



BUILDING ENERGY RETROFITS

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THE RING

April–May 2022

The University of Victoria's
community newspaper

uvic.ca/news



University
of Victoria

SPEED READ

WORKPLACE EXCELLENCE

UVic one of Canada's top diversity Employers

The University of Victoria has been recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for 2022 for the 11th consecutive year. This year's honorees stood out by making listening and learning from employees a top priority.
bit.ly/22-diverse

VICTORIA FORUM

Impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine

As March drew to a close, reports indicated that 10 million Ukrainians have been displaced internally, representing one-quarter of the entire population, with 3.5 million fleeing the country. A Victoria Forum webinar this month will examine the socio-economic and environmental impacts of the human displacement in Europe and our individual and collective responsibilities to bridge divides and support those who are displaced. April 21, 9–10:15 a.m.
victoriaforum.ca



US\$2 MILLION RESEARCH GRANT TO BATTLE SYPHILIS

Cameron. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

7 million

ESTIMATED
NUMBER OF
NEW SYPHILIS
CASES IN 2020,
ACCORDING
TO THE WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

Syphilis, one of the world's first global diseases, is resurging again, with millions of new cases occurring worldwide every year. Left untreated, syphilis can damage the heart, brain, eyes, blood vessels and bones, and can eventually lead to death. Congenital syphilis—where the infection is passed from mother to child during pregnancy—is a severe, disabling and often life-threatening infection seen in infants. Up to half of all infected infants die shortly before or after birth.

UVic microbiologist Caroline Cameron has received \$2 million US from Open Philanthropy, the largest grant the US-based organization has given to a single Canadian university. Open Philanthropy identifies outstanding giving opportunities, makes grants, follows the results and publishes its findings. Its mission is to

give as effectively as it can and share the findings openly so that anyone can build on them. The grant will fund Cameron's research for developing a direct diagnostic test and vaccine for syphilis.

"It's always exciting when a philanthropic organization reaches out to you about your research program—but this support means so much more. The funding from Open Philanthropy means those organizations are recognizing the need to invest in syphilis research," says Cameron. "So little is known about the bacterium that cause syphilis. If we want to eradicate the disease there is a lot of work to be done and to do it scientists need support from philanthropists, funding agencies and policy-makers."

The Cameron Laboratory is one of only a few labs in the world—and the only one

in Canada—studying *Treponema pallidum*, the bacterium that causes syphilis. "The number of disease cases versus the number of researchers is disproportionate—and the number of cases is going up," explains Cameron.

"We are honoured that Open Philanthropy are providing this level of funding for a UVic research team," says UVic President and Vice-Chancellor Kevin Hall. "This significant investment recognizes the high-impact research being carried out by Caroline and her team on this pressing, global issue. We share Open Philanthropy's belief that scientific research is one of the biggest contributors to improving human well-being, and partnerships like this one will help us tackle

SEE SYPHILIS RESEARCH, P.4

National recognition for mentoring grad students

BY PHILIP COX

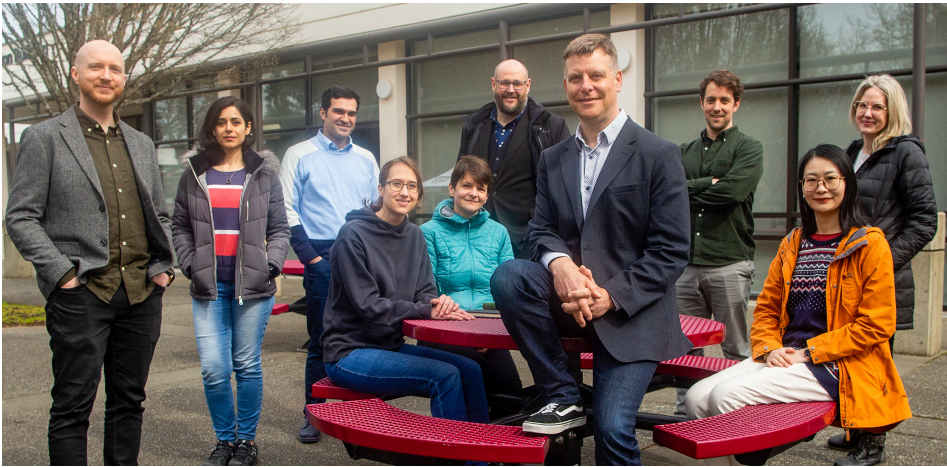
Few people are lucky enough to have a mentor like English professor and winner of the 2021 Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentorship, Stephen Ross—at least, that's the impression one gains from speaking with his mentees.

"I don't know where I'd be without Stephen Ross," says Matthew Huculak, the Head of Advanced Research Services and Digital Scholarship Librarian at UVic Libraries, without a hint of hyperbole. "When I was at a crossroads during a particularly tough year, Stephen supported my work and helped forge a position as the Libraries' first postdoctoral fellow with the University Librarian. Because of his support and mentorship, I now have the best job I could ever have imagined."

Testimonials like this are surprisingly common among those provided by students mentored by Ross, given the emotional timbre of their acknowledgments. Many note instances when he helped them navigate the complexities of graduate studies or supported them through personal difficulties. Most say he did both.

"A memory of Stephen Ross that I cherish is from when, in the second year of my PhD, I realized that I wanted to alter my research focus. He encouraged me to follow my heart, even though it meant replacing him as my supervisor," explains Lucie Kotesovska, an English PhD candidate and Vanier Scholar whom Ross also supported during her move from the Czech Republic to Victoria in 2020. "He told me that I was admitted to the program not for the project I had envisioned, but for the person I am. That was the most powerful moment of validation in my academic career so far."

Ross himself is an internationally recognized and esteemed leader in modernist studies. Within the last five years alone, he has published three books and written three more, and served as president of the Modernist Studies Association—the largest international organization in his field, with nearly 3,000 members at the time of his tenure—all while teaching, publishing scholarly articles, presenting regularly at conferences around the globe, and supervising the largest number of post-doctoral fellows, PhDs and MAs in his department. Nevertheless, his



Ross with his mentees (L to R): Graham Jensen, Saba Pakdel, Babak Ashrafrakhani, Denae Dyck, Lucie Kotesovska, Matt Huculak, Stephen Ross, Kevin Tunnicliffe, Ginger Jiang and Deborah Ogilvie. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

students emphasize his availability and generosity of spirit in their interactions with him.

"Stephen Ross is available, accommodating, understanding and caring—qualities one dreams of having in a mentor," says Saba Pakdel, a first-year English PhD student supervised by

Ross. "He is also generous with his knowledge and does not make students feel inadequate if they cannot understand complicated concepts."

In 2020, Ross received UVic's Reach Award

SEE GRADUATE MENTORING, P.5

Multi-Factor Authentication mandatory for most IT systems by May 15

Beginning May 15, UVic Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) will be required in order to access Banner admin pages, FAST, Exchange email and calendar, and the Virtual Private Network (VPN). UVic MFA strengthens NetLink account security by requiring a second factor every time you login to online services. The first factor we use is a passphrase – something you know. The second factor is something you have – such as a device in your possession. UVic MFA uses a quick, simple push system through a mobile app to verify you have the device. Once you enable UVic MFA on your NetLink ID, you will be prompted for additional verification when you login to protected online services

uvic.ca/mfa



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The University of Victoria acknowledges and respects the *lək̓ʷəŋən* peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the *Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ* peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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UNIVERSITY BUDGET

New strategic investments for 2022/23 outlined in UVic's Planning and Budget Framework

On March 29, 2022, UVic's Board of Governors approved the university's three-year Planning and Budget Framework, which outlines strategic investments and the budget framework for 2022/23.

Despite the challenges associated with the pandemic, the university remains in good financial shape, and we continue to forecast a balanced budget for the coming three years. This is thanks to overall strong enrolments at UVic, government's commitment to funding compensation mandates, as well as a flexible budget model that allocates a portion of the budget to non-recurring commitments.

Investment highlights

Our financial plan provides for over \$10 million in strategic investments with non-recurring funds this year and \$2.3 million in new base budget allocations after ensuring compensation, regulatory and other costs increases are funded. Investment themes in this year's framework include supporting the university's academic mission as we transition out of the pandemic; supporting student recruitment and success; furthering equity, diversity and inclusion; advancing research; and engaging the community.

Teaching, learning and student supports

We are maintaining many of the central investments made during the pandemic to support innovative teaching and learning, including learning experience and accessible course designers. Also, we have out-fitted two classrooms for full hybrid delivery, as well as 135 classrooms with basic lecture capture technology since the start of the pandemic.

We are hiring new faculty and instructors to meet student demand and providing incremental TA funding. In particular, we are responding to provincially supported growth in engineering and computer science, which will include capital infrastructure costs. We are also responding to an increased demand for staffing to support hands-on learning in specific faculties.

As in previous years, we continue to invest into competitive scholarships, bursaries and graduate fellowships—including Indigenous fellowships—to increase access and reduce barriers to education. UVic awarded a record number of entrance and in-course scholarships in 2021/22, and we anticipate a large number of entrance scholarships again this fall, given the quality of applicants to date. We are also investing in health and wellness services, as the pandemic underscored how important it is to have timely access to these resources.

Equity, diversity and inclusion action

To advance equity, diversity and inclusion across the university, there are allocations in this year's budget framework for the Equity and Human Rights office, to assist in developing and implementing the Equity Action Plan. There are also funds to support anti-racism and decolonization efforts, such as grants for curriculum development and redevelopment as well as student life programming. There are investments to further the work of the Associate Vice-President Indigenous and the Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement, as well as programming and financial supports specifically for Indigenous students.

New this year, we are funding a co-op coordinator position that specializes in assisting students with disabilities. Ensuring equitable access to education is a priority area for UVic, building on what we learned during the pandemic.

Research and community-university engagement

Aligned with Aspiration 2030, we are increasing research and grant writing supports for faculty members; funding an equity, diversity and inclusion research officer; and

providing start-up funding for early career researchers. For students, we are launching a new undergraduate research award that will offer paid internships to first-year students.

Other investments include support for climate change and sustainability action, as we move towards a comprehensive and integrated approach to sustainability across the university. Funding has been set aside for the coming years to advance academic, research and operational priorities emanating from a new Climate and Sustainability Action Plan, currently in development.

In support of our external and internal engagement goals, we are prioritizing a new communications and marketing leadership position, who will prioritize a campus-wide communications strategy and brand renewal exercise. We are also enhancing community outreach through advocacy, speaker series and events in partnership with government and organizations. Offering events both in-person and online will not only increase access but also expand UVic's reach. To support our international goals, we are hiring a new associate vice-president global engagement and support staff in the International Centre.

Revenue sources and fee increases

Our general operating expenditures this year total \$463 million. As a people-focused institution, 78 per cent goes towards salaries and benefits. A balanced budget means our operating revenue also totals \$463 million. About 50 per cent of our operating revenue comes from provincial grants, based on domestic student enrolments. The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training sets domestic enrolment targets for post-secondary institutions every year and allocates funding to institutions based on those targets. The Ministry

does not provide funding for international student enrolments.

Other sources of revenue include student tuition and fees—at 38 per cent of total revenue—as well as department revenues, grants and contracts, and investment revenues. Tuition from international students is about 41 per cent of total tuition revenue reflecting the fact that undergraduate international students pay the full cost of education. UVic's approach to international tuition is to set fees based on the cost and quality of our programs and then invest in support for students in need. This includes scholarships, needs-based and emergency bursaries, and the work-study program. We continuously revise our financial aid and award programs to ensure we meet needs and demand every year.

For 2022/23, domestic tuition fees will increase 2 per cent, in line with the provincial tuition limit policy. International tuition fees will increase 3.75 per cent, as per inflation, which at UVic has been about 3.5-4 per cent per year over the last five years.

Revenue-generating services

Over the last two years, we have provided central supports to revenue-generating units that have been impacted by the pandemic, such as continuing studies, food services, athletics and recreation, and housing. These investments were required to ensure these operations would be financially stable going forward. We expect these areas to return to profitability in this budget year as campuses return to more normal operations. Fee increases in ancillary areas are consistent with inflation with rates between 2 and 5 per cent.

More information

UVic strives to take a principled and transparent approach to developing and sharing our budget. For more information on the process, investment priorities, and financial details, download the Planning and Budget Framework 2023–2025 (PDF) at bit.ly/22-framework.

Annual audited financial statements are also available.

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Parking changes support sustainability and flexibility

UVic is committed to taking action on climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A key goal of the Sustainability Action Plan is to continue to increase the campus community's use of transit, cycling, walking and carpooling. One way to move the dial is through changing parking management practices and encouraging students, faculty and staff to use sustainable modes of travel.

In fall 2021, the first phase of parking rate changes came into effect. Term parking passes were discontinued,

and the cost of monthly parking decreased from \$114 to \$75 for general parking and from \$199 to \$131 for reserved parking. Daily parking rates at lots further from Ring Road (e.g., Velox, Ian Stewart Complex and Lam Circle) also decreased from \$9 to \$6 per day.

Effective Sept. 1, 2022, annual parking permits will be replaced by monthly permits and other flexible options. The new approach provides commuters with increased flexibility—especially meaningful in a time of hybrid work arrangements—and the option to shift some or all of their commute to transit, walking or cycling, or to take advantage of discounted parking in lots a bit further from the centre of campus.

“These changes respond to requests from campus community members who have been asking for more options and flexibility,” says Mike Wilson, director of campus planning and sustainability. “The flexibility provided by new parking permit options combined with an increased employee transit pass subsidy will encourage sustainable ways of getting to and from campus, which in turn will help UVic meet our greenhouse gas

reduction targets and support healthy communities.”

One of the most flexible parking options is the Flex 25 pass, which offers 25 daily single-use General parking permits with no expiry date. Staff with a Flex 25 permit can now also purchase an employee bus pass at a reduced cost of \$35 per month (\$38.50 in 2021), an option not previously available. Reduced-rate Value permits (at 35 per cent less than the cost of a general permit) will continue to be available for lots that are slightly further from the centre of campus (e.g., at Velox and the Ian Stewart Complex lots, off Gordon Head Road, and Lam Circle).

New for 2022, drivers with a Parking Permit for Persons with Disabilities, who require parking close to buildings, may park within any reserved parking space at a discounted rate (35 per cent less than a General permit).

The pricing of a monthly pass means that a student attending campus for eight months a year will experience almost no cost increase compared to their current annual permit. Compared to the City of Vic-



Velox and Ian Stewart Complex parking lots in the northwest of the Gordon Head campus

toria and other local post-secondary institutions, the cost of on-campus parking at UVic remains competitive.

Revenue from pay parking offsets the cost of sustainable transportation programs at UVic, including subsidized bus passes for students and employees and cycling facilities, including the Campus Bike Centre, bike shelters and racks.

Updated information about parking for fall 2022: uvic.ca/parking

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AI research drives better auto sales

BY ANNE TOLSON

A Canadian e-commerce marketplace that brings together consumers and car dealerships from across the country is relying on UVic expertise in artificial intelligence (AI) to improve its operations and enhance its customers' online experience.

VINN Auto offers both a place for paying dealerships to list their new and used cars for sale, and free, personalized support to consumers looking to purchase their next vehicle.

"The company wants to incorporate effective artificial intelligence tools into its operations – and that's a very good match with what our research group focuses on," says Kin Fun Li, a computer engineering researcher at UVic. For about two years, Li and his team of engineering graduate students have worked on a series of projects, identifying areas for improvement and providing recommendations and tools to VINN.

"At the same time, VINN is enabling our team members to work on real industry problems, not just from a textbook or pure research," Li adds. "So it's a two-way street – we're both learning from each other."

Li and the Victoria-based company were introduced in 2019 through Mitacs, a non-profit organization that builds partnerships between academia and industry to support Canadian

innovation and foster a highly skilled workforce. The collaboration has been so successful that the first project led to a second, which in turn is leading to a third and a related research paper.

For the initial project, which began in 2020, PhD candidate Linlin Zhang was tasked with cleaning up and restructuring VINN's database so that when customers enter their information on the company's website, it's organized and stored more efficiently.

In the second project, PhD candidate Jing Ning, is using AI to help the company's platform do a better job of classifying consumers who enter their information online. For example, is this a real person or a fake user? Is their email address real? Do they live in North America? Knowing this type of information before a VINN employee contacts a prospective customer saves the company time and money and improves the customer's experience.

"Getting a good PhD or Master's project in artificial intelligence can be difficult, especially getting real data from industry," Li says. "But these students are doing projects related to their research areas—in this case, artificial intelligence and machine learning—and they're getting paid to do it."

In another project, a Master's student used VINN data as the basis



(L-R): Avant, Ning, Abniki and Fun Li. IMAGE: ARMANDO TURA

for her research paper, which was recently accepted by a high-profile conference in Japan. Somayeh Abniki's paper details how to use image processing and deep learning to identify the precise vehicle colour a particular client wants. Abniki now works part-time at VINN (the name is an acronym for "vehicle identification number"), which counts several UVic alumni among its employees.

Tom Avant, co-founder and chief technology officer at VINN, says working with the UVic team has been a great experience.

"VINN is getting this fantastic opportunity to work with talented students, gaining access to academic

level machine learning sophistication, while at the same time being able to work within our community and help students get prepared for real-world problems," says Avant. "It's a real win-win and allows us to deliver better and better products to our customers."

Currently, the partners are applying to Mitacs to fund another project that will use AI to interpret and categorize incoming voice messages to ensure company employees can offer the best possible customer service.

"I think VINN's competitive edge is in offering free one-stop shopping and personalized customer service," says Li. "Our research projects are trying to make that experience even better."

Gayle Gorrill steps away from VPFO role after 15 years

BY JODY PATERSON

What do team building, complex property deals and 1,200 problematic rabbits have in common?

Answer: Gayle Gorrill, the recently retired UVic vice-president of finance and operations. In her lively 15-year campus career, she presided over a long list of complex and quirky issues like these for the university. And, as her many fans will attest, she did it all with the grace, keen insight and good humour she's known for.

"She is a service-oriented, people-first kind of leader who has supported her entire leadership team to ensure we are listening to our teams and our clients in order to create the kind of environment where we all feel welcome, a part of something bigger, and that we can each make an impact," says UVic Associate Vice-President Human Resources Kane Kilbey.

Gorrill was the first woman to be hired into the VPFO position when she arrived at UVic in 2006 from the University of Calgary. It's a big job, managing almost 650 employees in 10 diverse departments, which collectively encompass almost all of the universities operations outside of academics, research and external relations.

One of the first things Gorrill concluded after contemplating her big new portfolio was that a focus on team building was needed.

Human resources, financial operations, internal audit, financial planning, facilities management, campus security, university systems, legal services: What was the common cause that would connect every employee in the VPFO team? How best to celebrate the contributions of a team whose essential work is often invisible unless something goes wrong?

"What we determined was that the whole portfolio exists to help others," says Gorrill, who retired in December. "That's our common cause. And, given our role is to provide services, we'd better be really good at it."

And so the Service Excellence Initiative was born. Its guiding principles aim to foster employee engagement that supports service excellence. Gor-

rill and her leaders worked to achieve that by bringing people together across departments to get to know each other, and to appreciate the interconnectedness and value of their collective efforts.

"Before the pandemic, for instance, we would have a reception twice a year for everyone across the portfolio who had been hired in that time, and everyone was welcome," says Gorrill. "We'd do events, too: A hammering contest, "pop-up" fundraisers, bocce tournaments, winter hot chocolate gatherings, potlucks, and even a Price Is Right themed open house complete with games like "Cliff Hangers" and "Plinko."

Gorrill's efforts on behalf of UVic's Ocean Networks Canada helped secure not only a new location for ONC at the Queenswood site and money for renovations, but critically important funding for operations, says ONC President and CEO Kate Moran.

"She has been instrumental in our success," says Moran. "She's responsible in managing funding, of course, but she's also innovative. She has the ability to find solutions where others find barriers."

UVic owns more than 135 commercial, retail and office spaces, and 45 residential properties. Many of those properties were being managed in different ways when Gorrill arrived at UVic—and not optimally or with clarity of purpose in every case.

Gorrill responded by making significant changes to UVic Properties. It's a wholly owned subsidiary of the university that now manages such landmark properties as the Vancouver Island Technology Park, Queenswood Oceans and Climate Campus, and several high-profile downtown buildings left to UVic by the late Michael Williams.

One such landmark property was Dunsmuir Lodge, built privately in 1974 as a luxury rehabilitation centre on 40 hectares of North Saanich wilderness.

The late George Poole had donated the lodge and property to UVic in 1985 in the hopes that it would become a conference centre, but it never quite worked for that purpose. As well,

the land is sacred and is spiritual traditional territory of the local Pauquachin First Nation. .

It fell to Gorrill and her team to find a solution. That came in 2018, when Ontario-based Homewood Health bought the building and 11 hectares of property for use as a substance abuse and mental health recovery centre, with the remaining 29 hectares sold to the Pauquachin First Nation.

"There's value in being the new person, because you see actions that need to happen and don't yet know how hard it will be to take those actions," recalls Gorrill of a task that ultimately took 11 years. "The closure and subsequent disposition of the Dunsmuir property was absolutely the right thing to do, but it took a long time."

Over the years, Gorrill was instrumental in moving forward on many initiatives that will be part of the UVic campus far into the future, including CARSA and the new student and housing dining project.

Gorrill may have left the campus job, but the university remains very much a part of her life. Her and her husband's two children are both UVic graduates, and one is now a UVic employee.



Gorrill. IMAGE: DEREK FORD

Former UVic chancellor Murray Farmer's description of UVic as "big enough to matter but small enough to care" captures her own feelings about the university, says Gorrill. She experienced that sense of caring first-hand during three major health events while at UVic.

"I get the greatest joy from seeing the people around me doing well and enjoying their work," says Gorrill. "The fabulous part of a great team is that they can do what they need to do with or without you. I put out a note when I left saying the sign of a great leader is that when they leave, everything just carries on because of that great team."

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around the ring

Appointment of Vice-President Indigenous

One year after Qwul'sih'yah'maht Robina Thomas became UVic's first associate VP Indigenous, the Board of Governors has approved her appointment as vice-president. As VP Indigenous, Robina will continue the critically important, complex and difficult work to decolonize UVic and contribute to reconciliation in a meaningful way.

New Equity Action Plan survey

To support the development of UVic's first Equity Action Plan (EAP), 35 consultation sessions have been held during the first three phases of engagement, gathering more than 1,700 survey responses. We've heard from the campus community about their desired future for UVic related to equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging and the barriers they're currently experiencing or witnessing. Based on all of the collected ideas, stories and feedback, the Reflection and Challenge Committee has drafted five universal goals that support UVic's strategic vision for equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion. Now, we need your feedback as we assess and refine these goals and determine priorities for action. The newest survey (surveymonkey.ca/r/DS39NR3) will be open during phase 4 from April 19 to May 6 on the EAP website.

uvic.ca/eap

United Way campaign wraps up

The 2021-22 United Way Campaign wrapped up on March 31 marking a hugely successful campaign supported by the campus community who came out and showed their local love. The campaign raised over \$200,000, supporting the United Way's areas of action: isolated seniors, families in need, diversity, equity and inclusion and mental health and addictions. Co-chairs Allana Lindgren and Jennifer Vornbrock want to thank the UVic community for their generosity as well as this year's campaign committee who worked so hard and demonstrated such flexibility and creativity.

uvic.ca/unitedway

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(L-R) Makah carver Micah McCarty, Sarah Wright Cardinal and Pacheedaht council member Tracy Charlie. PHOTO: SUZANNE AHEARNE



Bennett. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Two of three 2022 CUFA BC awards go to UVic scholars

A political scientist who studies the ruptures in personal privacy caused by technological advances in surveillance and a Cree scholar whose research emphasizes the importance for Indigenous Peoples of healing from fractures caused by colonial disruptions were recognized this month by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC) for outstanding academic achievement.

Every year since 1995, the CUFA BC honours exceptional academics with its CUFA BC Distinguished Academics Awards. And this year, two of its three awards go to UVic scholars.

Sarah Wright Cardinal (child and youth care) is the recipient of the Ehor Boyanowsky Academic of the Year Award.

Colin Bennett (political science) is receiving the Paz Buttedahl Career Achievement Award.

The importance of healing from colonial disruptions

Cardinal, who is Cree from Treaty 8 territory, is being recognized for her work on a two-year project, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, entitled “Reclaiming Nuuchah-nulth teachings to empower and strengthen the roles and responsibilities of Pacheedaht young men.”

The project emerged from, and is led by, the Pacheedaht First Nation in partnership with Cardinal, who works with communities using land, water and spirit-based teachings and practices that contribute to children, youth and community wellness.

The project in Pacheedaht, one of the 14 Nuuchah-nulth nations on Vancouver Island, has involved the whole community in the carving of an oceangoing canoe—or čupuc (pronounced chuh-PUTZ)—the first

seaworthy dugout canoe to be carved in the community for more than 15 years.

Designed with its young people in mind, the project aims to revive confidence, health and well-being, and pride—in particular among its young men—by creating a work of great physical and symbolic weight, representing ancestral teachings and the kinship family system.

Human rights at the centre of privacy debate

For over 20 years, Bennett’s diligent work on privacy rights has kept the spotlight on how governments, businesses and political parties collect and use personal information.

A world-renowned privacy expert and researcher of security and surveillance issues, Bennett has seen technology change over the years from information being stored on data-

bases and mainframes, and the use of identity cards and video surveillance, to the process of collecting personal data online and through sophisticated digital technologies.

“The way organizations, including political parties, collect personal data has changed as new technology comes into our lives,” says Bennett.

The politics of privacy fundamentally is not just a legal and technical issue of interest to governmental and corporate elites, but an intrinsic human right under threat from a range of powerful institutional and technological forces.

Human rights, Bennett points out, are at the centre of the debate about who should be collecting personal data.

“It is not just a question of technology or security, it is a question of power,”

Bennett has spent his career work-

ing with lawyers, privacy commissioners, civil liberties groups and stakeholders in an effort to inject his academic work into policy.

A persistent researcher and advocate, Bennett’s recent work has focused on protecting voter privacy rights and improving the integrity and transparency of our elections.

Province-wide scope

CUFA BC represents over 5,500 faculty members, professional librarians, lecturers, instructors and other academics at BC’s five research-intensive universities—UVic, University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, Royal Roads University and University of Northern British Columbia.

The confederation announced the three recipients, including social epidemiologist Travis Salway from Simon Fraser University, in advance of the gala reception at the Laurel Point Inn.

SYPHILIS RESEARCH

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

more of the world’s biggest problems.”

Syphilis remains prevalent in low and middle-income countries, and is now increasing in high-income countries. In Canada, syphilis rates have reached their highest level in over three decades. Alberta’s rates of syphilis infection are the highest since 1948. Open Philanthropy’s donation provides invaluable research support to address some of the greatest challenges associated with this disease.

Current syphilis diagnostic tests have limitations with sensitivity, specificity and the ability to differentiate current versus previous infections, and there is no vaccine to prevent infection. Cameron’s team is working to understand how the bacterium causes infection in order to develop better diagnostic tests and identify vaccine candidates. Once a syphilis vaccine is developed, current serology-based diagnostic tests for syphilis will need to be replaced by diagnostic tests that directly detect the pathogen.

“If we hope to reduce and ultimately eradicate this disease, we need to develop this technology now,” says Cameron.

The Cameron lab collaborates on these technology development projects with international research institutions and industry partners including the University of Washington in Seattle, the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, Belgium, and SISCAPA Assay Technologies in Washington, DC.

The team’s research goal is to eliminate a disease plaguing humans for over five centuries, and at the same time reduce risks for those infected to acquire and transmit other sexually transmitted infections including HIV. Chris Somerville and Heather Youngs, Open Philanthropy scientific research program officers, saw the potential in Cameron’s research and reached out to her directly.

“Developing effective diagnostic tests and a vaccine for syphilis could prevent hundreds of thousands of deaths,” says Youngs. “We believe that Dr. Cameron’s work fills an important gap in diagnostic technologies and is a step toward drastically reducing the burden of this disease.”

“I am extremely grateful to Open Philanthropy and look forward to advances that will now be possible because of their generous support and commitment to improve global reproductive health,” says Cameron.

A new gold standard in COVID testing

BY DOROTHY EGGENBERGER

Less than 0.1 milliliters of blood is all that UVic researchers need, in an exciting commercial-academic partnership that has developed a “gold standard” test for COVID-19 using cutting-edge technology that could revolutionize clinical laboratory testing and monitoring of disease.

UVic microbiologist Caroline Cameron and SISCAPA Assay Technologies Inc. have developed a new diagnostic test that detects and measures the levels of SARS-CoV-2—the virus that causes COVID-19—with unprecedented accuracy.

“By measuring a selected virus protein in blood we go beyond simply determining a positive or negative diagnosis—we measure virus levels thus are able to monitor COVID-19 progression during infection and treatment. Such measurements offer the possibility of predicting disease severity and a better understanding of ‘long COVID,’” says Terry Pearson, SISCAPA director, co-founder, and UVic professor emeritus.

“Current diagnostic tests—PCR and antigen detection tests—suffer from their inability to reliably detect virus in blood and do not allow accurate measurement of virus load. Our new test solves these problems.”

SISCAPA Assay Technologies Inc. developed the groundbreaking technology called Stable Isotope Standards and Capture by Anti-Peptide Antibodies (SISCAPA) which detects and quantifies protein biomarkers. Together with Dr. Cameron, SISCAPA developed a critical component of the new test that measures SARS-CoV-2 virus nucleoprotein. The nucleoprotein undergoes fewer mutations than the spike proteins on the virus surface, thus the test can detect many new virus variants, unlike other tests that must be modified for each problematic variant that arises in the population.

Although the team is currently working with blood samples, the test is also capable of measuring viral proteins in nasal swabs, and saliva—a unique feature which enables further research into the manifestations of SARS-CoV-2 infection.



(L-R): UVic co-op student Angela Mitchell, Pearson and Cameron. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

The new test can measure multiple biomarkers in the same sample thus allowing measurement of a panel of inflammation and immune response proteins—features unique to SISCAPA technology. The result is a test that can detect active virus production and how well (or poorly) the human body responds to control the infection.

“SISCAPA diagnostic tests can measure any suitable set of biomarkers, tailored to match different infectious diseases,” says Cameron.

“SISCAPA technology can also be used to diagnose and monitor non-infectious diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular disease—the tech is wide-ranging in its applicability,” adds Pearson.

Current work is underway to develop SISCAPA assays for Influenza A, Influenza B and Respiratory Syncytial Virus that multiplexed with the COVID-19 test will allow screening of populations for respiratory viruses that show seasonal emergence.

NSERC grant funds development of critical antibody reagent

A SISCAPA test employs specialized antibodies that enrich small pieces of the SARS-CoV-2 nucleoprotein released by digestion of a patient’s blood into small peptides. At the beginning of the pandemic, Cameron and

Pearson applied for an NSERC COVID-19 Alliance Grant to fund the development of one of the key antibody reagents. The application and research were successful, allowing SISCAPA to develop a working test now used in labs in North America and Europe.

SISCAPA devised the test at UVic and then translated it to research partners in England and several countries in continental Europe. The Waters Corporation—a prominent international equipment manufacturer—was a key contributor to a European consortium of laboratories involved in COVID-19 research, donating mass spectrometers and analytical expertise. Excited with the positive results obtained using the UVic-SISCAPA assay, Waters introduced the SARS-CoV-2 LC-MS Kit to sell worldwide.

SISCAPA Assay Technologies operates on the UVic campus and primarily employs UVic alumni and co-op students, keeping the local economy buoyant while addressing some of the world’s most challenging problems around health.

“The academic interface available to us at UVic—especially the expertise of Caroline’s lab—enables us to do great things in the field of infectious diseases,” says Pearson, “And our UVic graduate employees, are first class.”

ReBuild for a clean energy future

BY ANNE TOLSON

UVic researchers are playing a central role in a nascent industry that’s rushing to find effective, affordable ways to energy retrofit existing buildings and reduce harmful emissions.

In the global race to achieve net zero emissions, civil engineer Ralph Evins is leading a wide-ranging partnership of 16 organizations that will share information and develop solutions to help businesses, governments and homeowners. Their focus will be to improve existing buildings so that they’re more energy efficient, low-carbon and resilient to climate change.

“There are lots of options for energy retrofits, but determining which one is best and cheapest for a particular type of buildings is very complicated,” says Evins. “Right now, lots of companies are tackling different parts of the issue, but not necessarily talking to each other and probably missing some important ways that they could be learning from each other.”

The ReBuild Initiative, based at UVic, will act as a hub for knowledge co-creation and exchange between partners. These include small startups and large multi-national firms eager to become service providers, federal departments, Crown corporations and municipal governments trying to develop policies and energy rebate programs, and researchers from several universities in Canada and around the world.

Evins says that although many governments have set bold greenhouse gas reduction targets, most haven’t fully appreciated just how formidable this goal is when existing buildings are included in the equation. For example, while BC has a very clear and ambitious plan for new building construction with its BC Energy Step Code, existing buildings must be addressed in order to meet overall emission targets.

“The idea that you can go into an

existing building and replace key components to make it more energy efficient—well, we’re only starting to get a handle on just how complex that problem is,” says Evins.

“The energy retrofit industry for older buildings doesn’t exist on anything like the scale we need, so now we’re scrambling to find solutions to help people to do it more cheaply.”

Pooling knowledge about building retrofits

Until recently, retrofitting buildings to reduce emissions has been widely overlooked by building owners, who were more likely to focus on areas such as aesthetic, seismic and maintenance upgrades, says Evins. While services to energy retrofit existing buildings exist, they tend to be very customized and, as a result, prohibitively expensive for many building and home owners.

Each ReBuild partner will contribute funding and resources, and is coming to the table with a specific energy retrofit challenge they want to solve. Evins’ team, which will include faculty, postdocs and graduate students, will work with partners to develop solutions. Many of these will involve data-driven methods, such as machine learning and computer modelling, to help analyze and classify building data and forecast energy requirements. To effectively share knowledge, ReBuild partners will also form working groups focussed on areas such as residential buildings, commercial buildings, data-driven methods, modelling methods, results analysis, tool development and policy guidance. Ultimately, it’s expected that the initiative will help guide future policy and regulation for energy retrofitting existing buildings.

“With this project, UVic will be a centre for new ways of thinking about retrofitting existing buildings, new methods to achieve emission targets—in BC, across Canada and internationally,” says Evins.



(L-R) ReBuild team members Ralph Evins, Haris Shamsi, Rajeev Kotha and Mahsa Torabi. CREDIT: ARMANDO TURA

Analyzing and sharing building data

For a partner with larger, more complex buildings, ReBuild will gather the data available from the many sensors measuring temperature, humidity, electricity use and much more. These will be analyzed to learn how to improve operations and identify the best, most cost-effective retrofit methods. This information will then be shared among partners with similar buildings.

Some of the smaller partners are looking to become service providers. For example, OPEN Technologies, a Vancouver-based startup, is targeting the residential market by developing a web-based tool that help homeowners to decarbonize by guiding them through specifying and sourcing low-carbon equipment replacements. OpenTech, another local company, wants to use satellite data to identify which buildings would be good candidates for retrofitting.

“We’re really excited to be working with Ralph and the ReBuild team on revolutionizing the way decarbonization projects are identified at scale,”

says Audette Chief Executive Christopher Naismith. “This will help us in our mission to building a carbon reduction plan for every existing building on the planet.”

Some ReBuild partners are based in the US. One of these, Spokane, Wash.-based Edo, provides organizations with technology that enables buildings to respond to the needs of the local power grid. Edo’s advanced energy efficiency and demand response model provides the technology and services to shift electric loads in buildings based on need and better manage electrical demand, generation and storage – an important part of a decarbonized and cost-effective energy system.

“ReBuild brings together an amazing team focused on enabling existing buildings to operate more efficiently,” says Easan Drury, Edo’s director of research and development. “As part of this unique partnership, Edo will develop tools that will make efficiency and demand-response opportunities easier for utilities and building service providers to access and implement.”

ReBuild is being funded through

more than \$1 million in partner contributions and another \$1.1 million over three years from a National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada Alliance Grant.

Aligning with the UN goals

Projects such as this reflect UVic’s commitment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. The Rebuild Initiative aligns with many UN SDGs, in particular Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), Goal 13 (Climate Action) and Goal 7 (Affordable Clean Energy).

Evins says that during the project’s planning stage, every potential partner he contacted was eager to be part of an initiative to centralize knowledge, share data, develop solutions and essentially build the energy retrofit industry.

“The reason that every company I contacted said ‘yes’ to ReBuild is because they know this is coming—the political will is there to make this happen and there’s no doubt anymore that we need to solve this challenge.”

UVic opens first CIFAL on North America’s West Coast

UVic and the United Nations Institute of Training and Research (UNITAR) announced today the establishment of the first accredited CIFAL—International Training Centre for Authorities and Leaders—on North America’s West Coast. CIFAL Victoria, based at UVic, is only the second such UN training centre in Canada.

CIFAL Victoria is connected to a global network of UN hubs that provide innovative training and promote the exchange of knowledge amongst government officials, the private sector and civil society.

“This CIFAL is not just for the university but for the region, and we are immensely proud and honoured to be its host,” says UVic President Kevin Hall. “CIFAL Victoria will be a

vehicle for driving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) forward through multi-disciplinary training and through partnerships in our region and across the CIFAL global network. At UVic, we care deeply about the UN SDGs and their calls to action to create an equitable planet, and a sustainable and inclusive economy.”

CIFAL Victoria will deliver training activities and research for students, staff, faculty and the community that builds on UVic’s deep commitments to the UN SDGs and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It will connect the region with the global community and support international knowledge-sharing and partnerships, with a focus on four key themes:

- Oceans, climate and sustainability
- Innovation and entrepreneurship
- Decolonization and Indigenous knowledge
- Global health and well-being

“While we have four areas of focus, we will be supporting work toward all 17 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and empowering individuals, communities, businesses and organizations to effectively address global challenges and improve well-being,” says Catherine Krull, director, CIFAL Victoria. “The centre will jointly offer training programs and research with our partners that will build capacity, facilitate the transfer of knowledge, experience and best practices, and

encourage partnerships and networking opportunities.”

CIFAL Victoria is one of 24 UN training centres for government authorities across Asia, Oceania, Africa, Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean, all coordinated by UNITAR’s social development programme. The central purpose of CIFAL training programs is to develop and strengthen human capacities to better respond to development challenges and to facilitate City-to-City (C2C) partnerships.

UNITAR is the UN training arm with a strategy focused on achieving the SDGs and supporting governments to implement the 2030 agenda.

“The CIFAL Global Network meets a crucial need to strengthen ca-

pacities to better address development challenges and exchange good practices amongst local authorities, academia, the private sector and the United Nations,” says Estrella Merlos, associate director of UNITAR’s CIFAL Global Network.

“Through knowledge exchange, CIFAL centres provide networking opportunities that lead to partnerships and collaboration. The launch of a new CIFAL centre at the University of Victoria will provide a platform that builds regional and global capacity and leadership to advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. CIFAL Victoria will serve as a catalyst and connector for North America’s West Coast.”

uvic.ca/cifal

GRADUATE MENTORING

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

for Excellence in Graduate Student Supervision and Mentorship—the university’s top honour for academic supervisors. He is now the first professor at the university to receive the CAGS Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentorship.

“To me, mentoring is very much about knowing who the students are and addressing them as a whole person with a complicated life,” explains Ross. “Most of the time, I think students who don’t succeed in grad school don’t succeed for reasons that have nothing to do with their abilities. I find that if you approach them

with compassion, you can create the conditions for their success and help them to overcome the obstacles that appear.”

For Amy Tang, a recent UVic graduate and current assistant professor at the University of the Fraser Valley, the compassion that Ross showed her had a profound impact on her life in and out of the classroom.

“When I first came out to my family, I had an extremely tough time, but Stephen Ross helped me to get through it,” Tang explains. “He was the only mentor figure in my life at that time who reached out and as-

sured me that it’s okay to be who I am.”

In a profile written the time of her convocation in 2020, Tang also credited Ross with helping her to succeed in her studies by fostering dialogue between students and breaking down structural barriers that had limited her ability to participate in the classroom after emigrating to Canada from Xian, China, for graduate school.

No less impactful than his formal supervisory relationships are the informal programs that Ross has created for students over the years: the long-running Write Club, which he founded almost a decade ago and

in which he participates as well, offers graduate and undergraduate students a weekly venue for distraction-free writing; the Walk and Talk program, which he initiated at the height of the pandemic, connected students seeking outdoor social interaction to counter the isolation that so many people were experiencing at that time; and the Modernist Café, which invites his supervisees to meet with him each week in a casual setting for the purpose of sharing experiences, knowledge and best practices with one another.

In all of his endeavours, Stephen

Ross cultivates a form of support for his mentees that continues across their academic career and beyond, and offers them a kind of mentorship that few people are lucky enough to have had at any point in their lifetime.

“We are incredibly proud of Stephen’s accomplishments as a supervisor,” says Dean of Graduate Studies Robin Hicks. “His whole-person approach to mentoring graduate students is an inspiration to us all. The university is very pleased to see Stephen recognized for his contributions to graduate education with the CAGS award.”

2021 CO-OP EMPLOYERS OF THE YEAR

BY EMMA ULVELAND

Each year, UVic Co-op and Career recognizes employers who have gone above and beyond to provide co-operative education learning experiences for UVic students. With all sectors feeling the impact of the global pandemic, we want to acknowledge the incredible efforts of all UVic co-op employers for their ongoing commitment to hands-on learning.

Caption. PHOTO: ARIANE LAGET

Canadian Chamber of Commerce Thailand International employer

Despite a shift to remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Thailand (CanCham) in Bangkok, Thailand, went above and beyond to keep co-op students connected to their team. Although students worked remotely during that period, they received strong mentorship from the entire CanCham team that allowed them to stay connected to the larger team and work culture.

CanCham Thailand has been operating for 28 years to promote and enhance Thai-Canadian relations by facilitating trade in both directions. Co-op has been a part of their employment strategy for close to a decade. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, the association made efforts to continue to hire co-op students in a remote capacity.

“UVic students are really agile and quickly adapt to the work environment and culture,” says Jen Meckhayai, CanCham Thailand’s executive director. “Students bring their Canadian perspective, and a new way of doing things, to the team. This makes a huge difference when we are planning projects and events.”

CanCham Thailand conducts more than 35 business and social events each year. Co-op students complete a variety of tasks for the Chamber, including conducting market research and writing business reports for Canadian organizations and the Embassy of Canada in Thailand. Students are also involved with identifying potential co-op or internship opportunities at CanCham member organizations by connecting to Canadian employers in Thailand. This work has led to increased co-op opportunities in the region.

UVic co-op students are tasked with projects that allow them to develop their project management skills, and to network with business professionals in the community.

Since 2019, CanCham Thailand has been a key co-op employer offering work-integrated learning experiences in Thailand and remotely to students from a range of UVic co-op program areas. Their outstanding commitment to supporting student learning during the COVID-19 pandemic continues to make a positive impact.

Agriculture and Agrifood Canada – Summerland Research and Development Centre Employer with more than 50 employees

Why does the co-op experience at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Summerland Research and Development Centre consistently exceed students’ expectations? It comes down to the diverse projects, unique research opportunities and meaningful mentorship.

Summerland RDC works to mitigate environmental pressures, control biological threats, and integrate sustainable production and processing systems to deliver high-quality wine grapes and tree fruits. The development of environmentally and economically sustainable methodologies ensures the success of Canada’s agricultural industries.

Between 2011 and 2021, Summerland RDC has provided 122 co-op work term placements. In spite of the challenges involved

in responding to COVID-19, the Summerland RDC increased its hiring substantially between summer 2020 and fall 2021. Many students who completed their first co-op with Summerland RDC have continued on as part-time staff.

Co-op students are given opportunities to develop their skills in the lab, work on diverse teams, carry out research and outdoor field work, and more. “Hands-on experience is really important,” says Dr. Mehdi Sharifi, a research scientist at AAFC. “We provide an environment that is safe, that is very diverse, and that has a lot of opportunity for training and learning.”

A recent student-led project included the planning, development and construction of the first ever Indigenous food garden at an Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research station, where students have been learning about various Indigenous traditional food sources and their management and stewardship practices.

“Last year, two Indigenous students from UVic, Dana Johnson and Kyle Clarke, came to work on this new project—we piloted it for the rest of the country,” says Sharifi. “They were amazing—they did it from their heart. They also did a presentation of their research to the Assistant Deputy Minister and did an extraordinary job.”

UVic environmental studies student Dana Johnson found the experience was a way to honour her ancestry. “I found myself striving to decolonize my mind and ways of being in an effort to give back to the many lands and communities that hold me up,” she says.

Co-op students are included in various activities beyond contributing to research projects, such as participating in symposia and discussion groups with other scientists and students. These experiences enable the students to strengthen their analytical and critical thinking skills, their public speaking and writing skills, and their ability to discuss complex ideas.

Shawn Veltman and Associates New co-op employer

Shawn Veltman is the owner and founder of Shawn Veltman and Associates, which specializes in helping companies create high performing sales and marketing teams. Shawn has recruited seven co-op students for a total of 12 placements over the past four years. Though the firm focuses on software projects, Veltman has recruited students from a wide variety of disciplines for his team.

Work terms begin with a full month of one-on-one training with Veltman, ranging from sharing knowledge of specific software applications to tips on improving students’ abilities and skills to work remotely. Students are then introduced to smaller projects and problems and by month three they are fully immersed in the work.

Veltman continues to impart entrepreneurial skills by working with the students as a partner even after their co-ops are finished. Many former co-op students find work with start-ups and established companies after their work terms. One former co-op student says, “I do not think I would be where I am at in my career without the mentoring that I received from Shawn.”

Beyond stretching his own budget to hire more than one student for the summer 2021, Veltman bridged a new connection with a health technology company to encourage them to hire two students he interviewed but couldn’t hire due to lack of funding. This connection has allowed UVic co-op to establish a successful relationship with this employer, who is now actively hiring and recruiting UVic co-op students.

Veltman encourages students to step outside their comfort zone while integrating with their academic interests. Co-op students are treated as equals and are empowered to challenge themselves and take responsibility for their projects. He regularly checks in with the students to ensure the work is engaging, that professional competencies are being developed and that students feel like part of the team.

Dusanj & Wirk CPA Employer with under 50 employees

Every work term at Dusanj and Wirk CPA has one thing in common: an incredible learning experience. The chartered professional accounting firm considers co-op students as true full-time employees and assigns the same responsibilities from day one. This trust is combined with mentorship and guidance that ensures success for the entire team.

Dusanj and Wirk is known for its warm and welcoming culture. The firm offers many specialized training sessions and one-on-one mentoring to complement students’ academic knowledge. They also create a cooperative environment where students feel encouraged and welcomed to ask questions. Often, they are partnered with junior accountants who can relate to the students’ experience and share career advice.

“My experience with Dusanj and Wirk has been extremely positive and I consider myself very lucky to have spent all three of my co-op terms with this firm,” says a former co-op student. “I felt very at home here and with the level of responsibility they offer their co-op employees, I often forgot that I was still a co-op student!”

The firm also offer plenty of opportunities to meet with other co-op students and staff accountants as well as managers and partners, including regular team building events like bowling, cooking classes, tax parties, Friday socials and other celebrations. Currently, 15 UVic alumni (30 per cent of their staff) are working on the team, 11 of whom began their career as co-op students with the firm.

In addition to giving students the opportunity to do meaningful work related to their academics, Dusanj and Wirk supports many co-op and career initiatives here at UVic. Their staff regularly participate in mock interviews, attend UVic’s Co-op + Career Networking Night and have never missed UVic’s annual Accounting Networking Evening.

Dusanj and Wirk provides work experiences that tie directly to students’ academics and career goals, while also giving them the tools and training to excel in that work.

uvic.ca/coopandcareer/employeraward

Save the date for You’re the Best-Fest, May 9-13

Are you a UVic employee? You’re the Best-Fest is a festival tailored for you—a time to celebrate, appreciate and reconnect with your colleagues. UVic staff and faculty came together like never before during the pandemic to solve problems, meet needs and encourage people to keep going.

May 9–13, You’re the Best-Fest is a chance to share stories and celebrate all of the amazing work that’s happened since March 2020.

“We’re excited to host a festival of celebration and gratitude for all the hard work, resilience and creativity people have shown over the past two years,” say festival co-chairs Shailoo Bedi and Cara Jones. “Come join in the food, fun and festivities as we celebrate that you are the *best!*”

- Confirmed activities during the week include:
- Get your fill of piping-hot flapjacks and bacon served up by the President and other VPs as they show their gratitude at the Festival Launch and Pancake Breakfast.
 - Pop by and join in the fun at the Best-Fest thank you booth. You’ll find games, a selfie/video gratitude booth, a thank you bulletin board and chances to win prizes! You can also send thank you grams to your colleagues and peers.
 - Sweet treats and an open-air concert in the quad.
 - Share your reflections on the past and co-creating the future through a World

- Café Experience. Explore creative ways we can bring our experiences forward into the years ahead.
- Come to the Best-Fest Story Fair to hear and celebrate the stories of how UVic community members came together in amazing ways to rise to the challenges of the past couple of years. Join us for food, networking and storytelling stations. Each story station will count toward a stamp on your story-passport, and a chance to win a prize.
 - Test your skills by taking part in a Photo Scavenger Hunt.
 - Visit the United Way cookie booth to grab a thank you treat and learn about the impacts of the UVic workplace campaign.



Don’t miss out on the chance to enjoy food, fun, storytelling and reconnection. Hold some time in your calendar May 9 to 13, stay tuned for updates and register for events at uvic.ca/bestfest.

2021 CO-OP STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

BY KATY DECOSTE

Each year, three co-op students are recognized for their outstanding contribution to their employer organizations, communities, and programs. Congratulations to this year’s award recipients.



Danielle Lowe
Peter B. Gustafson School of Business

In her final year of her Bachelor of Commerce, Danielle Lowe founded a business that combined her love for dogs, passion for sustainability, and skills in business development. Today, her cricket-based dog treat business Doodlebug has won 10 business competitions and sells treats across Canada. Lowe took her inspiration from innovative companies that prioritize consumer and environmental wellbeing.

Her entrepreneurial work term introduced Lowe to all aspects of the business world, from crafting financial projections to graphic design, and shipping products across the country. “Work-integrated learning gave me the opportunity to apply in-course material to real-life situations and personalize my academic achievements,” she says.

As a young entrepreneur, Lowe made it a priority to give back to the community that supported her by donating her product to Restorative Justice Victoria’s Charity Auction. She’s also presented as a panelist at UVic and has been invited as a keynote speaker and competition judge by West Point Grey Academy. She hopes to inspire other students to think outside the box and pursue unique, creative work-integrated learning experiences.

Someday, Lowe hopes to hire other co-op students and invite them into the world of entrepreneurship. “I am proud of my accomplishments this past co-op term and thrilled that I have another semester to focus on Doodlebug,” she says. “I’m confident my business understanding and professional network will continue to grow.”



Ocean Han
Optional and Professional Programs

Fourth-year biochemistry and physics student Ocean Han has a passion for solving problems. He knew he wanted to put his studies into practice to make a difference and found the perfect co-op term with UVic’s physics department, where he worked with medical physicist Devika Chithrani to research less-toxic cancer treatments using gold nanoparticles.

During his work term, Han received mentorship from PhD candidates in the lab and learned a wide array of technical skills to conduct his research. “Throughout my past education, I worked with diligence and curiosity to learn science in the classroom,” he says. “I never got to merge that passion and knowledge with such purpose to serve until my experience with the co-op program.”

Han’s success in the lab continued even after his initial four-month work term ended. With the encouragement of Chithrani, Ocean presented his research at the International Conference on Nanotechnology in 2021, where he won the best paper award. He has since prepared and submitted two manuscripts of his research to academic journals.

While working with Chithrani, Han collaborated with multi-disciplinary scientists from UVic, UBC and BC Cancer. “Altogether, it was exhausting work, but I had never experienced such profound personal and professional development, and, most importantly, had such conviction about what I was doing,” says Han. “I would happily do it all again.”



Haneul Jang
Engineering and Computer Science

Third-year engineering student Haneul Jang put his interest in mechatronics and computer-aided engineering to use during a work term with UVic’s Department of Mechanical Engineering, where he researched and designed upgrades for the third-year undergraduate vibration laboratory.

Having lived in several countries and experienced diverse cultures, Jang’s adaptability and determination helped him apply his studies practically to find and implement solutions in the lab. He was tasked with designing a lab that would improve student learning and engagement, which meant applying his practical knowledge about vibrations, signal analysis and control systems.

“The depth of learning from this single work term was far deeper than in the labs for my courses,” Jang says. By the end of his work term, the vibration laboratory had been completely upgraded, and his supervisor Vahid Ahsani had offered him independent work on more complicated interdisciplinary experiments.

Over the course of his work term, Jang came to embrace challenges in the lab environment as learning opportunities. “I faced failures, but this made success far more valuable,” he says. “Now, I try to view each encounter with a curious mind and look for opportunities that will grant me new skills, knowledge and perspective.”

After developing his confidence and skills in the lab, Jang has secured a work term doing mechanical engineering design for a private sector firm. “I feel more prepared for my career through this work experience,” he says.

Preparing for a future of resiliency in emergency management

BY TARA SHARPE

Floods, wildfires, a heat dome and a pandemic. It is no surprise, given the extreme pressures recently on the fabric of societal infrastructures that stitch everyday life together, that the need for training to confront future emergencies has become even more evident.

UVic’s Division of Continuing Studies now offers a one-year, four-course program to equip adult learners with the skills to prepare business in all sectors and industries for natural disaster, pandemic, conflict and cyberattack.

And those who complete the course will earn what Canada’s higher education magazine *University Affairs* recently framed as the word “on the lips” of an increasing number of post-secondary administrators and faculty across Canada—microcredentials. In the case of the UVic course, it’s the new Emergency Management for

Organizational Continuity (EMOC) professional development certificate.

Disaster resiliency in the workplace

The EMOC program, launched in Summer 2021, focuses on principles of risk management and how to keep organizations running through an emergency and beyond.

It was specifically created for people who aren’t already specialists in emergency management or business continuity.

“We know the next emergency is coming,” says Laura Vizina, director of health, safety and public relations programs in Continuing Studies.

“This course is intended for those who recognize they need plans in place and want to help ensure resiliency. It’s intended for a professional audience, but a diverse set of professionals. It’s not for emergency managers; rather, it’s for their staff and others

in a range of workplaces from private businesses and non-profits to government agencies and schools.”

Vizina was the creator behind this new program, which uses a variety of materials—including readings, videos, case studies and interactive discussion forums—and is assessed using analysis of risk and planning components, development of continuity plans, and quizzes.

“Think of gyms,” Vizina points out. “In January, it would have been peak business time with new year’s resolutions and new memberships. But these businesses had to find new ways to manage through these barriers. As we continue to go through these times, we’ll need to rely on more employees and they will need to understand not only the standard language of emergency management and business continuity but also understand the frameworks with which we all have to work within.”

New course a real confidence boost

UVic alumnus Jonathan (Jonny) Morris is CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association (BC Division). He was one of the first learners to enroll in the new program.

“This program is a real confidence boost,” says Morris.

He took the EMOC course because, in the first year of the pandemic, as CEO of the CMHA, he’d “felt reactive rather than proactive” in responding to the situation. He wanted to consolidate the experience with learning about theory and best practices to best support his team and respond to risks.

“None of us saw the pandemic coming so it’s the best time right now,” says Morris, “particularly with the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and climate change and the fact that we live in an earthquake zone, plus all the other risks we have to deal with—

privacy breaches, and what have you.”

Morris has a long research and practice history in suicide prevention, trained as a counsellor and has held sessional teaching appointments at UVic and Douglas College.

He encourages “anyone who is concerned about keeping organizations sustainable and resilient in managing what is arguably a very complex world” to find out more about EMOC.

Micro-credentials as a key theme

The feature story, “What’s behind the buzz about micro-credentials?” in *The Ring* last spring explored the uptick in interest from people seeking new skills and connections to thrive in an ever-changing economy. Micro-credentials offer flexible entry points and knowledge that adult learners can bring immediately into the workplace.

continuingstudies.uvic.ca

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Paintings of internment in Slocan Valley carry the echo of three generations

BY TARA SHARPE

A new exhibition opening April 22 at UVic’s Legacy Art Gallery Downtown focuses on Japanese Canadian identity, community and family.

Isshoni: Henry Shimizu’s Paintings of New Denver Internment centres the voices of three generations—*issei* (first generation) pioneers who came to Canada from Japan in the late 1800s, *nisei* (second generation) and *sansei* (third generation)—to provide deep insights into the inter-generational trauma of the forced uprooting and internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War.

The artist who produced these evocative paintings is a UVic honorary degree recipient.

Dr. Henry Shimizu was born in Prince Rupert in 1928. In 1942, he was one of 21,460 Japanese Canadians involuntarily relocated from BC’s coast and interned during the war, with homes, farms, businesses and price-less personal belongings dispossessed as the direct result of racist legislation and a sustained federal campaign by the Canadian government. And he was only a teenager at the time.

When Shimizu and his family were released after years of confinement in the Slocan Valley in an internment camp consisting of 16 dozen wood shacks (with only one outhouse for every 50 persons), they moved

to Edmonton—leaving BC behind, where his father had owned the New Dominion Hotel in Prince Rupert before the war.

As a renowned plastic surgeon and clinical professor at the University of Alberta Hospital, Shimizu enjoyed a long and distinguished career in medicine, training new generations of medical practitioners.

Recapturing historical wrongs, on canvas

It was while completing his plastic surgery residency in the 1960s that Shimizu first discovered his talent for art.

Nearly 40 years later, he had gathered to reminisce with friends who’d also been interned in the village of New Denver and it was then that he decided to begin capturing his recollections on canvas. It was 1999.

By 2002, he had produced 27 oil paintings, which were subsequently shown at the Edmonton Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre—six decades after the Shimizu family was forced to leave Prince Rupert.

Shimizu received the Order of Canada in 2004 and, in 2012, his Honorary Doctor of Laws from UVic. Among other notable appointments and voluntary contributions to community, he also served as chairman of the redress committee for Japanese internment.

Shimizu lives in Victoria and is the author and illustrator of *Images of Internment: A Bitter-Sweet Memoir in Words and Images*.

Exhibition officially opens with public lecture

The exhibition runs through June 18 at UVic’s free downtown art gallery and officially opens with a UVic Lansdowne Lecture April 23 at 7 p.m. at Legacy Downtown, 630 Yates St.

Award-winning visual artist Bryce Kanbara will deliver the lecture, “Japanese Canadians in the arts: ‘Did you think it’d come true?’” about Japanese Canadian artists, issues of identity and intergenerational relationships, with opening remarks by the exhibition’s curator Samantha Marsh.

Marsh is a mixed-race yonsei cultural worker and independent curator based in Vancouver. Since completing her master’s in museum studies from the University of Glasgow, she has worked with the Powell Street Festival Society and the Japanese Canadian community to create intercultural and intergenerational programs, events and initiatives.

Kanbara, a painter, sculptor, and printmaker who received the Governor General’s Award in 2021, is the proprietor of you me gallery in Hamilton, Ontario.

UVic is also home to the multimillion-dollar, research and public his-



Bon Odori, Dr. Henry Shimizu, 1999-2002, oil on canvas

tory project, Landscapes of Injustice, on the untold stories of the forced dispossession and displacement of Japanese Canadians. Led by our university and based at UVic’s Centre

for Asia-Pacific Initiatives, it involves 15 other partner institutions and is one of the largest humanities-based research projects in Canada today. legacy.uvic.ca

2022 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Recognizing stellar graduates

An innovator in carbon removal technologies, a champion of Indigenous entrepreneurship and a Governor General Award-winning playwright who seeks to dismantle Western colonial systems are among the recipients of the University of Victoria’s

Distinguished Alumni Awards (DAA) for 2022.

Presented by UVic and the University of Victoria Alumni Association, the awards recognize graduates who, through their leadership or accomplishments, contribute sig-

nificantly to communities locally, nationally or globally. New this year, there are three award categories: the Presidents’ Alumni Awards, the Indigenous Community Alumni Awards and the Emerging Alumni Awards.

Cathartic storytelling

Emerging Alumni Award

Kim Senklip Harvey (MFA ’21) is a proud Syilx and Tsilhqot’in director, writer and actor who is known for her ability to craft transformative and moving stories that inspire, nourish and delight. She became the first Indigenous woman to win the Governor General’s Literary Award for Drama for her play Kamloopa: An Indigenous Matriarch Story—winning less than a week after graduating from UVic.

Senklip Harvey is currently developing three television series, working on her first book of prose and earning her PhD in law at UVic.

“My work is in deep service to my peoples,” Senklip Harvey says. “I say my stories are a place of respite for their trying lives and if I make them laugh once or momentarily nourish their spirits, I’ve done my job. I hope my continued work supports the next generation in the ongoing practice of making a more equitable and peaceful future.”

Tackling climate crisis head on

Presidents’ Alumni Award

Robert Niven (BSc ’01) is the founder, chief executive officer and chair of CarbonCure Technologies, a global leader in carbon dioxide (CO2) removal technologies. Niven founded the company in 2012 with a mission to reduce 500 million metric tons of CO2 emissions annually by 2030. Under his direction, CarbonCure has expanded to six continents and won numerous international awards honouring leadership in sustainability, innovation and technology development.

Niven, who was featured as one of Canada’s Top 40 Under 40 for his leadership in cleantech, wants his success to inspire new grads to enter this field. “A lot of young people feel worried and powerless with the climate crisis,” he says. “Joining or, even better, starting a climate-tech company empowers you to make a difference. It can be an extremely fulfilling and exciting career. The industry is going through explosive growth at the moment and requires all different skills and experience levels.”

‘Follow your passion’

Indigenous Community Alumni Award

Cory Stephens (BCom ’96) is an instructor, learning enhancement officer and manager for the Northwest with the Indigenous Advancement of Cultural Entrepreneurship (IACE) program, which provides prospective Indigenous entrepreneurs with skills, knowledge and mentorship. Stephens draws upon his experience in community and economic development to guide the next generation of Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Taking a leap into a business venture can be intimidating. For those who are unsure, Stephens offers: “Follow your passion and never give up. Failure is one of the greatest opportunities for learning on your journey towards entrepreneurial success.”

This year’s awards recognize 20 outstanding graduates across three categories:

Presidents’ Alumni Awards

Damineh Akhavan
Lynne Beecroft
Karen Clark Cole
Sarah Hunt
Derek Juno
Robert Niven
Madeleine Redfern
Doug White

Emerging Alumni Awards

Devesh Bharadwaj
Bryce Jones
Sage Lacerte
Carol Linnitt
Kim Senklip Harvey

Indigenous Community Alumni Awards

Lydia Hwitsum
Shalene Jobin
Jacylin (Jace) Meyer
Lou-ann Neel
Marion Newman
Denis St. Claire
Cory Stephens

Visit uvic.ca/distinguished-alumni to view a recap video, and read the bios and interviews with all recipients.

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