Message from the Dean
The British Columbia edition

ASK graduates and students what factors set the Gustavson School apart from other business schools, and a common response will be: our spectacular location.

A sense of place indeed plays an important role in shaping our values and our approach to management education. Nestled on the far left edge of Canada, we are located where mountains meet water, where city meets forest, where understanding meets adventure. We are also where an innovative, emerging economy meets an evolving spirit of reconciliation, and different cultural perspectives intersect. This sense of place is reflected in the widely diverse opportunities our co-op students and alumni pursue in their careers. While our graduates find success on every continent, British Columbia is where many choose to stay and build their lives.

Our way of thinking is very much embedded in the global context. At the same time, this understanding has local roots. The phrase “the world looks different from here” is both a reflection of our reality and a promise we make to all who come here.

In this issue of Business Class, you will find stories of our alumni charting new paths in this beautiful province we call home. These experiences range from leveraging housing trends to transportation innovations, from executive recruitment insights to non-profits building community resilience.

We also recognize that our local actions have broader consequences and we are committed to mitigating any negative effects that flow from our activities. Last fall, Business Class reported on our Carbon Neutrality Plus initiative, in which we track and offset our carbon footprint. This fall, for the second year running, teams of students will research and pitch their ideas on how we should spend our offset dollars, and the school will follow their recommendations.

This initiative enhances student awareness of applied sustainability practices and advances our leadership as a school in this critically important area. It is encouraging to see coverage of this initiative from international management education bodies such as the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) and sustainability-focused education bodies such as the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), as well as interest from other schools and organizations looking to implement similar programs.

I was pleased to be invited recently to join the EFMD board of directors, an honor that was underlined by the fact that Gustavson is the only North American school so represented. It is a recognition of the leading role this school plays in shaping responsible management education worldwide, and I look forward to working with this distinguished group.

Whether they are in BC or abroad, our faculty, staff, alumni and students are making a difference. They are strengthening communities and enacting our aspiration to transform lives. I hope you enjoy reading about the impact some of these individuals are having as we redefine the future of business through innovation.

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Fostering Tomorrow’s Entrepreneurs
In May, Professor Brock Smith gave Victoria youth the opportunity to put their creative minds to work — while also learning the fundamentals of what it takes to build their own businesses — through his Kidovate Victoria initiative.

Kidovate walks youth through the process of developing their business ideas with a graphic novel workbook, access to Gustavson student mentors and a learning resource for educators. Aimed at kids aged 12-17, the 2019 program culminated in a market in the Bay Centre where participants sold their wares, including hand-knitted crafts, paintings, plants, soap and more. The program aims to develop entrepreneurial spirit, business acumen and a sense of corporate social responsibility.

Excellence in Practice Gold Award for ACE
The Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs (ACE) program was honoured with the European Foundation for Management Development’s 2019 Excellence in Practice Gold Award in the special category of Ecosystem Development. The international recognition honours ACE’s commitment to in-community learning and development opportunities for Indigenous entrepreneurs across BC. The ACE program, which was developed in partnership with Tribal Resources Investment Corporation, provincial and federal governments and Gustavson, was the only North American partnership to be recognized as part of the 2019 awards.

Mark your Calendar!
Victoria Forum returns on November 12-14, 2020. Co-hosted by the Senate of Canada and UVic, the theme will be “Bridging Divides: Turf, Truth and Trust.”

Heather Ranson, assistant teaching professor and associate director, Centre for Social and Sustainable Innovation.