



CELEBRATING SPRING 2020 GRADS

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THE RING

SEPTEMBER 2020

The University of Victoria's
community newspaper

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University
of Victoria

SPEED READ

SAFE & HEALTHY CAMPUS

What to expect this fall

We all know things are going to be different this fall at UVic. Most of us are studying and working online. For those of us returning to campus, and even for those of us who are continuing to work on campus, things will certainly feel different. More details on page 3. UVic has also produced a video highlighting some of the things you can expect: bit.ly/20-expect Complete updates and FAQs at uvic.ca/coronavirus

LOOKING AHEAD

Academic programming for the spring term

UVic will continue to offer a blend of face-to-face and online instruction for the spring term. We are looking at ways to safely open up the campus more while keeping aligned with public health guidelines. Read the full update from Vice-President Academic and Provost Valerie Kuehne at bit.ly/20-vpac.



Hall in Newcastle, Australia. PHOTO: UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

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KEVIN HALL
WILL BECOME
THE EIGHTH
PRESIDENT OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF VICTORIA ON
NOVEMBER 1

Kevin Hall named next UVic president

Kevin Hall, an innovative academic leader and civil engineer known for his strong commitment to community engagement and unwavering belief in access to education and equity, diversity and inclusion, will be the next president of the University of Victoria.

Hall is currently the vice-president and senior deputy vice chancellor of global engagement and partnerships at the University of Newcastle (UON) in Australia. His five-year term as president of UVic begins Nov. 1.

"After an extensive international search, the committee decided that Dr. Kevin Hall is exactly the right choice to lead the University of Victoria as its next president," says Cathy McIntyre, UVic Board of Govern-

nors Chair. "Dr. Hall has the research and executive experience to advance UVic's global reputation and stature in all its activities. He has a deep commitment to the impact universities can make in their communities, to equity, diversity and inclusion, and to advancing our goals on truth, respect and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. I look forward to his leadership as we move forward in support of a strong and sustainable future, continuing the outstanding service of President Jamie Cassels over the past seven years."

Hall was chosen after a year-long search process by a committee composed of representatives from a variety of university constituencies, including Board of Governors, Senate, faculties, staff, gradu-

ate and undergraduate students, and the UVic Alumni association. The committee's work was informed by input from the campus and external communities.

"I am extremely honoured to be selected as the next president of UVic," says Hall. "I am excited and very inspired to join a university that strives to be a global exemplar in vital causes that hold the key to our future—a university that nourishes and shapes tomorrow's leaders, shows global leadership in supporting a brighter future for Indigenous Peoples and communities, and engages deeply with communities locally and around the world to drive social, environmental and economic change."

SEE NEXT PRESIDENT P.3

Funding announced for National Centre for Indigenous Laws

BY JULIE SLOAN

On Sept. 3, the Province of BC announced a \$13 million contribution to support the building of a National Centre for Indigenous Laws (NCIL). This funding is in addition to \$9.1 million from the federal government announced in 2019 and \$5 million from the Law Foundation of British Columbia, which is the largest donation ever received by the Faculty of Law.

"The National Centre for Indigenous Laws will be home to the first Indigenous law program in the world to combine the intensive study of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous law, and will help Canada build a new nation-to-nation relationship based on the recognition—and renaissance—of Indigenous legal traditions," says Jamie Cassels, president and vice-chancellor of the University of Victoria. "We are grateful to the provincial and federal governments who helped establish this unique Indigenous law program at UVic, and to the Law Foundation of BC for their generous donation today."

The combined funding of \$27.1 million dollars will be used to create a 2,440-square-metre (26,264-sq.-ft.) addition to the Anne and Murray Fraser (Law) Building—which will be designed to reflect and honour the law school's location and long-standing relationship with the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples on whose territory the university resides. The project will use Coast Salish designs, signage, public art, natural light, and materials such as BC wood and cedar weaving. The building is expected to be complete in 2023.

New high-tech digital infrastructure will enable students to connect with their home communities and enable sharing of legal traditions with one another. It will also enable UVic to host conferences, public workshops, research, and partnerships for faculty, students and visitors. The new addition will include public lecture theatres, faculty and staff offices, classrooms, meeting space, an Elders' room and spaces for gathering, ceremony and sharing of histories and knowledge.

SEE INDIGENOUS LAWS P.2



Val Napoleon, professor and director of the Indigenous law program, speaking at the Sept. 3 announcement alongside UVic President Jamie Cassels and the Honourable Minister Melanie Mark. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

around
the ring

Expanded library
resources

UVic Libraries has signed agreements with four publishers—Cambridge University Press eBooks, Oxford University Press eBooks, Taylor & Francis eBooks, and Wiley Online Books—and negotiated access to more than 200,000 eBook titles to support online learning and research. Significantly expanding the holdings of 1.7 million eBooks in the Libraries’ collection, these additional eBooks are discoverable via the library catalogue. Titles will be added throughout the year as they are published.

Limited access to print resources, scans of journal articles and book chapters is now available through the Re:Quest Service for faculty, students, staff and community borrowers. Requests are fulfilled within 72 hours whenever possible. Pick-up is available at the Mearns Centre for Learning–McPherson Library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday–Friday.

Students will have access to 42 individual study spaces in the BiblioCafé and the Law Library (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

The library buildings will remain closed at this time. Contact askus@uvic.ca for further assistance.

Attention,
campus alumni

From now until Sept. 30, UVic Alumni Relations is running a contest to encourage grads to keep in touch—with prizes including an Apple Watch, AirPods and an iPad. Be sure to update or confirm your own information to be entered to win a prize: bit.ly/20-alumni

Integrated Student Wellness Centre offers
students one-stop wellness support

BY STEPHANIE INMAN

UVic’s Health, Counselling and Multifaith teams have come together to provide students with an integrated, holistic approach to their wellness needs. Following a \$6.5-million renovation, more than 50 combined staff moved into the Student Wellness Centre (SWC) on the first floor of the newly named Health and Wellness Building, formerly known as the Technology Enterprise Facility, in mid-July.

“It’s a central hub for students,” says Rob Crisp, director of Health, who co-leads the SWC with Dr. Rita Knodel, director of Counselling and Multifaith. The SWC is essentially one door for students to access counselling and health and marks a major transformation in the student experience to offer a high standard of comfort, care, privacy protection and infection prevention and control, says Crisp.

“It gives students a central place for wellness,” says Knodel. “We hope that this integration will play a key role in reducing stigma around seeking mental health supports in particular. We also have the opportunity to be more professionally collaborative being physically close and we can be more oriented to what students need.”

The SWC recognizes that supporting spiritual health and community building and are as vital as supporting the mental and physical aspects of health. Dedicated space has been provided to a range of visiting practitioners and healers including Indigenous Elders, chaplains and others. Multifaith is primarily situated in the Multifaith Centre. However, the SWC has plans to incorporate wellness-oriented Multifaith programming, like



yoga and meditation, into the Health and Wellness Building.

“Our model allows students’ needs and preferences to guide the care they receive,” says Crisp.

During COVID-19, the SWC is ensuring that student and staff safety is the top priority; appointments are primarily by phone or video conference, with limited in-person appointments available as required. Planning for fall programming is underway to provide students with groups, workshops and clinics, online and in-person, in a COVID-safe way.

Many universities are gradually transitioning to this model of student wellness in parallel with community health centres, where counsellors, nurses, physicians, allied health team members and support staff are located together and collaborating on care.

Last week, the Student Wellness Centre also implemented a new 24/7

mental health support service called SupportConnect available to UVic students anytime, anywhere. This online and call-in service augments the wellness centre’s services to provide students with round-the-clock care in a variety of languages.

The renovated space includes individual clinical and counselling offices, meeting areas, boardroom and administrative offices. The SWC will offer students access to a variety of visiting specialists including an eating disorder clinic, gender affirming care, pet therapy and other specialists.

In addition to serving student needs, the wellness centre also serves as a one-stop for faculty and staff who have concerns about students and in the past may have been uncertain whether to contact counselling or health.

Integrating counselling and health has been a long-time goal for the

university. Counselling was formerly located on the second floor of University Centre, while Health Services occupied the Petersen building, a fair distance away in the student housing precinct on the northeast edge of campus. The new, central, location, close to the bus loop and CARSA, will be more accessible to students.

The other major tenant of the Health and Wellness Building is the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research, and the building houses a number of other offices as well.

uvic.ca/student-wellness-centre

Counselling and Health
swcreception@uvic.ca
250-721-8563

Multifaith
multifaith@uvic.ca
250-721-8338

Review of Sexualized Violence Prevention Policy

Three years ago, UVic’s first Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy with its associated practices and procedures came into effect following extensive consultation with the university and broader community.

Now, we are looking to re-engage the community to see how the policy, procedures and practices can be improved and strengthened for our three-year review.

“Preventing and responding to sexualized violence is a shared responsibility and incredibly important for our entire campus community,” says UVic President Jamie Cassels. “When the university initially undertook the

work to draft a specific policy, we wanted it to be fair and transparent and clearly explained to students, staff, and faculty. We’ve achieved that and with the insights and experience of our campus community, this review will help to further strengthen the policy and procedures.”

Offer your feedback: campus-wide survey launched

To date, the significant work and consultation put into developing the 2017 policy has shown to serve the community well, said Cassbreea Dewis, executive director of Equity and Human Rights (EQHR).

EQHR, alongside other offices, units, and departments who regularly interact with the policy, have found that it is generally easy to work with, speaks strongly to the values of the university community, and provides a much-needed framework for sexualized violence prevention and response at UVic.

There are, however, always opportunities to learn and build on the important learnings of the past three years, which is what this review is about: an opportunity for our university community to weigh in and help us identify areas of strength and improvement.

To this end, a campus-wide survey launched to gather community input on three broadly identified areas of change:

- informal resolution strategies
- addressing intersectionality
- reconciling tensions with other laws and legislation.

The survey also has a general content section where people can contribute their ideas and recommendations for improving the policy, procedure and practices as a whole.

Full Ring story: bit.ly/20-svpr

Take the survey: bit.ly/20-policy

INDIGENOUS LAWS
CONTINUED FROM P. 1

“This physical structure represents a sanctuary where our laws, which enable us to be peoples, will be safe, and where both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students will learn about those laws, creating the foundation to a multijuridical Canada,” says Val Napoleon, Director of the Indigenous law program and Indigenous Law Research Unit, and Law Foundation Chair of Indigenous Justice and Governance.

As the Indigenous law degree program (JD/JID) enters its third year, the growth in numbers of students and faculty—six of whom are Indigenous and teach primarily in the JD/JID program—speaks to both the success of the program and the need for more space. At full capacity, the four year, dual-degree program will house an additional 100 students, who join

approximately 400 students in the JD and graduate programs.

Laura Hoversland is a second-year JD/JID student and a member of the Teslin Tlingit Council (Yukon). “I always wanted to be a lawyer, but I never imagined, because of the impact of systemic trauma, that I could ever do that,” explains Hoversland. “My dad is Norwegian, and my mom is Tlingit. When I was younger, I thought graduating high school was good enough, but my dad encouraged me to keep going. It’s been a long journey from legal assistant to Aboriginal court worker to a senior justice analyst for an Indigenous non-profit (Council of Yukon First Nations) in Whitehorse, Yukon. Being in the Indigenous law program at the University of Victoria has not only changed my life but will change the life of my seven-year-old daughter. I’m excited to see where it takes me.”

The realization of both the Indigenous law degree and the new

building arrives thanks to years of dedication and hard work, and an enormous amount of support. “The contributions we are to receive from the provincial government, the federal government and the Law Foundation of British Columbia towards the expansion of the Fraser building will provide us with a home for our Indigenous law program and the National Centre for Indigenous Laws,” says UVic Dean of Law Susan Breau. “It is truly a historic moment and as the dean of the faculty, I wish to convey our profound gratitude to all of these funders who will make the realisation of our vision possible.”

The Law Foundation of BC has been an unwavering supporter of the Faculty of Law’s clinical programs for many years. This gift of \$5 million is the largest donation ever received by the Faculty of Law.

“The Law Foundation of BC is proud to support the vital work at UVic Law to promote the recovery and

resurgence of Indigenous legal orders across the continent,” says Josh Paterson, Executive Director of the Law Foundation of BC. “This new centre will cement the role of UVic scholars as global leaders partnering with Indigenous communities and peoples seeking to articulate and apply their laws to contemporary challenges. We are grateful to be able to play a role in changing the way our next generation of lawyers are able to interact with and understand Indigenous legal orders.”

The NCIL will be built in consultation with local and national communities. Over the next four months UVic will be launching the National Next Conversations—a national engagement initiative to raise awareness of the Indigenous Law Program and better understand other Indigenous law initiatives taking place across the country, and to solicit feedback and input to inform the new National Centre for Indigenous Laws.

Construction is set to begin in 2021.



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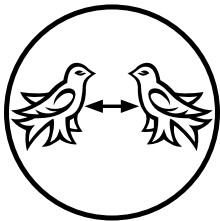
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What to expect this fall

Things are going to be a little different this fall at UVic. Most of us are studying and working online. For those of us returning to campus, and even for those of us who are continuing to work on campus, things will certainly feel different.

We can all help to keep our campus safe this fall. Here are a few things you can expect.



Bigger spaces, fewer faces

To allow for physical distancing, you'll see fewer people in classrooms and meeting rooms this fall. We've also rearranged and removed furniture or designated specific seats in rooms to help you keep your distance.

Signage and traffic flow

You'll see new signage, arrows and markers to help you safely move around campus. We've also added signs to help with etiquette in staircases, elevators, washrooms and other common spaces.

Study spaces

We have opened some dedicated spaces for students to study and learn on campus. Some computer labs will also be open, but they'll need to be booked in advance. We'll provide a list of these spaces and how to book as soon as this information is available.

Safety ambassadors

Teams of safety ambassadors

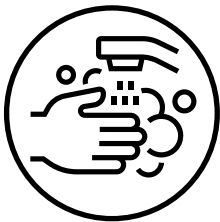
have been hired to help with safety measures on campus. They'll monitor traffic in and out of rooms so you won't be crowded. They'll also help between classes to ensure rooms are prepped and clean for the next group of learners.

Services

UVic is still offering a full range of great services this year. The new Health and Wellness Centre is now open. The UVic Bookstore, Academic Advising and CARSA gym facilities are open too, but their service models may have changed. Some services are online only or must be booked in advance. Check websites for details.

Food and drink

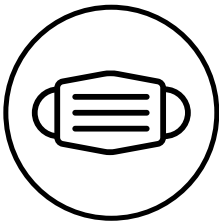
You'll still find lots of great food at Mystic Market. Starbucks (under the bookstore) is also offering a grab and go service. Some food services in the Student Union Building are also open. Most other food outlets are closed. Water fountains and hydration stations are open for filling water bottles only. Don't forget to bring your own water bottle so you can stay hydrated!



Hand washing

Hand washing is one of the best things you can do to help limit the spread of germs. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (about as long as it takes to sing your ABC's). There are hand

sanitizer stations at all major main floor entrances of buildings or feel free to carry around your own!



Masks

Even with limited numbers of people on campus, common areas can be congested, making it difficult to consistently maintain a safe physical distance. We recommend that you wear a mask in public indoor spaces like hallways, stairways, building entryways and other high-traffic areas, especially where it's more difficult to keep distance. Masks are a great way to help limit the spread of germs, but they won't stop germ travel altogether. It's important to practice good hygiene and maintain physical distance even when you're wearing one.

Stay home if you're sick

Remember to do a self-assessment every day before coming to UVic. If you have any symptoms please stay home. You can also call 811 for medical advice. BC's COVID-19 self-assessment tool is really helpful too.

Learn more

If you are coming to campus, please allow for extra time to get around, follow the signage and continue to show kindness and respect to those around you.

uvic.ca/coronavirus

Plan now to participate in Orange Shirt Day this Sept. 30

Online events to include a conversation between UVic Chancellor Shelagh Rogers and Phyllis Webstad, whose story sparked the drive to recognize Orange Shirt Day.



Carey Newman's T-shirt design

BY BARBARA TODD HAGER

Hundreds of students, faculty and staff in orange T-shirts gathered on the UVic Quad on a brilliant September day in 2019 to commemorate and honour the healing journey of residential school survivors and their families. That wasn't the first year our community recognized this solemn occasion, and it won't be the last. This year, COVID-19 safety restrictions will keep us from coming together in person for an annual gathering. It hasn't, however, disrupted plans for an extraordinary virtual Orange Shirt Day that will inspire UVic's students, faculty, staff and alumni living in every part of the world to reflect on how our educational systems can bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians in the spirit of reconciliation.

Orange Shirt Day is a national movement that takes place every year on September 30. Since its inception, the event has inspired schools and universities across Canada to develop and implement curriculum and activities that recognize the damaging impacts on Indigenous peoples who were forced to attend the federally funded, church-run schools. Close to 150,000 Indigenous children and youth attended the schools from the mid-1800s to 1996, when the last school closed, and it's estimated that close to 6,000 died while attending residential schools.

One of the highlights of UVic's online event this year is a conversation between UVic Chancellor Shelagh Rogers and Phyllis (Jack) Webstad, whose childhood story about residential school inspired the Orange Shirt Day movement. The event will also include messages from Indigenous Elders and UVic community members, and a Lekwungen drumming presentation.

At a reunion in 2013 of former students of the St. Joseph Mission Residential School, Webstad shared the story of how she arrived on the first day of school wearing a brand new orange T-shirt—a gift from her grandmother—only to have it taken from her and never returned. The story resonated with the audience and soon people started wearing orange T-shirts in the fall to show support for Webstad and all residential school survivors.

According to the Orange Shirt Day Society, "The annual Orange Shirt Day opens the door to global conversation on all aspects of residential schools. It is an opportunity to create meaningful discussion about the effects of residential schools and the legacy they have left behind."

Support on social media and T-shirt sales

UVic faculty, staff and students are encouraged to wear an orange shirt on September 30, as a visual symbol of our awareness of the need for ongoing reconciliation. It's easy to share how your support, too: send a photo of yourself wearing an orange shirt using the hashtag #OrangeShirtDayUVic, or email your photo to socialmedia@uvic.ca. Photos will be shared on UVic's OSD website and social media.

There are a limited number of T-shirts on sale at the UVic bookstore featuring a logo designed by Kwakwaka'wakw/Coast Salish artist and UVic faculty member Carey Newman. Proceeds from those sales directly benefit the UVic Elders Engagement Fund as well as the Witness Blanket Project. If you already have an orange shirt, please consider making a \$20 donation to the Elders Engagement Fund this year.

UVic's Orange Shirt Day event will stream on Wednesday, Sept. 30 at noon at facebook.com/universityofvictoria. More info: bit.ly/20-osd

NEXT PRESIDENT

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

A commitment to UVic's values

Hall's career has been defined by his leadership in issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, most recently leading the team that initiated the successful Research Advantage Program at UON, which includes a large number of fellowships and award programs for women in research.

Hall has a deep commitment to environmental sustainability and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). He is currently the chair of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research located at UON. He founded the Centre for Water and the Environment at Queen's University, led the Sustainability Task Force at the University of Guelph and initiated the SDG audit and compliance between the City of Newcastle and UON. Under the 2025 UON Sustainable Vision, the university became the first university in Australia to be powered by 100% renewable energy.

"Professor Kevin Hall's working style advocates for and empowers students and the university community, and his sustainability-focused

perspective paves our university's way towards even bolder sustainability actions, said Saeed Rezvani, graduate student member of the Presidential Appointment Committee. "His exceptional reputation for entrepreneurship and expertise in external engagement will introduce new opportunities for the UVic community to contribute to the further achievement of UVic's vision: making a better future for people and the planet."

Innovative impact within a non-traditional approach

Throughout his academic career, Hall has been an innovator, focused on putting research into practice by delivering knowledge to industry and community. His research interests have focused on water quality modeling, environmental monitoring and pathogen detection systems, and water and health in marginalized communities.

Hall has spearheaded entrepreneurship and innovation initiatives at UON, leading the establishment of the Integrated Innovation Network, a series of five innovation incubators. This regional network allows community, companies and subject matter experts to work closely with researchers and

students to develop opportunities for social change and economic growth.

Many of these initiatives were used as a catalyst to enhance student experience by providing work-integrated learning and internship opportunities.

Presidential transition

Hall will succeed Jamie Cassels, who has served as the university's president since July 2013. Cassels has been a faculty member at UVic for nearly 40 years and in senior leadership roles for more than half that time, with plans to return to his academic pursuits later this year.

"It's been a real honour and a highlight to lead the university these past seven years. I am truly delighted Kevin will be assuming leadership of the university this fall—his international focus and ability to form strong community connections will be very important for our university at this time and into the future. I look forward to focusing in the coming months on continuing to deliver on UVic's mission of education, research and service amidst these challenging and rapidly changing global circumstances," Cassels says.

Hall will be the eighth president in UVic's 57-year history.

Campus life is busy!

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CONGRATS TO SPRING 2020 GRADS

major medal winners

Governor General’s Gold Medal
Mark Piraino—PhD, Mathematics
Bridget Ryan—PhD, Biology

Lieutenant Governor’s Silver Medal (thesis)
Jingrong Wang—MSc, Computer Science

Lieutenant Governor’s Silver Medal (other than thesis)
Holly Cecil—MA, Art History and Visual Studies

Governor General’s Silver Medal
Logan Bakker—BEng, Mechanical Engineering

Jubilee Medal for Humanities
Laura Murphy—BA, Linguistics

Jubilee Medal for Science
Samuel Tomkins—BSc, Physics and Astronomy

Jubilee Medal for Social Sciences
Hannah Eilertsen—BSc, Psychology

Law Society Gold Medal
Lauren Frederick—JD

Certificate Distinction in the Faculty of HSD
Susan Martin—BSc, Health Information Science

Victoria Medal in Fine Arts
Chelsea Kutyn—BMus, Performance

Dr. Maxwell A. Cameron Memorial Medal
Cole Spittle—BEd, Elementary Curriculum
Emily Winkel—BEd, Secondary Teacher Education

Canadian Society for Mechanical Eng. Medal
Logan Bakker—BEng

Department of Civil Engineering Graduation Medal
Timothy Berntsen—BEng
Zakary Papas—BEng

Department of Computer Science Graduation Medal
Elio Ferri—BSc (Honours)
Shiyi Huo—BSc

IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Computer Engineering
Laura Kissack—BEng

IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Electrical Engineering
Kai Ren—BEng

IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Software Engineering
Shreyas Devalapurkar—BEng

IEEE Victoria Section Gold Medal in Biomedical Engineering
Brianna Carrels—BEng

Exploring identity through art

BY JOHN THRELFALL

For most people, a visit to the yoga studio simply adds a bit of metaphysicality to their workout: a chance to breathe, stretch and realign their chakras with a few oms and namastes. But for Rudra Manani, who graduated this summer with a visual arts degree, it’s an example of the widespread spiritual whitewashing that not only drives her art practice but also her identity as a first-generation Indo-Canadian.

“There’s a fascination with Hindu practices, but it’s gotten so disconnected that people don’t often realize where it all began,” says Manani, who was born in India but raised in Calgary before coming to UVic to train as an artist. “Think about yoga and how commercialized it’s become: not just Lululemon but all the retreats and studios with statues of deities ... it’s more associated with hippie culture than Hindu culture, especially on the Island.”

Despite the fact that Hinduism is the third-largest religion (after Christianity and Islam) and is considered the world’s oldest faith, it’s rarely associated with the mainstream yoga practiced by over 300 million people worldwide, or the estimated \$80 billion annual spending on related clothing, activities and equipment.

“I have nothing against white people doing yoga, obviously, but I think there should be more recognition and acknowledgement of the traditional practices and how old yoga actually is,” she says, noting its ancient history in both African and Buddhist cultures. “A lot of my work stems from this, and it’s something I’ve been building towards during my whole degree practice... being on the Island and feeling disconnected from that culture to begin with, then seeing glimpses of it in everyday



Manani’s self-portrait, “Get Your Om On.” PHOTO: RUDRA MANANI

society, led me towards this.”

A multidisciplinary artist with a focus on photography and painting, Manani describes her art practice as taking a critical standpoint on the self-care industry in the West—specifically in its appropriation and fetishization of Hindu practices for profit, while simultaneously disconnecting Hinduism from its roots.

Consider the self-portrait “Get Your Om On,” which was part of the 2020 Visual Arts BFA graduation exhibit *Suggested Serving Size*: Manani’s photograph puts a voyeuristic spin on her Indo-Canadian identity with the idea of an outsider looking inwards.

“I was inspired by a contemporary video of traditional Indian dancing featuring the goddess Durga, where the dancers lined up and had all their arms seemingly coming out from one person,” she explains. “I wondered how I could reference the religious aspect of it, but also make it feel kind of off-putting, like

there’s something wrong with it.”

It’s no coincidence that Manani is pictured in a white room of a typical suburban Canadian home, wearing traditional dress but wrapped in arms that are more groping and smothering than supportive or celebratory. “It speaks to my experience as someone living in a predominantly white city who often has to deal with cultural appropriations ... I’ve gotten some backlash for it, but I often do feel like I’m outside looking in at my own roots, trying to figure out where I stand.”

Professor Rick Leong, whom Manani cites as being influential in the development of both her painting and multimedia practices, characterizes her as “a deep thinker who listened well, and certainly wasn’t afraid to take risks.”

“Rudra was always engaged and inquisitive, and she often navigated outside of her comfort zones,” Leong continues. “In one of her last projects she stretched quite a large canvas

directly to the wall of the large painting studio, working through her ideas and pushing the work through several stages. I admired her ambition with the work, her perseverance with the process and the fact that the work was an exploration of the formation of identity in an uncertain or ambiguous context. I look forward to seeing how her creative career develops in the future.”

While the COVID-19 outbreak has crimped her immediate plans of accepting an artist residency in Greece, Manani is currently exploring gallery opportunities while looking for ways to increase the Indo-Canadian presence in the art scene. “There aren’t a lot of Indian artists talked about in school,” she says. “There is dialogue happening, but it’s still under the radar.”

In the meantime, her current work is certainly making her parents happy. “My mom read my bio and was really pleased that I’m exploring my identity,” she says with a laugh.

Pure math takes PhD across the world

BY VIMALA JEEVANANDAM

Discovering pure mathematics

Nine years after transferring to UVic as an undergraduate student, Chris Bruce has graduated with a PhD in mathematics and a prestigious NSERC Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship.

In that time, he has proven himself to be an exceptional mathematician.

“Chris flips easily between being sharply focused when thinking of a specific problem and being very diffused in his unbounded curiosity for all things mathematical,” says Bruce’s supervisor and UVic mathematics professor Marcelo Laca. “Early on I stopped viewing him as a student and started thinking of him as a younger collaborator.”

Born and raised in Victoria, Bruce started his undergraduate degree at Camosun College, and had quite a different path in mind. “I thought I’d major in business or economics,” he says. He had already started an online business, selling parts for mountain bikes. But after transferring to UVic and taking an introduction to abstract algebra course, he knew his path was changing.

Math has given me the room to be creative and freedom to explore ideas and questions, but within the guidelines of strong and logical structure. Within that structure, there is so much symmetry and beauty to discover.”

—Chris Bruce, graduating PhD in mathematics

He explores connections between two areas of mathematics—algebraic number theory, an ancient field of mathematics which deals with prime numbers, rational numbers, and their generalizations, and operator algebras, a relatively new field of math that was originally developed to model systems in quantum physics.

“If you can come up with a strong enough connection between these two areas, you can give new approaches to solving problems and potentially solve some of the world’s most famous unresolved problems in pure mathematics, such as the Riemann hypothesis or Hilbert’s 12th problem.”

Building global collaborations

While one might imagine mathematics as being a solitary activity at a desk, Bruce’s experiences belie that.

“Working with people—discussing problems and having a back and forth of ideas, working on a proof—that is the most enjoyable part of mathematics for me,” Bruce says. To that end, he started a graduate-level seminar in his department, giving graduate students, post-docs and visitors a chance to present to their peers.

During his undergraduate degree, he completed a semester in Moscow. Since then, he’s taken courses at the University of Wollongong in Australia, attended workshops at the Hausdorff Research Institute for Mathematics in Germany, and developed collaborations in the United Kingdom and Japan.



Bruce. PHOTO: VIMALA JEEVANANDAM

Bruce adds, “staying at UVic throughout my graduate studies allowed me to continue benefitting from working with a group of mathematicians with a strong area of expertise in operator algebras, and a supervisor that I really enjoyed working with and continued to learn from. But the many trips abroad allowed me to expand my academic network and gain exposure to other areas of mathematics and new ideas.”

Winning the Banting Fellowship

Bruce will be continuing onto Queen Mary, University of London, with a

prestigious NSERC Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship, a prize which provides the best applicants with \$70,000 per year in funding for two years.

“I’m excited to start my new life in the UK, so my feelings about leaving Victoria are bittersweet. Even though being a PhD student can be stressful, I really enjoyed my time at UVic. Math is a small department, which also creates a sense of community. I enjoyed discussions with my supervisor, seminars, getting feedback from various people. It’s good to find a place where you fit in well.”



Nursing practice just right for this time

BY KATE HILDBRANDT

“The BSN program introduced me to concepts involving advocacy and leadership in nursing—things I’d never really thought about before,” says Sydney Hofmeyr, 29, who graduated this July from UVic nursing.

Hofmeyr is loving her new job as a home and community care nurse with Island Health’s Victoria Health Unit. She started work in April after completing a practicum there, and says she was beyond excited to care for mostly local elderly folks living within their own homes.

She also loves the fact that she can ride her bike to and from her daily appointments and connect with the surrounding community in her travels.

“I feel quite lucky to be working as a nurse today, helping people through these dramatic challenges we are all facing right now.” As a health care professional, she is prepared to respond to the province’s dual public health emergencies, treating COVID-19 as well as opioid overdoses.

In the first seven months of 2020, there were fewer than 200 deaths from COVID-19 in BC. During that same time, illicit drug toxicity deaths claimed 909 lives. While Hofmeyr understands these challenges as part of her job, she

has also faced tragedy on the home front. Her 15-year-old brother died of an overdose while she was in her second year of nursing studies.

She was shaken by his loss and how his death impacted the community around him. “I chose to move on with my studies so I didn’t take a break from school,” she says.

Reflecting on that decision now, she adds, “I guess I thought I knew what grief was about, that I could deal with this.” She also chose a palliative care focus to her nursing studies in an effort to help heal herself and those around her.

She says a good share of her third year was spent working through her grief. “My studies helped me. I developed a real interest in the philosophy of death and bereavement. I became fascinated, too, by the foundational principles of palliative care which involve basic human values I think are lacking today.”

Many members of her generation want to be political and caring, she says. “But you have to ask yourself, are those qualities in your nature? These qualities were not in my nature until I started working with professor Kelli Stajduhar. She has become my ideal of what a nurse is, and what kind of nurse I aspire to be.”

“Palliative care isn’t a ‘thing’ or a ‘place’ but an approach that focuses on care for the person, their family and community. This approach necessitates a community response where everyone sees their responsibility and their part in care for the dying.”

—Kelli Stajduhar

Completing a practicum under Stajduhar’s supervision at UVic’s Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health was fascinating, says Hofmeyr. “I was inspired to see research conducted alongside a community. This gave me an opportunity to consolidate my learning and gain a whole new perspective on nursing.”

Hofmeyr also proposed the creation of a ‘Before I Die’ wall to Stajduhar’s team. The community-oriented installation cements the idea of life having an end point. The institute, UVic’s School of Nursing and the Deathly Matters conference organizers supported the installation set up at the Student Union Building in fall 2019.

Passersby were invited to complete the phrase, “Before I die, I want to ...” on an expansive chalk board. The concept was originally created by artist Candy Chang, who mounted a similar



Hofmeyr. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

wall on an abandoned house in New Orleans after the death of a loved one. There are now more than 5,000 ‘Before I Die’ walls worldwide.

“It was an interesting process watching people approach the wall,” says Hofmeyr. “It’s an intimate act to make a claim about what you want out of life.” Some of us need help

starting that conversation, defining our desires, understanding ourselves—essential steps for a palliative care practitioner in preparing their client for a good death.

Clear that nursing education never ends, Hofmeyr says, “I believe my own thirst for knowledge will lead me back when the time is right for me.”

Commerce feeds curiosity at campus food bank

BY SASHA MILAM

Tari Murwira, who graduated this July with a commerce degree from the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business at UVic, can count her spare hours over the last school year in cans of soup, jars of peanut butter and litres of milk. Murwira has been coordinator of the University of Victoria Student Society’s on-campus food bank since April 2019.

“The food bank is a warm community of dedicated, generous people,” says Murwira. “I am inspired by how selflessly the volunteers give their time, and their enthusiasm brightens up the space. I’ve enjoyed connecting with users of the service, and getting to know their stories.”

In normal circumstances, the food bank, which relies on funding from the UVSS student fees and donations, serves non-perishables and fresh produce, eggs and dairy, when available, to students. During peak times, the food bank serves 600-800 students weekly.

With the advent of COVID-19 and the physical distancing measures put in place to slow its spread, UVSS services such as the food bank have had to adapt. While the Student University Building was closed, Tari and the food

bank team were able to direct students to food resources in the community, and provide grocery gift cards to students in need.

During her term as coordinator, Murwira appreciated the opportunity to meet students from different faculties and backgrounds who she may not have met otherwise. These users aspire to be doctors, lawyers, social workers, teachers and various kinds of community changers—all supported in meeting their goals by the food resources the food bank offers to relieve the pressure of expensive student life.

“I am interested in the intersection of business and impact, and I like how my work at the food bank has given me exposure to wider UVSS running. It’s allowed me to see and contribute to a smoothly running non-profit service.”

For Murwira, who specialized in service management while at Gustavson, today’s volunteer work may be tomorrow’s career.

“I hope to work in non-profit management, and eventually as a director for a non-profit or social venture. I took a social enterprise class in third year that really inspired me, and I feel it is truly my path and desire. There are different options and paths to get there, which I am excited to explore.”



Murwira. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Aspiring teacher has passion for French culture and language

A year spent living in a Francophone community in Quebec instilled a life-long love of French language and culture in Pamela Fraser

STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

A year living in a Francophone village in Quebec instilled a life-long love of French language and culture in Pamela Fraser.

Fraser, who graduated in July with a master’s degree in French, credits her parents, especially her dad, for passing along an enthusiasm for French culture and language. Although she was enrolled in French immersion classes as a child, Fraser’s father discovered she could attend Victor-Brodeur, Victoria’s French first-language school, if she lived in a Francophone community for a year.

Off the two of them went. Fraser spent fourth grade at a school in Chicoutimi.

“It was a big experience and a good memory that we share,” Fraser says. “I have a strong passion for the French language and I would trace it back to that year.”

Fraser won an Andy Farquharson Teaching Excellence Award for Graduate Students this year in recognition of her work as a teaching assistant in the Department of French, specifically for the skill and enthusiasm she showed guiding new French learners. Her teaching efforts included playing music videos at the start of class to pique students’ interest in French culture, creating fun games to practice verbs, and



Fraser

fostering a safe space for students to practice their speaking skills.

French Chair Catherine Caws says Fraser stands out as one of the best teaching assistants the department has ever had.

“Students are typically very shy about speaking another language, and so it takes a lot of support and creativity in encouraging students to take risks and to understand that making mistakes is a natural process when learning,” she says.

Fraser also advanced to the finals of UVic’s Three-Minute Thesis competition. There, she spoke about her research on theatrical representations of the École Polytechnique massacre, in which 14 women were killed by a male gunman in 1989 in Quebec.

Her presentation, “Misogyny & Antifemism: Why Theatrical Representations of the Polytechnique Massacre Matter,” showed that the

plays she studied tended to focus more on a “crisis of masculinity” and men’s feelings about the massacre, rather than the experiences of the women affected.

Fraser plans to take her experience as a graduate student into a career as a secondary school teacher. She’s enrolled in UVic’s post-degree professional program in teacher education in the Faculty of Education.

As for her dad, Fraser says he’s proud of her accomplishments. Fraser hopes she’ll be able to teach French immersion in the city she grew up, helping pass on her love of French language and culture to other Anglophones.

“I love Victoria. I think it would be really interesting experience to teach French immersion here,” Fraser says. “I like teaching Anglophones. I can really relate and understand the issues that may come up.”

Board of Governors chair and vice-chair welcome new members for 2020-21



McIntyre

The UVic Board of Governors is one of two primary governing bodies of the university (the other being the Senate). The board is responsible for the management, administration and control of the property, revenue and business affairs of the university. Every year, the board elects a new chair and vice-chair and new student representatives are elected from the undergraduate and graduate student bodies. This year, the board also welcomes newly elected staff and faculty members and an order-in-council appointee. More info about the board can be found at uvic.ca/usec.

Cathy McIntyre, Chair

Cathy McIntyre is principal of Strategic Initiatives, a Victoria strategy consulting firm. Her background includes more than 30 years of marketing, communications and consulting experience, and more than 20 years of board service. A Chartered Director (C.Dir), McIntyre currently serves on the Boards of Directors of First West Credit Union, Consumer Protection BC, Peninsula Co-op and CADTH. She is a former director of the United Way of Greater Victoria, the United Way of Canada, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation and the CMA Society of BC, among others. McIntyre earned an MBA at UVic and the Corporate Director Certificate at Harvard Business School.

McIntyre was acknowledged as one of UVic's "50 Alumni Who Made a Difference" in 2013 and received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. She is a past president of the UVic Alumni Association and has served as a convocation senator on UVic's Senate. She has served on the UVic Board of Governors since 2015; her current appointment is effective until July 2021.

David Zussman, Vice-Chair

David Zussman has held executive positions in academia, government and the not for profit sector. In academia, he held the Jarislowsky Chair in Public Sector Management at the University of Ottawa and served as Dean of the Telfer Faculty of Management and Director of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at that university. Prior to that, he was a professor in the School of Public Administration at UVic.

In the not-for-profit sector, Zussman was President of the Public Policy Forum and in government he was Assistant Secretary to the federal Cabinet for Machinery of Government and served as Commissioner of the Public Service.

Currently, Zussman serves as the

Chair of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sports and is a member of the Environment Canada audit committee. He is also President Emeritus of the Public Policy Forum, an adjunct professor at the School of Public Administration at UVic and Senior Fellow at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the U-Ottawa.

Shailoo Bedi

Shailoo Bedi joined UVic in 2004 as a director within the University Libraries and holds a dual appointment between the libraries and LTSI, as Director, Student Academic Success focusing on coordinating programs that directly support student academic success and retention.

Bedi earned a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction at UVic in 2016 and has published on topics related to leadership, equity, diversity, and inclusion and qualitative research methods. She also teaches in the area of leadership and diversity.

One of her key values is being an engaged university citizen and serves on several committees including: the Advisory Committee on Academic Accommodation and Access for Students with Disabilities, the Human Research Ethics Board, Strategic Enrolment Management, and co-chair's ConnectU, the university's staff and faculty conference. Bedi is also involved in the broader Victoria community where she serves on the Board for Artemis Place Society.

Katherine Fairley

Katherine Fairley is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in economics at UVic. She recently completed her BSc in the same discipline. She has a passion for research-informed policy design and for developing inclusive practices of management. She has worked in the public service, having completed a co-operative education work term with the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, but her ultimate love is economic research, where she focuses on quantifying economic measures of race and gender-based discrimination as well as suggesting policy best practices for improving economic equality and increasing diversity in her discipline. She previously served on the University of Victoria Board of Governors as the member elected by undergraduate students.

Adam Monahan

Adam Monahan is a Professor of Atmospheric Science in the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences at the University of Victoria, and a member of the Institute for Integrated Energy

Systems. His main research interests are characterizing and modelling variability in the atmosphere and ocean, with a specific focus on unifying statistical and physical perspectives. He has particular interest in near-surface winds and renewable energy meteorology. Monahan has written or co-authored more than 110 peer reviewed papers and has been awarded the President's Prize of the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society. He holds a BSc in Physics from University of Calgary, and an MSc in Physics and a PhD in Oceanography from the University of British Columbia.

Monica Prendergast

Monica Prendergast is Professor of Drama/Theatre Education, Department of Curriculum & Instruction at UVic. Her research interests are varied and include drama-based curriculum and pedagogy, drama/theatre in community contexts, and arts-based qualitative research methods. Prendergast's books include *Applied Theatre* and *Applied Drama* (both with Juliana Saxton), *Teaching Spectatorship*, *Poetic Inquiry*, *Staging the Not-yet*, *Drama, Theatre and Performance Education in Canada* and *Poetic Inquiry II*. Her CV includes over 50 peer reviewed journal contributions, numerous chapters, book reviews and professional contributions. Prendergast also reviews theatre for CBC Radio Canada and writes a column on theatre for *Focus* magazine.

Paul Ramsey

Paul Ramsey is a Senior Software Engineer with Crunchy Data. Previously Ramsey was a Senior Software Engineer for CARTO and Vice President of Products for Boundless Geo. Active in his community, he is a Member of OsGeo Conference Committee, was Chair of FOSS4G Conference, and was a Director for Open Source Geospatial Foundation. He holds a Master of Science Statistics from the UVic and a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the University of British Columbia.

Juliet Watts

Juliet Watts is a third-year student pursuing a BA in Political Science and Public Administration. While at UVic, she has served as the UVSS Director of Campaigns and Community Relations, and as a Director-at-Large for the Undergraduates of Political Science Course Union. She is experienced in advocating for students to the university and navigating bureaucratic systems at all levels of government.



Monahan



Prendergast



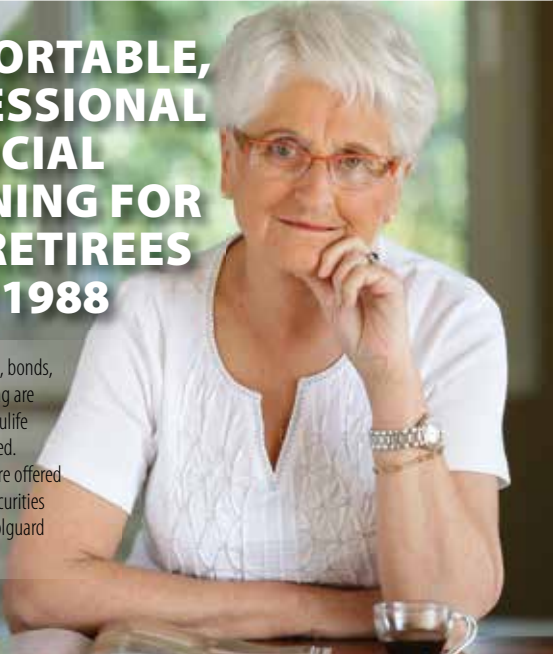
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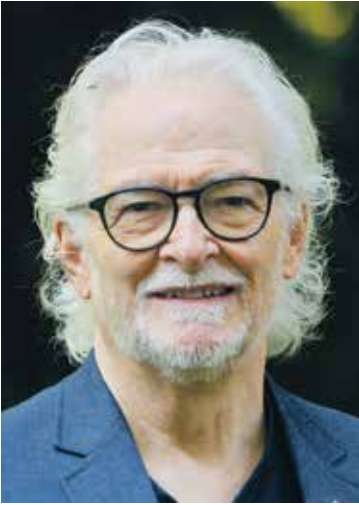




Archibald. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



Cai. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



Carroll. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



Leadbeater. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Four UVic faculty named as Royal Society fellows

From studying patterns of sounds in second languages to understanding and improving the health and well-being of children and youth, the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) recognized four UVic researchers this month with the country’s highest academic honour.

The peer-elected recipients are chosen for academic excellence and for making “remarkable contributions” in the arts, humanities and sciences, and Canadian public life. Professors John Archibald (linguistics), William Carroll (sociology) and Bonnie Leadbeater (psychology) are elected new fellows, while Lin Cai (electrical and computer engineering) is named a new member to the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists.

Nancy Turner (emeritus, environmental studies) won the RSC’s Innis Gerin Medal for distinguished and sustained contributions to the literature of social sciences.

John Archibald, linguistics

A prolific, groundbreaking and internationally recognized scholar of second-language phonology, Archibald has made major contributions to multiple areas in the field of linguistics, and shaped government policy and provincial curricula on second-language learning in Canada.

An enthusiastic and dedicated teacher, Archibald has supervised over 75 honours and graduate theses during his career. He is also co-editor of the classic introductory textbook, *Contemporary Linguistic Analysis*, published in multiple editions in Canada and the US.

“My research has always been driven by a desire to answer the why questions related to second-language speakers’ accents,” Archibald explains. “Why are some elements of speech easy to acquire for some learners but hard for others, for instance? Time and time again, research shows that the mental representations of multilingual people—whether it be for sentences, words or sounds—are rooted in complex cognitive systems. Exploring and seeking to explain that complexity, on my own and with graduate students, has been the nar-

ative arc of my career.”

Archibald has been a professor in UVic’s Department of Linguistics for the past decade, while also an affiliated researcher in the Bilingualism Research Lab at the University of Illinois in Chicago. His previous posts include dean of the Faculty of Humanities at UVic and president of the Canadian Linguistic Association.

Lin Cai, electrical and computer engineering

The internet—one of the world’s largest human-made systems—has connected more than half the global population and it is rapidly expanding. Smart devices ranging from sensors and electronic appliances to security systems and autonomous vehicles need to access the internet, from anywhere and at any time, leading to a new era of ubiquitous intelligence. Cai is working hard to make sure that future wireless systems are reliable and efficient in supporting internet-connected devices, which are estimated to reach 24 billion in 2030—about three times the current human population.

The major challenge, says Cai, is that the wireless spectrum is currently inadequate to meet the explosive growth of the wireless service demand. Cai, an internationally recognized expert in the field and professor of electrical and computer engineering, is working with her team to design and develop a system of wireless networks that will satisfy the stringent connectivity requirements of a massive number of smart devices.

“The most rewarding part of being an engineering faculty member,” she says, “is working with talented and dedicated students and research fellows, to inspire and be inspired to create disruptive technologies that enable new products and services beyond what consumers can imagine today.

William Carroll, sociology

A social activist to the core, Carroll has been tracking social movements, analyzing corporate power structures and shining the light on social justice issues around the globe since the ‘70s.

Whether it is examining efforts to democratize media or investigating the power of the fossil-fuel industry in Western Canada, Carroll is passionate about empowering Canadians toward a more democratic society. His current research is focused around the relationships between corporate power, fossil capitalism and the climate crisis. He co-leads the “Mapping the Power of the Carbon Extractive Corporate Resource Sector” with Shannon Daub, the executive director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC. Carroll and Daub were the 2019 recipients of UVic’s REACH Award for Excellence in Research Partnership.

Carroll’s contributions include 13 published books, 74 refereed articles, 53 book chapters and 147 research papers presented at academic conferences around the world.

Carroll says, “I have tried in my scholarly work to advance our understanding of social injustices and inequality. The more we understand the mechanisms that generate inequity and ecological degradation, the better equipped we are to undo them.”

Bonnie Leadbeater, psychology

Leadbeater is recognized around the world for her expertise in child and youth well-being. She led the development of the WITS programs (walk away, ignore, talk it out, seek help) for the prevention of peer bullying, in English, French and Portuguese.

In her two decades of research, she also contributed to our understanding of the mental health of youth transitioning to young adulthood; mothers; substance use and mental health; and the prevention of peer victimization. Her community and international partnerships have also addressed critical societal issues and supported the development of policies aimed at supporting healthy youth.

As a dedicated researcher, educator and psychologist, she has had a profound and widespread impact on children and youth in Canada and abroad.

“It is an honour to be recognized for a career that has given me so much pleasure and so many opportunities to work with extraordinary students and



Turner. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

partners—dedicated to promoting the well-being of children and youth,” Leadbeater says.

Nancy Turner, environmental studies

Turner, professor emeritus and renowned ethnobotanist, devoted her career to understanding and communicating the crucial role that plants play in Indigenous cultures and languages, especially with respect to land use, rights and title. The RSC tribute recognizes Turner as a long-time champion of Indigenous knowledge.

Her book, *Ancient Pathways, Ancestral Knowledge: Ethnobotany and Ecological Wisdom of Indigenous Peoples of Northwestern North America*, won the 2016 Canada Prize in the Social Sciences by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Recently, she edited a new book, *Plants, People, and Places: The Roles of Ethnobotany and Ethnoecology in Indigenous Peoples’ Land Rights in Canada and Beyond*. She is one of the most respected ethnobotanists in the world—specializing in ethnoecological studies with Western Canadian Indigenous Peoples, particularly in BC.

“I am indebted to my Indigenous teachers over the years,” Turner notes, “and want to acknowledge them and the critical importance of their teachings, their language and their relationships to plants and places.”

New fund launched to support COVID research response

A new University of Victoria fund is set to create ways for donors to support researchers as they find solutions to make our communities stronger and speed up our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UVic Research Accelerator Fund (RAF), launched in late July, empowers world-class researchers to respond to the urgent needs of communities in areas of economic sustainability, the health of individuals and populations and Indigenous wellness. Working with partners—Indigenous and other communities, government, health authorities and industry—UVic researchers are focused on building a better future for Canadians amid unprecedented times, says UVic’s Vice-President Research Lisa Kalynchuk.

“UVic researchers are driving recovery from COVID-19. Donor support unlocks and accelerates research with local and global relevance. The UVic Research Accelerator Fund advances big ideas to make real change in our everyday lives over the long term,” says Kalynchuk.

From developing rapid, non-invasive tests and virus-resistant surface coatings, to new ways of detecting and monitoring COVID-19, society is hungry for new tools and strategies. UVic researchers are immersed in activities related to the determinants of health including mental health, healthy aging and substance use, and social justice and equality. The university is also finding ways to support entrepreneurs and industry as they craft and adapt to new ways of working in the wake of the pandemic.

The first RAF campaign will focus on COVID-19 research. Longer term, the fund will also support future research projects tackling the world’s toughest social, economic and environmental issues, such as climate change and anti-racism.

uvic.ca/researchaccelerator

Mary Kerr wins 2020 Molson Prize

BY JOHN THRELFALL

While the previous winners of the prestigious Molson Prize have been a veritable who’s-who of Canadian culture, theatrical designers had been missing from the list of winning artists, writers, composers, architects, choreographers and academics. That’s changed forever, as UVic theatre professor and legendary production designer Mary Kerr has become the first designer to be named a Molson Prize Laureate in the prize’s 56-year history.

From the iconic likes of Expo 67, Expo 86 and the 1994 Commonwealth

Games to nearly every professional stage in the country, Mary Kerr’s visionary theatrical designs have transformed Canadian culture over the past five decades.

The Molson Prize, which honours contributions to Canada’s cultural and intellectual heritage, is only the latest accolade for the theatre professor. Kerr is also a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, the Royal Society of Canada and has represented Canada at numerous international theatrical design competitions over the past 30 years.

“This award is an important way for other designers to gain heart: they

can see their work is being received equal to painting or sculpture,” says Kerr. “To me, good theatre is a vision quest: it can change your life.”

Two prizes of \$50,000 are awarded each year, one in the arts and the other in the social sciences or humanities. This is the third Molson Prize for UVic and its first in fine arts. John Borrows (law) received a Molson Prize last year and Angus McLaren (history) received the university’s first in 2008.

Molson Prizes are administered by the Canada Council for the Arts in conjunction with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

Full story: bit.ly/20-kerr



Kerr. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

New uvic.ca launched

UVic launched a new central website on Aug. 5. It's clean, simple, searchable, mobile-friendly and task-driven. It also rates as one of the top websites in Canada for accessibility, usability, and search-engine optimization. On the new website you'll find the answers you need—whether you're sitting in your backyard using your mobile, in a rural community using a dial up connection, or accessing the website from another country or time zone.

The website redesign project was led by University Communications + Marketing (UC+M) in partnership with University Systems, guided by a project leadership team of more than 20 leaders from across campus and supported by the contributions of hundreds of staff from a range of university units.

The new website also reflects extensive user interviews, testing, and research into best practices. The resulting new site was built on those findings: we've made evidence-based decisions; prioritized a mobile-first experience; improved accessibility and searchability, reduced content and duplication, and incorporated industry-leading best practices.

It's more than just a facelift. The new website's foundation has been updated to make it lightweight, modular and fast. Those powerful building blocks make it easily adaptable to modern devices and accessible to everyone.

The website's mobile-first design is built with search engine optimization (SEO) at its core, targeting Google's mobile-only ranking system.

According to Information Architect and User Experience Specialist for UC+M, Len Collins. "Users are looking for specific things and over 80% of the time they're going to use search, often with a voice command. Search has become the way we find content. So we wanted to make sure our content is easily translatable, easily findable, and in simple, spoken English."

Read more about the new site features: bit.ly/20-central

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Harnessing plant power for COVID-19 antibody tests

BY VIMALA JEEVANANDAM

In order to meet the global demand for COVID-19 spike protein needed for antibody test kits, UVic plant biologist Peter Constabel has turned to an unexpected source—a relative of the tobacco plant.

Nicotiana benthamiana has an unusual and fascinating superpower: the ability to quickly produce virus proteins. Constabel is teaming up with UVic biochemist Alisdair Boraston, as well as bioLytical Laboratories and ImmunoPrecise Antibodies (Canada) to apply this power to solve the shortage of COVID-19 spike protein needed for antibody testing.

Antibody tests, also known as serology tests, can detect if a person's body has already responded to an infection such as COVID-19. This allows an individual to know if they have had a past infection and allows health officials and governments to track and control the spread of the disease. Given the large number of asymptomatic cases of COVID-19, antibody tests are an essential tool in the fight against the disease. However, the large-scale production of these tests is both costly and time-consuming, reliant on production of spike protein using animal cell cultures in laboratories.

This quick-growing plant may offer a solution, allowing the spike protein



Constabel. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

be produced by plants in greenhouses. It can be tricked into producing virus proteins, such as the COVID-19 spike protein, by inserting the virus's genes into the plant, using a bacterium as a vector. As the plant grows, it produces the virus's proteins, which can then be extracted and purified for use.

"If successful," says Constabel, "this will allow for a much cheaper and more efficient source of COVID-19 spike protein. It could dramatically accelerate the production of antibody

tests in Canada."

BC-based health technology companies bioLytical and ImmunoPrecise Antibodies will characterize and test the spike protein produced by the plant to establish if they can effectively be used for antibody tests.

The UVic-led project is made possible through a special version of the Alliance grant from NSERC which promotes collaboration between industry and academia for projects that specifically address COVID-19.

PHILANTHROPY

"COVID-19 really turned my world upside-down."

Donations made a difference as students faced abrupt changes in their lives, and world, this year.

BY SARAH TARNOPOLSKY

In March 2020, as the university transitioned from face-to-face to alternative modes of instruction in the wake of a quickly advancing COVID-19 pandemic, international students were given the option to travel home early. Nahomi Lopez, who is from Mexico, was still in her first year of studies as she watched many of her friends hop on flights. Despite losing her job at the Cridge Centre after-school program, she elected to stay in Victoria.

"I talked it over with my mom and we decided it was better for me to stay," said Lopez. There were so many unknowns—how the virus would affect Mexico, when and for how long borders would close, when and if she could resume work—her best option was to remain at her homestay near UVic. Like nearly 2,000 other students who received the COVID-19 Support Bursary between March and June, Lopez was grateful for the backing when it was needed.

The university initially committed \$200,000 to meet the immediate challenges students were facing as a result of the pandemic—including lost jobs, technology issues and urgent housing needs. Within weeks, hundreds of alumni, community members, staff and faculty contributed to the bursary to help the university meet the overwhelming demand for support.

UVic AVP Alumni and Development Jane Potentier recalls that donors were quick to reach out. "Right away, we had emails from alumni



Seymour

and other community members to ask if there was anything they could do to help students," she says. "Their response was practical, immediate and meaningful."

Global Community Advisor Sara Mosher-Mandel was one of 153 staff and faculty members who donated. Sara's own academic experience and current work with international students at UVic prompted her to make a gift. "As someone who was an international student many times throughout my academic career, I know that every little bit helps," she says. "Especially in this time of global crisis, I wanted to contribute and support all of the people who enrich our campus community."

Maya Seymour, who was in her third-year in Health and Community Services, said COVID-19 really turned her world upside-down. She usually takes five courses a semester, works 30 hours a week and volunteers to further her experience in the health field. When she lost her job, she didn't think she would be able to continue school, but the bursary allowed her to complete her summer semester and be one step closer to graduating. "This pandemic has reinforced my desire to

pursue a Master of Public Health and make an impact in the global health community," she says.

In all, donors contributed \$241,000 to the bursary, including donations from the UVic Alumni Association and the UVSS. Over \$3,000 was raised through a live stream of alumnus Charles Ross' popular "One Man Star Wars." With additional funding from government sources and university budgets, the COVID-19 Support Bursary ultimately disbursed over \$1.4 million to students, and an ongoing fund to support students facing challenges associated with the pandemic has been established to continue its vital work.

The new COVID-19 Student Support Fund will bolster a number of student financial assistance streams to respond to the increased number of students requesting support. Donations to that fund will help students focus on their studies, well-being and academic performance throughout the next year—through support for housing, food, mental health services, child care, mentoring and online learning.

For more information about the new fund, visit bit.ly/20-support.