

# REACH AWARDS

CELEBRATING FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT p. 5, 6 & 7



# THE RING

OCTOBER 2019

The University of Victoria's  
community newspaper

ring.uvic.ca



University  
of Victoria

## SPEED READ

### EMERGENCY ALERTS

#### Stay safe with the new SafetyApp

The UVic SafetyApp is a new way to receive emergency notifications from the university on your mobile phone. Find important safety information, contacts, maps and procedures—all in one place! The app is a new tool in the UVic Emergency Alerts notification suite, and does not replace other channels for emergency notification. Learn more and get the app at [uvic.ca/alerts](http://uvic.ca/alerts).

### LABOUR RELATIONS

#### Mediated agreement reached between university and union

Following several months of negotiations and two days of mediation, a tentative collective agreement was reached Sept. 20 between UVic and CUPE 4163 (Component 3) under the BC government's Sustainable Services Negotiating Mandate. The tentative agreement, which will be in effect May 1, 2019 to April 30, 2022, is subject to ratification by the union and its members, and by the university's Board of Governors. No further details will be available until the agreement is ratified by the bargaining unit and the Board of Governors. [uvic.ca/bargaining](http://uvic.ca/bargaining)



Bryden at the Legislature Buildings. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES.

1,200+

NUMBER OF  
POLITICAL  
SCANDALS  
IN CANADA  
CATALOGUED  
IN BRYDEN'S  
RESEARCH

## Distinctly Canadian: new research on political scandals

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

UVic historian Penny Bryden knows what riles Canadian voters. While sex scandals engross Americans and Brits, Bryden's research shows mismanaged cash angers Canadian voters, proving that pocketbooks are most sacrosanct in the true North.

But what constitutes a scandal in the first place? In an editorial published in the national edition of *The Globe and Mail*, Bryden outlined her three criteria for a true scandal: first, there must be a transgression; next, a cover-up; and finally, sustained public outrage.

"There has been no shortage of 'breaking news' on the scandal front in the last decade," explains Bryden. "In Canada, we

get outraged about misspent money more than anything else, whereas in other countries like the UK and US, sex scandals are more common."

Bryden's five-year research project, funded by SSHRC, focuses on a broad range of scandals in Canada—including financial, loyalty, sex, security and entitlement. She is halfway through the study.

So far, Bryden has catalogued 1,200 to 1,400 scandals over Canada's history and she describes it "as a running list."

Bryden uncovers new scandals all the time—recent ones, but also historical scandals that left little trace in the public record.

"I'm trying to find less well-known scandals," Bryden says. "It's not always what you think will upset people."

### Outrage over misspent taxpayer dollars is distinctly Canadian

Canadian political scandals involve everything from the purchase of a \$16 glass of orange juice by former Conservative cabinet minister Bev Oda and the sale of an amusement park owned by former BC Premier Bill Vander Zalm, to the first major political scandal in 1873.

Bryden explains that this first political scandal after Confederation involved the Canadian Pacific Railway when then-prime minister Sir John A. Macdonald and his Conservative government were accused of receiving financial support from a shipping

SEE SCANDALS P.3



## UVic comes together in sorrow and support

Approximately 300 people gathered in the heart of the University of Victoria's campus on Sept. 17 to be with each other for comfort, healing and reflection following the devastating bus accident in which two students died and several were injured.

The tone was set by a powerful welcome, blessing and prayer by Tsartlip Elder May Sam, who urged those assembled to take care of each other during this difficult time.

Sam, who expressed love and compassion in her moving remarks said she was thankful to be invited "to make sure that you're safe and that you're all coming together and holding each other up."

The BiblioCafé was filled to capacity by students, family members, faculty and staff who also heard from UVic Chancellor Shelagh Rogers who said it was a "beautiful outpouring of support" to see how people who don't know each other come together "to express solidarity, to express your sadness."

She urged people to take advantage of the healing benefits of the nature that surrounds UVic, noting the university's location is one of the reasons people choose to come here.

The university community has been in mourning since a tragic accident on the evening of Sept. 13 in which two students

died and several others were injured while on a field trip to the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre, a research and teaching facility on the west coast of Vancouver Island. While some students were treated for injuries and returned to UVic on Sept. 14, one student remains in hospital. A total of 47 UVic passengers were on board.

### Support ongoing

University support and outreach staff met the students on their return to campus and provided a space for them and their family

SEE COMMUNITY GATHERING P.2



Updated territory  
acknowledgement

Events and gatherings at UVic usually begin with a territory acknowledgment. This part of the university's protocol is a vital and visible way that we honour the territory and reflect on our collective responsibilities being on these lands. UVic has updated its communications standards to include the territory acknowledgement on business cards, letterhead and other official stationery. The acknowledgement also continues to evolve and reflect our understandings arising from ongoing relationships with local Indigenous communities. We do our best to be responsive to and respectful of the diversity of community perspectives. For example, we have replaced the phrase "Lekwungen-speaking peoples" with "Lekwungen peoples" in the territory acknowledgement. We have also been asked to use the spelling "Lekwungen" to describe the Songhees and Esquimalt communities and the language they speak. Finally, members of Elders Voices asked us to use the title "Elders" rather than "Old Ones" when introducing or referring to Elders.



2019 Orange Shirt Day group photo participants. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Support grows for Orange Shirt Day

A large crowd of university faculty, staff and students honoured residential school survivors on Orange Shirt Day on Sept. 30, gathering for a Welcome to the Territory, drumming and a group photo before attending a film screening and discussion at First

Peoples House. More than 2,000 orange shirts were sold on campus this year, featuring a design contributed by Audain Professor of Contemporary Art Practice Carey Newman. Proceeds support the Elders' engagement fund and Witness Blanket project.

The University of Victoria is committed to fostering respect, reconciliation and mutual understanding with all Indigenous peoples and communities. [uvic.ca/orangeshirtday](http://uvic.ca/orangeshirtday)

Short-term investment  
policies to receive update

In its continuing commitment to promote a sustainable future, the university is updating two policies related to its investments, and is inviting feedback from interested faculty, staff and students.

Over the spring and summer, UVic's finance office worked with student group representatives to discuss and review its responsible investment policies, specifically the Short Term Investment Policy and the policy that guides it, the Policy on Social Responsibility and UVic Investments.

Short-term investments—distinct from endowment funds, donations and other long-term financial assets—are intended to provide returns on the university's short term cash that is used over the school year to fund operations, research, capital projects and other requirements.

The university invests these funds over a much shorter period to ensure cash is available when required. The return on these investments form part of UVic's annual operating budget, which is approved in March by the Board of Governors.

Examples of investment strategies include those that consider environmental, social and governance issues (ESG); integration; engagement; negative/exclusionary screening; positive screening/best in class; generating positive environmental, social and finance return; and sustainability-themed investments.

Goals of the review include continuing to achieve UVic's investment objectives, updating responsible investment practices and aligning each of the policies with UVic's Strategic

Framework. UVic aims to be a global leader in environmental, social and institutional sustainability through research, academic programs, campus operations and the impact and influence of our students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Consultations will continue through October. It is expected the review of the Policy on Social Responsibility and UVic Investments will go to the Board of Governors for discussion later this year, and the Short Term Investment Policy review will go to the board in 2020.

Meanwhile, the Board of Governors is informing itself on best practices in responsible investment with education sessions. The first, in September, addressed the important role that responsible investment plays in a sustainable, inclusive and productive economy.

A second session in November, that includes members of the UVic Foundation, will include understanding how the university foundation investment managers integrate environmental, social and governance factors into decisions, the implications of the transition from a fossil-fuel economy to renewable energies and the benefits and implications of the foundation being a signatory to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment.

Members of the university community interested in getting more information and to provide feedback should visit the short-term investments page of the financial planning website: [bit.ly/19-invest](http://bit.ly/19-invest).

COMMUNITY GATHERING CONTINUED FROM P. 1

members to reunite and learn about the counselling, health services and other resources including academic accommodations. Individual care plans have been developed to meet the students' complex and ongoing needs.

First-year biology students John Geerdes, 18, from Iowa City, Iowa, and Emma Machado, also 18, from Winnipeg, Manitoba, died at the scene.

UVic President Jamie Cassels told those at the intimate campus gathering that "Emma and John were taken far too soon and we are so sorry for this loss.

"Along with you and others who are here, as this university's president—and as a father—my heart aches for the families, loved ones, friends and classmates of the two students who died," said Cassels. "Your university is seeking to do everything we can to help the students who were on the bus, and those closest to them, through this difficult situation."

Jonathan Granirer, director of outreach and university relations at the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS), told those gathered about the importance of finding comfort with friends, and building those connections especially when newly arrived on campus.

"If you need support and haven't asked for it, please ask for it," he said, noting that the UVSS has a wide range of clubs to find people with similar interests to forge new friendships.

The university reminded all students, faculty and staff of the resources available including extended hours at MultiFaith Services, which provided a space for quiet reflection.

Students can access counselling support through Counselling Services, while faculty and staff can seek support through the Employee and Family Assistance Program. Other resources include UVic's Health Services and Indigenous support services.

Review underway

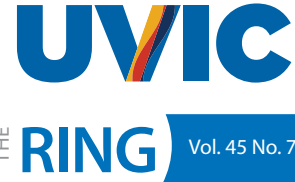
The university has begun a review into the circumstances around the bus accident. The RCMP and Transport Canada are conducting investigations and once completed will also provide valuable information.

"Very soon after the university was informed about the accident, we knew that we wanted to fully understand what happened," said Gayle Gorrill, vice-president of finance and operations.

"The safety of our students is extremely important to us at UVic. Whenever there are situations such as this tragedy, we need to learn from them."

The fall field trip to the research centre is an optional two-day offering that provides research and learning activities at the world-class teaching and research facility that is an oceanside campus owned by UVic, the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Calgary and University of Alberta. The fall field trip has been held for at least 18 years.

The only other UVic trip this term to the research centre is in late October when a mode of transportation other than a bus will be used. Gorrill said the outcomes of the review will inform decisions around transportation for other future trips.



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Cleves, Gifford, Darimont and Tanaka. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

## Royal Society of Canada elects four UVic researchers

Four University of Victoria researchers in the fields of social sciences and humanities have been elected to the Royal Society of Canada (RSC), a 137-year old council of distinguished scholars and leaders recognized with the country’s highest academic honour.

Professors Robert Gifford (psychology and environmental studies) and James Tanaka (psychology) are elected new fellows, while Rachel Cleves (history) and Chris Darimont (geography) join as new members to the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists—with Cleves the first UVic humanities researcher to join this group. The society’s peer-elected recipients are chosen for their academic excellence and making “remarkable contributions” in the arts, humanities and sciences, and Canadian public life.

### Robert Gifford

Gifford, an expert in environmental psychology, developed what he calls “the dragons of inaction” or the reasons why people don’t do more to mitigate climate change. He is passionate about understanding what it will take to improve climate-related human behaviour.

Government officials in the Netherlands and Canada have tapped Gifford’s expertise to shape effective programs and policy to fight climate change. In June, he met with government officials at Environment and Climate Change Canada to critique past programs and advise on future policies.

Gifford’s work has drawn global media attention including reports in CBC, NPR, BBC, ABC and Al Jazeera. He is a prolific author and his research was featured on the cover

of New Scientist in 2016, while an article he wrote for the American Psychologist has been the most cited in the flagship journal since that 2011 publication.

“I am honoured and privileged to be able to work on human decision-making about the environment,” says Gifford, “Helping to discover how people think about this crucial problem is what inspires me.”

### James Tanaka

Tanaka, an internationally recognized expert on facial recognition, has devoted much of his career to understanding the processes of face recognition in people on the autism spectrum.

Tanaka and a team of UVic faculty, students, community professionals and families, are dedicated to research and development of facial recognition tools for children and adults with autism. The work, conducted through the UVic Centre for Autism Research, Technology and Education, which was founded by Tanaka, involves a range of hands-on outreach activities to bridge research, education and community engagement.

“Without question, my students are my inspiration—their boundless curiosity, fresh approach to scientific questions and unwavering dedication to research—has propelled my work in new, unexpected directions,” Tanaka says. “Together, we share a common belief that cognitive and brain sciences can unlock the mysteries of the human mind and this knowledge can be used to help others.”

By creating “new tools for different minds,” Tanaka and his team have improved the lives of thousands of individuals with autism and their families across the globe.

### Rachel Cleves

Cleves calls herself an archive rat. The description is apt—reflecting countless hours of meticulous research she devotes to her projects—but only tells part of the story. Cleves, UVic’s first humanities scholar admitted as a new RSC college member, is expert at finding little-known historical stories that illuminate contemporary times. Her most recent book, *Charity and Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America*, weaves diaries, letters, poems, and even tax records to tell the story of two 19th century women whose relationship was described and accepted publicly as marital—long before the fight for marriage equality began.

“A lot of my work is dedicated to promoting diversity and equity,” Cleves notes. Violence, sexuality, illicit sex—no subject is off limits for Cleves. Her forthcoming biography of Scottish writer Norman Douglas, a literary star in the early 20th century and also known for abusing children, examines sex tourism and child prostitution at a time when these practices were less taboo than today.

“We can’t just write about the things that are romantic and erotic to us. We have to write about the unpleasant stuff too,” she says. Cleves is excited to “enhance scholarly life in Canada” and plans to continue her advocacy on equity and diversity as a member of the RSC.

### Chris Darimont

Darimont is an interdisciplinary conservation scientist and the Raincoast Chair of Applied Conservation Science. At a global level, his work focuses on the unique ecology of “human predators,” or hunters and fishers, with novel insight into the causes and consequences of humanity’s distinct predatory behaviour. Closer to home, Darimont’s group conducts long-term community-engaged research on wildlife and fisheries, commonly working collaboratively with Indigenous governments of coastal British Columbia. This applied work focuses on providing habitat, foods and security for culturally, economically and ecologically important animals like bears, wolves and mountain goats.

“I’m infinitely curious about the natural world, passionate about applied research to protect it, and have the privilege to work with extraordinary people who make a difference,” says Darimont.

Research out of Darimont’s lab has real-world impact with Indigenous governments applying findings to wildlife, fisheries and forest management. Darimont has served as an expert witness before the National Energy Board and Auditor General of BC. He was also an expert panel member on the design of BC’s proposed endangered species legislation and is a frequent contributor to media outlets.

## around the ring

### Fire drills on campus

UVic runs almost 100 fire drills in campus buildings every year. Fire drills are required by legislation, and allow UVic building emergency teams to practice their roles. When you hear the fire bell, immediately evacuate the building and go the Building Emergency Assembly Point. Encourage others around you to do the same. If you see flames or smoke, pull the nearest fire alarm. Call 911 and provide any details you have. Follow up with a call to Campus Security at 250-721-7599. Fire drills typically take 15 minutes or less—thank you for your cooperation. [bit.ly/19-drill](https://bit.ly/19-drill)

### Vikes Championship Breakfast tops \$5.6m for student athletes

On Sept. 24, Vikes Athletics and Recreation hosted more than 600 alumni, supporters and community members in the CARSA Performance Gym for the 12th Annual Vikes Championship Breakfast. Over \$550,000 was raised in support of student-athlete scholarships to push the event’s running total above \$5.6 million raised since 2008. [bit.ly/19-breakfast](https://bit.ly/19-breakfast)

### Daily media highlights

You’re invited to subscribe to the university’s daily digest of media stories about UVic. The curated clippings package is overseen by University Communications + Marketing and distributed each weekday by Agility PR Solutions. Subscriptions are limited to @uvic.ca email addresses. It may take up to 48 hours to begin distribution to new subscribers. [bit.ly/19-digest](https://bit.ly/19-digest)

### Great BC ShakeOut

The annual Great BC ShakeOut earthquake drill takes place Oct. 17 at 10:17 a.m. Whether you’re in the classroom, at home or in the office, take a few minutes to become prepared. Download the How to hold an earthquake drill document from [uvic.ca/shakeout](https://uvic.ca/shakeout) and practice the Drop, Cover and Hold On procedure with your students or colleagues. Drop by the information booth in University Centre, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. More: [uvic.ca/shakeout](https://uvic.ca/shakeout) or [epmanager@uvic.ca](mailto:epmanager@uvic.ca).

### SCANDALS CONTINUED FROM P. 1

magnate in exchange for the contract to build the transcontinental railway. Macdonald’s Conservatives were removed and the Liberals won the next federal election.

In another scandal, former Alberta premier John Brownlee was forced to resign in 1934 for his involvement with a young stenographer and family friend, Vivian MacMillan, who says she was pressured into having

a sexual relationship with him over nearly three years.

“It wasn’t the sex that people were worried about,” Bryden says. “It was the power imbalance.”

“If you look at scandals over the longer term, you learn something about the political climate and what’s important to Canadians—and what’s not,” Bryden adds.



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# REACH AWARDS

On Oct. 10, the third annual REACH Awards will celebrate UVic scholars for their extraordinary contributions in research and teaching. Award recipients lead the way in dynamic learning and make a vital impact at UVic, in the classroom and beyond.

“Our REACH Awards celebrate teaching and research excellence at the University of Victoria,” says UVic President Jamie Cassels. “This year’s distinguished honourees are inspiring teachers and researchers, who are contributing to a better future for people and the planet.”

## EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS



**HARRY HICKMAN ALUMNI AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND  
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

**Scott McIndoe, Chemistry**

Innovation and creativity are hallmarks of Scott McIndoe’s teaching and leadership. As an extraordinary teacher of large first-year classes, McIndoe has introduced new ways of teaching chemistry, authoring highly successful lecture books, developing a revolutionary graduate course framework, blogging with students and utilizing 3D technologies to create molecular “hands-on” models to enhance student learning. His responsiveness to students is epitomized by his creation of an anonymous “real-time” solution for students to ask in-class questions. McIndoe is also a recognized leader in the scholarship of learning and teaching—influencing colleagues nationally and internationally. McIndoe’s students thrive, bringing molecular theory into reality attending to real-world problems like environmental sustainability, food security and medical advances.



**GILIAN SHERWIN ALUMNI AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING**

**Georgia Sitara, Gender Studies/  
History**

A former student praises Georgia Sitara for showing her an “intersectional, anti-racist, and decolonial feminist understanding of the world.” Sitara encourages her history and gender studies students to cultivate the courage to use their voices and intellectual acumen to be agents of positive social change. She utilizes the principles of loving kindness and deep rigour to foster dynamic student-centred learning. Her commitment to ensuring Indigenous, queer and other marginalized students are well-supported to succeed within the academy and beyond contributes to a more inclusive and equitable future. She imbues her students with love and compassion through meticulous intellectual training.



**AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
TEACHING FOR EXPERIENTIAL  
LEARNING**

**Patrick Boyle, School of Music**

Patrick Boyle forges musical partnerships with students that embody direct, active experiential learning and scholarship. Through faculty recitals, jam sessions, public performances and impromptu in-office practice sessions, Boyle creates avenues for students of jazz to explore their growing talents, embrace their musical and artistic values, and learn about the business of music. His pedagogical focus on the craft of improvisation, culture and composition emphasizes deepening students’ listening experience while creating something new. The vibrancy of his approach is visible in the jazz ensemble, with students sharing their music in community in formal and informal settings.



**AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH-  
ENRICHED TEACHING**

**Megan Swift, Germanic and  
Slavic Studies**

A student describes Megan Swift’s teaching as a “beautiful example of show, don’t tell.” In her Russian studies courses, Swift integrates research and teaching, using multimedia, lecture and discussion to build connections between Russian culture, the revolution and the contrasts between the Lenin and Stalin eras with Putin’s Russia today. Swift’s vision of a research-based online encyclopedia and mapping project, “Dostoevsky’s St. Petersburg,” is exemplary. Using digital technologies and period materials, students trace aspects of the author’s literary works onto a map of St. Petersburg, publishing the findings in the form of short encyclopedia entries.



**AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION  
AND MENTORSHIP**

**E. Paul Zehr, Exercise Science,  
Physical and Health Education**

When you build teams of graduate and undergraduate students to collaborate on projects, share findings and support each other, you’re onto something special. E. Paul Zehr exemplifies the best traits of mentorship in the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education. He inspires students toward independent exploration, to participate in international labs and teaches his methodologies to other scientists around the world. Zehr utilizes his lab for meetings to help graduate students navigate the many nuances of scholarly success from publications to presentations, methods to theories. As one student says: “These meetings are filled with no less than an academic goldmine of valuable information.”



# EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARDS

## AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CREATIVITY AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

### Kirsten Sadeghi-Yekta, Theatre

“Act well your part,” poet Alexander Pope once urged, because “there all the honour lies.” Through honour—scholarly, artistic and personal integrity—Kirsten Sadeghi-Yekta has earned the respect of communities around the world. Her applied theatre projects raise the curtain on social issues that impact people’s lives. She customized her approach to work with children in Downtown East-side Vancouver and disabled young women in Cambodia, with youth in Brazilian favelas torn by drug wars and special-needs students in the Netherlands, developing a safe space for them to create artistically, build skills and confidence, and find beauty. Most recently she has been invited to bring that experience into local focus. With the Hul’q’umi’num community on Vancouver Island, she is turning on the spotlight to help them revitalize a crucial part of their culture: their language.



## DAVID H. TURPIN GOLD MEDAL FOR CAREER ACHIEVEMENT IN RESEARCH

### Budd Hall, Public Administration

For more than 40 years, Budd Hall has envisioned and worked to build a world that functions as a “knowledge democracy” through teaching, creating diverse and resilient networks, and helping communities drive research as a globally recognized innovator of participatory research. By taking this vision mainstream and global, his work has impacted university students, peers and the public—from injection drug users to homeless individuals, urban slum dwellers and rural poor to sex workers. Hall’s leadership on community-based research has transformed academia and, perhaps more importantly, the knowledge democracy that he champions has transformed lives.



## AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

### Charlotte Schallié, Germanic and Slavic Studies

“One person has the capacity to make such a significant difference,” write Charlotte Schallié’s peers on the impact of her bringing the forgotten story of Carl Lutz into view. During World War II, the Swiss diplomat saved tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews, standing up to racism, intolerance and injustice; he was, in current terms, upstanding. Together with Agnes Hirschi (Lutz’s stepdaughter), Schallié travelled the world to find the people whose lives Lutz saved. She listened to their stories and shared them to raise awareness of Lutz’s heroic mission, speaking to media and at conferences and teaching a new generation of scholars and citizens. For her vision and the impact of her work, Schallié is also upstanding.

## DAVID H. TURPIN GOLD MEDAL FOR CAREER ACHIEVEMENT IN RESEARCH



### Tim Stockwell, Psychology/ Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research

Tim Stockwell has debunked myths about alcohol-related disease, created strategies that cut alcohol-related traffic deaths, studied the neurophysiology of addiction and shaped policy at all levels around the world. Promising scientists are drawn by his leadership, expertise, high standards and championing of both responsible policies and practices. International colleagues call him “one of the most productive and influential researchers” and say that he asks and answers “the critical questions, both for the advancement of science and in service of the public interest.” While Stockwell continues to build on his novel alcohol and addiction research, his example and mentorship encourage others to join the field and indeed to expand the reach of this life-changing work.

## SILVER MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

### Alisdair Boraston, Biochemistry and Microbiology

Alisdair Boraston is passionate in applying his research on carbohydrate-protein interactions. For one thing, he wants to identify new molecules that can be used to fight infections so we’re no longer at the mercy of drug-resistant bacteria. He is also working towards figuring out how marine and land-based plant material might be converted into biofuels or other useful bioproducts to potentially reduce our carbon footprint. But his impact goes beyond lab work and stellar publications. By generously sharing his equipment and his knowledge, he helps advance all students and other trainees in his department. As both a role model and as a scientist, Boraston is boosting the well-being



of people at UVic and further afield, and indeed of our planet itself.





Palliative care nurse Katie Leahy and Dr. Fraser Black assess the health needs of people living in poverty in Victoria.

## Better end-of-life care for people in poverty

BY SUZANNE AHEARNE

Death may be the great equalizer, but access to good end-of-life care is rarely equitable. A new mobile palliative care program is addressing that imbalance by providing care and dignity to people in Victoria with life-limiting illnesses who are homeless and living in poverty.

The Palliative Outreach Resource Team (PORT)—launched Sept. 19—is built upon lessons learned from a three-year study led by UVic palliative care researcher Kelli Stajduhar, lead investigator of the Equity in Palliative Approaches to Care program with the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health and the School of Nursing.

The study by Stajduhar and Ashley Mollison, project coordinator and PhD student, followed 25 people living homeless or barely housed while struggling with life-threatening medical conditions. Their 2018 report, *Too little, too late: How we fail vulnerable Canadians as they die and what to do about it*, found that homeless and barely housed people have to navigate many systems—health care, housing, social care—and that as their health declines, their ability to access these systems also declines.

The big takeaway: despite a terminal diagnosis of cancer, heart failure or lung disease, those who were able to access palliative care—an approach that focuses on whole-person care including emotional,

social and spiritual needs—actually experienced an improvement in quality of life.

“We used the research as a way to shed light on what we were seeing, and then used the report as a catalyst to figure out the best solutions for our community and how to make it happen,” said Stajduhar. “We knew that the population of people we’re dealing with are not going to come to a palliative care clinic or be comfortable going to a hospital.” They determined that the best model for this community was to get services to them where they’re at, literally. And so, PORT was formed.

This mobile palliative care program is a collaboration of UVic, Island Health, Victoria Cool Aid and Victoria Hospice. And it is, according to Stajduhar, the best possible outcome: “As a researcher and as a nurse, the most we can hope for is that the work we do actually makes a difference in the lives of people. So, I’m over-the-top happy.”

Mirroring similar models in Toronto and Calgary, people can self-refer or be referred by their caregivers to a palliative care nurse and a physician who manage the pain and symptoms related to life-limiting illness, support chosen family and caregivers, and provide grief and bereavement support. Chosen family and caregivers in this population include “street family” and shelter, housing, harm reduction, and peer and support workers from inner-city community organizations who are

doing the bulk of end-of-life care for people living in poverty.

Dr. Fraser Black, assistant dean at UVic’s Island Medical Program, is a palliative care physician and PORT team member who works alongside nurse Katie Leahy. He emphasizes that one of the goals of PORT is to make visible the city’s need for palliative care. “There are people who are dying in places that we just don’t see—in their cars, their tents, in shelters—and they’re dying in pain and they’re dying alone. And the need is great.”

For its first year, the program will be funded by Saint Elizabeth Health and Island Health. The Vancouver Foundation is funding the UVic-led evaluation of the program, as well as the development of initiatives to increase access to and quality of palliative care in the inner city.

Stajduhar and Mollison are continuing research to help inner-city workers integrate palliative approaches into their work. “When we begin our work with people, often they’re very angry at the system. They feel a sense of frustration, they feel hopeless,” Stajduhar told CBC in a recent interview. “The wonderful thing is, through our work together, people start to feel hope and meaning in the everyday work that they do. And when people feel good about the work that they’re doing, they do a better job with the people that they care about and love.”



The Orontes Quartet. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

## Syrian guitar quartet completes fellowship at UVic

BY JOHN THRELFALL

When the Orontes Guitar Quartet were welcomed as visiting artists to UVic last November, it was a momentous occasion not only for the Syrian musicians themselves but also the international guitar community. Now, the Orontes are celebrating their time in Canada with a gala downtown finale at the Alix Goolden Performance Hall on Oct. 18.

At the time of their arrival on campus, the Orontes Quartet—Gaby Albotros, Orwa Alsharaa, Nazir Salameh and Mohammed Mir Mahmoud—offered a remarkable message about the power of music, hope and determination in the face of the ongoing violence of the Syrian civil war. In the 11 months since, they have continued to spread that message with appearances on campus and performances across Canada.

“We got to know a lot of good people and had the chance to travel through the country and perform in many places, which allowed people to know more about Syria and Syrian musicians,” says Alsharaa, speaking for the quartet.

After the classical guitar ensemble were denied entry to the US in 2017 due to the ongoing travel ban, School of Music guitar instructor Alexander Dunn stepped in and spent nearly 18 months working with two US-based organizations—the Artist Protection Fund (APF), an innovative initiative of the Institute of International Education, and the non-profit organization Remember the River—to secure the Orontes a placement at UVic.

Dunn, who received a 2019 Provost’s Advocacy and Activism Award for his work in bringing the Orontes to UVic, describes it all as “an exhilarating experience.”

“Knowing that a group of musicians on the other side of the world—connected by common interests but separated by the chasm of human rights abuses and the outrages of war—was life-changing,” he says. “Suddenly the abstraction of religious and cultural conflict occupied my thoughts in a very real way.”

While in Canada, the Orontes took their universal message of peace

through music to cities large (Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg), small (Port Alberni, Salmon Arm, Gibsons) and in-between (Kingston, Sudbury, Red Deer). “We were surprised at how huge is Canada, and how long it takes to travel from one part to another,” says Alsharaa. “Everyone was friendly and welcoming, but the beauty of each city and its own character was the most beautiful thing.”

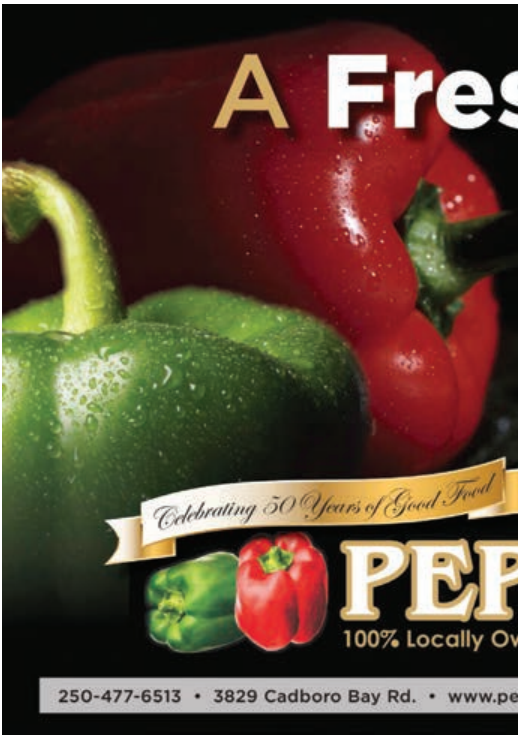
In addition to their travel and concerts, the Orontes also met with students, faculty and other professional musicians, and recorded some new material using the School of Music’s facilities—which, says Dunn, was all part of their APF Fellowship.

“They learned that a high degree of musicianship and learning is the norm here,” he says. “They were exposed first-hand to a stream of virtuoso players that showed not only how inspiration could directly affect their craft, but that international standards and expectations—which may not have been a part of their everyday experience at home—are readily available here.”

With their APF Fellowship ending in November, the Orontes still have a pair of concerts in Toronto and Montreal with the Canadian Arabic Orchestra and Choir—but the Oct. 18 performance will be their final performance in Victoria: Syrian Encounter will feature a thematic night of not only the Orontes Quartet, but also Brazilian musician Celso Machado and a reading by UVic writing professor Deborah Campbell, author of the award-winning book, *A Disappearance in Damascus*.

As for the future, the guitarists are hoping for extensions to their work permits while they apply for study permits and Canadian citizenship.

“The most important experience for every musician is to perform as much as possible, which is something we were able to do thanks to the APF, Alexander Dunn and, of course, UVic,” says Alsharaa. “We want to thank all the people who made our trip to Victoria possible. We are really lucky to be here in Canada, especially in Victoria—which is one of the most beautiful places on earth.”



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# EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARDS continued

## ANDY FARQUHARSON TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS



**Leah Gajecki, Chemistry**

Leah Gajecki’s ease in using a multitude of teaching techniques sets her teaching apart. When introducing new concepts, Gajecki explains, draws, illustrates through stories, links to real life examples, and connects to her research so that students are well supported in their learning. “My method,” she explains, “is to break down concepts in ways that anyone can understand.” Gajecki’s students recognize her ability to do this and are very grateful for her care and support.



**Natalie Boldt, English**

“Natalie is one of the most kind and compassionate teachers that I have encountered,” writes one of Natalie Boldt’s colleagues. This statement is confirmed by many of Boldt’s students. They describe her ability to create a positive learning environment that allows all students to comfortably participate. Most importantly, students feel respected due to Boldt’s careful attention to their contributions in class—allowing her to sustain student engagement throughout the whole course.



**Mehdi Hashemi, Political Science**

Genuine, outstanding, caring and inspiring are just a few of the words that students use to describe Mehdi Hashemi. Students talk about the small gestures that Hashemi does that have a big impact on their academic well-being. For example, after meeting with a student about an upcoming assignment, Hashemi follows up with further support, inspiring the student to put in the extra effort. Through these small gestures, Hashemi truly inspires students to strive for high-quality work.



## AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

**William Carroll, Sociology**

**Shannon Daub, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC**



William Carroll and co-nominee Shannon Daub want the world to know who’s who in fossil fuels.

Together with more than 100 collaborators and 11 partner organizations, they are “Mapping the Power of the Carbon Extractive Corporate Resource Sector.” Carroll, a sociology professor at UVic, and Daub, the executive director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC, link five research streams with journalism and multifaceted knowledge mobilization. They’re integrating economics, political science, geography, earth science, sociology, law, political ecology, Indigenous studies, journalism and communication studies to investigate the organization and power of the fossil-fuel industry in Western Canada. Their project empowers Canadians as well as a democratic society.

## Other major UVic awards

The REACH Awards celebrate teaching and research excellence at UVic, but they’re not the only awards on campus. Other university-wide awards that recognize the outstanding work of UVic faculty, staff and students include:

- **The President’s Extraordinary Service Awards (PESA)** celebrate the outstanding contributions of our people, whether teams or individuals, from all across campus.
- **The Provost’s Advocacy and Activism Awards** recognize the impact of dedicated advocates and activists within our community in addressing systemic or institutionalized barriers as champions for others.
- **The Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Awards (JCURA)** program encourages and supports undergraduates to pursue innovative and original research to enhance their learning while at UVic, and to provide a valuable preparatory experience towards graduate studies or a research-related career.

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## Learning Commons rises in MacLaurin

Have you heard about the MacLaurin Learning Commons? The new student-centred, multi-purpose work space in MAC D201 is available for use by all UVic students. Built during MacLaurin's D-wing seismic upgrade, the Learning Commons is a space reimagined for students by students. It offers a great mix of formal and informal, group and individual spaces with wi-fi for students to meet, work and recharge while on campus. Thanks to the Jean Downie Dey Legacy Foundation, this two-level, bright and open space is home to new, reconfigurable seating areas including bean bags to chill on, 11 computer work stations, two 70" electronic displays, a print station and technical support for users.



## New publication highlights local artists

UVic Libraries recently launched its latest publication, *[untitled]: The Artists' Archives at the University of Victoria Libraries*, exploring the archives of four celebrated local artists in Special Collections and University Archives. The publication is presented as a series of four interrelated booklets—each told through the voice of a writer closely associated with them, and packaged in a limited-edition portfolio. UVic has engaged in the preservation of documentary heritage relating to art, artists, the campus and the Victoria community since the establishment of Special Collections, and then the University Archives, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. [bit.ly/19-archives](http://bit.ly/19-archives)

# Prepare for 5 Days of Action this November

BY ASHLEY MCKAY

Courageous conversations are never easy. That's why they're called courageous. The university's 5 Days of Action is an annual event aimed at creating spaces for courageous conversations, dialogue, allyship and commitment to change. This year 5 Days of Action is taking place on campus Nov. 4 to 8 and is organized around calls to action to address discrimination, harassment and sexualized violence on campus.

This year's project manager, Ashley McKay, talks with Mary McCue, 2018

project manager ( full article online at [bit.ly/5-action](http://bit.ly/5-action)).

**What can attendees at the 5 Days of Action expect?**

You can expect that all of the facilitators will be generous, warm and open. They are there to assist you, and help you navigate your own feelings and learning. They will not challenge you in a way that will make you unsafe, but in ways that will help you grow. I think the idea of these five days is to bring you to the table, and hopefully you will stay long enough to learn some-

thing and be able to take something positive and useful away to help make this campus a more welcoming and inclusive place.

**What are the "actions" in the 5 Days of Action?**

I think there are three ways everyone on campus can participate in actions during the 5 Days. First there are the Calls to Action, found on the EQHR website. These are actions to read, watch, do and commit to address discrimination, harassment and sexualized violence here at UVic. Second,

anyone in the campus community can act by registering for workshops, lectures, art exhibits and performances that are free to attend. And third, taking time to reflect on your actions, thoughts and commitments to make this place a more welcoming and inclusive space I think is the most important action you can take.

**What are you most excited about this year during the 5 Days of Action?**

There are so many exciting opportunities, and more events are still to

be confirmed. There is so much this year—including a lecture and tour of the Transgender Archives, as well as sessions on anti-racism, fairness, building inclusive spaces and a performance presented by the Immigrant Employee Support Network. I encourage everyone to check out what is going on and attend, participate and commit to making positive change.

You can register for the 5 Days of Action events, learn more about the Calls to Action and get more information at [uvic.ca/5days](http://uvic.ca/5days).



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