law. A number of other programs and courses across academic units address Indigenous history, culture and language.

Beginning Sept. 14, UVic’s territorial acknowledgement will be front and centre on the university home page. You’ll also see the full Indigenous Plan, along with a video of Songhees Elder Elmer George giving a welcome to the territory in Lkwungen and English, and President Cassels’ acknowledgement and comments on behalf of the university at bit.ly/uvic-indigenousplan.

The university community is welcome and encouraged to use the acknowledgement. Guidelines for its use will be linked from the same page.

For related stories, see page 8.

HELP SHAPE UVIC’S NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

From September 18 – October 8 share your ideas using the Thoughtexchange online interactive forum.

What strengths and directions can we build on to distinguish UVic? How can we achieve those goals?

Your input will help set the future direction for UVic.

The first phase of the UVic community consultation process will take place Sept. 18–Oct. 8, using the Thoughtexchange online interactive forum. This process is easy, confidential and anonymous. Whether you’re a student, faculty or staff member, alumni, retiree or community member, you’re invited to share your thoughts about future direction of UVic over the next five years.

Counting fish for science

This summer, UVic researchers called on the local sport diving community for help counting at-risk species, such as rockfish, in local waters.

Guidians of the Deep, a new research program led by marine ecologist John Volpe and grad student Stefania Gorgopa of UVic’s School of Environmental Studies, turned to local scuba divers for assistance with surveys of marine fish populations in protected areas around Victoria and the Gulf Islands.

The response was overwhelming and the team completed 94 dives, with a goal of 100 by Sept.1. Pictured (l–r): students Stefania Gorgopa, Desire Bulger and Abbie Sherwood. For more information on John Volpe’s research, visit johnvolpe.ca

Is your Ideafest proposal ready?

It’s time to brainstorm events for Ideafest 2018, which runs March 5–10. Campus units are invited to submit event proposals to the Office of the Vice-President Research by Oct. 6. Info: bit.ly/ideafest-propos

NEW!

Pay-By-Licence Parking

Paying for hourly or daily parking? Remember your licence plate number and enter it at any parking dispenser. You don’t need to leave your receipt in the vehicle.

Have a permit? Buy your term or annual permit online, using your NetLink ID. You no longer need to display a permit in your vehicle.

Why is the parking system changing? More efficient technology is now available to manage campus parking. Pay-by-licence parking is the first step toward a virtual permit system, which will be easier for users, more efficient and more sustainable. Mobile payment options will be available in the future.

uvic.ca/security/parking
African initiatives stress community-based approach

BY TARA SHARPE

By 2016, according to UNESCO, approximately 40% per cent of all children under six years old will live in Africa. Yet the research and literature that guide early social/developmental development on the continent still comes mainly from outside Africa.

Alan Pence is the UNESCO Co-Chair in Early Childhood Education, Care and Development at UVic. He now shares the distinction—first awarded to him in 2008—-with Hasina Bami Ebrahim, a Muslim scholar at the University of South Africa (UNISA) who focuses on early learning and child care among Muslim minority groups in South Africa.

The transition of the Africa-focused UNESCO chair from a single Canadian base at UVic to a co-chair configuration with UNISA is a new initiative. It supports community efforts throughout sub-Saharan Africa to develop culturally supportive programs and to help heighten the focus on African scholars’ visibility, voices and leadership.

Pence is widely recognized for the “generative” approach he co-developed in the 1990s with First Nations in Canada, which incorporates cultural practices, values, language and spirituality in early childhood education curricula of child care centres operated on communities on reserve in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

He now brings the community-based delivery model—which reflects the ideas and values of communities while also integrating established perspectives of early childhood education and development—to the new initiative with Ebrahim.

Taking into account the rapid growth of Islam across the globe, Ebrahim has drawn attention to critical issues that need to be considered when children are socialized into a monolithic worldview from birth. She’ll be in Victoria this month and, on Sept. 21 at 4:30 p.m. in room A110 of the David Turpin Building, will deliver an inaugural UNESCO co-chair lecture on Muslim childhoods.

Ebrahim adds: “To advance knowledge and education of early childhood from African local realities, there is a need to provide leadership for emerging researchers.”

Pence is one of two UNESCO chairs at UVic, both within the Faculty of Human and Social Development.

Can brainwaves predict baseball performance?

BY SUZANNE AHEARNE

Hitting a baseball is considered to be one of the most difficult skills in any sport. So, what makes a batter successful? Some think it requires that the athlete be in “the zone”—a mental state in which performance is optimal. But what is “the zone”? Can it be quantified?

Our Krigolson, a neuroscientist with UVic’s Centre for Biomedical Research, and Anthony Pluta, a professional baseball veteran and graduate student, used portable brainwave technology this summer to see if they could predict baseball batting performance.

Working out of Krigolson’s neuro-economics lab at UVic, Pluta—who pitched for major league baseball at collegiate organizations in Canada, Japan and the US for 13 years—recorded brainwave data from 60 baseball players for a few minutes prior to batting practice using a portable electroencephalographic (EEG) headband.

Next, players had batting practice and their performance was rated by three highly experienced coaches in terms of pitch recognition, power and contact with the ball.

When Krigolson and Pluta analyzed the data, they were surprised to find that the higher the batter’s brain activity in the beta range (16-30 Hz)—a range typically associated with increased cognition and concentration—the worse they performed during batting practice. Players with lower activity in the beta range hit better during batting practice, a range associated with a more relaxed state.

Importantly, by using EEG technology prior to batting, their results suggest that measuring brain activity is a more reliable indicator of performance than more indirect or observational interpretations.

The next steps for this project include expanding the scope of players tested and the number of other baseball skills for which performance can be predicted. They also hope to work with other teams in a variety of sports.

Study participants included members of the UBC Thunderbirds, Douglas College Royals and a number of las College Royals and a number of professional baseball players. The study, conducted as part of Pluta’s master’s thesis project in psychology, was supported by grants to Krigolson’s lab through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council.

Pluta began his studies at UVic in 2012 after he retired from professional baseball. While doing his MSc thesis work in Krigolson’s lab, Pluta also became a certified competition development coach in the National Coaches Certification Program (NCCP) which is the highest level of certification possible in Canada for baseball.
Two University of Victoria alumni who went on to found the innovative non-profit Fish Eye Project led a live dive in August in the icy waters of Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, as part of the Canada C3 expedition.

The Arctic dive was organized by UVic grads Mike Irvine (education) and Moeva Gauthier (biology). Broadcast via the Canada C3 Facebook page, the dive made history as the first live dive in the Arctic to be broadcast coast to coast. Viewers on social media were able to watch the dive as it happened, and ask questions to the divers while they were underwater.

The Arctic is the next frontier—there is so little we know and it’s changing so fast,” says Gauthier. “This window into this part of our country gives all Canadians the opportunity to connect, learn and interact with the Arctic environment. Inuit culture and cutting-edge research.”

The dive was recorded and is available on the Canada C3 website, along with educational curriculum related to the dive for teachers looking for classroom material.

The event—sponsored in part by UVic’s Ocean Networks Canada—generated significant media attention as CBC radio and television programs across the country caught up with Irvine and Gauthier to learn more about the dive.

This isn’t the first breakthrough event for the non-profit Fish Eye Project, whose mission is to inspire the next generation of ocean stewards. Co-founder Mike Irvine made waves in 2015 by presenting his UVic master’s project in front of five metres below the surface of the Salish Sea.

In 2016, the Fish Eye Project staged the first underwater live broadcast streamed into multiple giant-screen theatres across the country and online to thousands of students. Gauthier returned to UVic this fall to begin a doctorate in geography.

More stories online
Be sure to visit uvic.ca/ring for more Ring stories and notices, published regularly.

- Researcher studying BC’s HIV epidemic wins Scholar Award
- UVic welcomes 2017 Schulich Leader scholarship winners
- Students go back to the Stone Age
- European experiences influence future study and career options
- New study maps hot spots for salmon-hungry bears across BC
- UVic doctoral candidate’s questions of ninth planet generates global buzz
- Cuba field school takes students off the beaten track

uvic.ca/ring

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Doing the Wright thing
It’s the 150th anniversary of US architect Frank Lloyd Wright’s birth. It’s also the year that seven Wright-designed stained glass windows will be shipped home to Buffalo, New York, by Legacy Art Galleries after 50 years of stewardship by the university.

A panel presentation on Saturday, Sept. 16 at 3 p.m. at Legacy Downtown is the last chance for people to bid farewell to what Wright called his “light screens” before they’re packed in special crates and shipped to Martin House, an architectural masterpiece designed by Wright in the early 20th century.

The Legacy event falls on the final day of the So Long, Frank Lloyd Wright exhibition, which was curated by alumna Emerald Johnstone-Bedell (pictured above with Wright’s “Stair Landing Laylight, East”). She remembers “getting valuable hands-on experience learning how to care for collections” as a UVic co-op student.

Find out more about the light screens http://ow.ly/jZ2R00oXwG

ShakeZone comes to campus
Do you know what an earthquake feels like? On Sept. 12 you’ll have a chance to find out—and become better prepared—by riding the ShakeZone earthquake simulator. The simulator—which will be set up from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. near the Petch Fountain in front of the library—safely allows you to experience the sensation of a moderate to large earthquake. Also check out displays by the Insurance Bureau of BC, the Oak Bay Emergency Program, the UVic Bookstore, Ocean Networks Canada, Emergency Management BC, St. John Ambulance and the Saanich Emergency Program. Info on ShakeZone and the Great BC ShakeOut drill on Oct. 19: uvic.ca/services/emergency/home/evak/rehearse

New student residence in the works
UVic has begun planning for a new residence for students. It’s the first significant capital project since the Campus Plan vision was renewed in 2016. Living on campus helps students with their transition to university, provides academic and social support, and nurtures a strong community. More stories online
in memoriam

Ian Stewart, former chair of the Board of Governors and a close friend, benefactor and keen supporter of UVic athletics, died in June at the age of 84. "Ian was one of those rare individuals," says UVic President Jamie Cassels. "A prodigious talent with an eclectic range of expertise, he helped guide the university through a time of momentous change and growth. His generosity and exemplary leadership will be fondly remembered." First appointed to the Board of Governors in 1976 and later as board chair, Stewart was pivotal in the formation of the Vikes athletics and recreation programs. As board chair, he was instrumental in the 1991 purchase by UVic of the SMUS Cultural and Athletic Centre at the corner of Gordon Head Road and McKenzie Avenue to serve as a hub of campus recreation. The building was later named in his honour. Stewart also served as honorary chair for the capital campaign supporting UVic’s new Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities. The varsity weight room in CARSA is named in his honour. For more on his contributions to UVic visit bit.ly/uvic-ianstewart

It is with a heavy heart that Continuing Studies marks the passing of one of their own, Anita Jessop. Jessop was a dedicated, long-serving staff member within the division and had worked for the university for over two decades. She passed away peacefully at Royal Jubilee Hospital on June 16 after a lengthy illness. In recent years, Jessop held the position of program assistant within the Health Sciences and Public Relations Program unit in Continuing Studies. For nearly seven years, she assisted students and staff in the areas of health professional development, dental professional development, and general health and wellness. Jessop’s strong, wry personality will be greatly missed around the office. Colleagues agree she was “one in a million” and always had the ability to keep things real. They describe her as “spunky and kind, and a beautiful person inside and out.” If you wish to make a donation in her memory, her charities of choice are Victoria Hospice and the Canadian Cancer Society.

Associate professor emeritus and widely respected political commentator Norman Ruff died on Aug. 19 after a battle with cancer. Ruff joined UVic’s Department of Political Science in July 1969 and retired in June 2005 after a distinguished career in teaching and research. Ruff took to heart the concept of knowledge mobility, educating not only his students, but taking his expertise to the masses as well. “Norman was an inspiration to generations of young scholars,” says UVic President Jamie Cassels. “As a political scientist his learned, intuitive commentary was a staple of news coverage and analysis during numerous elections. Colleagues recall media reporters lining up outside his office for the opportunity to glean even the smallest nugget of incisive wisdom and opinion of the political front.”

BY JOHN THRELFALL

Visual arts professor swims into past, creates the future

Despite unseasonably cold winds and unusually choppy waves, visual arts chair Paul Walde dove into the waters of Canoe Lake in Ontario’s Algonquin Park on July 8 and, after months of preparation, completed the first stage of the Tom Thomson Centennial Swim.

Occurring on the 100th anniversary of iconic Canadian landscape artist Tom Thomson’s drowning in Canoe Lake, Walde was accompanied by an eight-person synchronized swim squad, a five-person brass band playing Walde’s own 45-minute composition written for the occasion, a film crew and a flotilla of a dozen boats.

“The scariest part was when it was really choppy. I got lost and disoriented and blown off course,” says Walde. Ironically—and unintentionally—Walde almost had to call for help when he ended up in the part of the lake where Thomson’s body was found. “Landscape painting is about beauty. But the landscape is dangerous. It doesn’t care if you live or die. That was the very limit of what I could do. For me, to be in the water where he died—that was powerful.”

With the site- and temporally-specific portion of the project complete, the noted intermedia artist now turns his creative attention to the next stage: viewing, editing and preparing the footage for eventual exhibit. “The gallery video will be very different from the swim itself.” Walde explains, comparing it to his 2013 piece, Requiem for a Glacier. “It’s not a concert video that simply documents the event, but will be a more poetic, immersive experience that ties together the various film and sound recordings.”

Walde feels the timing was right for this project on various levels not only the centenary of Thomson’s death, but also recent technological advancements. “Twenty years ago we wouldn’t have been able to have a flying drone or put a camera on my bathing cap and shoot 4K video.”

As a result, the final exhibit will include surface, underwater and overhead footage, as well as recordings both underwater and of the accompanying band, and scenes of the locations featured in Thomson’s paintings.

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Community engagement map displays UVic’s global impact

BY VANESSA STOFER

UVic faculty, staff and students are actively impacting the communities we live, work and play in—and a new interactive map from the Office of Community-University Engagement (OCUE) highlights the sheer scale of these efforts.

In 2016, OCUE began a mapping project to track the breadth of our community impact around the world. The online, searchable database now displays over 1,000 unique records in more than 70 countries, including a diverse range of initiatives—from community research projects to co-op work terms and guided tree walks.

Faculty, staff and students can submit their own initiatives, crowdsourcing the map on a university-wide level. "The map demonstrates the vast extent of UVic’s community engagement," says John Lutz, chair of the Department of History and a 2016 recipient of the Provost’s Engaged Scholar award.

Students can use the map to explore over 500 UVic courses that include community-engaged learning opportunities. These courses host guest speakers, award credit for working with community organizations, allow students to learn hands-on through field schools, and more.

Lutz adds that the map "offers students and faculty a needed access point to the diverse types of courses, research and other relationships the university has in partnership with local, national and international communities and organizations.”

Members of the public can search the map to see UVic’s community impact around the world and learn about Victoria-based events open to the public, such as lecture series and cafés.

"Developing the engagement map has been a very exciting project for the OCUE team and we’re very grateful for the support of units across campus," says Norah McAhe, director of OCUE and executive director of UVic’s Co-operative Education Program and Career Services.

“We recognize that this work is never done and we encourage faculty and staff to contribute to the map’s ongoing evolution,” UVic Systems, Global Engagement, Research Partners and Knowledge Mobilization, and the Co-operative Education Program and Career Services also contributed to the map.

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By Lisa Abram

Michael Lines has a passion for the history of the book. That’s why, in addition to his role at UVic Libraries as a learning and research librarian, he leads bookbinding workshops for younger students.

With subject specialties in political science, philosophy and medieval studies, the connection between his outreach activities and librarian work is a strong one.

"As a librarian, I’m focused on helping UVic students navigate our information-saturated environment. For most undergrads, that means learning to research a topic, while balancing, speed, accuracy and completeness," Lines says.

A typical day includes meetings about library initiatives, collaborating with administrators, searching bibliographies for new books and serving on the Research Help Desk. Lines talks to around a dozen UVic students a day, and is available for one-on-one research consultations that can be booked online.

With in-depth knowledge in his subject specialties, Lines’ positive influence on students can be felt.

"I bring a bird’s eye view to the topics that I present. As a librarian, it’s my responsibility to include a full range of views on subjects of importance to the research and the teaching agendas of the departments I work with.”

"Engaging with students of all ages in a dynamic learning environment on and off campus is a natural fit for Lines. "After taking a bookbinding course in 2014, Lines volunteered to help students in my daughter’s class to make a very large book containing their handmade maps of Canada.”

"They had an exciting time sewing the pages, and I was hooked."

Arranged through the UVic Speakers Bureau, his mini-bookbinding workshops deliver literacy messages to K-6 students. Older students get a glimpse into the publishing world and learn they can take part in it as an artist, writer, printer, designer, editor or publisher.

Equipped with supplies and tools, Lines takes each class through the step-by-step process of making a simple book, explaining book structure with examples taken from classroom texts.

At Science Venture camp this summer, he brought his bookmaking workshop to young humanities enthusiasts.

"I was really pleased to see that these young people have a great feel for the value of analogue. They were not surprised to learn that their reading speed and comprehension were much better in print, especially for longer works.”

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The SYWE Legend Pole (also known as the Elliott pole) in the UVic Quad will be rededicated in a ceremony on Sept. 12 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. as part of this year’s Indigenous Week of Welcome. The pole, carved by Charles Elliott of the Tsartlip First Nation, was raised in 1990 (pictured above) to mark the Learned Societies conference at UVic. Last year, the pole was taken down, restored and renovated by carver John Livingston, working with Charles Elliott. The event—open to Elders, faculty, staff and students—will be an opportunity for the carver to bless the pole.

New fund created to support Elder engagement

by Denis Helm

We learn from others who have knowledge and experience. So, it’s not surprising that Elders as “wisdom keepers” are integral to UVic’s Indigenous Plan. As the plan notes, Elders “are pivotal in protecting the Indigenous ways of knowing and being” and that “the cultural wisdom of Elders defines and informs the manner in which Indigenous people live in the modern world.”

As an essential part of the plan along with foundational teachings, the Elders are being welcomed by the university to guide campus members in their work and to continue to build on their existing long-time involvement at UVic.

For Yvonne Houssin, a Métis third-year student, being able to learn from Elders and to turn to them for advice or comfort, has made her feel welcomed and supported at UVic.

“We respect Elders in our communities and their lifetime full of knowledge. We look to them and their steps to inform our future steps. I think anyone can benefit from what they can share.”

The university is establishing the Learning from Each Other fund to provide meaningful engagement with Elders and opportunities for learning Indigenous ways of knowing, and to turn to them for advice. The fund is available to support Elder engagements, which perhaps comes from the Elders being welcomed by the university to guide campus members in their work and to continue to build on their existing long-time involvement at UVic.

Why did Beaton choose UVic to pursue a PhD in law? While attending the Supreme Court of Canada for Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin, Ryan heard UVic law professor John Borrows speak about Indigenous legal issues. That confirmed for him that UVic was the best place in Canada to pursue his research into the Indigenous land claims process. Beaton is the fifth student from UVic Law and the seventh from the university to be named a Trudeau Scholar since the program’s inception in 2004. Ryan Tenkin in the Department of Philosophy is the other 2017 Trudeau Scholar (see bit.ly/uvic-ryantokin).