Federal government invests in new centre for Indigenous law and reconciliation at UVic

The construction of a national centre for Indigenous law and reconciliation at the University of Victoria received major funding support on March 19 with the federal government’s announcement of $9.1 million for the transformative project.

This national centre of excellence for the study and understanding of Indigenous laws will house the world’s first joint degree in Indigenous legal orders and Canadian common law (JD/JID), launched at UVic last September. The design of the building will reflect modern and traditional values of the Coast Salish peoples—welcoming students, academics and community members from all nations for engagement, debate and public education.

Budget 2019 states the federal government will contribute the funds over three years starting in 2019/20 to support the construction of “an Indigenous Legal Lodge at the University of Victoria, a leader in this field.”

“We are grateful to the federal government for its support of the University of Victoria and this national centre for Indigenous law which will play a vital role in helping to grow a more just and inclusive Canada—socially, economically and legally,” says UVic President Jamie Cassels. “This learning and research centre and UVic’s Indigenous law degree program are part of UVic’s commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Report and Calls to Action to establish Indigenous law institutes for the development, use and understanding of Indigenous laws.”

SEE INDIGENOUS LAW P.6

Bringing the Strategic Framework to life

The third in a series of articles that explores how staff and faculty across campus are implementing the university’s Strategic Framework.

BY JENNIFER KWAN
Q AND A: DR. JOAQUIN TRAPERO, DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMS

Tell us about your work at the university.

Our team is housed within the Office of Research Services. We are a small but highly visible team and we have two main goals: attract and retain top research talent and bring leading infrastructure to our campus so UVic researchers have cutting-edge technology to support their work. As director of Institutional Programs, I oversee UVic’s participation in several key programs that fund research, including: Canada Foundation for Innovation, the British Columbia Knowledge Development Fund, Canada Research Chairs, Canada 150 Research Chairs and Western Economic Diversification Canada.

Our team helps coordinate major research projects across faculties and research centres. From idea to implementation, in a process that can take several years, we collaborate with staff and faculty across campus on multiple projects at different phases. I would characterize our team as an important hub of information and collaboration.

My team will also be helping with the recruitment of the UVic Strategic Framework Impact Chairs. This new $1.2-million initiative will fund four five-year chairs to lead the way in dynamic learning, respect and reconciliation, sustainable futures, and engaging locally and globally.

Research is central to the university. Research links students, staff, faculty and community, and how we contribute to making the planet a better place. It is fundamental to UVic’s vision, as spelled out in the Strategic Framework.

How do you see the Strategic Framework helping or connecting to your work, and the work of your unit?

Our team lives and breathes strategies 2.1 to 2.5 to advance research excellence and impact, which ultimately means we strive to be in the top tier of the world’s research universities. Each strategy is a carefully

SEE FRAMEWORK P.4

Field school on Salt Spring Island. PHOTO: MIKE MORASH
The Board of Governors approved a $401-million operating budget for the 2019–20 fiscal year at its March 26 meeting, balancing revenues in- cluding the BC government grant and tuition, with expenditures that include scholarships, fellowships and academic programming.

The three-year Planning and Bud- get Framework ensures alignment between the University’s Strategic Framework 2018–23 and the aca- demic and operational priorities for the next three years along with their associated resource commitments in the upcoming year.

Areas of focus represent the Strate- gic Framework’s priorities and strate- gies in its six key areas: cultivate a extraordinary academic environment; advanced research and scholarship; creative and cultural sector and impact; intensity dynamic learning; foster respect and reconciliation; pro- mote sustainable futures; and, engage and globally and locally.

In keeping with the university’s mission, 80 per cent of the total oper- ating budget is allocated to academic areas including faculties, research, library, student financial aid and awards and student services. The other 20 per cent covers operating expenses in areas such as physical plant maintenance and information technology.

The range of expenditures includes direct support to each faculty: build- ing on the commitment to experi- mental education; meeting student demand in engineering, Indigenous law, business and social sciences; sup- port of research chairs; student health services and housing; the campus sustainable food pod; educational and research partnerships with Indig- enous communities; and enhancing research and supports and research infrastructure.

On the revenue side, the provin- cial grant for 2019/20 is expected to increase by $1.5 million. This funding is to cover compensation increases for employees under the Public Sector Pay Equity Act, the net cost of the new employer health tax and funding for expansion of the engineering and computer science and ID/IT programs.

Increased student fees reflect in- creases of two per cent for domestic students; four per cent for international graduate students; four per cent for international undergraduate students who enrolled before April 2018 (grand- parented at a lower increase) and 15 per cent for international undergraduate students enrolled after April 2018.

As a publicly supported research university and consistent with Min- nistry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training policy, domestic stu- dent tuition fee increases at UVic are limited to two per cent. As provincial funding does not support interna- tional undergraduate students, UVic has a responsibility to ensure that international students pay the full cost of their education and contributes positively to the university’s long-term financial stability and commitment to academic quality.

The decision to proceed with the increase, part of a two-year plan initi- ated last year, was made after careful consideration and evaluation of alternatives. To ensure international students could plan for their finances while in Canada, students who applied last year received a letter noting the approved increase for 2018/19 and the proposed increase for 2019/20.

Applications received from interna- tional undergraduate students to UVic con- tinue to increase. The university will continue to look for opportunities to both increase the socio-economic diversity of our international student population and implement programs and services to better support their success while on campus. This will be done through strategies set out in the recently approved Strategic Enrol- ment Management plan and further discussions including at upcoming board meetings.

After the increase, international tuition fees will continue to be lower than peer BC universities. UVic pro- vides international students with a wide range of financial supports that include scholarships, bursaries, emergency loans, as well as work study opportunities.

For 2019/20, other fee increases include an increase of four per cent for standard student housing; four per cent in residential meal plans; five per cent in parking fee and a two per cent increase in child-care fees. Ancillary services operate on a cost- recovery basis.

The Board of Governors had to adjourn and relocate their meeting from the Senate chambers due to loud, ongoing interruptions by students urging the university to divest from fossil fuels. The board will receive an update on the student request at a future meeting.

The board chair expressed multiple times during the meeting that the board wanted to conduct the business in open session with the students present before deciding to adjourn after about 25 minutes. The board agreed to reconvene board discussions in a different building. Minutes of the meeting are expected to be posted as usual along with the next board meetings agenda.

The university’s inaugural Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Plan was unanimously approved by Executive Council and brought to Senate and Board of Governors for information in March 2019. The plan—which aligns student enrol- ment goals with UVic’s Strategic Framework and other key institu- tional initiatives—is now available at uvic.ca/senm.

“We are very pleased to be launching our SEM plan, follow- ing a year of productive work and extensive consultations with our community,” says Vice-President Academic and Provost Valerie Kuehne. “The plan positions the university to achieve our enrolment priorities well into the future, lays out a clear path for reach- ing our goals.”

During 2018, members of the Enrolment Management Working Group and four committees—grad- uate recruitment and retention; undergraduate recruitment and conversion; undergraduate stu- dent retention and success; and data analysis and benchmarking—worked with acrsel Consulting, SEM leaders in North America, to develop the plan’s six goals, sup- porting strategies and implement- ing tactics. The plan aims to maintain student enrolment at about the current size, while optimiz- ing resources.

“The engagement of faculty and staff was integral to the de- velopment of our SEM plan,” says XVP Student Affairs Jim Dunson. “We’re looking forward to the implementa- tion phase, and working together to support student recruit- ment, retention and success in the years ahead.”

As part of the campus engage- ment strategy for the plan’s imple- mentation, a series of presentations will occur throughout April and May prior to the official launch of the plan in May 2019. A copy of the presentation outlining the high- level implementation strategy can be found at uvic.ca/senm.

During 2019, a five-year imple- mentation plan and committee structure will be developed. An annual SEM summit will continue to advance the plan and provide an opportunity to report on implementation progress to the UVic community.
Ancient ways of knowing help heal, bring dignity to Indigenous youth

BY KATE HILDEBRANDT

How does one “speak back” to violence experienced by Indigenous girls, young women, Two-Spirit youth, even whole communities impacted from centuries of oppression? This question frames the work of Sisters Rising, an Indigenous-led, community-based research project in its third year of embracing one overarching intention: to honour Indigenous youth who have experienced sexualized, gender-based violence by offering traditional land- and arts-based teachings.

Shezella Rae-Sam, a graduate student at University of Victoria’s School of Child and Youth Care, has worked on the frontlines of Sisters Rising for the past two years. Sam is Nuu-chah-nulth of Ahousat and works with a team to engage Indigenous youth using traditional methods and materials. Rather than focus on trauma, participants are supported to speak to their strengths through learning and experiencing Indigenous knowledge systems involving spirit and land.

“We ask participants, ‘What do you need to lift yourself up’? They tell us they want to connect to their culture. They want to feel appreciated and respected. They want basic supports for health and community involvement, but they want that support from people who have lived their same story,’ says Sam.

A key finding, says Sam, is that all participants state their claim for connectivity. “They want to feel connected, to find their families, to learn their first language. This involves ‘re-centering,’ which is the focus of my thesis,”

Sam is completing her master’s thesis with Sandrena de Finney, a child and youth care researcher and the principal investigator for Sisters Rising. Sam’s learning has shaped her identity as a “knowledge seeker,” committed to helping Indigenous young people find their way back after experiencing sexualized trauma. To date, Sisters Rising has conducted workshops involving around 150 young people. The team also works with community leaders to help deal with youth, violence and self-harm.

Sam recently applied for her own research grant to continue leading workshops with Indigenous girls and local Elders within her community. “These girls are afraid, withdrawn, ashamed and exhausted. Their testimonies often speak to feelings of a deep ugliness where their sadness turns into anger.” Sam strives to counter their oppression with a narrative of resilience. “We must acknowledge our strengths; we are still here being ancestors did, the spark of identity is within us. When an Elder shares her story, “They want to feel that support from people who have lived their same story.”

“Some connections can be life-altering, she explains. When an Elder tells a girl about her people’s history with cedar—used for housing, clothing, canoes and carvings—then shows her how to make a cedar rose as her ancestors did, the spark of identity is lit as teachings are handed down. As with wood, land-based materials carry forward ancient stories of Coast Salish women crafting ceremonial head-dresses or knitting Cowichan sweaters to help feed their families. “While sharing stories is valuable, says Sam, “some cannot articulate what they’ve been through.” Using land-based materials encourages the participant to express herself using art as her people have done. “When a girl realizes she is part of an ancient way of knowing,” Sam explains, “our findings show this connection can heal and regenerate a young life.”

Sisters Rising is part of the Network for Change and Well-being, a network of researchers, project partners and community leaders. “Our work is unique because it builds one on the other. A cultural understanding and healing is the foundation for social and structural changes.”

“UVic is a founding partner of TRIUMF,” says Vice-President Research David Castle, “and our scientists’ research areas including particle physics, accelerator physics, medical physics and nuclear astrophysics. This five-year funding boost ensures that TRIUMF and UVic can continue to lead in cutting-edge research to advance science, medicine and business.”

TRIUMF is the highest-power rare isotope facility of its kind for producing isotopes—with associated applications—from iron to uranium—produced in the universe! ARIEL’s funded advances in isotope target and ion-source technologies at ARIEL will support researchers in their pursuit of critical advances in the understanding of isotopes while shedding light on some of the most fundamental questions in science, like:

- How and where are the heavy elements—from iron to uranium—produced in the universe?
- What are the best quantum materials for next-generation superconductors or batteries?
- How can we use rare isotopes in the fight against cancer or Alzheimer’s disease?
- Funded advances in isotope target and ion-source technologies at ARIEL will enable the production of entirely new isotopes, while tripling TRIUMF’s output of rare isotopes—with associated benefits in science, medicine and business.

Canada’s 2019 federal budget, unveiled March 19, also included substantial funding for TRIUMF, Canada’s particle accelerator centre, which was co-founded by UVic 50 years ago and continues to be a substantial nexus for UVic-led research. There are currently 18 TRIUMF scientists serving as adjunct faculty members at UVic in particle physics and its related fields.

The five-year federal funding of $292.7 million represents the largest single investment in TRIUMF to date. The five-year federal funding of $292.7 million represents the largest single investment in TRIUMF to date.

BAJA ROYALTY

“TRIUMF is the highest-power rare isotope facility of its kind for producing isotopes—with associated applications—from iron to uranium—produced in the universe!”

TRIUMF is the highest-power rare isotope facility of its kind for producing isotopes—with associated applications—from iron to uranium—produced in the universe! ARIEL’s funded advances in isotope target and ion-source technologies at ARIEL will support researchers in their pursuit of critical advances in the understanding of isotopes while shedding light on some of the most fundamental questions in science, like:

TRIUMF’s commercialization initiative, the funding will support two major research platforms at TRIUMF: the Institute for Advanced Medical Isotopes and the UVic-led Advanced Rare Isotope Laboratory (ARIEL).

The five-year federal funding of $292.7 million represents the largest single investment in TRIUMF to date.

In addition to bolstering TRIUMF’s commercialization initiative, the funding will support two major research platforms at TRIUMF: the Institute for Advanced Medical Isotopes and the UVic-led Advanced Rare Isotope Laboratory (ARIEL).

“TRIUMF is the highest-power rare isotope facility of its kind for producing isotopes—with associated applications—from iron to uranium—produced in the universe!”

“TRIUMF is the highest-power rare isotope facility of its kind for producing isotopes—with associated applications—from iron to uranium—produced in the universe!”
Innovator and entrepreneur Sue Paish, QC, CEO of Canada’s Digital Technology Supercluster, and UVic’s GUSTAVSON Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year (2019), says the Pe-ri-cluster has positioned Canada as the world better – whether it is through leading digital technologies developed within BC, percluster is one of five business-led innovation superclusters, which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and fostering strong industry-led consortia who will support the scaling of small enterprises while delivering jobs, creating a competitive and attractive technology cluster.

Paish has led an influential Women in Business Lifetime Achievement Award from Business in Your Co- worker. Women's Executive Network has named her to their Hall of Fame for Canada’s Top 10 Most Influential Women, and the Public Policy Forum has honoured her with the Peter Lougheed Award for Public Policy.

In addition to the Supercluster, Paish has led transformative change in UVic. Paish holds an honorary doctorate from the British Columbia Institute of Technology and is an appointee to Queen’s Counsel in BC.

Innovator and entrepreneur Sue Paish, QC, CEO of Canada’s Digital Technology Supercluster, and UVic’s GUSTAVSON Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year (2019), says the Pe-ri-cluster has positioned Canada as the world better – whether it is through leading digital technologies developed within BC, percluster is one of five business-led innovation superclusters, which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and fostering strong industry-led consortia who will support the scaling of small enterprises while delivering jobs, creating a competitive and attractive technology cluster.

Paish has led an influential Women in Business Lifetime Achievement Award from Business in Your Co- worker. Women’s Executive Network has named her to their Hall of Fame for Canada’s Top 10 Most Influential Women, and the Public Policy Forum has honoured her with the Peter Lougheed Award for Public Policy.

In addition to the Supercluster, Paish has led transformative change in UVic. Paish holds an honorary doctorate from the British Columbia Institute of Technology and is an appointee to Queen’s Counsel in BC.

Innovator and entrepreneur Sue Paish, QC, CEO of Canada’s Digital Technology Supercluster, and UVic’s GUSTAVSON Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year (2019), says the Pe-ri-cluster has positioned Canada as the world better – whether it is through leading digital technologies developed within BC, percluster is one of five business-led innovation superclusters, which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and fostering strong industry-led consortia who will support the scaling of small enterprises while delivering jobs, creating a competitive and attractive technology cluster.

Paish has led an influential Women in Business Lifetime Achievement Award from Business in Your Co- worker. Women’s Executive Network has named her to their Hall of Fame for Canada’s Top 10 Most Influential Women, and the Public Policy Forum has honoured her with the Peter Lougheed Award for Public Policy.

In addition to the Supercluster, Paish has led transformative change in UVic. Paish holds an honorary doctorate from the British Columbia Institute of Technology and is an appointee to Queen’s Counsel in BC.
eDNA tool a leap in progress detecting endangered frog species in BC

BY ANNE MacLAURIN

Trampling through international waters in search of salmon had its ups and downs according to PhD student, Perumthuruthil Suseelan Vishnu, who spent six weeks aboard the Russian vessel, the Professor Kaganovsky. “The first week was great,” says Vishnu, “but I struggled with seasick—A new genetic tool developed by UVic—technology detects the presence of a species in a matter of days. Traditionally, it can be weeks in the field for researchers to make direct observations for site assessments undertaken for a variety of reasons such as to study species or identifying possible constraints for natural resource development. “The DNA—survey methods can be logistically challenging, time-consuming and expensive. With eDNA, a recovered specimen, expect a result and know basically it’s fish and wildlife,” says Caren Helbing, a UVic professor of biochemistry and microbiology. “The technology allows us to see the unseen. It is a game changer for science as it allows researchers to determine a higher detection success rate in a very short period of time, while cutting costs, time and impact on the environment.”

eDNA refers to the genetic material that an organism releases into the environment such as skin cells, feces and mucus. The eDNA technology features the use of an Integrifl-DNA test that can be used by regulators, resource managers, researchers and citizens for enhanced detection reliability, says Helbing. “The ultimate goal is for regulatory and public acceptance of eDNA.”

Helbing and her co-workers at UVic and Hemmera Environics Inc. used the technology, which has a patent pending, to confirm the presence of the coastal tagged frog west of Lillooet, BC. The scientists were able to confirm the existence of tagged frog DNA at a rate 10 times higher over the course of five days compared to traditional surveying methods conducted previously over a four-year period, according to research recently published in the open-access journal PeerJ.

This resulted in a tripling of the known range of this species.

From 2000 to 2013, four previous studies examined 292 sites using traditional ecological survey methods in multiple regions west of Lillooet. The occurrence of frogs was low at about 0.7 percent. Helbing’s research, conducted over five days in 2016, detected tagged frog DNA at a higher rate of 7.6 percent.

The newest was the navy destroyer Annapolis, which was intentionally sunk in Howe Sound in 2015. Bulger later sloggender her way through hours of video counting groundfish. “I got very good at identifying fish-shaped blobs in poor visibility,” she laughs.

In all, she observed 14 groundfish species, eight of them rockfish. Most striking was the difference between abundance and biodiversity at reef sites. “Artificial reefs had very high numbers of rockfish or not many at all. Natural reefs consistently had a medium number of rockfish and greater diversity—more species.”

Bulger is now using the sonar data to create high-definition 3D maps of each site. “I’m looking at more fine-scale physical characteristics that may be driving fish patterns. This could have implications for future artificial reef design.”

More studies need to be done to better understand how artificial reefs impact an ecosystem before moving forward, advises Bulger. “This study suggests that human-made habitat may be useful in the conservation of some threatened species. But to get diverse ecosystems, preserving older, more heterogeneous natural reefs may be the best option.”

UVic geography PhD student joins International Year of the Salmon study

BY BY VALERIE SHORE

Over the last 27 years, eight ships and one airplane have been intentionally sunk, of the BC coast for the enjoyment of recreational drivers—and to enhance habitat for local marine life. “Artificial reefs are in the middle of the ocean colour satellite images. “Phytoplankton is the basic building block of the marine food web. The Ring of Fire, along with multi-beam sonar technology, Bulger surveyed nine artificial reefs and nine natural reefs at sites from Sidney to Campbell River to the mainland. Depths ranged from 10 to 65 metres. She and her field crew of five—four undergraduates plus one engineering graduate student—ran the ROV along transects at each site, shooting video and documenting depth, current, slope, roughness of surfaces, and nearby habitat quality. Mapping software was used to select natural reef sites, which ranged from underwater ridges to boulder fields and rocky walls. They were situated as close as possible to the artificial reefs. The oldest artificial reef surveyed was the steamship Capilano, which foundered near Powell River in 1915.

The work was funded by the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program and the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change-Strategic.

Are artificial reefs conserving at-risk marine populations?

BY ANNE MacLAURIN

Trampling through international waters in search of salmon had its ups and downs according to PhD student, Perumthuruthil Suseelan Vishnu, who spent six weeks aboard the Russian vessel, the Professor Kaganovsky. “The first week was great,” says Vishnu, “but I struggled with seasick—A new genetic tool developed by UVic—technology detects the presence of a species in a matter of days. Traditionally, it can be weeks in the field for researchers to make direct observations for site assessments undertaken for a variety of reasons such as to study species or identifying possible constraints for natural resource development. “The DNA—survey methods can be logistically challenging, time-consuming and expensive. With eDNA, a recovered specimen, expect a result and know basically it’s fish and wildlife,” says Caren Helbing, a UVic professor of biochemistry and microbiology. “The technology allows us to see the unseen. It is a game changer for science as it allows researchers to determine a higher detection success rate in a very short period of time, while cutting costs, time and impact on the environment.”

eDNA refers to the genetic material that an organism releases into the environment such as skin cells, feces and mucus. The eDNA technology features the use of an Integrifl-DNA test that can be used by regulators, resource managers, researchers and citizens for enhanced detection reliability, says Helbing. “The ultimate goal is for regulatory and public acceptance of eDNA.”

Helbing and her co-workers at UVic and Hemmera Environics Inc. used the technology, which has a patent pending, to confirm the presence of the coastal tagged frog west of Lillooet, BC. The scientists were able to confirm the existence of tagged frog DNA at a rate 10 times higher over the course of five days compared to traditional surveying methods conducted previously over a four-year period, according to research recently published in the open-access journal PeerJ.

This resulted in a tripling of the known range of this species.

From 2000 to 2013, four previous studies examined 292 sites using traditional ecological survey methods in multiple regions west of Lillooet. The occurrence of frogs was low at about 0.7 percent. Helbing’s research, conducted over five days in 2016, detected tagged frog DNA at a higher rate of 7.6 percent.
The centre will also house the Indigenous Law Research Unit (ILRU), which is a world leader in the study and application of Indigenous law. ILRU has partnered with over 30 Indigenous communities across Canada on legal research questions related to lands, water, governance, citizenship, gender and human rights, harms and injuries, and child welfare, and works with institutions across the globe to revitalize and rebuild Indigenous legal orders.

"Figuratively and literally, this commitment will enable us to build a strong, stable foundation from which to teach and study Indigenous law as one of the great legal traditions of the world," says Val Napoleon, director of the nlu and the JD/ID program.

UVic is committed to continuing its work with other institutions to share knowledge, curriculum and course materials to help them develop their own versions of the JD/ID and nlu.

The centre, to be built as an addition to the current UVic law building, will be designed to reflect and honour the long-standing relationships between the law school and the Songhees, Esquimalt and sy̱u’úth peoples. It will include public lecture theatres, faculty and staff offices, an Elders’ room and spaces for gathering, ceremony, and sharing of histories and knowledge.

The building’s state-of-the-art digital capabilities will enable students to connect with their home territories and allow communities to share their legal traditions with one another. It will also allow UVic: to host conferences, public workshops, research and partnerships for faculty, students and visitors. Planning for the building is in the early concept stage.

The development and 2018 launch of the JD/ID program relied on consultations with and support from a wide range of stakeholders across Canada. The BC government invested $2.5 million in the program’s operating costs in Budget 2018. Also last year, Vancity contributed $1 million and the McConnell Foundation donated $500,000.

Response to the TRC

This national centre for Indigenous law and reconciliation is fundamental to the fulfillment of Calls to Action numbers 27, 28 and especially 50 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: “In keeping with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal organizations, to fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and access to justice in accordance with the unique cultures of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.”

Senator Murray Sinclair, former judge and Chief Commissioner of the TRC, said of the centre for Indigenous law and reconciliation and the joint JD/ID program: “They are precisely what we had hoped would follow from the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and they promise to form the very best of legacies: a set of initiatives that reject and reverse the pattern of denigration and neglect identified in our report, and that establish the conditions for effective action long into the future.”

Momentum builds behind UVic’s respect and reconciliation commitments

Securing funding for a new national centre for Indigenous law and reconciliation, and launching the world’s first Indigenous law degree program, are just two of the significant steps UVic has taken this year to advance its commitment to fostering respect and reconciliation.

Other initiatives over the past 18 months to further both this Strategic Framework priority, as well as the goals of UVic’s Indigenous Plan, 2017–22, include:

- Two new academic programs that address the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner’s Calls to Action: a Certificate in Indigenous Language Proficiency, and the Indigenous Studies Major in the Faculty of Humanities, with Lisa Kahaleole Hall, a Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) scholar, as its first director;
- Five Indigenous faculty members appointed to newly funded tenure-track positions in humanities, law, nursing and public administration, and 20 Indigenous staff hired;
- Kwawúth’úikw’ t’st’awt’st’k’ oil artist Carey Newman’s appointment to a three-year term as the Audain Professor of Art History in the department of Visual Arts;
- Nineteen new scholarships and awards for Indigenous students, totalling $1.4 million in additional support;
- Further expansion of UVic’s International Indigenous Cooperative Education Program, unique globally, through two new partnerships with Australian universities and the creation of a new Indigenous co-op coordinator position;
- Renewal of the Centre for Indigenous Research and Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE);
- Creation of the Department of Indigenous Education in the Faculty of Education, with Jean-Paul Restoule, an Anishinaabe scholar and educator, as chair;
- Appointment of Qwëd’úl yah’łaht, Robina Thomas, as the inaugural Executive Director of the Office of Indigenous and Academic Community Engagement;
- Launch of the Indigenous Youth 3C Challenge, a new, non-credit entrepreneurship program to encourage Indigenous youth to engage in the economy in their own terms, with $3.4m in federal funding for the National Consortium for Indigenous Economic Development (NCIED) and Gustavson School of Business to work in partnership with the BC Association of Friendship Centres;
- Twenty-three Indigenous-focused academic programs offered across campus ranging from undergraduate certificates to doctoral programs.

Watch for more details in a progress report on the implementation of UVic’s Indigenous Plan later this year.

Victoria | Shelbourne Village Square • 250-477-7234
Home | Auto | Marine | Life | Travel | Business
waypoint.ca
Students Ambassadors donate $2,000 to help students in financial need

BY MEGAN LOWRY

After a busy year of classes and volunteering across campus, this year’s cohort of UVic Student Ambassadors met at the University Club to celebrate their achievements.

“We are so proud of the work we did,” says Kayleigh Erickson, Student Ambassadors co-president. “We not only supported students through recharge events with free hot chocolate and cupcakes but this year we gave directly to students who need financial help the most.”

Using profits from selling flowers and frames at convocation, the student-led group is donating $1,000 to the Student Emergency Fund. The fund offers support to students who are in financial crises and need immediate assistance.

“An emergency is something you can’t plan for,” says Dipayan Nag, Student Ambassador co-president. “Knowing that we can help a fellow student pay tuition or fly home to see loved ones during a family crisis is really rewarding.”

Established through the Alumni Association in 1996, the Student Ambassadors have given more than $42,000 to campus initiatives. “Our mission is to improve student life on campus through service projects and philanthropy,” says Erickson. “Part of that is also helping students through the transition to alumni by showing them how to remain connected to campus.”

So, it’s fitting that an anonymous alumni donor surprised the group—matching their contribution to the Student Emergency Fund this year, making their total gift $2,000.

“It was a complete surprise to us,” says Nag. “But it shows us the power of a collective community coming together to make a difference, and will hopefully continue to inspire giving across campus.”

BY ANNE MacLAURIN

As field schools become more popular, both at UVic and in higher education generally, the publication of a first-of-its-kind book, Out There Learning: Critical Reflections on Off-Campus Study Programs, is timely. Edited by a team of UVic faculty members across five faculties, the book is unique in its multi-disciplinary scope.

Cameron Owens, an Associate Teaching Professor from the Department of Geography, and Associate Professor Deborah Curran, who is cross-appointed in the Faculty of Law and School of Environmental Studies, were among the scholars who contributed to the book, which was launched in March at the Legacy Gallery.

“The process of collaboration with this book was unique,” says Owens. “All of the contributing authors met face-to-face for a workshop to discuss their chapters, which I think leads to a more coherent and integrative read; a community was built,” he adds.

Owens hopes the book sparks a discussion about the value of short-term off campus study programs. It is often assumed these programs have great pedagogical benefit but Owens and other authors wanted to subject this claim to critical scrutiny. Importantly, there is the question of how students can work with communities they visit rather than extract from them. Owens’ field programs include a component where students invest the knowledge and enthusiasm gained in the field into projects that will benefit the community.

Co-editor and law/environmental studies professor, Curran teaches the only interdisciplinary field school based in law in Canada. “This book recounts that exploration of the power and potential of learning through field school experiences from student- and community-centred perspectives, and challenges us all to more carefully craft learning experiences that connect people, place, history, emotion and ideology,” says Curran.

The book includes three sections on the pedagogy of field schools, implications of place-based learning and assessing short-term study abroad programs.

Helga Thorson (Germanic and Slavic studies) and Elizabeth Vibert (History) were the book’s other editors. “This is the first book of its kind to delve into critical issues related to off-campus learning. Some disciplines—such as geography and geology—have long-standing traditions running field schools, whereas in other disciplines—for example, law and history—off-campus study programs are relatively new,” explains Thorson.

“I’m really proud of the way the book brings together insights into field schools in Indigenous spaces, Global South spaces, and elsewhere. I’m also very proud of the integration of student voices in the volume,” says Vibert.

Out There Learning also includes 15 student-written vignettes about their experiences. One student writes, “What you can’t get from a textbook: a field course in the context of a legal education is a chance to learn more than the black and white of a statute or case decision. It provides the colour that gets bleached out of our textbooks and brings life back to the law.”

IN’S April 4 is the time for the annual Department of Visual Arts BFA exhibition, the year titled Scatter. Work by 29 graduating student artists will fill the Visual Arts building with painting, photography, sculpture, performance, digital media and installations. Don’t miss the always-popular opening reception, starting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 18. Scatter continues 10 a.m.–6 p.m. daily to April 28. (Exhibition will be closed Easter Sunday.)

Work by 29 graduating student artists will fill the Visual Arts building with painting, photography, sculpture, performance, digital media and installations. Don’t miss the always-popular opening reception, starting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 18. Scatter continues 10 a.m.–6 p.m. daily to April 28. (Exhibition will be closed Easter Sunday.)

BY ANNE MacLAURIN

As field schools become more popular, both at UVic and in higher education generally, the publication of a first-of-its-kind book, Out There Learning: Critical Reflections on Off-Campus Study Programs, is timely. Edited by a team of UVic faculty members across five faculties, the book is unique in its multi-disciplinary scope.

Cameron Owens, an Associate Teaching Professor from the Department of Geography, and Associate Professor Deborah Curran, who is cross-appointed in the Faculty of Law and School of Environmental Studies, were among the scholars who contributed to the book, which was launched in March at the Legacy Gallery.

“The process of collaboration with this book was unique,” says Owens. “All of the contributing authors met face-to-face for a workshop to discuss their chapters, which I think leads to a more coherent and integrative read; a community was built,” he adds.

Owens hopes the book sparks a discussion about the value of short-term off campus study programs. It is often assumed these programs have great pedagogical benefit but Owens and other authors wanted to subject this claim to critical scrutiny. Importantly, there is the question of how students can work with communities they visit rather than extract from them. Owens’ field programs include a component where students invest the knowledge and enthusiasm gained in the field into projects that will benefit the community.

Co-editor and law/environmental studies professor, Curran teaches the only interdisciplinary field school based in law in Canada. “This book recounts that exploration of the power and potential
Romeo Dallaire receives UVic’s first-ever Public Humanist award

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

Retired lieutenant-general, former Canadian senator and best-selling author Romeo Dallaire received the first-ever Public Humanist award in March from UVic’s Faculty of Humanities for his tireless efforts to change the world for the better.

Dallaire’s deep humanitarian commitment evokes the spirit, impact and importance of the humanities. His life’s work enriches human dignity, provokes critical inquiry and inspires humane feelings. As commander of the United Nations’ peacekeeping mission during the Rwandan genocide 25 years ago, Dallaire tried to protect the country’s vulnerable minority Tutsi population, even as world leaders ignored his warnings of the coming violence. Some 800,000 people were killed.

Since Rwanda, Dallaire has dedicated his life to humanitarian efforts and is striving to eradicate the use of child soldiers. He has also worked tirelessly as an advocate for veterans returning from combat.

The Faculty of Humanities’ new dean, Chris Goto-Jones, says the retired lieutenant-general embodies the ethos of the faculty’s newly launched Humanitas Awards. “He’s well known as a humanitarian and a leader, but also as an accomplished writer and a generous, honest observer of the human spirit. Through his cultivated commitments and his actions, Dallaire has sought to change the world for the better, which is precisely what we seek to recognize with these new awards.”

Dallaire’s integrity and courage in the face of unimaginable horror have made him one of Canada’s most admired citizens. He has co-authored three books, including Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda, which won the 2003 Shaughnessy Cohen Award for Political Writing and 2004 Governor General’s Award for non-fiction.

Dallaire accepted the Public Humanist award at an evening gala on March 15. Science fiction and fantasy writer Ursula K. Le Guin and UVic alumna Ashik Akins were also honored at the event.

Le Guin, the late and esteemed American novelist who passed away last year at age 88, was posthumously honored with the Historical Humanist Award for her visionary work as a thinker and writer of more than 50 books, which defined genre and inspired legions of artists. Akins, who graduated from UVic (in 2009 in Latin American studies and environmental studies), received the Emerging Humanist Award. Akins founded the non-profit initiative Mosqoy, which has collaborated with Indigenous Quechua communities of the Peruvian Andes since 2006 to support the post-secondary education of more than 70 students and promote the artisan work of 130 women through fair trade.

“I always advise them on what their rights and responsibilities are. I give suggestions on how they should outline their personal statements so that they read well to whoever who would be making the decision. The last thing Fraser wants is for students to be scared of speaking up for themselves. Fraser’s vision for her work is a university committed to fairness, and an important part of that is making sure that students and faculty alike are empowered to speak up against any perceived issues or unfairness. “The university wants students to succeed,” she says. “But if students don’t raise their concerns about things that aren’t working, then the university will assume things are going completely to plan.” She emphasizes that students’ voices are integral to UVic’s success.

Will she be here for 18 years? Fraser isn’t sure. But right now, she is throwing herself into her work at UVic, making sure students know she exists and that they aren’t alone in difficult administrative situations. Even when she can’t help a student herself, Fraser always makes sure they leave her office knowing how to contact the person who can help them. “I operate under the concept of an open-door policy,” she says. “I will never turn a student away.”

Fraser can be contacted either by phone at 250-721-8357 or by email at ombuddy@uvic.ca. Her office is in the Student Union Building, Room 8205, and she can be seen by appointment or during her walk-in hours.

uvicbuddyperson.ca

Women’s rugby 7s team claims national title

BY BRADEN WILLIAMS

On March 24—exactly three weeks after claiming their second-straight Canada West banner—the Vikes women’s rugby 7s team captured the 2019 National University 7s championship title in Kingston, Ontario. The Vikes went undefeated in the tournament, reaffirming their place as one of the premier women’s rugby schools in Canada. “I am so proud of our teams effort all season and this was the perfect way to cap it off,” says Vikes head coach Brittany Waters. “This was some of our best and most consistent rugby all year. We played to our strengths all weekend and stuck to our game plan, which was to play a wide game, maintain possession off restarts and play a fast up tempo game.”

“The part of the weekend that impressed me most was how the team continued to build off each game and kept elevating their performance,” says assistant coach Mandy Marchak.

The national title caps off a very successful year for the squad whose accolades include a Canada West silver medal, a fifth-place finish at the 15s national championships, and the Canada West 7s banner for a second consecutive year.