**15 years of RBC Case Competition have flown by!**

To celebrate, we asked a few of our past winners to share where they are now.

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**Tara Hack (nee McDougall)**

*Graduation year: 2006*

**Current job:** Interior Designer – Workplace

**Personal update:** I’ve lived in London, England for the last six years with my husband and daughter (who was born here). I work for Woods Bagot — an Australian architectural practice — as an interior designer. I love working with clients like HP, Ericsson and Unilever to design and deliver office projects throughout Europe.

**Favourite RBC memory:** It’s still one of my top five accomplishments. What you learn in this competition is a real life skill. Pitching and selling ideas is a big part of what I do today and getting exposure to that at university is so important. I can still remember the feeling of ‘we totally nailed it’ and doing it as a team was so exciting. I love a good SWOT analysis.

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**Davin McLeod**

*Graduation year: 2007*

**Current job:** Management Consulting

**Personal update:** Off the job, I love to play outside. After spending half my life playing competitive soccer (including three years for the Uvic Vikes), I’ve found new passion in outdoor adventure sport – mountain biking, off-road triathlon, open water swimming, ski touring, trekking and mountaineering. There is so much adventure to be had in BC! I also love to travel. I was married this year, and my wife and I just spent three weeks travelling Sri Lanka for our honeymoon.

**Favourite RBC memory:** All I remember from the case competition in 2006 was the nerves we felt in front of the panel of judges, and then the joy of the first place finish!

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**Saare Adams**

*Graduation year: 2006*

**Current job:** Owner/Partner at MacPherson Adams, CPAs.

**Personal update:** Shortly after graduating, fellow grad Derek Story and I secured venture capital funding to run our business. This proved to be an invaluable lesson in the value of having specific expertise, which led me to obtain my CA designation in 2009. My practice focuses on tax and advisory for small and medium enterprise clients in BC and Alberta.

**Personal update:** I met my wife Mel while at Uvic and we have a four-year-old son and two-year-old daughter. We’re based in Victoria and spend time at our cabin in the Okanagan.

**Favourite RBC memory:** Finishing our presentation and being relieved and very proud; there was little time to analyze the case and I recollect thinking ‘we’d done a great job, regardless of what the competition results were.’

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**Coralie McLean**

*Graduation year: 2009*

**Current job:** Director of Marketing and Communications at Children’s Health Foundation of Vancouver Island

**Personal update:** I live in Victoria with my husband and our two dogs. In 2016, we were married this year, and my wife and I are both moving to focus on tax and advisory for small and medium enterprise clients in BC and Alberta.

**Personal update:** I met my wife Erin in Vancouver, and we got married in 2016. We both love to ski, cycle and play ultimate Frisbee in our free time. When the weather is not so great, we like to cook and bake.

**Favourite RBC memory:** I have a few favourite memories – the first was working with the team to achieve a common goal. We were all very focused on the tasks at hand, and we were on the same page. The second was having family and friends in attendance who otherwise would not have been familiar with what was happening both within the confines of the building and our program in general.

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**Marcus Brandt**

*Graduation year: 2008*

**Current job:** Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA, CA), Manager at DMCL LLP in Vancouver. I work in the firm’s private enterprise group, and assist businesses and individuals with assurance, tax, and advisory services.

**Personal update:** I met my wife Erin in Vancouver, and we got married in 2016. We both love to ski, cycle and play ultimate Frisbee in our free time. When the weather is not so great, we like to cook and bake.

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**For Brianna Dick,** an accomplished painter from the Songhees First Nation, art has always been a passion. Now, thanks in part to training she completed last November with the Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs (ACE) program, she is also building it into her career. ACE, a collaboration between TRICORP, the Gustavson School of Business and Indigenous community and government, has been invited into more than 38 Indigenous communities since it was founded in 2013, offering business training and mentorship to more than 309 aspiring Indigenous entrepreneurs. With federal government support through Western Economic Diversification Canada, philanthropic support from Tim Price and a $1 million gift from BMO Financial Group in 2018, the program was empowered to expand to an artist-focused cohort.

“Over the history of the ACE program, it became clear that Indigenous artists seek specific skills to create a special kind of business model to commercialize their art practices in the ways they deem most appropriate. We are grateful to our advisory board of successful Indigenous artists who have been instrumental in shaping the curriculum and delivery strategy,” says Dr. Brent Mainprize, Gustavson teaching professor and co-director of the ACE for Artists program.

“I think that the idea of a business course to an artist can be a little bit daunting,” says Program Manager Rosy Hartman. “Through the program, however, artists can gain the skills they need to really launch their careers and move from art as a passion or maybe a hobby to a career.”

“I think what I enjoyed the most about the ACE for Artists program is that it kind of gave me the inside scoop of business in our modern world,” says Dick, who was part of the first ACE for Artists cohort. “As Indigenous people we’ve always had that sense of business in terms of trading our items, negotiating deals on land and more, but when it comes to making a contract, knowing the legalities around copyrighting my art or what resources are out there for me as an Indigenous artist — and an artist in general — the program was helpful.”

In order for the ACE for Artists program to excel, there needed to be a high level of collaboration between the business school and the Faculty of Fine Arts.

“The partnership with Fine Arts has been so critical and important to the success of ACE for Artists,” says Mainprize. “There is a lot of excellent art-specific expertise that the Faculty of Fine Arts brought to the table that we really hadn’t had experience with.”

For Dr. Susan Lewis, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, the partnership made a lot of sense in terms of the direction in which the faculty wants to move.

“Looking at where we’re moving as a faculty and in terms of Uvic’s commitment to Indigenous students, it really seemed like an absolutely perfect fit,” says Lewis. “Here in our faculty we’re putting more emphasis on how we can prepare students for careers in the arts through programs that are innovative and community based, with lots of opportunities for experiential learning. As I looked at the ACE program, I saw that a lot of that is in place within that program and extending it to artists exclusively made sense.”

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**Entrepreneurial Industry**

**ACE for Artists** blends art with business acumen

by Matt Beauchamp

**OR BRIANNA DICK,** an accomplished painter from the Songhees First Nation, art has always been a passion. Now, thanks in part to training she completed last November with the Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs (ACE) program, she is also building it into her career. ACE, a collaboration between TRICORP, the Gustavson School of Business and Indigenous community and government, has been invited into more than 38 Indigenous communities since it was founded in 2013, offering business training and mentorship to more than 309 aspiring Indigenous entrepreneurs. With federal government support through Western Economic Diversification Canada, philanthropic support from Tim Price and a $1 million gift from BMO Financial Group in 2018, the program was empowered to expand to an artist-focused cohort.

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