Val Napoleon wins 2021 Indspire Award for Law and Justice

SPEED READ

RESPECT & RECONCILIATION

Territory acknowledgement updated

In consultation with the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, UVic has made key changes to its territorial acknowledgement. The revised version is: "We acknowledge and respect the ləkq̓ən̓ó̓l̓ peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and w̱sən̓əl peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day." Please update your email signature, website postings and other online text to reflect these changes.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Fall semester planning

We’re hard at work preparing for a safe return to in-person activities this fall. Visit uvic.ca/covid-19 to keep up to date with ongoing changes to university services and health and safety protocols as guided by BC’s Restart Plan and the provincial health officer. Protocols around masks, physical distancing and gatherings are likely to change over the summer, and your health and safety remain our top priority. Visit uvic.ca/covid-19 for updates.

SPRING 2021 GRADUATES

Producing plays during a pandemic

BY JOHN THRELFALL

If you had to pick the worst possible time to start a theatre career, it would be tough to top the COVID era. With live indoor performances cancelled since March 2020 and no relief in sight, the arts remain one of the hardest hit economic sectors of the pandemic. Yet Logan Swain is feeling optimistic about his career choice, thanks to UVic’s co-op program and alumni company Theatre SKAM. Not only is Swain graduating this spring with a BFA in comprehensive theatre with a design specialization, but he’s already been hired as a producer with SKAM.

"Doing theatre in a non-educational environment has been a great opportunity for me," he says. Thanks to two separate eight-month, BC Arts Council-funded co-op terms, Swain completed his degree by undertaking ever-increasing responsibilities at SKAM: designing a new play, organizing a tour, interacting with city officials, working with kids and so much more.

"The logistics of that hands-on, real-world experience was very different than at UVic, where everything already existed," he says. Born and raised in the Cowichan Valley, Swain felt theatre was the logical choice for him, as it encompassed the various career paths he was considering. "Music, writing, film, engineering, event planning... what’s really great about the theatre program at UVic is that you’re given all the tools and skills you need to do things on your own—but when you actually put them into practice, you’re fully supported. And doing co-op was a great next step: still having that support but also having the freedom to make your own decisions."

With design credits on seven Phoenix Theatre productions behind him, as well as the experience of mounting a pair of Fringe shows with his own company, Bucket Head Theatre, Swain started at SKAM in 2019 and was able to design two different productions, organize a tour and help mount a 13-show festival before the pandemic hit. He then found himself at ground zero for the decision-making process when SKAM received official approval to continue with their annual outdoor SKAMpode Festival in July 2020, providing some physically-distanced relief to the city’s live-performance drought.

SEE SWAIN P.9

INDIGENOUS LAWS

Val Napoleon wins 2021 Indspire Award for Law and Justice

By Julie Sloan

Val Napoleon is one of Canada’s most influ- enctual Indigenous legal scholars. She’s also an artist, disruptor, activist, a Cree woman from the Saulteau First Nation and an adopted member of the Gitanyow (Gitxsan) Nation. In May, Napoleon received the 2021 Indspire Award for Law and Justice. The Indspire awards represent the highest honour the Indigenous community bestows upon its own people. Over 28 years, the Indspire awards have honoured 364 First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals who demonstrate outstanding achieve- ment.

It is a much-deserved award. As director of the world’s first Indigenous law degree program, launched in 2018, and co-founder and director of the Indigenous Law Research Unit, Napoleon is truly changing the lives of Indigenous people across Canada and abroad with her tireless work helping First Nations communities articulate and formalize their traditional laws—and by training the next generation of lawyers to work with those laws along side Canadian Common Law.

"Val is changing the way we teach and practice law in Canada," says UVic law professor and Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Law John Borrows. "Her lead- ership at the Indigenous Law Research Unit is key in responding to communities’ invitations to help them revitalize their laws. Her work in the law school brings to light how we can better help communities accomplish their goals."
Supporting student enrollment during a pandemic

BY ERIK KING

When the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan launched in 2019, no one could have predicted that two years into the enrollment program, implementing the plan’s tactics would focus on the student experience as a challenge—along with the abrupt transition to online learning and teaching. But the good thinking behind SEM has helped UVic mitigate some of the challenges that student success during a difficult year. The SEM Plan guides university researchers, admissions, and enrollment professionals about their success initiatives. In practice, that means the university is committed to recruiting and retaining the very best student candidates, including those from under-represented popula
tions, diversifying the international undergraduate student population, and increasing our enrolment of Indig
iduous students and proportion of graduate students. “Our six SEM goals are long-term and reflect commitments articulated in other national planning.”

Sustainability

UVic named as one of Canada’s Greenest Employers

UVic has been included in the list of Canada’s Greenest Employers for the seventh time. The national awards recognize Canadian employers that lead the nation in creating a culture of environmental awareness and action. “It’s an honour to be recognized as a green employer,” says Mike Wilson, director of campus planning and sustainability. “UVic’s green campus and leadership on climate action and sustainability is something we are very proud of. This year, with input from students, faculty and staff, we’re developing an institutional Climate and Sustainability Action Plan, which will offer ambitious, creative and integrated sustainability solutions while respecting Indigenous ways of knowing and being.”

Sustainable initiatives that supported UVic’s selection in the Canada’s Greenest Employers list for 2021 include:

The Campus Sustainability Fund, which provides financial support for employees, student and faculty-inspired sustainability projects

The integration of sustainability as a key part of UVic’s academic curriculum in nearly every major field of study and engineering to social sciences and law

A campus community garden with 90 plots, run by UVic Students’ Society volunteers, offers regular gardening workshops and a bee apiary, and an ongoing native plant landscaping and invasive species removal program

Progress toward becoming a zero-waste campus. UVic offers hundreds of recycling bins, an extensive composting program, water conservation initiatives, and special pick-up off for soft plastics, styrofoam, electronic waste and batteries

Major sustainability initiatives under
dway in 2021 include the development of a Climate and Sustainability Action Plan that will guide the university with an integrated approach to sustainability across research, education, community engagement and campus operations; construction of two new student housing and dining buildings; and target Pass Passive House and LEED Gold construction standards while adding 621 new residence spaces for students living on campus; and implementation of the Campus Cycling Plan, which will create an All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling network on campus.

Learn more about sustainability initiatives on the UVic’s Office of Campus Planning and Sustainability.

Canada’s Greenest Employers competition, now in its 14th year, is organized by the Canada’s Top 100 Employers project, which is the result of 3 years of collaboration between UVic’s Office of the University President and the Canada’s Top 100 Employers project.

Forbes: UVic is one of Canada’s best employers It’s been a challenging year to be an employer—and an employee. UVic was proudly ranked 12th on Canada’s Best Employers list for 2021. Forbes partnered with market research firm Statista to compile this annual list of Canada’s best employers by surveying more than 8,000 Canadians working with at least 500 employees.

Child care expands at Queenwood Plans to reorganize the former Queenwood Retreat Centre with a new child care centre are moving forward, thanks to funding from the provincial government. UVic currently operates three culturally inclusive child care facilities on campus for 116 children, and the new project will add 37 child care spaces, including spaces for infants and toddlers, and for children aged three years to kindergarten. More: bit.ly/27-empy
In September 2022, 398 Uvic students will be living in the largest passive house building in Victoria. The sus-
tainable student housing and dining construction project is taking shape on the outside of Ring Road, just south of the Student Union Building where Cadboro Commons was used to stand.

Featuring concrete and mass timber and, designed with the in-
dustry's most rigorous sustainability and energy efficiency requirements, students will be able to enjoy all the best on-campus living can offer while also knowing they are in a state-of-
the-art green building. In the fall of 2023, the second building will be ready to welcome 385 more students into the dorms.

The past few months have seen the buildings rise in stature with current site activity focusing on the concrete structure, interior framing and exte-
rior stud framing. The recent arrival of mass timber from a new state-of-
the-art facility in the Kootenays allows for the installation of mass timber columns and slabs, including work on the mass timber podium—a feature that wraps around the exterior of the south wing of Building One.

Mass timber is made by adhering smaller pieces of wood together to form pre-fabricated larger building components such as beams. By us-
ing BC-sourced wood for the mass timber features, the university is using sustainable construction options and reducing its carbon footprint for the entire build. This is due to two factors: the timber has been grown, harvested and processed all within the province, lowering the carbon foot-
print incurred for shipping, and the production of mass timber is not as
intensive as the manufacture of other construction materials such as steel and concrete.

When complete, these buildings will be the starting places on campus for students to live, learn, share meals and connections,” says Joen Lynn, execu-
tive director, Uvic Student Services. The facilities will enrich the student experience by creating a community gathering space on campus, and we’re very excited for our students to have access to this kind of facility during their studies at Uvic.

While construction is progressing on schedule, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the project. Work safe plans and procedures are in place and strictly followed to keep personnel healthy, and they are rou-
tinely kept up to date as provincial health orders change. Because cam-
pus is quieter than usual, with student, faculty and staff learning and working remotely, construction has progressed efficiently with fewer constraints as vehicle and foot traffic on campus is currently very low.

A video tour of the site hosted by Sidney Reist, Uvic engineering alumni and project coordinator with the Illusion Kinetic joint venture highlights the recent work including the mass timber features.

When complete, Building One will have six storeys on its south wing and eight storeys on its north wing. It will house the dining facility and student residences. Building Two is 11 storeys and will be home to student residences on its upper floors and classroom space, study and meeting space, conference facilities and an Indigenous student lounge on the lower two levels.

By expanding on-campus hous-
ing, Uvic is striving to meet student demand and provide as many op-
portunities as possible that foster a socially and intellectually engaged and connected campus.

Full story and video: bit.ly/2J9xnh

Sustainable student housing takes shape

Campus Greenway weaves from west to east

The westernmost segment of the Campus Greenway project stretches from Gordon Head Road to Ring Road. The entire greenway runs through the centre of campus, for a total distance of 1 kilometre, and when complete will be a multi-modal route for pedes-
trians and cyclists between Sinclair Road and Gordon Head Greenway.

Connecting buildings and public spaces while creating a vibrant aca-
demic and social hub, the greenway will be built in phases. The Central Campus portion is still to come and a segment of the East Campus Green-
way will be completed in conjunction with the Student Housing and Dining construction project.

The Western Head Greenway is defined by natural features, including the protected area of Bowker Creek and the University Club pond, and there is a pathway through this picturesque area allows visitors to enjoy the third house cycling corridor on campus while viewing the ecological features of this portion of the greenway.

The western section of the Green-
way will tell the story of natural areas of campus like the Garry oak ecosys-
tem and Bowker Creek, says Mike Wil-
son, director of campus planning and sustainability. “It will also highlight some of the ecological practices we’re committed to at Uvic, such as storm water management, and become a much safer commuter corridor for active transportation.”

New public spaces will include a plaza and seating area near Gordon Head Road just off the Alumni Chip Trail and a viewing platform and seat-
ing area at the headwater of Bowker Creek. An additional viewing platform and seating area will be installed near the University Club pond.

Interpretive signage along the greenway will highlight Indigenous culture, language, history and connec-
tions to the land including ecological characteristics. Developed in consul-
tation with the Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engage-
ment, the interpretive panels will tell the stories of relationships with the land that continue today. A ceder weaving design pattern that will be incorpo-
rated in the paving treatment was inspired by the manner of weav-
ing in Uvic’s Indigenous Plan. Ecological restoration activities will see the return of native plants and trees, including the planting of camus
in the field between Gordon Head Road and West Campus Way, and wetland native plants in the Bowker Creek and University Club pond areas.

Pedestrians and cyclists will enjoy improved controlled road crossings at both West Campus Way and Ring Road. The crossings will be widened and reorientied to safely accommodate foot and bicycle traffic.

The Western Campus Greenway project is anticipated to be completed in Sept. 2021.
While working on the Delgamuukw
CONTINUED FROM P. 1

Napoleon began working with Gitxsan
Budd Hall, highly respected for his
jurists like Peter Grant, Stuart Rush,
Indigenous education. “He has devoted
a month from a visionary organization
focused on effecting the type of real
change in the field of linguistics in
the processes.

Four decades of community
collaboration
Hall, a professor emeritus (public administration) and former dean of education at UVic, served as secretarygeneral of the International Council of
Adult Education (based in Toronto)
from 1979 to 1991 before coming to UVic. He has also worked closely with unesco and the un since 1972.
“it’s not secret as to why these kinds
of social-justice oriented innovations
come about,” Hall adds. “it’s because of
people. Movements are people.”

Continuing to solicit feedback
“Adding a course or four or five read-
ing closely with the next generation
students will learn about those laws,
scholarship is considerable,” says
UVic, in addition to the Fraser law—
for Indigenous Laws is getting closer
to action 50, to build Indigenous Law
institutes. Already more than 10 years
after the promise, the Centre for
Indigenous Laws— the culmination
of 15 years of work fulfilling the Truth
and Reconciliation Commission’s call
to action 50, to build Indigenous Law
institutes.

“it’s a dialogue of equals. We’ve
made a lot of progress but the vision,
if you think about this as a knowledge
democracy, is the recognition that
knowledge is created in all places and
that lived experiences are equal to
knowledge produced in the academy.”
Hall shares the unesco position
with his colleagues and co-chair rajesh Tandon, a uvic honorary degree recipient based in New Delhi, India.

Hall hosted the third, UVic in 2008, at which the seed of an idea for cbrc was germinated.
UVic video: bit.ly/21-hall

Recognizing a global duty on community-driven change

BY PHILIP COX

UVic linguist Ewa CzaykowskaHiggins has spent the majority of her decades-long career in collabora-
tive, community-based work in Indigenous language documentation, maintenance and revitalization with Salish communities, effecting lasting
change in the field of linguistics in the process.
For leadership and lifelong, commitment to community-engaged language research, she has been
honoured with the 2021 Paz Buttledahl Career Achievement Award from the Canadian Association
of University Teachers (CAUT) of British Columbia. “The Paz Buttledahl award reflects the integ-
ral connections at the heart of Dr.
Czaykowska-Higgins’ tremendous
academic achievements and her
impact on Indigenous and non-
Indigenous communities,” says
academic of the year for the Faculty
of Humanities at the University of Victoria.

Czaykowska-Higgins earned the respect of innumerable
scholars, and is in awe of the impact her work has had.
“I keep teaching Indigenous language studies, and the
students will learn about those laws, as will the
law—a L’expert Zenith Award, and
the known hereditary position as
Chair of the First Nations
University of Canada’s First Peoples’
Culture Foundation, the First
Peoples’ Language and Culture
Council, and UVic’s linguistics department.

During the six-year-long project,
which was steered by several Elders
communities in the region, and
academic.”

UVic’s position on the Halal’t people. With his support,
the world, of what counts and how
knowledge is constructed,” Hall says.
“Adding a course or four or five read-
ings to everything else, as we know
it isn’t enough. It has to go deeper. We
have to think about the very architec-
ture of knowledge.”

“So this physical structure represents a
sanctuary where our laws, which enable us to be peoples, will be safe,” explains napoleon, “and where both
Indigenous and non-Indigenous students will learn about those laws, effecting language
in a multi-racial Canada.”

How the centre will facilitate and
build those conversations and
connections has been the focus of
ongoing national outreach which continues to solicit feedback and ideas through its engagements.
An APTN/CBC special will air on
June 22, highlighting the accomplish-
ments of the 2021 Indigeneous award
winners, including napoleon.

Louis honouring work with Salish communities

BY PHILIP COX

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NAPOLEON CONTINUED FROM P. 1

eviewed a painting, and her artwork spoke

Throughout the 2000s, Czaykowska-
Higgins has worked closely and collaboratively with members of the na’uxw m’s-in-speaking commu-
nity in Washington state, and the Hul’q’um’i’n nation, and the Senec’oten
speaking communities of southern Vancouver Island.
In 2002, and she, along with a Tolc’atal galica
he delivered verse in his own words
during his speech, turning the attention to someone
other than himself—to honour the
tate Pacific Freire, an influential phi-
loosopher and educator who was a personal inspiration to him.
Over the years, Hall has under-
taken theoretical and practical work in community-based research, often
exploring critical pedagogy and work-
ing closely with the next generation
to question what is entrenched and
called instead for new approaches.
“UVic, together with most of the
universities in the world, is based upon a 500-year-old Eurocentric idea
of the world, of how to understand
and interact with the world, of what
knowledge is constructed,” Hall says.
“Adding a course or four or five read-
ings to everything else, as we know
it isn’t enough. It has to go deeper. We
have to think about the very architec-
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Rights to their lands without a signed
treaty—a precedent that set the stage for countless conflicts across
Canada. It was during this time that
napoleon began working with Gitxsan
leaders and peoples, and other leading
jurists like peter grant, stuart rush,
louise mandell, among others.

Founding of the Indigenous
Law Research Unit
While working on the Delgamuukw
case, napoleon and his Gitxsan
peoples arguing their case on the
basis of their own laws from oral
histories, and saw that the Canadian
legal system had no understanding of
Gitxsan legal systems. This realization
formed the basis of a new direction
in her life, and the founding of the
Indigenous Law Research Unit, which
she co-founded in 2012 with Hadley
daley.

napoleon’s passion, determination
and hard work couldn’t even be
seen 20 years ago. That was when she started
painting, and her artwork spoke about
Emotions and symbolism in a new
way. Her paintings center on Ravens—
typically tricksters in Indigenous lore—but with a twist. Her ravens are
grandmothers and disrupters a motif
that’s easy to see as a representation of
Napoleon herself.

Napoleon holds the Law Foun-
dation Chair of Indigenous Justice
and Reconciliation at the University of
British Columbia, has been named a
Canadian Indigenous Bar Asso-
ciation People’s Counsel—a rare
distinction awarded to a First Nations,
Inuit, or Métis lawyer for “outstanding
achievements in the practice of
law—a L’expert Zenith Award, and
the known hereditary position as
Chair of the First Nations
University of Canada’s New Scholars
in 2017. She will receive an honorary
doctor of laws from UVic in June
2021.

National Centre for
 Indigenous Laws
And Napoleon isn’t taking a break
soon. In September 2020, uvic
announced funding for the estab-
lishment of the National Centre for
Indigenous Laws—the culmination
of 15 years of work fulfilling the Truth
and Reconciliation Commission’s call
to action 50, to build Indigenous Law
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after the promise, the Centre for
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as well as ceremonial and community
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winners, including napoleon.
The global pandemic brought a year of disconnection, shifts, publishing challenges, and heartbreakingly new losses. Throughout, despite a year like no other, UVic researchers pivoted research and funding to study solutions to build more resilient communities in the wake of COVID-19.

This spring, UVic funded its first round of the Research Accelerator Fund (RAF), a seed fund to support teaching and research at our university. The first RAF campaign focused on COVID-19 research that strives to make communities stronger and speed up recovery—locally and beyond.

“The Research Accelerator Fund supports recovery efforts through expertise, partnerships and infrastructures,” says Nathan Lachowsky, special advisor of health research within the Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation.

“Projects funded under RAF represent a range of emerging areas and team-based interdisciplinary approaches—to create projects with aspirations for significant impact in our communities.”

UVic launched the seed fund last summer to empower the university’s 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.

Initial funds by donors under RAF contributed to providing $165,000 to six projects, including the following:

Dr. Leigh Anne Swayne, a UVic neuroscientist within the Division of Medical Sciences, leads a team of researchers to understand the adverse effects of SARS-CoV-2 infection on the brain. More is known about COVID-19’s impact on respiratory and cardiovascular systems, but its lingering effects on the brain—whether loss of smell or so-called “brain fog”—is more of a mystery.

Statistician Xuekui Zhang and his team of researchers are studying risk factors for COVID-19 and forecasting infection counts. They’re looking at US infection data to model the trajectory of COVID-19 infection and apply that model to Canadian infection rates to better predict outcomes here.

Exploring impacts of the pandemic
From understanding the mental health needs of older people to how the COVID-19 pandemic intersects with the ongoing overdose public health emergency in BC, UVic researchers are creating solutions relevant to these lived experiences with support from the BC Ministry of Health.

In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, psychology researchers Brianna Turner and Thorne Paterson (psychology) are leading a nationwide study asking how COVID-19 and the associated preventative measures are affecting the lives of Canadians. Partnered with researchers in the UK, Canada is one of 11 countries seeking to identify what has been helpful or harmful to our well-being throughout this time.

The work is also supported by funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research. Claire Cutler’s (political science) research is entitled “The Legal and Political Vulnerability of PPE Supply Chains during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Policy Prescriptions for Enhanced Security.” She is identifying critical nodes of legal and political vulnerability in the supply chains for Personal Protective Equipment, known as PPE, for Canada. The goal is to provide policy prescriptions to assist provincial and federal governments in developing appropriate long-term cooperative strategies and partnerships in order to enhance the security of supplies.

UVic research led by Erica Woodin and Catherine Costigan (psychology) involves a community-engaged partnership with the Victoria Assisted Living Community Treatment (ACT) Program, which consists of four interdisciplinary treatment teams that provide stabilization and rehabilitation to adults living with severe mental illness in the community. ACT Team members are experiencing greater levels of stress than normal during the pandemic, which is due in part to the greater number of opiate-related deaths among ACT clients in recent months. The purpose of this project is to understand the practices being used that support interdisciplinary team-based care and the psychological health and safety of team members, and to provide recommendations to further support clinician well-being.

A UVic project led by Karen Kobayashi (sociology) will focus on frail and vulnerable seniors and assisted living technologies (ALTs) to overcome challenges and improve life. The team is focused on improving the health and quality of life of seniors living with complex care needs, and multiple, chronic health conditions. They will investigate several innovative ALTs currently being developed in the province. By using a community-based participatory research methodology, they bring researchers, key health system decision-makers, technology developers, and older adult end-users together, focused on addressing and overcoming challenges to embedding ALTs in end-users’ real-world contexts.

As the COVID-19 pandemic intersects with the ongoing overdose public health emergency in BC, the need to evaluate responses to both these crises is crucial. UVic researchers Karen Urbanski (ciscut/public health and social policy) and Bernie Pauly (ciscut/nursing) are part of a multi-institutional team evaluating the rollout of “safer supply” prescribed alternatives to BC’s toxic illicit drug supply. This research will provide critical evidence to inform pandemic planning and emergency response activities at federal, provincial and local levels.
A learning quest leads to story, artistry and resilience

BY KATE HILDEBRANDT

Shawna Bowler, a proud Métis woman from Winnipeg, and a UVic social work master’s graduate, was a candidate for this year’s Governor General’s gold medal award for her thesis on Indigenous women’s healing through beading methodology. Her thesis is also a testament to her experiences in reconnecting with her own Métis ancestry.

Recounting her quest, Bowler speaks of the genuine amazement at just how far she has come during her studies, and just how her awakening began.

In 1997, Bowler was enrolled in computer science at the University of Manitoba. A writing-intensive curricular requirement led Shawna to a Native People of Canada course.

“I learned so much about my people. I made it a point to know more. I switched to the Native Studies under-grad program and that learning changed my life.”

Bowler continued to the social work undergraduate program to further her studies in social justice for Indigenous people. She wanted to better understand the lack of connect-ion to family, traditions and culture which, as she has observed in her work today, is a loss that is difficult to mend.

Gifts of connection, and amending uncertainties

“Where do my ancestors come from?” she asks, “I still don’t know all the answers.”

Bowler’s parents split up before she was a year old. To this day, she doesn’t know anyone from her father’s side of her family—but she does know that her dad was from Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation in Saskatchewan. She, too, is registered there, but had never visited until she began her MSW re-seniorisation with UVic in 2019.

Interestingly, this was not the point of inspiration that led to her interest in beading.

“So how did I get in my head that I was going to make a pair of moccasins,” she explains. “I looked on the internet, read books, talked to people about the process and I learned that it is the beadwork that makes the moccasins unique. So I taught myself.”

It didn’t take long for her to see she was good at this. “I gave moccasins to my grandmother for her 90th birthday.”

The beadwork features the classic five petal flower. Gifting, she explains, is the centrepiece to her studies on beading.

Linking people with research methodology

Two years later, Bowler was knee-deep on her research paper and want-ing to give back to the participants who shared their knowledge. She decided to make medicine bags with the four petal flower beadwork.

“This became the centrepiece of my research methodology. It is stitched into that beadwork. Gifting the medicine bags and my story cre-at-ed that safe, supportive space for the participants to share their own story though their own beadwork.”

It was really important to me to learn about Indigenous ways of know-ing, being, and doing, and to assert Indigenous ways of doing social work and healing. Engaging in this research allowed me to accomplish some of this and further my own process of decolonization and healing.

Balancing studies and a career

During Bowler’s four years of studies with UVic, she has worked full-time in social work.

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As with learning and sharing knowledge, she says, “beadwork is medicine.”

And Grandma is still wearing those beautiful moccasins.

A study in (very tall) landscapes

BY ANNE MACLAURIN

Persia Khan, who graduated this spring with a BSc in geography and a minor in environmental studies, grew up surrounded by big mountain land-scapes in Cochrane, Alberta.

After touring the UVic campus, Khan knew she wanted to trade the Rockies and Kootenays for a coastal environ-ment and a future in conserva-tion and ecology.

“My path at UVic was largely shaped on the lands of the Songhees, Esqui-mault peoples, I have had the opportunity to be a research as-sistant with UVic’s Mountain Legacy Project. A highlight of Khan’s degree was participating in research at UVic and she intends to pursue a master’s of science program, specifically in wildlife ecology. When she reflects on her time at UVic, one of the most important things she learned was how the local community matters.

Moving forward, Khan wants to decolonize her own research and continue to learn from those who have engaged with western ideals of conservation and environmental management.

She’s currently working as a field technician monitoring wildlife in the Alberta Rockies, where she is looking forward to lots of hiking and biking all summer before beginning more studies in wildlife ecology.

“After learning on unceded lands over the past few years, specifically on the lands of the Songhees, Essqui-mault, WSÁNEĆ peoples. I have had the privilege of learning from elders and community members about the ways that my growing Western science education can be used to complement already existing Indigenous perspec-tives and knowledge,” says Khan.

“Somehow I got it in my head that I was going to make a pair of moccasins,” she explains. “I looked on the internet, read books, talked to people about the process and I learned that it is the beadwork that makes the moccasins unique. So I taught myself.”

It didn’t take long for her to see she was good at this. “I gave moccasins to my grandmother for her 90th birthday.”

The beadwork features the classic five petal flower. Gifting, she explains, is the centrepiece to her studies on beading.

Linking people with research methodology

Two years later, Bowler was knee-deep on her research paper and want-ing to give back to the participants who shared their knowledge. She decided to make medicine bags with the four petal flower beadwork.

“This became the centrepiece of my research methodology. It is stitched into that beadwork. Gifting the medicine bags and my story cre-at-ed that safe, supportive space for the participants to share their own story though their own beadwork.”

It was really important to me to learn about Indigenous ways of know-ing, being, and doing, and to assert Indigenous ways of doing social work and healing. Engaging in this research allowed me to accomplish some of this and further my own process of decolonization and healing.

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BY CHARLIE HILDEBRANDT

When Kashtin Apsassin arrived in Austin for the last leg of his Master of Global Business (MGB) program in 2020, he was excited to spend another semester exploring a new country and continent with his international cohort of classmates. He didn’t expect that he would have to fly halfway across the world due to a global pandemic. However, after a rollercoaster year filled with highs and lows, Kashtin graduated and excited for the official start of his postgraduate life.

Apsassin is one of many new grads around the world who finished their degrees during a pandemic. In his case that also meant starting a co-op, beginning a job hunt and starting a new career, all without leaving his home. The situation was complicated by the fact that the conclusion of his final co-op coincided with the beginning of the pandemic and one of the most uncertain job markets in recent memory. He applied to dozens of jobs and received few responses. “Graduating from university is already an uncertain time,” he says, “and to add to that was the most unpredictable period in recent times.”

During this period, he lost both his on-campus job and his internship that would have helped pay for his education. He ended up trying to be entrepreneurial, “I asked the people I knew if they would want to be a client, and I started a photography and web design business, and even worked helping others spruce up their resumes.” He used the knowledge he had built with my professional practice courses in the MGB to offer my peers support as they looked for jobs.”

Another thing that helped Apsassin through this time—sharing his experience with peers. He highlights how important it is for graduates to be honest about their immediate post-graduation experiences. “When Kashtin Apsassin arrived in Austin for the last leg of his Master of Global Business (MGB) program in 2020, he was excited to spend another semester exploring a new country and continent with his international cohort of classmates. He didn’t expect that he would have to fly halfway across the world due to a global pandemic. However, after a rollercoaster year filled with highs and lows, Kashtin graduated and excited for the official start of his postgraduate life.

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Another thing that helped Apsassin through this time—sharing his experience with peers. He highlights how important it is for graduates to be honest about their immediate post-graduation experiences. “Coupled with COVID-19, I had to face the post-graduation experience which is a very real thing. It was the first time I had to face mental health as I no longer succumb to disease in my hometown. I am surprised by the fact that the conclusion of his final co-op coincided with the beginning of the pandemic and one of the most uncertain job markets in recent times. "Mandy and I developed a video script and submitted her rehearsal," says Waktola. “That helped me get through it in terms of helping others. I think the right note with their ‘layer cake’ approach to communicating.”

"Lots of people booked their appointments and attended, but then some people started changing their minds. The challenge, even after they registered for the vaccine, was learning how to speak to those who were not 100 per cent sure," that took time, she says. "We would explain, answer their questions and do what we could to calm their fears.”

Stobbie says it was Waktola’s deep understanding of science and teaching that helped people decide the vaccine was the right thing to do. "I see it very well in the Tsawout community," says Stobbie. "She is a natural."
Most university students switch majors before they reach graduation—not Chris Anderson. “I was learning about the nervous system in my grade 12 science class when I realized how much we didn’t know about it,” says Anderson, “That’s when I knew I wanted to study neuroscience.”

Anderson graduates this month with his BSc in neurobiology. He is also one of the few undergraduates who has already co-authored a research paper—with a second paper on the way. His key to success, he says, is building strong relationships with his professors—don’t hesitate to ask questions and seek opportunities outside of the classroom.

“Faculty and instructors are always looking for undergraduate students to help out with their research, but they’re not necessarily going to post about it. They want you to come to them.”

Biologist professor Raad Nashmi—one faculty member Anderson reached out to, and eventually Nashmi asked him to volunteer in the Nashmi Neurolab. The team used a mouse model to study a degenerative disease called phoxphospase A2(G)-associated neurodegeneration. The disease affects a region of the brain that deals with motor control. Anderson compared the number of neurons present in that region in mice that had the disease against mice that didn’t so see if there was a difference. A few months after the study concluded, Nashmi asked Anderson if he’d like to be listed as a co-author in the study. Anderson was both surprised and thrilled.

He continued working with Nashmi—this time in a directed studies course. Focusing on the same region of the brain, Anderson worked with Nashmi and his graduate student to look at co-localization of different synapses. The work is part of a larger paper which, when published, will be Anderson’s second co-authored paper. “If you want to pursue research, directed studies is a great stomping ground and also a great way to get your foot in the door. I’ve been super interested in research, but I wasn’t certain if it was something I wanted to do long-term. Not only did I cement my decision to pursue my master’s, I was also hired to two research positions this summer.”

This summer, Anderson is research assistant to biology professor Bob Chow and his graduate students. The team is studying three types of polar cells in the eye that connect the outer retina to the inner retina, enabling you to process what you see. “I’ll use a process called immunolabeling,” explains Anderson, “Under a fluorescent light, the antibodies are fluorescently labelled, so it looks like something like a neon mosaic.” He’s also working with Nathan Lachowsky, a professor in public health and social policy, and the Community-Based Health Equity Research group on the Canada-wide 35LGBTQIA+ COVID-19 survey.

“I’m so happy I chose UVic because I’ve met so many life-long friends here, so many wonderful people including my current partner of four years. This was a great choice for me. It’s a great school and I can’t complain about it. I’m happy I get to stay at UVic because I’ve enjoyed my time here so much.”

After completing his degree in five years, he is eager to advocate for taking your time. “There’s no right or wrong timeline to complete your degree. I struggled a lot with taking five years instead of the ‘normal’ four,” explains Anderson, “You can take as much time off as you need. You can go in school, take a semester off, come back to school to do that sort of thing. You shouldn’t be rushing something you don’t need to rush. It’s okay.”

Anderson will begin studies for his master’s in neuroscience this fall under Chow.

One semester studying abroad in Spain gave UVic graduate Elijah Ackerly a new perspective on life back home in Saanich that would change his path forever.

“I fell in love with the language and culture in Spain, but also with the way that learning a new language can influence your perspective on the world,” Ackerly says. “I saw that life can be different from where I grew up.”

Ackerly, who graduates this month with a major in Hispanic studies and a minor in history, was raised with his sister by his mother in a single-parent, low-income home. Despite experiencing what he describes as “a noticeable class discrepancy” between himself and his elementary, middle and high school classmates, he never doubted that he would one day attend university.

“I didn’t always know what I wanted to study, but I always knew I wanted to go to university. It just meant that I had to take out student loans and work hard for scholarships,” Ackerly reflects.

Among the many merit-based scholarships that he received is the Elais Mendel Prize for Study Abroad in Hispanic and Italian Studies, which assists undergraduate students with tuition fees and travel costs associated with the university’s study abroad program.

After finding an advertisement for the program posted in the Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies hallway, Ackerly attended an information session, applied, and soon found himself in Alcalá de Henares—a small city with 200,000 residents, 35 km northeast of Madrid. He then spent the next three months studying Spanish language, culture and literature at the Universidad de Alcalá while earning UVic credits.

“The experience was really influen-
tial for me and solidified my desire to do a degree in Spanish. I came back and declared a major in Hispanic studies right away,” Ackerly explains. “And, although I was only in my second year, it also got me thinking about what would be a good next step.”

In addition to trying his hand at extra-curricular activities on campus, such as working as a co-editor of the Hispanic and Italian Studies undergraduate journal PRIS 17.7.74 in 2020, Ackerly also worked as a team leader at the Oak Bay Parks, Recreation and Culture’s Youth Centre throughout his degree.

“The centre is a free drop-in space open to youths from the neighbourhood to hang out, hold space, and find belonging,” says Ackerly. “I worked there every day after school, planned monthly events and sometimes taught courses on first aid, customer service or resume development.”

Ackerly notes that his time overseas gave him unique insight into some of the challenges faced by many of the participants in the program, who had recently moved to Canada and were learning English as a second language. “I could fully relate to what it’s like to be in a new country where you’re learning the language, which is really difficult. Because of my experiences in Spain, I could definitely empathize with the participants who were new to Canada. It made me a better instructor.”

In the fall, Ackerly will carry these insights and experiences from Saanich to Spain once again when he returns to the Universidad de Alcalá in Alcalá de Henares to start a master’s in teaching, with a focus on bilingual and multicultural education.

“Study abroad programs are an important way for our students to learn about other cultures and languages through mutually-enriching encounters,” says professor of Hispanic and Italian Studies Marina Bettaglio. “We are proud to be able to provide scholar-
ships that break down financial barriers and make experiences like this possible.”
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This spring, UVic is awarding seven honorary degrees that recognize notable achievements in scholarship, research, teaching, the creative arts and public service. Honorary degrees have been awarded at UVic since its inaugural convocation in 1964. An honorary degree is the highest honour the university can bestow for distinguished service to the university or to human welfare. Honorary degrees have been awarded at UVic since its inaugural convocation in 1964. Honorary degrees have been awarded at UVic since its inaugural convocation in 1964.

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**HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENTS**

**In Memoriam: Reg Mitchell**

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**Bruce Poon Tip**

Honorary Doctor of Laws (LLD)

Bruce Poon Tip is a global leader in sustainability and social entrepreneurism. He is the founder of G Adventures, a travel pioneering company that is an advocate for sustainable tourism and environmental activism, and founded the non-profit Planeterra Foundation, which helps communities affected by tourism reap its benefits, protect the environment and develop social solutions to business challenges.

**Marvin Storrow**

Honorary Doctor of Laws (LLD)

Marvin Storrow, QC, is a leading member of the BC bar with a national reputation for outstanding advocacy and a lifelong record of public service. His contributions to the development of Indigenous law in Canada are unparalleled, with his precedent-setting advocacy leading to many important Supreme Court of Canada decisions.

**Pauline van den Driessche**

Honorary Doctor of Science (DSc)

Pauline van den Driessche is an internationally renowned scientist and UVic professor emerita who is internationally recognized for the depth and breadth of her work in linear algebra and was among the earliest researchers in combinatorial matrix analysis. She is also a leading international scientist in mathematical epidemiology.

**Teresa Petrick**

Honorary Doctor of Science in Nursing (DSN)

Teresa Petrick has led an outstanding career as a nurse, nurse educator, and administrator, helping to extend the reach of high quality nursing education programs. Petrick has provided exemplary leadership and vision for a model of nursing education that has stood the test of time in British Columbia and beyond.

**Josh Blair**

Honorary Doctor of Laws (LLD)

Josh Blair is the co-founder and CEO of Impro.Ai, a high-tech company enabling the benefits of executive coaching to be brought to employees at all levels of organizations. He is also a partner at Esplanade Ventures, a venture capital firm empowering entrepreneurs to deliver technology-based healthcare breakthroughs.

**Eric Metcalfe**

Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts (DFA)

Since the 1960s, Eric Metcalfe’s practice has epitomized the avant-garde in Canadian art, crossing disciplines of painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, installation, performance, music and video. It is often associated with the international Fluxus movement, which explored the intersection of artistic disciplines, media and contemporary culture.

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**In Memoriam: Reg Mitchell**

Reg Mitchell was predeceased by his wife Wendy, and leaves behind children Helen (Eric), Steve (Jodi) and their mother Mary; brother Rob (Dot) and four grandchildren (and Maggie).

Reg will be missed by all, but will never be forgotten.

—Gerald Poulton, UVic Associate Professor Emeritus

To commemorate Reg’s legacy, friends and family are establishing the Reg Mitchell Memorial Scholarship. Anyone wishing to contribute can donate online at bit.ly/reg-scholarship.

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Pauline van den Driessche

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Teresa Petrick

Honorary Doctor of Science in Nursing (DSN)


**Averted Eye Sees**

**Victoria Libraries worldwide web.**

Durno's efforts to recover artworks made with Telidon, UVic recovery work on early Canadian digital Wastasecoot explains. "So that's how the erasure of In-...
Indigenous resurgence in UVic tri-faculties

BY DOROTHY EGGENBERGER

Lydia Toorenburgh joined the Faculties of Science, Social Sciences and Humanities (the tri-faculties) as the Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator in December 2020. The new position, currently a three-year term, is another step towards the Indigenization of UVic. Toorenburgh will work with staff and faculty to forge systemic change, while also providing support to Indigenous students.

No stranger to UVic, Toorenburgh completed her bachelor’s in anthropology here, worked as an Indigenous Student Recruitment Officer for a year, and is currently pursuing her master’s degree, also in anthropology. As a graduate student, she is using audio-recording and walking methodologies to learn how Indigenous people with lower levels of English literacy interact with and access services in the health care system.

Toorenburgh is Cree-Métis and mixed settler on her mother’s side and a first-generation Dutch immigrant on her father’s side. She says balancing these three different identities has played an important role in her work and studies.

Q&A with Lydia Toorenburgh

Q. What role will you play as the Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator?

A. There are three main components of this role.

The first is to support the administration on how to better understand and implement Indigenization and decolonization. It’s about critical action and approaches together with Western knowledge systems so learners can come to understand and appreciate both.

The second component, similar to the first, is to support faculty and staff on Indigenization and decolonization. I’ll organize events, support Indigenous initiatives, and work with equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) committees.

The third component, similar to the first, is to support faculty and staff on Indigenization and decolonization. I’ll organize events, support Indigenous initiatives, and work with equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) committees.

Q. Could you explain the terms Indigenization and decolonization?

A. Indigenization is the process of naturalizing Indigenous knowledge systems. Decolonization is the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority of Western thoughts and approaches. At UVic, we want to weave Indigenous knowledge and approaches together with Western knowledge systems so learners can come to understand and appreciate both.

Q. What is an example of weaving together Indigenous and Western knowledge systems at UVic?

A. There is a lot of conversation around how to decolonize and Indigenize the curriculum. I believe one of the best ways is to partner with the community, where the classes and coursework support those pre-existing relationships. At UVIC I was able to build on the community partnerships of my teachers. As an undergraduate student, I contributed to a video series that showcase local Indigenous artists at the invitation of Dr. Andrea Walsh, part of a directed studies course. As a graduate student, I had the privilege of being taught by Dr. Brian Thom who has worked with the Cowichan Nation for many years. Because of that strong partnership our class joined the Commemorating Ye’yumuts Project to create teaching resources for the sacred ancestral site, Ye’yumuts. In both instances, I was able to earn credits, receive mentorship from my professors on how to approach this important work, while also making practical contributions to my field and our local community.

Academia at the service of the community is my value as an Anthropologist, and I carry that into this role. Decolonizing the academy is not just about internal change, it is also about breaking down the walls of the university. We must do more than invite Indigenous communities onto our campus, into our classrooms and into our leadership circles. We must also take our time, skills and bodies out into the community.

Q. What do you hope to accomplish in this role?

A. I want my work to have a resounding impact on the kind of environment we work in and learn in here at UVic. I’d like to see movement within the faculties towards decolonial processes, like preferential and limited hiring, and training to build a more diverse workplace and gain Indigenous expertise. I’d also like to see the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems into the curriculum. Change can be gradual, but I want to see movement toward those goals.

I also want to prioritize supporting students. There are times when just sending the right email to a student directing them to the right resources can be a real success for that student. I want to have as much positive contact with students as possible.

Q. What does ‘resurgence’ mean to you?

A. I’m always learning what resurgence looks like in relation to place, time and community. I’m not the authority, just one person trying to support that work.

For me, resurgence right now is community-level events and projects. Resurgence means supporting and returning energies to Indigenous peoples. It’s about critical action and critical learning for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples to build stronger relationships and a stronger community.

Resurgence is about working with Indigenous partners so they can thrive.