Board approves Strategic Framework

The Board of Governors unanimously approved the UVic Strategic Framework 2018–2023 on May 29. This important institutional document articulates our shared understanding of our vision, values and priorities. It serves as a guide to excellence in research and creative activity, teaching, service and engagement to serve students, communities and the world,” says UVic President Jamie Cassels. “Thank you to all those who participated in this important process.” To download a copy of the framework, please visit uvic.ca/strategicframework. A formal launch of the framework will take place in September.

CONVOCATION 2018

Watch Convocation online

Spring Convocation ceremonies will be webcast live on June 11–15. If you’re not able to attend in person, you can watch the ceremonies on your computer at uvic.ca/convocation. Video of each webcast will be available for six weeks following Convocation. For event times and more information, visit uvic.ca/ceremonies.

Biology grad builds community with STEM

BY VIMALA JEEVANANDAM

In her past four and a half years, biology undergraduate student Yamila Franco has developed an impressive list of accomplishments—achieving fluency in French, completing four co-op terms and an Honours project, learning how to code, blogging for My UVicLife, pursuing her passion in photography and becoming a board member with the BC Chapter of the Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research. But Franco also makes sure to Skype with both of her grandmothers in the Dominican Republic every day. “Community is why I am here,” she says. “I achieved a lot, but it’s because I try to be very rooted in my values, and take care of my spirituality, my body and my mental health.”

It’s Franco’s belief in the importance of community that unites many of her interests, from welcoming new students to conducting research in the field of entomology—the study of insects. Franco says her UVic co-op as a biological pest control assistant researcher with CABI, the Centre for Agricultural Biosciences International, “allowed me to understand the research process, improve my French and build my resume. But I’m most interested in CABI’s programs that help make research about alternatives to chemical pest control available to farming communities globally.” Back in Victoria, this led Franco to complete an honours project in entomology, while also sharing her passion for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) through Science Venture, a UVic non-profit which offers hands-on science learning opportunities for youth.

Three from UVic awarded 3M National Student Fellowships, recognizing leadership

BY JODY PATERSON

Three of UVic’s most accomplished undergraduate students were named as recipients of the 3M National Student Fellowships for 2018. Samuel (psychology), Maxwell Nicholson (economics) and Michael Graeme (anthropology and environmental studies) are recognized leaders in their fields and have received national recognition for their contributions.

The awards recognize students’ achievements and future potential to enhance teaching and learning at the post-secondary level, and include $5,000 for each student as well as support for a year-long collaborative group project. This year, students were asked to submit a higher-education challenge and a solution to the 3M selection committee.

UVic president Jamie Cassels expressed great pride in the accomplishments and recognition achieved by these students. He said that the opportunities and success of these students have been made possible through the hard work and contributions of the faculty and staff, and the students’ teachers and support staff.

Three from UVic awarded 3M National Student Fellowships, recognizing leadership

SEE FRANCO P. 7

SEE 3M STUDENTS P. 11
Gustavson goes carbon neutral

As a way to offset the frequent airplane travel that comes with being an internationally focused business school, the Gustavson School of Business is going carbon neutral—and is believed to be the first business school in the world to do so. To work toward this, the school is investing in three carbon-offset projects that will improve living conditions in communities in Uganda, Honduras and Thailand, and two environmental projects in BC. Over 90 per cent of Gustavson students and faculty have voted internationally on an annual basis, in keeping with the school’s objective of developing globally minded graduates and demonstrating the leadership in international business research.

Fundraising priorities for 2018–19

President Jamie Cassels has announced a fundraising goal of $16 million for UVic in 2018–19 and released the list of projects that will be priorities for the year. He notes that the new strategic framework will help us focus our efforts in the upcoming year. UVic raised an impressive $18.8 million in the 2017–18 fiscal year. View the PDF list at bit.ly/checklist-18.

Campus checklist survey results

Thank you to the 923 people who participated in the Campus checklist survey. UVic released that so many staff find the Checklist emails valuable, and are looking forward to implementing some changes resulting from the survey, including an online form for content submissions. It’s not just our newsletter, it’s yours too! More at bit.ly/checklist-18.

SINGING TO FIGHT THE STIGMA AND
SOCIAL ISOLATION OF DEMENTIA

By Suzanne Ahearne

Rita Goodman was nine years old and huddled in the dark basement of her Liverpool orphanage when she first started singing about bluebirds flying over the white cliffs of Dover and the long road to Tipperary. Nuns led their young charges in song to drown out the sounds of the German Luftwaffe as bombers pulverized the British port city in the early years of the Second World War.

Now, at 88, she’s singing in the basement hall of St. Joseph the Worker church in Victoria. Her short-term memory is what she describes as “sketchy” but when she sings a medley of some of the British morale-boosting songs made famous by Vera Lynn, her memories of those war years are as vivid as they ever were.

Goodman, along with her daughter Anne and about 30 others, are part of Voices in Motion, an intergenerational community choir for people with dementia, their family caregivers and high school students.

Voices in Motion is also a UVic research study led by Debra Sheets (nursing) and fellow research affiliates of the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health, Stuart MacDonald (psychology) and Andre Smith (sociology), along with Mary Kennedy (music) and Carl Asche (economics) at the University of Illinois. They’re investigating how participation in an intergenerational choir impacts quality of life for persons with dementia, caregiver well-being, and how it might reduce some of the stigma surrounding memory loss.

Goodman, who worked as a registered nurse in Britain and Canada and sang in the UVic Chorus for nearly 40 years, was sitting beside St. Andrew’s Regional High School student Chanet Mandap when choral director Erica Phase-Berg asked choir members to chat with their neighbours for a few minutes after singing the medley. Goodman tells Mandap about the nightly ritual of little girls in nightgowns being trotted downstairs to sleep in the basement during air raids, and the storage shelves they converted into makeshift beds. Mandap tells her she has never heard anything like this in her history classes.

This kind of knowledge-sharing doesn’t come as a surprise to Sheets. Intergenerational choirs are really magical, she says after the practice. People tend to associate with people their own age. For older adults to be around younger people who have a lot of good energy, and for younger people to be around older people when maybe they don’t live near their grandparents, they can develop relationships with them.

All this is going to be especially important, she points out, in a population where the number of older adults is going to double in the next 15 years. Previous choir studies have shown the experience is a positive one, but Sheets says that they have been primarily qualitative and largely just asked participants about their experience, without tapping into the impact on their lives and relationships.

“More rigorous research is important,” says Sheets. Choirs are a relatively inexpensive intervention, but they’re not without expense: they require a choir director, piano accompanist, a place to rehearse and other supports. “To gain wider public support for dementia-friendly choirs, we need stronger evidence that this can significantly improve people’s lives,” she says.

Mary Kennedy, emeritus UVic music professor, is leading the high school students survey portion of the study, asking about their attitudes and knowledge about dementia before and at the end of the project.

Sociologist Amand Smith is working with graduate student researchers to do in-home interviews with partici-pant pairs about the choir’s impact on social networks and the relationship between persons with dementia, their caregivers and the student.

Researchers hope that the project’s findings and tools will allow other organizations to replicate best practices and measure the impact of a choir on social connections, social networks, and caregiver burden and stress.

“Our goal,” says Sheets, “is to offer an opportunity to participate in a meaningful and supportive activity in which having dementia is not the focus. It’s not about staying busy and filling time. It’s about doing something that leaves you feeling uplifted and which offers opportunities to learn by being part of a community of your voice and what you’re contributing to the group.”

“I think we can have an impact on quality of life here for both the car- egiver and care recipient so both are creating new connections. Reducing stigma and social isolation is a great contribution,” says Sheets.

At the end of the first phase of this two-year project, the choir put on a sold-out public performance in May. In September, the choir will double in size. It is funded by the Alzheimer’s Society Research Program and Pacific Alzheimer Research Foundation. In- land Health is the project’s community collaborator.

To gather the necessary data—participant pairs—a person with early- to moderate-stage dementia and a family caregiver who is often a spouse or child—go through monthly assessments as part of the study. Grad students and research assistants are doing rigorous cognitive, neuropsychological and physiological assessments.

Navigate the ever-changing market

A longtime resident and UVic grad, Dave is helping local residents and newcomers navigate their way through the real estate market.

Whether buying or selling, he will assist smooth sailing — just ask his many clients, old and new.

Get your vacation planned with us!

Cheap Flights to Asia, Europe, USA and Canada — Book NOW!! We also book vacations & China Visa services.

University Heights, Unit #318
3980 Shelbourne Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2

Royal LePage Coast Capital Realty
250-592-4422 | dave@davelynn.ca

www.FlyGreatChina.com

Get your vacation planned with us!

Cheap Flights to Asia, Europe, USA and Canada — Book NOW!! We also book vacations & China Visa services.

University Heights, Unit #318
3980 Shelbourne Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2

Royal LePage Coast Capital Realty
250-592-4422 | dave@davelynn.ca

www.FlyGreatChina.com

IT’S NOT ABOUT STAYING BUSY AND FILLING TIME. IT’S ABOUT DOING SOMETHING THAT LEAVES YOU FEELING UPLIFTED AND WHICH OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN BY BEING PART OF A COMMUNITY THAT VALUES YOUR VOICE AND WHAT YOU’RE CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROUP.”
Marine ecologist’s global impact earns national award

BY VIMALA JEEVANANDAM

Marine biologist Julia Baum is one of six university faculty members across the country to be awarded a coveted 2018 E.W.R. Steacie Memorial Fellowship from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. The fellowship honours “outstanding and highly promising faculty who are earning a strong international reputation for original research.” It includes a research grant of $250,000 over two years.

“Julia is an inspired choice and an inspirational recipient of this award,” says co-nominator Verena Tunnicliffe, also an internationally respected marine biologist at UVic, and the Canada Research Chair in Deep Ocean Ecosystems and the University of Victoria’s newest Steacie Fellow. “It’s an incredible honour,” says Baum of being awarded a Steacie Fellowship. “Coral reefs are one of the most sensitive ecosystems to climate change, and the discoveries the scientific community makes in the next few years—along with the decisions that we make as a society about addressing climate change—are going to dictate if these ecosystems can persist throughout this century.

“I’m incredibly grateful to NSEIRC for this support. It enables me and my team to take our research to the next level and to push the boundaries of what’s known about coral reef resilience to climate change.”

Baum is also a much-sought-after speaker by the world’s top universities, a passionate advocate for women in science, and an articulate and persuasive science communicator.

“I want the science that my team and I do to matter. We devote a lot of effort to sharing our work with the public, school kids and policy-makers—it’s the right thing to do and we love doing it,” says Baum of her motivation to effect change through research and communicating publicly about changing environmental conditions to inform public discourse and policy makers.

Baum will use her fellowship grant to expand her research at Kiritimati (Christmas Island) in the equatorial Pacific, attracted attention when the recent major El Niño event caused the worst heat stress ever recorded on the island’s corals, resulting in widespread bleaching and coral mortality. The data she’s collecting is helping researchers around the world evaluate the resilience of coral ecosystems to globally rising temperatures.

Only 10 years after completing her PhD, Baum has already earned more than 20 fellowships and awards: published almost 50 peer-reviewed articles, five of them in Science, one of the top two science journals in the world; and been cited more than 7,000 times—an exceptional record for someone so early in their career.

Baum is also a “pod”-style room clusters—which will be the tallest on campus. The new housing will feature public engagement opportunities and a dining hall for over 600 students currently living off campus.

Help shape plans for new student housing and dining

Help shape plans for new student housing and dining

Plans are beginning to take shape for new student housing that will provide much-needed accommodation and a dining hall for more than 600 UVic students who would otherwise live off campus.

All faculty, staff and students are invited to learn more about the project and share your ideas on preliminary building design, landscape, sustainability principles and outdoor areas at an open house on Wednesday, June 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the McPherson Library.

“Over the past year, we’ve been working closely with the neighbourhood and on-campus communities to inform the planning principles for these new buildings,” says Mike Wilson, director of campus planning and sustainability. “We’re now in the design phase, with a team of architects working to ensure the building designs meet the needs of students and that new and rejuvenated outdoor areas provide a welcoming environment for the broader campus community.”

The UVic Board of Governors approved funding for the project in late March.

“The two new buildings will feature a modernized 600-seat dining hall as well as conference and meeting rooms on the ground levels. The inclusion of academic space is also under consideration.

“South of the Student Union Building and west of Tower Residence, the new project will create vibrancy and animation within the current housing precinct and along Ring Road. “The Grand Promenade” will be extended to encourage walking and cycling between the new buildings and the rest of campus.”

The new housing will feature a variety of room types, including “pod”-style room clusters—which share kitchen, washroom, living and dining areas—as well as traditional single dorm rooms.

To protect green space and accommodate more students living on campus, the new buildings will be the tallest on campus. The project team is currently developing a sustainability strategy for the buildings, not only to achieve UVic’s operational goals but also to ensure that students have opportunities to engage with issues, principles and practices that support social and environmental sustainability.

Construction is targeted to begin in summer 2020, and will take place in phases over four academic years. Two existing residence buildings, Margaret Newton Hall and Emily Carr Residence, as well as the Cadboro Commons Building, will be deconstructed during the project.

The student housing project is the first significant capital project since UVic’s Campus Plan was renewed in 2016. Following community consultation this spring, a Development Variance Application will be submitted to the District of Saanich in fall 2018.

For more information, contact Mike Wilson, director of campus planning and sustainability at 250-472-5433 or mwilson@uvic.ca.

Open House

Wednesday, June 13 | 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

McPherson Library

uvic.ca/new-student-housing

HELP SHAPE THE PLANS FOR NEW STUDENT HOUSING

UVic is planning for new student housing that will provide much-needed housing for over 600 students currently living off campus.

Learn more and share your ideas on the preliminary building design, landscaping, sustainability principles and new outdoor areas.

OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, June 13 | 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

McPherson Library

uvic.ca/new-student-housing

For more information, contact Mike Wilson, director of campus planning and sustainability at 250-472-5433 or mwilson@uvic.ca.

Public engagement opportunities and updates are available on the project website at: uvic.ca/new-student-housing
Johnny Cash collection at UVic Libraries

The archives of Saul Holiff (at right), the Canadian who helped make Johnny Cash (left) a superstar have arrived at UVic. A new online exhibit, “Volatile Attractions: Saul Holiff, Johnny Cash, and Managing a Music Legend,” highlights letters, diaries, journals, a memorabilia-and-photo scrapbook, audio recordings and rare photos of Cash. Full story: bit.ly/uvic-juah

UVic welcomes new dean of law: Susan Breau

Dr. Susan Breau will become the next Dean of the Faculty of Law, serving a five-year term from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2023. Her appointment was overwhelmingly ratified by members of the search committee with 95.7 per cent approval.

Since 2014, Dr. Breau has been the Head of the School of Law at the University of Reading, U.K. and has a distinguished record of achievement as a researcher, teacher and administrator. Her scholarship engages with multiple forms of law and legal orders, particularly in the law of armed conflict and international human rights law. Breau completed her BA, Bachelor of Laws and MA at Queen’s University. She practiced law in Kingston, Ontario, for almost 20 years before completing a Master of Laws and PhD at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

She has taught and lectured at law schools throughout the United Kingdom and Australia and was the Dorset Fellow in Public International Law at the British Institute of International and Comparative Law.

Summer 2018

Kuhanga’s work led to a network of regional learning centres across Tanzania which guides the provision of early childhood education and the relationship between employment, care and gender. Moss coordinated the Europe-wide Commission’s expert group on family, work and Youth Care, particularly its early childhood education and the relationship between employment, care and gender. Moss coordinated the Europe-wide Commission’s expert group on family, work and Youth Care, particularly its early childhood education and the relationship between employment, care and gender.

Robert Waisman was one of the “Boys of Buchenwald” before he was freed from the World War II concentration camp, eventually emigrating to a new life in Canada where he built a successful career and dedicates himself to Holocaust education. At the age of 10, he was a slave labourer in a German munitions factory where a child’s hands were deemed useful in fixing jammed machinery. Waisman was sent to Buchenwald where he remained until April 11, 1945, when it was liberated by U.S. soldiers. Of his family, only he and his sister Leah survived. Arriving in Canada in 1949, Waisman became a community leader, philanthropist, and an educator who shares his experiences of hate, racism and indifference with thousands of students each year.
Building the business case for water

BY CARLOS BERTI

Nuha Omer Elgindi has always believed that commerce could be about more than just making a profit. Born in Sudan and raised in Tunisia and the UK, Elgindi says her early environment played a key part in making sustainability one of her earliest, deepest values. “I had always wanted to make a difference. And to protect the plants and animals around me.” Those values have since connected Elgindi to the global commerce hub at UVic’s Gustavson School of Business—and to the United Nations, where Elgindi is building the business case for water security. This month, she receives her Master of Global Business (MGB) degree from Gustavson.

Father-In-Law: Will McClary

BY JULIE SLOAN

Law school can be stressful. And hard. Add to that becoming a new father during your second year and you’ve got a big challenge on your hands. Will McClary took on that challenge, and because of the support he received at UVic Law, he took it in stride. Then he added an executive role on the board of the Law Student Society (LSS).

SEE ELGINDI P.6

SEE MCCLARY P.8

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADS!

Thousands of UVic students and their families and friends will gather on campus this month to celebrate the achievement of an academic milestone. During Spring Convocation from June 11 to 15, ceremonies will be held to confer 3,776 degrees, diplomas and certificates.
A love of objects and a passion for art history

BY JOHN THRELFALL

What compels someone to study art history? It could be a passion for the life and work of a certain artist, like Frida Kahlo, or a fascination with a specific period of visual history, like the Renaissance. But for Josie Greenhill, graduating this month with a BA Honours in Art History & Visual Studies (AHVS), her inspiration came from a movie about Jack and Rose.

“I’ve always liked museums, but when it comes to liking history, that was from watching way too many panorama dramas when I was growing up—specifically Titanic. I was next-level obsessed with James Cameron’s movie, which I used to watch every single day,” laughs Greenhill. “Can this interview just be about Titanic?”

Alas, no, but the legacy of that great ship is a good metaphor for what drives an emerging art historian like Greenhill. “I’ve always liked art, history and culture, and this is an area that mixes them all together,” she says. “I like what objects and material culture can communicate to you; it’s a different approach than just looking at historical texts.”

Born and raised in Nanaimo, Greenhill admits she started out as a “mediocre student” at UVic, but that clearly didn’t last long. Beyond completing an AHVS honours thesis, she’s also taken on leadership roles in student governance, was awarded a JCURA for undergraduate research, had a work-study position, held a curatorial placement as a curatorial assistant at Legacy Art Galleries—where she also curated an exhibit about local artists—was hired as an archival assistant in Special Collections, launched her own digital exhibition for UVic’s Electronic Textual Cultures Lab, earned numerous awards and scholarships, presented and published numerous academic papers, and is one of the “faces of art history” in new AHVS recruitment material.

She has also been accepted into the University of Toronto’s highly-competitive art history master’s program, for which she also won a CGS Master’s NSERC grant—a rare feat for a first-year MA student. “Josie represents everything UVic stands for,” notes AHVS chair Erin Campbell. “She is a well-rounded, high-achieving, brilliant, civic-minded, thoughtful and compassionate student who has been shaped by her UVic experience.”

Yet that self-effacing Greenhill would describe herself in such glowing terms. “People think I’m really busy all the time, but I spend a lot of time listening to podcasts and watching Net-flix,” she admits. “It’s partially about time management—I wake up early every day—but it’s also about taking risks. Sometimes you just have to take the leap and apply for things you may not have all the qualifications for; it’s surprising how many opportunities will come your way.”

One of Greenhill’s favourite aspects of studying art history has been the sense of discovery that comes through working with archival materials. “An object can be your only insight into a time period—if you can hold history or really see it, it has more impact than just reading a document. For example, she was thrilled to be able to access a pair of books by Christina and Dante Gabrielle Rossetti through UVic’s Special Collections. “She did the poetry and he did the binding and illustrations,” she explains. “My honours thesis is about Pre-Raphaelite book art—the binding designs, illustrations—which directly ties into why I’m interested in art history. The Pre-Raphaelites were so multi-faceted; they were poets, designers, painters, illustrators . . . there are so many aspects they bring together, and I like studying all those different parts.”

With her time at UVic coming to an end, how does it feel knowing her face and voice will continue to have a presence on the department’s recruitment material? “It’s kind of intimidating,” she admits. “I’m pretty shy, but do I think it’s cool that I can reach people who I won’t ever meet in person and help motivate them to study art history. I’m grateful that people trust me enough to be a face for the department.”

And is there any wisdom shell like to share with those future students? “You get out of your degree what you put in to it,” she concludes. “If you get involved, you’ll feel so much better.”

ELGINDI

CONTINUED FROM P5

sideration to environmental or social impacts.” She soon saw that business has the power to be an innovative solution to the world’s environmental crisis, and not just a contributor to the problem.

Hoping to take up the mantle of environmentalism her mother had taught her, she took those standards of social and environmental responsibility privately sector work—and around the world to Victoria.

New Beginnings at Gustavus

Elgindi began her studies in Tunisia’s Mediterranean School of Business, going on to receive an MSc in environmental assessment and management from the University of Brighton. Seeking to find ways to merge her passions, she decided to enroll in Gustavus’s MGB program.

Here, Elgindi found a diverse community with similar outlooks on business and social responsibility, and the chance to put her critical thinking skills to the test in the real world. “My internship with a consultancy firm in enabling me to work in a company that focuses on socioeconomic development and tries to expand its business in a socially responsible way. It was a great example of something a professor once told me: companies care about social responsibility because people do.”

After her graduation this June, Elgindi hopes to forge a meaningful path. “In the short term. I want to continue my work for developmental organizations. I want to make a difference here.”

Longterm, she dreams of opening her own consultancy firm, one focused on helping the most vulnerable parts of the world. “regions like Africa and South America, which are the most affected by issues of global environmental crisis.”

Her international business experience will definitely come in handy, but for Elgindi the MGB program was more than just a business course: “It was a lifetime experience.”

PHOTO: JOHN THRELFALL
Bright lights, big city for English grad

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

Growing up on a small island three hours north of Victoria, the outdoors served as Iona Lister’s classroom. Home-schooled for the most part until high school, Lister spent her days reading, writing and making music while immersed in nature.

“We played in the forest. We climbed trees. We ran around a lot. It was very idyllic,” she remembers. Lasqueti Island, where Lister moved at age two with her brother and their musician parents, has no commercial electric utility; its unspoiled environment nurtured her imagination and sustained her interest in learning when she had to move to Qualicum Beach, where her family now lives, to attend secondary school.

“I noticed a lot of apathy when I went to high school. It was a huge culture shock,” she says.

The English master’s student, who graduates this June, has since taken to travelling, trekking across Europe and South America, and learning several languages, including Spanish and French. While studying in the English department, Lister developed an interest in Anglo-Norman literature, text written for English grad.

Lister explored two Anglo-French medieval poems for her master’s research, “The Three Ladies Who Found a Cock” and “The Knight Who Made Cunts Talk,” proving that medieval writers had memorable senses of humour.

Lister’s success extends over the Atlantic—she was also accepted into Cambridge and Oxford universities. She chose to study in Toronto, however, because of the scholarship and structure of the program. Living in Toronto means she can travel home more easily while still enjoying the perks of big city life, like singing soprano in a choir.

“I’m excited. There are a lot more opportunities to be involved in music and dance than here,” she says. “I’ll be able to explore a new place and continue studying.”

Lister credits her unconventional upbringing for her diverse interests and desire to learn. She hopes to one day become an English professor.

“Growing up, I was allowed to nourish my excitement about the things I loved,” Lister says. “I want to keep learning.”

Supporting seniors’ access to fresh air and exercise

BY HOLLY HEUVER

There’s nothing quite like looking across the ocean and feeling the salty air filling your lungs as you ride your bike along Dallas Road. And Caron Sage, who graduates with an MA in Kinesiology this month, has been offering senior citizens in Victoria and beyond the opportunity to reconnect with nature through free bike rides, via the Cycling Without Age program.

“We’re trying to reduce social isolation and loneliness for older adults,” says Sage. “We have an aging population and we need to address this to improve the quality of life for the community and those living in the care homes. Access to nature is extremely important for people’s health. We allow people to age adventurously and to be a part of the community, even if they are in a nursing home.”

Sage, along with Kristi Owens and Marleen Butchart, began their own chapter of Cycling Without Age in Victoria, the sixth chapter in Canada and BC’s first. In May 2017, the first trishaw arrived, a custom-made three-wheeled bike with two seats in the front for passengers and a backseat for the pedaller.

Instead of a traditional thesis, Sage developed a manual for Cycling Without Age for his master’s project. “It is a manual on how to start your own chapter within the Canadian context from my experience in Victoria and the recreation background I have gained from my degree. There are about ten groups scattered around BC who are in the beginning process of starting out. Some of them don’t have the skills I have gained through my schooling and the manual will allow me to pass that on.”

Sage’s idea for his thesis began after stumbling across a TED Talk by Cycling Without Age’s founder, Ole Kassow. As an undergraduate, Sage had been cycling to work for a co-op position at Beckley Farm Lodge, and saw an instant connection. “I see myself going back for my PhD to measure the benefits of Cycling Without Age for the passengers and the volunteers. It would aid in bringing credibility to the program and getting more support for the program. There is a need for that. UVic could potentially be the hub for research for Cycling Without Age internationally.”

FRANCO

CONTINUED FROM P.1

from kindergarten to grade 12.

Through one of her co-ops with Science Venture, Franco delivered in-school workshops and camps to communities across Vancouver Island, gaining her work on relationship build-

ing and reciprocal learning.

“An important factor in supporting youth in their STEM journey is creating a safe place for exploration and discovery—building a community of learning,” says Franco. “These are values that I bring with my cultural background.”

Unlike a more traditional approach to teaching math and science that focuses on content and memorization, Franco starts activities by asking youth what they want to learn—assembling a curriculum based on that feedback, “We give them a choice about how they want to approach learning. Once I took that approach, it was easier to make connections, and it was amazing to empower students and see how they develop their passions and skills with confidence.”

Now that Franco is graduating, she’s continuing to find ways to enhance STEM education with under-

served groups. She’s now sharing her enthusiasm for coding and compu-
tational thinking through a new pro-

gram teaching girls-only after-school program called Friyay!—bringing to-

gether her passion for computational thinking, art and coding.

“In the long-term, I hope to work with teachers to build the technologi-

cal resources they need to make their classrooms more student-centred and allow for more personalized ap-

proaches,” she says.

Franco’s tuition was paid through a Council of International Schools scholarship for undergraduate studies.
CONVOCATION 2018

Labwork builds the brain literally

BY SUZANNE AHEARNE

When Tia Sojonky arrived at UVic from her hometown of Regina, Sojonky was drawn to study engineering. She realized she’d underestimated how much hard work it would be to get here. She knew, after graduating in June with an honors degree in biomedical engineering, that she had to do more to preserve the community’s language, the more I lost my words,” said Laflond, “The more I engaged with the language, the more I lost my words.”

Sojonky later enrolled in UVic’s Continuing Studies Cultural Resource Management diploma program, graduating in 2009. Rachelle Laflond, Chisasibi Centre’s public relations and programming coordinator, said the CALR courses helped her understand the landscape of Indigenous language revitalization across Canada, particularly why some communities’ languages were surviving while others were diminishing. Laflond says they learned about language dynamics from a linguist specializing in James Bay Cree. In another class, they had the chance to transcribe the recordings from Elders and turn them into educational resources.

Ultimately the courses gave us skills on how to preserve our language,” Laflond says. “The idea is that we do that now.”

Laflond will be among the Chisasibi Centre’s employees attending convocation. The centre is already discussing pilot projects to build on what they’ve learned during the certificate. “It’s a powerful moment,” Laflond says. “We need to celebrate it.”

CALR academic advisor Suzanne Ohrbandzky, from the Department of Linguistics, says the university is thrilled to host the graduating group. “We are excited and honoured that they are travelling from Chisasibi to be at the convocation.”

Chisasibi group’s mission to help Cree language and culture flourish

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

Margaret Fireman understands that language upholds her culture. Without language, oral traditions and wisdom passed down from her Cree ancestors would be lost. Language, she says, is closely tied to the land.

And so when Fireman, a residential school survivor and then-manager of Chisasibi Heritage and Cultural Centre in northeastern Quebec, was searching for a program to bolster the preservation of her community’s language of James Bay Cree, she chose carefully.

Fireman turned to the University of Victoria’s Certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization (CALR) to support her workplace’s efforts to sustain the first language of Chisasibi’s nearly 4,600 members.

“We come from an oral tradition,” she says. “We felt it was really important in this line of work that you understand your own language first in order to properly interpret our story.”

The entire staff at the Chisasibi Heritage and Cultural Centre, all of whom speak James Bay Cree, enrolled in the CALR program, which teaches new approaches and practical strategies to strengthen language revitalization while honouring traditional knowledge and practices.

Next week, 14 of the graduating students will make the three-day journey to UVic, driving 16 hours from Chisasibi, on the edge of James Bay, to Ottawa, before boarding a flight to Victoria to attend convocation on June 12. The journey is more than geographical; it reflects the community’s determination to ensure their culture and language flourishes.

The CALR program has been offered in collaboration with communities as far as the Northwest Territories. The program develops a range of skills and knowledge to support community-driven language revitalization, and is tailored to meet the needs and interests of each community.

Developed by UVic’s Department of Linguistics in partnership with the Enokwin Centre of the Okanagan Nation and UVic’s Continuing Studies, Chisasibi’s program included six courses taught in James Bay Cree.

Instructors travelled to Chisasibi, meaning that all staff at the cultural centre were able to participate in the two-week intensive portion of the program.

Fireman said although the community’s residents speak James Bay Cree, English and French are interspersed in everyday conversations. In recent years, the community members have noticed an erosion in residents’ fluency in James Bay Cree, especially among young people, who are influenced by English and French media and music.

“We’ve had some evening and weekend sessions with Elders and we talk about how we are losing our language,” Fireman says. “We’re very concerned,” she says. “This certificate program is really important to us.”

The issue of language survival resonates deeply for Fireman. Forced to attend residential schools and speak English as a child, Fireman later struggled to communicate with her parents and grandparents, who solely spoke Cree.

The more I engaged with the language, the more I lost my words, she says. “That had to regain my language again.”

Fireman later enrolled in UVic’s Continuing Studies Cultural Resource Management diploma program, graduating in 2009.

“BEING A FEMALE IN ENGINEERING HAS CHALLENGED ME TO SUCCEED IN THIS AREA BECAUSE THERE ARE SO FEW OF US. STRONG FEMALE ROLE MODELS SUCH AS DR. WILLERTH HAVE ALSO ENGAGED TO ME TO PURSUE MY ACADAMICS. WE NEED MORE FEMALE ENGINEERS.”

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

Part of Willerth’s research involves what she calls “mini brains”—stem cells that contain the blueprint for making any type of tissue in the body—into brain organoids. These are what Sojonky refers to as “mini brains”—artificially grown miniature organs that resemble a normal brain. And because they replicate many of the same features and are derived from human cells, they can be used for applications such as drug screening, regenerative medicine and are a valuable way to study how diseases like Parkinson’s develop and respond to treatment. Sojonky did modelling in the lab that looked at ways of increasing oxygen transport into these mini organs to increase cell survival.

“I hope to advance the fields of tissue engineering and regenerative medicine,” says Sojonky. “To understand how people live with disease or life-altering injuries. Being able to bring a regenerative medicine tool into the lab to a clinical trial would be a dream come true.”

The idea for this research came up at the University of Victoria when she supervised Sojonky’s honours thesis, supervises a lot of undergrads—no surprise, as the recipient of this year’s UVic REACH award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research-Inspired Teaching. She wrote that Sojonky’s intelligence and work ethic made her stand out as a high performing student.

Sojonky found that through the course of her studies she had to balance her passion with deadlines and responsibilities. “I kept learning about new technologies in classes and thinking about how that would be amazing to research. I wanted to learn about everything. But I also learned that research is frustrating. It takes time, especially for tissue engineering, where you are growing cells. Experiment fail. You have to wait for resources to be put into place, which can be tough. I learned on others for help, which is a lot different than independent study.”

Sojonky received a renewable entrance scholarship in her first year. Being able to reduce the worry about finances to focus on school was key, she says. But just as important, she emphasizes, was the confidence it gave to people shifting into school and on co-op work terms.

“They provided me with so much knowledge that I didn’t have otherwise gained just in class, because of their varied backgrounds, previous degrees before engineering, experience at different universities or with extracurricular clubs. Everyone I met gave me new insights into the engineering profession and the possibilities this degree could give me. They really provided me with a well-rounded learning experience.”

Sojonky describes working on group projects with fellow students, from different parts of Canada and the world, as “eye-opening.” And having a solid core group of friends, many of whom she met in her first year while living on campus, was “vital in surviving the last five years.”

As for inspiration, she says, “It isn’t too tough to be inspired when you can take a walk to the beach as a study break. I just love to learn new things and challenge myself.” Sojonky says. After a break to work in the biomedical engineering field for a few years, she plans to go to grad school to pursue a PhD. “Being a female in engineering has motivated me to succeed in this area because there are so few of us. Strong female role models such as Dr. Willerth have also encouraged me to keep pursuing my academics. We need more female engineers.”

MCLRARY CONTINUED FROM P5

Page 8 The Ring Summer 2018
A passion for sociology

BY ANNE MacLaurin

Falling in love with sociology and social justice studies came as something of a surprise to social sciences grad Quyuan Yoon-Potkins, who moved from East Vancouver to pursue her post-secondary education at U Vic. “I came to U Vic prepared to study psychology, but my introductory sociology course completely changed all that,” said Yoon-Potkins. “Dr. Ravelli’s teaching style was so intriguing and relatable that I never wanted to miss a class, and the content was so interesting that I actually enjoyed studying and doing my assignments!”

Yoon-Potkins graduates this month with a honours BA in sociology and a diploma in social justice studies. She loved how the sociology program is highly applicable to real-life circumstances, and she found using her own personal experiences really helped in understanding the class teachings. For Yoon-Potkins, this meant looking at her Korean heritage and the immigration experience of her grandparents. “I never had a clear idea of what life was like for my grandparents as immigrants,” she continues.

“I wanted to gain a better understanding of an immigrant’s experiences, especially in an aging context.” During her years at U Vic, Yoon-Potkins always felt extremely comfortable and welcomed by the campus community, and she enjoyed the many opportunities available, both recreationally and academically.

“Everyone I met in my first year made me feel right at home,” she says. “Karen Kobayashi has been a crucial part of my academic journey and research...her guidance has not only helped me to flourish academically, but has taught me empathy and compassion as well.”

At U Vic, Yoon-Potkins continued to play high-level soccer both for a co-ed intramural and women’s team. “It was a great outlet for stress and it keeps me healthy and active even during the busiest times of the school year,” she says. “It also taught me a lot about drive, dedication, teamwork and time management.”

Yoon-Potkins is grateful for the scholarships she received—a UVic Excellence Scholarship, Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Award, and Bly L.J. Watson Scholarship—as they allowed her to pursue her passion for sociology and social justice.

In the future, she wants to educate people—especially young people—about social issues and social injustices. But right now, she is looking forward to travelling to South East Asia for two months at the end of the summer.

“My future is pretty open and I am looking forward to the endless opportunities and experiences as they come.”

The Ring Summer 2018 Page 9

Diploma by distance enables new perspective

BY KATE HILDBRANDT

Sabrina Curtis, of Golden, BC, sees herself as someone who thrives on seeking out the next challenge. “I’m happy with life,” says the mother of two, who just completed an online graduate diploma in evaluation through the School of Public Administration. “I’m just always looking for ways to add interest and understanding, to look at things through new contexts.”

It’s a fitting trait for Curtis, who as the director of planning and evaluation for the Columbia Basin Trust, Curtis is applying her learning directly to her complex work of measuring the performance of many diverse community programs and strategic initiatives supported by the trust.

“I feel like this program was made for me,” says Curtis. “It offered a new perspective on organizational challenges which we have been struggling with for a long time.”

The subject matter led her to learning new ways to improve several processes. That practical application, she says, continues to translate as accomplishments at the office.

“It was rewarding,” says Curtis. “I now have a more elaborate toolkit to access in managing our program evaluations, and reports to communities and clients on our progress.”

Those “clients” are the 150,000 people situated across 80,000 sq km (about 31,000 sq miles) within the Columbia River Basin in southern eastern BC. The Columbia River is essential to every aspect of life, and the trust was created to support the ideas and efforts of the people in the region.

“So satisfying work,” Curtis explains. “There is so much opportunity to do good things, which can be both a blessing and a curse.”

Case in point: coordinating a region-wide symposium in 2017—SHIFT! Thriving in Change—Curtis and her team attracted a whopping 450 delegates with astronaut Chris Hadfield as guest speaker. He also live-streamed a presentation to school children from across the basin’s communities.

More online

To see all the grad stories online, go to uvic.ca/convocation.
BY JODY PATERSON

Even decades after a mine closes, people in surrounding communities can face serious health risks from drinking contaminated water. Communities in BC’s North are particularly at risk of arsenic poisoning due to the legacy of gold and uranium mines, says University of Victoria civil engineer Heather Buckley.

Water is easily contaminated by arsenic and metals that leach out of rock and soil disturbed in the mining process. With no simple, quick or low-cost method for testing water, even short-term measures to address known problems typically end up delayed by weeks or even months until lab results are available.

Buckley is working on a solution. Her research aims to develop a low-cost test strip—along the lines of those used for glucose monitoring—that immediately identifies health-threatening levels of the most common contaminants from mining.

With a goal of creating a simple test strip that sells for a dollar or two, Buckley’s work not only envisages giving communities the power to test their water supply at any time and get immediate results, but to have direct access to the data they need to advocate for change or intervention.

“When you dig up rocks for mining the metal extracted accounts for maybe one per cent of that material,” explains Buckley, whose research is funded by the Canada Foundation for Innovation. “Then those big piles of rock are out where the dust can blow. Along comes the snow melt, the spring washout, and whatever was in and on those rocks goes straight into the river.” Arsenic occurs naturally in the ground. Rock-crushing spreads it around as a fine dust across the landscape. Mercury, chromium, cadmium and lead are all well-recognized health hazards from mining processes that also affect drinking water. Health effects from such toxins can take years to manifest, at which point the damage has been done.

Buckley’s high-tech test strip builds on existing research around molecules specifically designed to capture metals. Such molecules will be used to create a “stickiness” on the test strip for the most problematic metals. She anticipates having a prototype ready for testing within five years, and stresses that keeping them affordable is a critical component of the work.

“I want to make technology that can be viable even used in rural Bangladesh,” says the “green” engineer and chemist, named a Green Talents Fellow in 2015 by the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy in Freiburg, Germany.

Buckley is hopeful her research will eventually change mining practices. While her current focus is to empower communities to monitor the water supply, she notes that the work also gives companies the tools to show they can do better.

“It creates a space where communities and industries can rebuild trust. It takes away some of the divisiveness, says Buckley. That’s an important goal this year, which is the launch of the UN International Decade for Action: Water for Sustainable Development.

A secondary aspect of Buckley’s research is to apply the same “stickiness” technology used for the test strips to create a method of extracting valuable metals from mine tailings and boost the amount of ore that mining companies are extracting.

In time, the research could ultimately result in a reduction in mining due to higher returns, and lead to new extraction techniques that don’t require the use of additional toxicants like mercury in the extraction process.
Three members of the university community are recognized as campus leaders in the second annual Provost’s Advocacy and Activism awards, acknowledging individuals who address systemic or institutionalized barriers and act as champions for others.

Karen Lithgow, a biochemistry and microbiology graduate student; Hannah Charnock, a chemistry undergraduate student; and Bruce Wallace, an assistant professor in the School of Social Work, were honoured at a luncheon for their efforts in fostering an environment that supports and nurtures individuals and groups for their activism.

Both Lithgow and Charnock have done pioneering work in establishing the UVic Women in Science initiative. Through education, mentorship, community engagement and communication, they seek to increase the representation of women in science disciplines and tackle challenging obstacles encountered by women in science.

Wallace, in his community-based research, has long advocated for the establishment of supervised drug consumption services and awareness of the need for action to reduce drug overdose deaths in the community. The award is co-sponsored by the offices of the Provost and Equity and Human Rights.

“Three are multidisciplinary projects, a collaborative approach to improve the quality and safety of health care organizations about safety issues arising from our changing climate. Studying genetic variation gives us a better understanding of how species might adapt in a rapidly changing climate.”

Dr. Elizabeth Borycki, a professor with the School of Health Information Science, was awarded the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research Health Professional Investigator Award. Borycki’s research addresses concerns raised by Canadian and international health care organizations about safety issues arising from our use of health information technology—from digitized health systems to electronic health records. Her goal is to conduct several interconnected studies and develop a comprehensive approach to improving the quality and safety of health information technology, including clinical simulations to better understand how errors arise.

Three honoured with Provost’s Advocacy and Activism awards

“Their advocacy for gender equality will ensure a stronger and more inclusive environment at UVic that can serve as a role model for universities across Canada and beyond.”

—Provost and Vice President Academic Valerie Kuehne, sponsor of the awards
One last round of “Convocation magic” for Eastman

After 13 years as UVic’s University Secretary, Dr. Julia Eastman is stepping down July 6 to retirement. Before doing so, she’ll participate in a final set of Convocation ceremonies.

Eastman has overseen the arrangements for 180 Convocation ceremonies during her tenure, despite, she acknowledges, with a laugh, not attending any of her own.

Having now been directly involved in so many ceremonies in her official capacity, Eastman says she’s a firm believer in “Convocation magic.” It’s seeing students and their families so excited to be there, so proud of their achievement in graduating—“it’s such a pleasure. I encourage anyone who works at UVic to take in a ceremony. It reminds us how important their time at this university is to our students.”

Convocation comes with many poignant moments, too, she says. Those encompass pride and accomplishment, but also involve people who’ve experienced terrible losses, including individuals there to accept posthumous degrees on behalf of family members or friends.

There’s also the privilege of hearing honours and leaders like former BC Lieutenant Governor Stephen Point and scholar and educator Gowdyownly Point give “powerful speeches about the transformation of education from a force of oppression of Indigenous people to a force for positive change.” Or listening to award winning international journalist Stephanie Nolen describe meeting so many people around the world who’ve discovered the opportunities we have here to learn in a beautiful, comfortable, safe place.

Eastman arrived at UVic from Dalhousie in 2005 after stints with the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Council of Maritime Premiers. As University Secretary, she is responsible for thesecretariat for UVic’s Board of Governors and Senate, foundations and senior advisory committees. She’s a member of the university’s Executive Council along with the president and four vice-presidents, and also responsible for overseeing privacy, access to information matters and records management, equity and human rights, and policy coordination and elections at the university.

It’s been a “very interesting conglomeration of responsibilities,” Eastman says, one that sees her interacting with a wide range of leaders, faculty, students and staff—with her office serving as a kind of “nerve centre” for the governance of the university.

She says working at UVic has been a “total privilege” and feels blessed by the “fabulously talented and committed people” with whom she has worked both inside and outside the area.

The job comes with challenges, too, of course. In her retirement, she plans to continue contributing to understanding how Canadian universities can govern themselves effectively in these complex times.

Eastman, who has a PhD in Higher Education from the University of Toronto, will spend the near future working with Glen Jones (OISE), Claude Trotter (Laval), and others writing up a comparative case study they conducted of the governance of six major Canadian universities from five regions across Canada. It will be the first draw on her access to “more personal freedom” that comes with retirement, and is the culmination of more than four years of work.

“Julia is considered the dean of Canadian university secretaries, recognized across the country for her deep experience and wisdom,” says UVic President Jamie Cassels, who also served with Eastman for five years when he was UVic’s vice-president academic.

“For Julia, good governance is the guarantor of quality at universities, and of academic freedom and institutional autonomy,” Cassels continues.

Students are at the forefront of her thinking in whatever she does. Her role has involved helping the university navigate an ever-changing set of complex, multi-faceted challenges, where there are no easy answers. She’s quiet, thoughtful and courageous, all at the same time, and always solution-focused. I’m going to miss her wise counsel, sage advice and strong support.”

There have been many changes at UVic over the past 13 years. Eastman explains, reflecting parallel changes in society at large, particularly in the use of technology. At the same time, she believes there’s been continuity in UVic’s culture. “The UVic culture is quite distinctive and participatory with an expectation of consultation you wouldn’t necessarily find at other universities,” she says.

Looking back, Eastman notes that universities are complex institutions, and government and public expectations of them are evolving and growing. But, she says, as she hears from her counterparts from across the country, UVic has been “really fortunate” in how its Board of Governors and Senate conduct their work. “They’re very committed to UVic and are able to work together and with the administration effectively. It means they can come together around a shared conception of how to move forward.”

The search process for Eastman’s successor is underway. Curtis Andersen, Associate University Secretary, will serve as the acting University Secretary.

Eastman plans to stay put in Victoria after she steps down and “take things as they come,” including out in the water in her kayak.

Greener ships, cleaner ocean

Drop an electric motor into a ship and you’ve all set to sail into a cleaner environment, right?

If only it were that simple, says mechanical engineer Zuomin Dong, whose research focuses on hybrid electric propulsion systems.

Dong and his research team have studied and built advanced hybrid vehicles for a decade, winning dozens of awards. His team’s computer modelling tools take all operational factors into account to identify the “sweet spot” where vehicles achieve maximum fuel efficiency and emission reduction without sacrificing performance.

Ships are much more complex and challenging than cars, explains Dong. While cars are mass-produced, mostly the same size and operate in similar conditions, marine vessels are much more varied—with hulls, propellers and engines that perform differently depending on cargo and maritime conditions. “You can’t design one system and use the same template for all others,” says Dong.

The combination of natural gas engines and hybrid electric propulsion shows considerable promise for “greener” ships, says Dong.

Natural gas is a cleaner fuel than diesel but doesn’t combust fully at certain loads. That characteristic limits reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and dramatically increases discharge of hydrocarbons.

But in combination with a hybrid electric system, propulsion systems can be programmed to avoid these engine conditions and switch to electric power at high-risk times. “When we tested that using our model, we were able to reduce GHG by 19 per cent, and cut fuel costs by 39 per cent,” says Dong. Full story: bit.ly/clean-ship

HAROLD KLUNDER
Recent Watercolour Paintings
Downtown: 665 Fort Street
June 19 - July 14, 2018

Page 12 The Ring Summer 2018