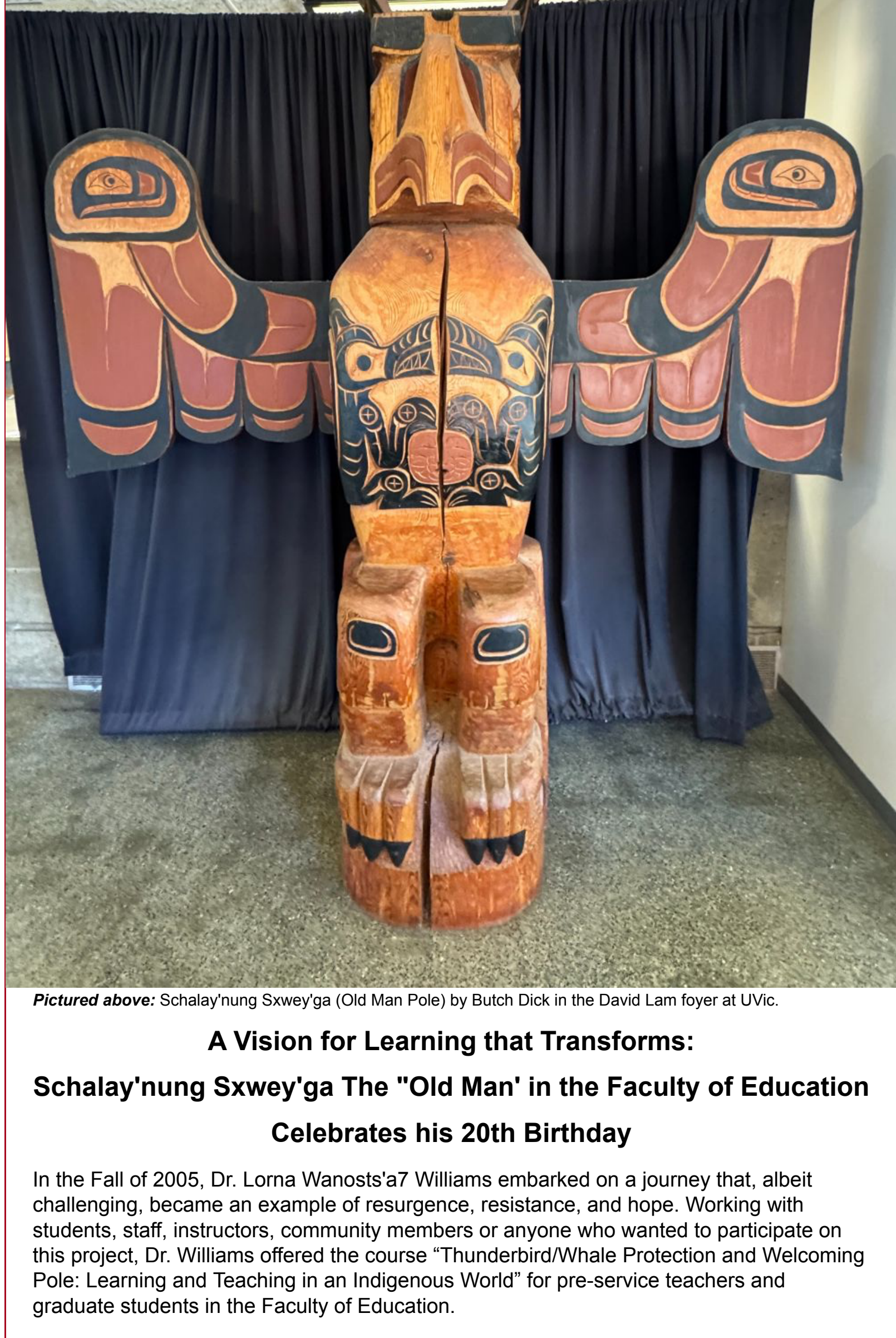


January 2026

Happy 20th Birthday Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga



Pictured above: Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga (Old Man Pole) by Butch Dick in the David Lam foyer at UVic.

A Vision for Learning that Transforms: Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga The "Old Man" in the Faculty of Education Celebrates his 20th Birthday

In the Fall of 2005, Dr. Lorna Wanosts'a7 Williams embarked on a journey that, albeit challenging, became an example of resurgence, resistance, and hope. Working with students, staff, instructors, community members or anyone who wanted to participate on this project, Dr. Williams offered the course "Thunderbird/Whale Protection and Welcoming Pole: Learning and Teaching in an Indigenous World" for pre-service teachers and graduate students in the Faculty of Education.

What now is common practice in many courses across the Faculty, at that time the weaving of Indigenous teachings was a new pedagogical approach to learning especially since this entailed learning directly from Educator and Master carver Dr. Butch Dick, and from his apprentice, artist-in-residence Fabian Quocksister. These rich experiences allowed the participants to learn within Indigenous ways, including learning by doing, observing, asking questions, telling stories, singing, and sharing. [An article published in 2007 by Dr. Williams and Dr. Michelle Tanaka can be found [here](#).]

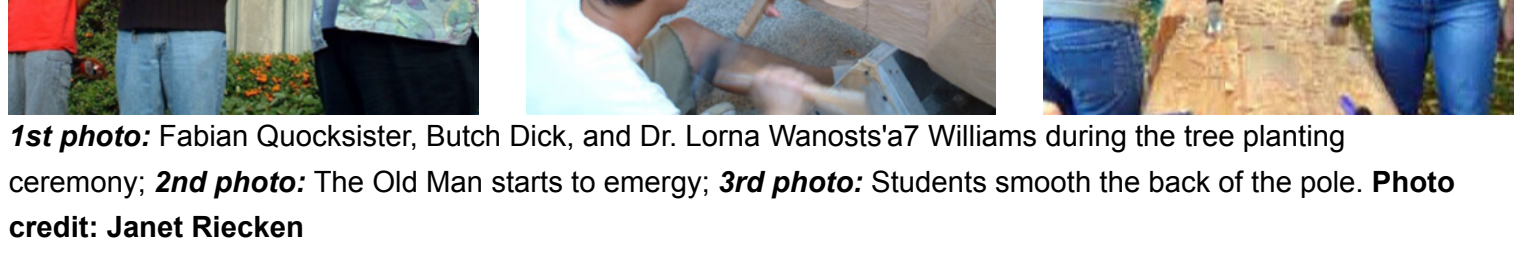
The "Old Man" has witnessed and has celebrated change, has endured racism, and has lived through the hope of future teachers committed to changing the world, and the hope of the instructors who continue to weave Indigenous principles into their work. He has lived through the hope of those who walk past him in silence, with admiration, in reverence, and with respect. He stands tall, with open wings, and with an open heart to guide those of us who continue to amble on the path of Reconciliation with Truth. His presence, a symbol of strength, determination, and resurgence, and a powerful reminder of the responsibility that each of us holds to create a shared future.

In 2013, as the University of Victoria celebrated its 50th anniversary, Wanosts'a7, Dr. Williams wrote:

"Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga, 'The Old Man', welcomes people into the heart of the space where educational activities take place in the McLaurin building, home of the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria. Schalay'nung has the double meaning of 'teaching of the ancestors' and 'to be a true history'. Sxwey'ga, means 'man'. The naming ceremony was the culmination of a remarkable course designed by Lorna Williams on Indigenous ways of knowing called 'Learning and Teaching in an Indigenous World: Thunderbird/Whale protection pole where pre-service teachers, education graduate students, community members, high school students, faculty, and administrators worked alongside Fabian Quocksister, Lekwelthout artist-in-residence, and Lekwungen mentor carver/educator, Butch Dick.

At the ceremony, community and university leaders, community members and students acknowledged the role of Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga to hold the space for Indigenous knowledge and wisdom at the University of Victoria. Their stories tell us that there is a sense of embracing and moving past the historical wrongs that have led to unequal power relations. For these feelings of reparation to occur here is significant as we seek settings that are based in an engaged, combined, and emergent pedagogy that more fully respect the multiple histories and knowledges of all people. As educators, we must work to be true to our shared history, remembering where we have been so that we can move forward in the creation of new learning and teaching environments.

Dr. Budd Hall was the Dean of the Faculty of Education at that time and with his support this vision became a reality. The Poem "Old Man" is his creation. This poem was especially meaningful to First Nations leaders who attended the standing of the pole at the ceremony held on January 19th, 2006.



1st photo: Fabian Quocksister, Butch Dick, and Dr. Lorna Wanosts'a7 Williams during the tree planting ceremony; **2nd photo:** The Old Man starts to emerge; **3rd photo:** Students smooth the back of the pole. Photo credit: Janet Riecken

An Honouring Poem for Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga, The Thunderbird/Whale Protection and Welcoming Pole installed in the McLaurin Building, Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria, Friday, January 19, 2006 6:00 pm

Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga

Welcome back to the fields of camas lilies that your people harvested each season

Welcome back to the hill by the bay where your people collected clams and mussels for at least 12000 years

Welcome back to the lands where pine and Arbutus trees stood for 500 generations

Welcome back to the shady places where the medicines have grown

We welcome your stories

We welcome your wisdom

We welcome your return from your journeys

You have seen my ancestors come to this Island's shores not so many years ago

You have seen your people die from the illnesses that my ancestors brought

You have seen your lands taken through both administrative sleight-of-hand and guns

You have seen my great grandparents be given land of your Halait Peoples by persons who were not of that land

You have seen your people crying, alone in the residential schools

You have seen your people standing at the barricades in protection of the land and forests

You have seen your people starting their own schools to stop the destruction of your children in the schools of others

You have seen the Aunties teaching young people the language

You have seen Uncles teaching the songs and the dances

And now you have come

You have come to protect all of your people as they seek to learn within our walls

You have come with your other ways of knowing

You have come to say that never again will your young people be treated badly simply because they are the children of this land

You have come to help us, all of us, create a space where all people, young and old can learn and be respected and recognized for who they are

And we welcome you

We receive you with respect

We receive you with open arms

We thank all those who have made it possible for you to come to this house

Those who dreamed of your story

Those who removed the wood that had held and protected you for years

Those who cleansed and sang for you

Those who learned from you even as they helped to set you free again

Those who recorded this re-birth

Those who will take this story to all the places in the land and share it with others

Those who are the teachers

Those who are the elders

Those from your communities who encouraged you to come

Those from this house of learning who have longed for and supported your journey home

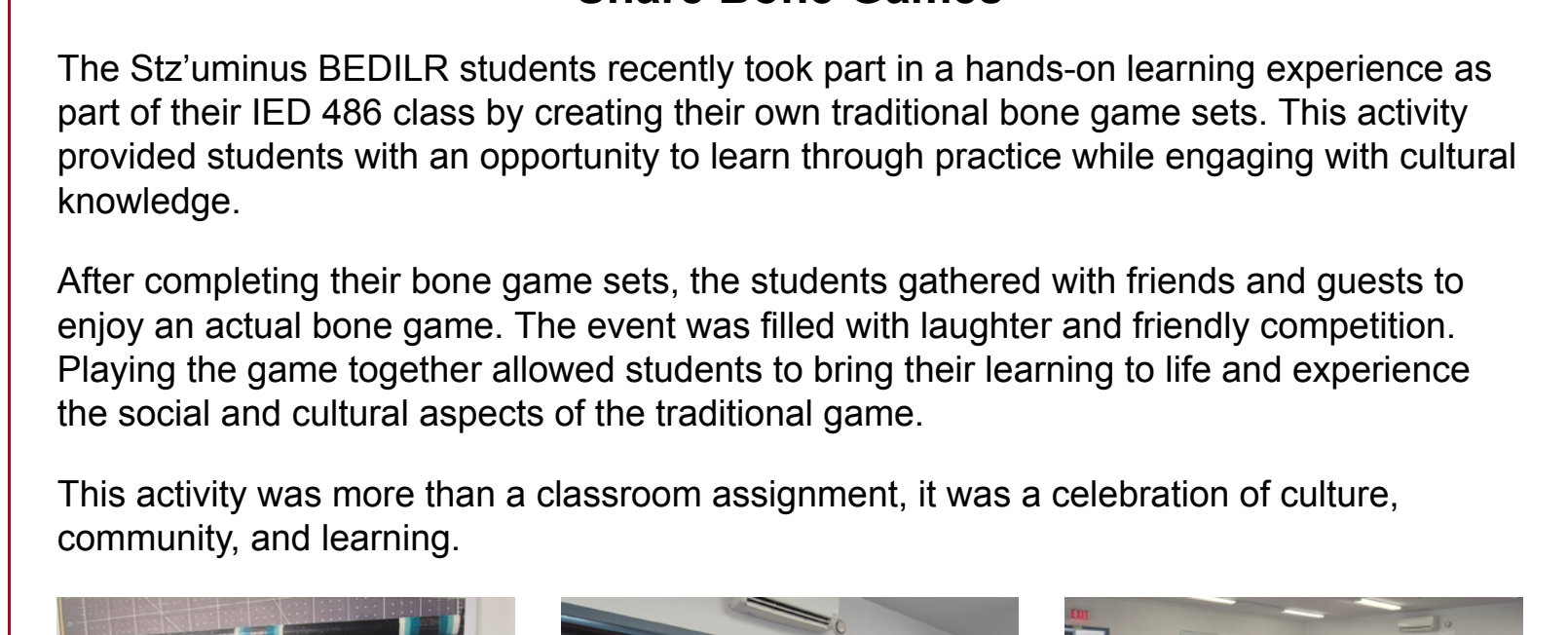
Those who are here today, both young and old, to welcome you and to accept you

Welcome, Schalay'nung Sxwey'ga

This is your home

- Budd L. Hall

Indigenous Language Programs



Pictured above: The Stz'uminus BEDILR students & guests enjoying playing the bone game.

Honoring Tradition Through Play: BEDILR Students Create and Share Bone Games

The Stz'uminus BEDILR students recently took part in a hands-on learning experience as part of their IED 486 class by creating their own traditional bone game sets. This activity provided students with an opportunity to learn through practice while engaging with cultural knowledge.

After completing their bone game sets, the students gathered with friends and guests to enjoy an actual bone game. The event was filled with laughter and friendly competition. Playing the game together allowed students to bring their learning to life and experience the social and cultural aspects of the traditional game.

This activity was more than a classroom assignment, it was a celebration of culture, community, and learning.



1st photo: Picture of traditional bone sticks; **2nd photo:** Learning how to make bone sticks; **3rd photo:** Students making their own sets of bone sticks for the class.

Team Update



Welcome chuutsqa (Dr. Layla Rorick) as Assistant Professor in Indigenous Language Revitalization, Reclamation & Maintenance in Indigenous Education

Please join us in welcoming chuutsqa (Dr. Layla Rorick) to the Department of Indigenous Education (IED) as our new Assistant Professor of Indigenous Language Revitalization, Reclamation, and Maintenance. Dr. Rorick joined IED effective January 1, 2026, and brings her expertise and commitment to Indigenous-led research and education.

We are honored to have chuutsqa join our faculty and look forward to the knowledge and leadership she brings to our community.





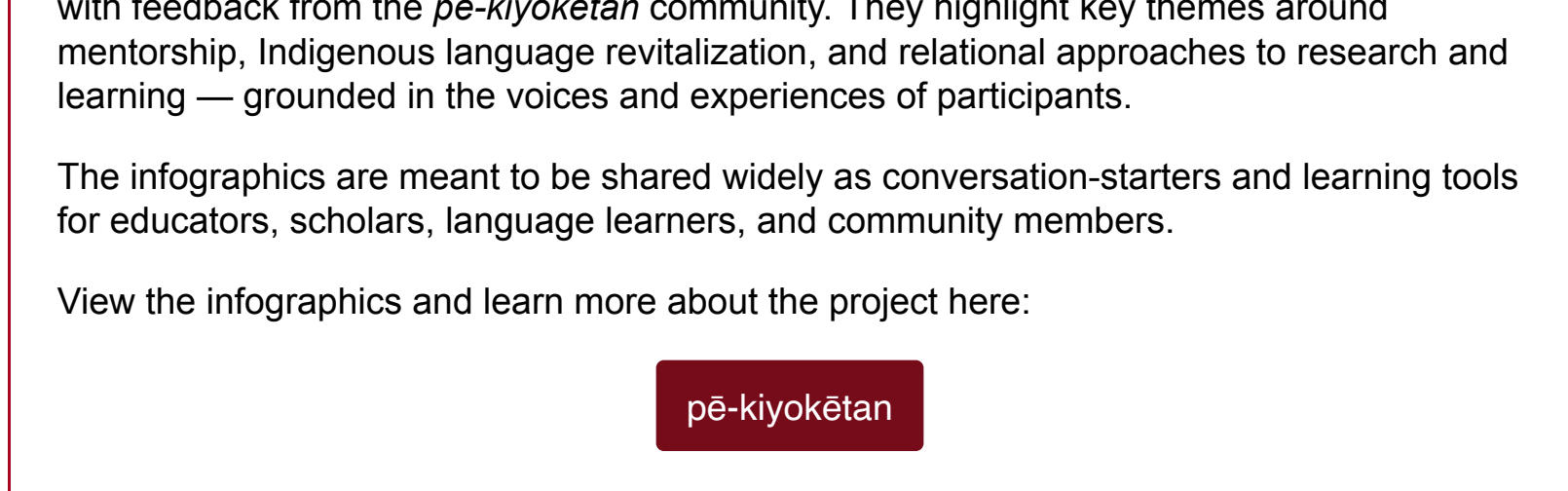
Recent Publication from Belinda Daniels

Sterzuk, A., & Daniels, B. (2025). Introduction to the special issue: Relational research in adult Indigenous language reclamation (Editorial). *Journal of Belonging, Identity, Language, and Diversity*, 9(2).

To read the publication, click on the link provided.

[J-BILD](#)

In Community



pē-kiyokētan: SSHRC Project Infographics

As the SSHRC-funded pē-kiyokētan project comes to a close, I'm excited to share some of our findings in the form of infographics drawn from our mentorship gathering in Saskatchewan.

These visuals were created through collective reflection during our gathering and refined with feedback from the pē-kiyokētan community. They highlight key themes around mentorship, Indigenous language revitalization, and relational approaches to research and learning — grounded in the voices and experiences of participants.

The infographics are meant to be shared widely as conversation-starters and learning tools for educators, scholars, language learners, and community members.

View the infographics and learn more about the project here:

[pē-kiyokētan](#)

Program Opportunities



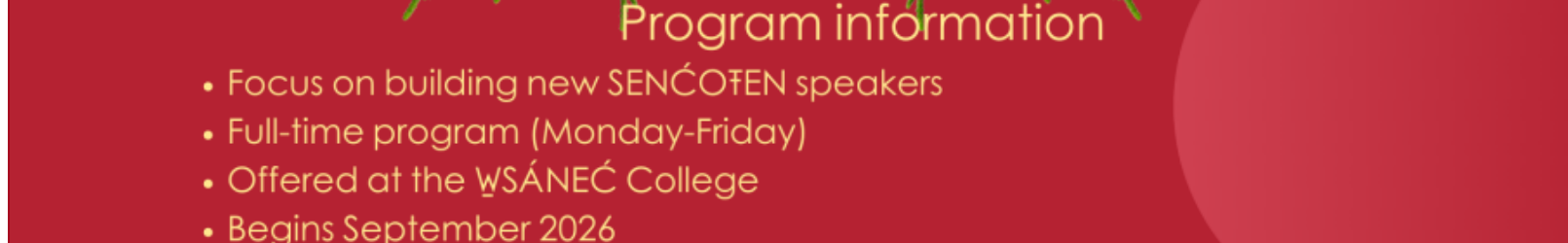
Pictured above: 2024 MLR students, Instructor Sonya Bird, and Dr. Wanosts'a7 Lorna Williams.

Application Portal Open - 2026 Masters in Indigenous Language Revitalization (MLR) Program

Indigenous Education is accepting applications for the 2026 Masters in Indigenous Language Revitalization (MLR) Program. Deadline for applications is **January 30, 2026**.

For more information on how to apply please go to our website by clicking the link below.

[MLR](#)



Deadline Extended: 2026 W,SENĆOTEN,ISTW Language Program

The application deadline for the 2026 W, SENĆOTEN, ISTW Language Program has been extended to **Tuesday, February 17, 2026**.


For additional information or to submit an application, please contact Tye Swallow at tsallow@asaneccschoolboard.ca or Colleen Juricic at ledlpa@uvic.ca.

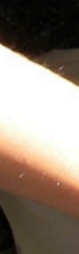
Fall 2026 NEW COHORT STARTING
W, SENĆOTEN, ISTW
"moving the language forward through the breath of the people"
APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED FEB 17th




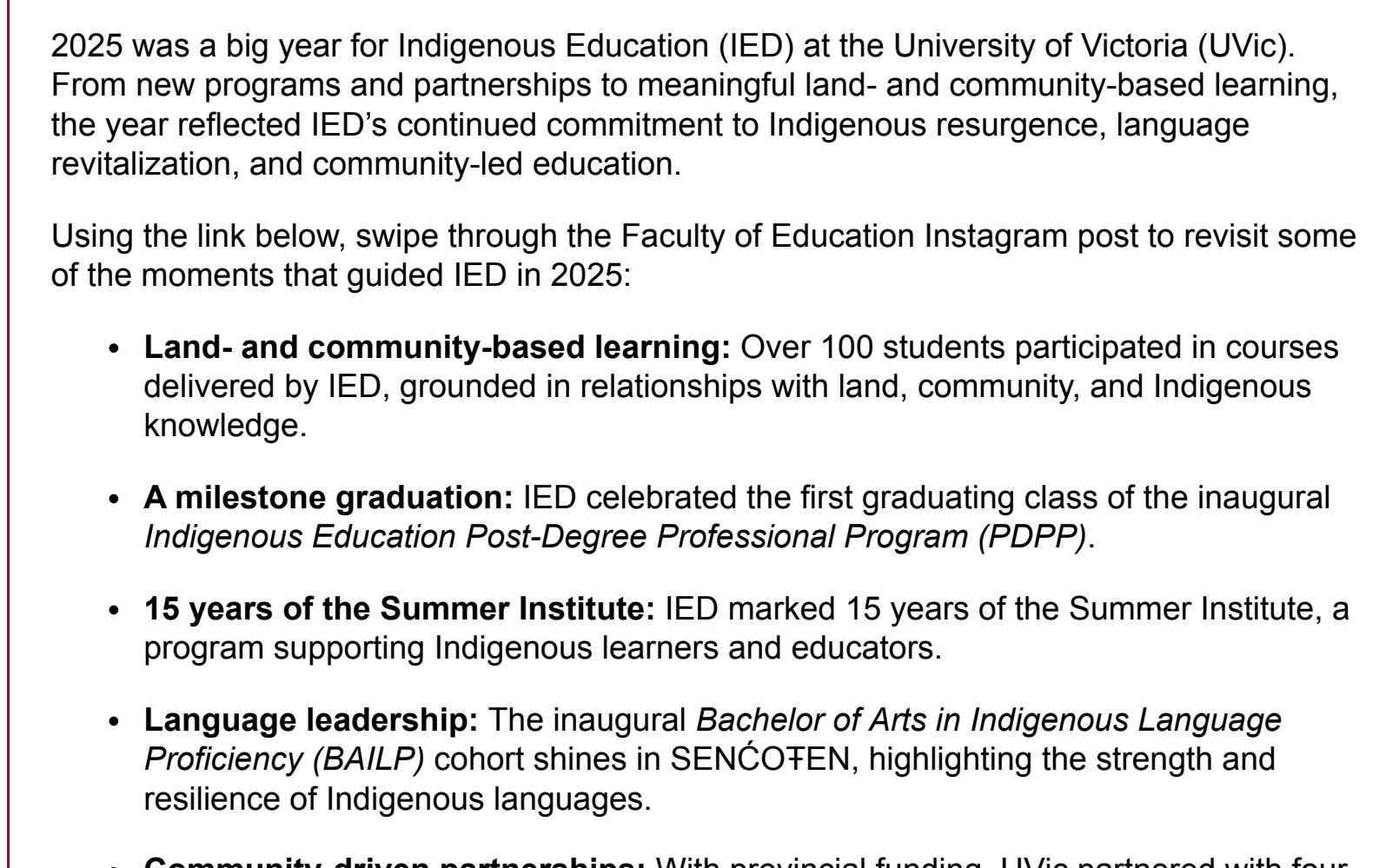
Program information

- Focus on building new SENĆOTEN speakers
- Full-time program (Monday-Friday)
- Offered at the WSÁNEĆ College
- Begins September 2026
- W,SENĆOTEN,ISTW is a ladder program, that begins with a one-year certificate and leads into a Bachelor of Arts degree in Indigenous Language Proficiency through UVIC.
- Prerequisite: English 12
- A partnership between Indigenous Education, in the Faculty of Education at UVIC, and the WSÁNEĆ School Board
- The program focuses on learning SENĆOTEN, and preparing students for further academic paths:
- Year 1 Certificate in Indigenous Language Proficiency
- Year 2 Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization
- Year 3 & 4 Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Language Proficiency in SENĆOTEN



**Contact your local Post-secondary**

**Contact Us**
Tye Swallow,
tsallow@wsaneccschoolboard.ca
or
Colleen Juricic, Language Programs Assistant,
Indigenous Education, UVIC ledlpa@uvic.ca
250-721-7824.

A Year of Impact for Indigenous Education


Let's Look Back: Indigenous Education in 2025

2025 was a big year for Indigenous Education (IED) at the University of Victoria (UVic). From new programs and partnerships to meaningful land- and community-based learning, the year reflected IED's continued commitment to Indigenous resurgence, language revitalization, and community-led education.

Using the link below, swipe through the Faculty of Education Instagram post to revisit some of the moments that guided IED in 2025:

- **Land- and community-based learning:** Over 100 students participated in courses delivered by IED, grounded in relationships with land, community, and Indigenous knowledge.
- **A milestone graduation:** IED celebrated the first graduating class of the inaugural *Indigenous Education Post-Degree Professional Program (PDPPP)*.
- **15 years of the Summer Institute:** IED marked 15 years of the Summer Institute, a program supporting Indigenous learners and educators.
- **Language leadership:** The inaugural *Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Language Proficiency (BAILP)* cohort shines in SENĆOTEN, highlighting the strength and resilience of Indigenous languages.
- **Community-driven partnerships:** With provincial funding, UVic partnered with four First Nations—Mowachant-Muchalant, Stz'uminus, Ktunaxa, and WSÁNEĆ—to design education programs aligned with local languages, cultures, and community priorities.

As we look ahead, these moments remind us of the power of collaboration, respect, and Indigenous leadership in shaping education.

[UVic-IED IG](#)

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