INTERNATIONALIZING THE CURRICULUM

Listening Without Borders

BY JOHN THRELFALL

If you think a piece of music sounds the same when played by different orchestras around the world, you’re not listening internationally. Which, in a musical nutshell, is exactly what School of Music professor Ajtony Csaba had in mind when he approached UVic’s Learning Without Borders Program (LWB), which supports internationalization of the curriculum.

“When I came to UVic to work with the orchestra, I saw this ensemble had a lot of potential for development,” he explains.

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“This students, and the audience, could benefit by introducing them to several new international approaches to music.”

To secure tomorrow’s jobs and power a strong economy driven by new ideas and innovation, BC needs to expand its internationally recognized post-secondary system and make it possible for every qualified British Columbian to attend university, college and trades training. Of these, 8,400 will require a degree, 2,300 trades training.

“The BC Labour Market Profile, released by the Research Universities’ Council of BC (RUCBC), reveals that in 2016 the number of jobs requiring university, college or trades credentials will exceed the supply of BC graduates.

“That skills deficit will continue to grow through to 2020, when about 18,800 jobs will go unfilled due to a lack of the necessary education and training. Of these, 8,400 will require a university degree, 8,100 a college credential, and 2,300 trades training.

“The RUCBC report was based on the provincial government’s BC Labour Market Outlook and on BC Stats and Statistics Canada data.

“To secure tomorrow’s jobs and power a strong economy driven by new ideas and innovation, BC needs to expand the capacity of its internationally recognized post-secondary system and make it possible for every qualified British Columbian to build a bright future,” says University of Victoria President David Turpin.

“That’s why BC’s universities have put forward an Innovation Agenda for BC that calls for an investment in BC’s future now, so that British Columbians can take full advantage of the opportunities ahead.”

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“International” is the perfect word to describe the career of the Romanian-born Csaba—not only did he train in Vienna and Budapest, but he has also conducted orchestras in Hungary, Austria, China and Syria before joining the School of Music in 2010.

“Each orchestra has its own playing style,” he notes. “The London Philharmonic Orchestra, for example, has its own style that is different from the Chicago symphony, the Vienna Philharmonic or the Beijing Central Conservatory’s orchestra—so it will be very beneficial for our students, to learn a stylistic approach reflecting orchestras worldwide.”

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Csaba’s idea was to create a four-year course more reflective of what he describes as “the multicultural state of music repertoire… and orchestra performance and training traditions around the world.”

The looming skills gap also concerns the business sector.

A highly qualified workforce is key to economic success, says Bruce Carter, the CEO of the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce.

“The supply of qualified labour is already limited in some areas and that will deteriorate further due to demographic shifts and job growth,” Carter says.

The Opportunity Agenda goes a long way to addressing the looming qualified labour shortage, he says.

A full summary of the BC Labour Market Profile and the Opportunity Agenda: www.rucbc.ca

For a previous Ring story on the Opportunity Agenda: http://bit.ly/WhIdGFr

University of Victoria

THE RING

FEBRUARY 2013

The University of Victoria’s community newspaper

ring.uvic.ca

CAMPUS PLANNING

New community consultation framework available

UVic’s new Engagement with Our Neighbours: A Community Engagement Framework for Campus Land Use Planning & Development Projects is now available online. It sets a new direction for UVic on community engagement for future land use planning and capital projects on the Gordon Head campus and immediate surrounding area. Visit UVic’s news page for a PDF copy.

LABOUR RELATIONS

Update on CUPE, Faculty Association bargaining

UVic and CUPE 4163 (Component 3) representing sessional instructors and music performance instructors have ratified a tentative agreement reached in December. With this agreement in place, collective bargaining has concluded with our staff unions. In bargaining between the university and the Faculty Association, the Framework Agreement for faculty and librarians has been renewed for two years and outstanding monetary issues will be resolved at arbitration, following mutually-agreed-upon negotiation procedures. www.uvic.ca/info/bargaining/

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Teen in Ukraine contributes to NEPTUNE research

UVic’s NEPTUNE Canada observatory garnered national media attention after a teenager from the Ukraine discovered an appetizer off the deep seafloor? Story, viewing video taken by NEPTUNE’s Border Program (LWB), which supports internationalization of the curriculum.

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University of Victoria

ART, ANIMALS & US

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with the Learning Without Borders goal. Csaba is the second School of Music Professor — along with Jonathan Goldman — to benefit from the LWB curriculum development grant.

“With the help of this grant, we can invite guest speakers from specific musical cultures, who will demonstrate the differences in how these performers conceive traditions and stylistic regions,” says Csaba. “That will provide our students with new tools that help identify and interpret in a reflective way, say, French romantic orchestral music differently than Russian romantic music.

It’s not so much that we’re thinking of an international novel: while the story will be the same in different languages, the word choice and tone are going to be slightly different from country to country.

“If you listen to two interpretations of one piece of music, one after another, it’s obvious that something is different,” explains Csaba. “The romantic music a composer can hear in a performance are related to the ensembles — this trombone player in Spain might have a slightly different tone than the one in Russia, whose training is different. The same conductor can work with each ensemble, with the same concept, on the repertory, but it will still sound slightly different.”

Come March 1, you can hear some of Csaba’s theories in action when the UVic Orchestre performs Dances (and a bit of counterpoint) without borders at the University Centre. “We will play two separate sets of dances — Rimsky-Korsakov’s Capriccioso Espagnol Op. 34 and Prokofiev’s Slavonic Dances Op. 66 — which are both cross-cultural,” says Csaba. “Prokofiev is Bohemian, and Slavonic references the folklore of the whole Slavonic population, while Rimsky-Korsakov is Russian, so he’s referencing another country entirely. They are both composing in a dance tradition which is not only related to their own culture. But can that sense of internationality truly be taught? If students are exposed to many different ways of interpreting music, they will be able to go to another country and listen with a referenced ear,” Csaba concludes.

“Then they can compare and make a derivation from what they’re used to — and they will understand how it is different and how to reproduce it. This is an important experience preparing artistic collaborations in a multicultural society.”

For more information, see sidebar at right: www.uvic.ca/scholarships/LWBProgram.php

Letters welcome
The Ring welcomes letters to the editor on issues of direct concern to the university community. Letters should be signed with university community affiliation noted, not exceed 500 words in length and not be submitted to other media outlets. The editor reserves the right to select letters for publication and to edit for style, grammar and length.

LWB CONTINUED FROM P.1
Great Moments: Your stories, our history

So many great moments! The University of Victoria has witnessed many significant moments during its 50-year history. Many of these have contributed to UVic’s development into a world-leading research-intensive university while others have helped UVic make a difference in the world. Many other great moments have been of a more personal nature, uniquely experienced by UVic students, staff, faculty and community members as the campus has grown and changed.

During 2012, members of the university and the local community nominated nearly 230 engaging achievements, individual reflections and events in preparation for the university’s 50th anniversary celebrations. From personal tales of graduation to epic discoveries on the ocean floor, the amount of interest in the history of the university and in the nominations themselves was inspiring.

Now you can read about many of the most remarkable great moments in the UVic Annual Review (visit www.uvic.ca/annualreview/) or explore the full list of nominated moments in the online database at www.uvic.ca/anniversary/moments/index.php.

All moments in the database have been reproduced as they were submitted. They are organized by decade—from the 1960s through to the 2000s. The collection of Great Moments can be browsed by title, and many of the titles demand a closer look—from RES-E-Dos and “The Great Bus Pass Experiment” to “The Russians Were Coming” and “Exploring Deep Sea Volcanoes.” Many stories feature historical photos.

If you would like to contribute your own memories about UVic, you can still post them to the 50th anniversary Facebook page at www.facebook.com/uvic50 or Tweet them at @uvic50 using the hashtag #greatmoments.

Money in her studio. Photo: Mitch Wright

“I’m not looking to make a statement so much as looking to inspire questioning and show the complexity and our dependence on animals,” she says, adding the exhibit itself and viewers’ response to it will form part of her research.

“As an artist-philosopher, Connie is less interested in telling us what to think and more interested in inviting us to think,” says Dalton. “An example might be her artful interpretation of bird traps. Viewers will want to consider their own relationship with birds. Are they a source of beautiful feathers that we may use to adorn ourselves and feed our vanity? What gives us the right to take what we please? This is a moral and ethical question that most of us manage to avoid.”

Bal_le (the judgment heavens) and “babble” are two words that occur in the title of Morey’s exhibit, plays with the words “Babel” (the Biblical story of early human civilization striving to build an edifice that reached the heavens) and “babble” (the judgment that followed).

“With the sudden arrival of multiple languages, people were scattered to the four corners of the earth, the confusion of languages isolating groups one from another, as it does today,” says Dalton. “Language is one of those markers that was humans regard as evidence of our superiority over the other species that share this plane.”

While her doctoral course work is done, and the studio research is nearly complete, Morey continues to develop the written portion of her doctoral work and expects to finish by fall. Her dissertation is tentatively entitled Resonance, Ecology & Imagination. It is important to note that her art is not so much illustrative of her research as it is a crucial and equal component of her research.

“It’s not a means to an end in the writing,” Morey says, adding that the accuracy of studio work as a fundamental aspect of research has only come about in Canada in the last 10 years, and practice-based research remains a rarity.

With the exhibition of her work, Morey hopes to stimulate others to ask their own questions about human-animal relationships and cultural perceptions toward animals.

Humans have a complex relationship with animals. Although animals ourselves, we humans, especially in Western cultures, often see ourselves as exceptional or “above” other species with which we share the planet. Yet these other animals are integral to virtually all aspects of our existence.

In a mixed-media solo exhibition, UVic art education doctoral student Connie Morey explores this idea of “human exceptionalism” and the ethics that underpin and affect human relations with other animals, people, entire ecologies—anything that might be considered “other” or excluded by our own concept of self.

Entitled Ba_ile, the Feb. 1–24 exhibit of two- and three-dimensional works at Xchanges Gallery showcases the studio research component of Mor- ey’s doctoral work, which is inspired by the work of West Coast writers Jan Zweck (UVic professor emerita) and Robert Brighurst. Morey describes her research as an attempt to envision an ecological perspective of imagination and the creative process, and perhaps disrupt the idea of human exceptionalism.

Morey, who also teaches at UVic in the Department of Curriculum and In-

By Mitch Wright

Exhibition explores our relations with other animals

PhD exhibition explores our relations with other animals

Ken and Kathy Shields, one of the most storied and successful coaching duos in CIS history, have been included in the BC Sports Hall of Fame’s 2013 Class of Inductees. As head coaches of the University of Victoria Vikes men’s and women’s basketball team, the husband and wife were at the helm of two of the most successful varsity programs in the country, earning a combined 15 national titles. Integral to the development of the UVic men’s basketball dynasty of the 1980s, Ken Shields coached the team to an incredible season straight CIAU CIS Championships and earned four CIAU/CIS Coach of the Year awards. As head coach of the Vikes women’s basketball team for over 20 years, Kathy Shields won eight CIAU/CIS national titles and was a two-time CIAU/CIS Coach of the Year. Ken and Kathy Shields will be formally inducted into the BC Sports Hall of Fame at the 45th Annual Banquet of Champions on Sept. 19, 2013.

Dr. Iain MacLeod Higgins has received honorable mention in a major prize competition held under the aegis of the Modern Language Association (MLA)—the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work. The citation on his translation of The Book of John Mandeville (the medieval travel book) congratulates the UVic scholar for “impressive scholarship combined with skillful translation of a Medieval work with great modern relevance.” Higgins has taught at UVic since 2001 in both the English department and the Medieval Studies Program. His teaching and research interests include later Medieval English, Scottish, and French literature, travel writing and poetry—both medieval and modern. He is currently a member of the editorial board of the Middle English Review. Info on prize: www.mla.org/prizes_and_awards

Mia Maki, senior instructor in the Gustavson School of Business, and UVic Advise on Equity and Diversity Grace Wong Sneddon, director of UVic academic leadership initiatives, have joined the board of directors at the Victoria Foundation, which has helped connect UVic’s initiatives succeed in building community resources in Victoria since 1936.

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around the ring

Anne Michaels on the responsibilities of fiction

Stonecutter, poet and composer Anne Michaels will receive an honorary degree from UVic and deliver a President’s Distinguished Lecture Entitled “The Mystery of Mist: A word made up,” in University Centre Farquhar Auditorium. Michaels frames her talk with a quote from her novel Farquhar (2007): “The mystery of wood is not that it burns, but that it flows.” Her lecture will focus on the responsibilities of fiction when it is deeply engaged with historical events. Admission is free and everyone is welcome, but tickets must be reserved in advance at UVic Ticket Center: 250-721-8400 or auditorium.uvic.ca. More info: http://bit.ly/WvJLcN

Volunteer for Congress 2013

UVic faculty, students and staff are invited to volunteer for the 2013 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, June 1–8. Congress 2013 offers delegates and visitors a chance to connect with the academic excellence, public lectures and community celebrations as part of UVic’s 50th anniversary. More than 7,000 academics and researchers representing 69 associations will be on campus to share findings, refine ideas and build partnerships that will help shape the Canada of tomorrow. Congress will also feature many events and activities that are free and open to everyone including the Big Thinking speaker series, Canada’s largest academic book fair, daily performances on the outdoor stage, an urban fair, exhibits and social and cultural events. As a volunteer, you will have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities. To increase your skill, be a part of a team where your contribution is valued, and have fun. UVic volunteer lounge with refreshments, door prizes and many other perks are waiting for you. Sign up today at www.venues.uvic.ca/staff-volunteers or email volunteer@uviccongress.ca

SSHRC seeks student research communicators

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) has launched Research for a Better Life: IdeaFest, designed to support excellence in research communications. It is offered for a second year and is open to all students including undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral fellows. Students may submit entries in the medium of their choice including text, video, audio and graphics. The top 15 submissions will receive $3,000, an invitation to a special communications workshop at Congress 2013 at UVic and the chance to pitch their idea to a live audience at the Storytellers Showcase at Congress. Submissions will be accepted from Feb. 16 through March 1. More: www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/studentresearchcommunications

A feast for the mind

Most things only get better with age— in IdeaFest’s case, they also get bigger. Now in its second year, the University of Victoria’s popular festival of ideas has doubled in both length and content, running over two weeks from March 4–15 and featuring more than 50 free events from every faculty on campus (and more than half of UVic’s interdisciplinary research centres). Produced and hosted by the Office of the Vice-President Research, IdeaFest creates a vivid and multi-faceted space for community, faculty, staff and students to explore the world changing ideas rooted in research, creativity and scholarly thinking right now in every corner of campus. Whether you’re a science lover, an activist, a zombie enthusiast, or something else entirely, this festival provides an opportunity to have your curiosity piqued by the experts on campus that help make the world a bit more interesting— and a little bit better tomorrow—for everyone.

New and emerging ideas are expected, debated, re-worked and mobilized in a number of channels during this festival, including panel discussions, presentations, exhibits, lectures, performances, film screenings and tours ranging in topics from big data and the social power of gaming to sovereignty in the North and whether or not English should emerge as a global language (to name just a few). Complete festival details and a full roster of all 50 events is available at www.uvic.ca/ideafest to be sure to keep up with @UVICResearch on Twitter for up-to-date festival information.

CfI funds UVic nanotext, seafloor research

By Mitch Wright

Two teams of University of Victoria scientists are ready to dive into separate research frontiers—one on the leading edge of earth sciences to better understand fundamental aspects of how our planet works, the other pursuing how new nanomaterials can help create useful technological devices—thanks to funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI).

A total of $3.4 million is coming to UVic through the federal government agency, part of $815 million announced Jan. 15 for 75 projects at 34 institutions across the country.

Nanotech solutions sought in energy, biosensors

UVic will receive $1.8 million, part of a $7.7-million commitment toward a wide-reaching project in advanced materials science and technology led by researchers at SFU and also involving UVic and CRCF.

The Prometheus Project aims to create a global hub for materials science and engineering innovation and commercialization, turning world-class research into jobs and growth by creating device prototypes for cleaner energy, improved health-care delivery and faster data processing.

Dr. Alex Brzo, UVic’s principal investigator on the project, says the money will be used to upgrade lab and fabrication infrastructure so researchers have increased capacity to translate their designs into commercially viable prototypes.

“This will be a huge step toward taking our ideas to prototypes,” says Brzo, a UVic chemistry professor. “We have a strong core of infrastructure, and this investment will help improve the capacity to transform our research expertise into commercial applications.

Brzo says UVic’s research strength is in the fabrication of nanomaterials that can be incorporated into solar cells capable of more efficient, low-cost power generation and also able to be mass-produced. They’re also working with new materials to create miniaturized biosensors and imaging probes, tools that might become possible as an analysis devices for early diagnosis of disease.

“This project will allow BC’s four most research-intensive universities to collaborate on fundamental materials research projects with a wide range of potential commercial applications,” says Neil Branda, Canada Research Chair in Materials Science and SFU chemistry professor leading the $19.5-million project. “By engaging with a large community of industry, government and NGO partners, we will move this research out of the lab and into society to solve current and future challenges in important areas such as energy, health and communications.”

Undersea research frontier opening up

Dr. Laurence Coogan, associate professor in the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, is the project leader for a research initiative receiving $1.62 million through the CFI. CFI says the project will create “an unprecedented opportunity” by attaching new scientific instruments to the underwater cable operated by UVic’s Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) NEPTUNE Canada observatory to enable real-time data observations and sampling at the hydrothermal vents from subsea volcanos.

“This is really going to open up new opportunities for researchers to understand how mid-ocean ridges work,” says Coogan, who will lead a team of 15 researchers from seven institutions across North America on the $8.4-million initiative. “This is one place where we can watch the creation of new ocean crust take place in real time. The process of regeneration of the crust has a broad impact on the ocean and is one of the fundamental aspects of how our whole planet works.”

The Endeavour node is considered a frontier for earth sciences researchers, partially because scientists haven’t been able to get easy and reliable access to the deep-sea sites.

The new installations will enhance the level of instrumentation currently at the mid-ocean ridge node, more than 200 km off the Pacific coast at a depth of more than 2 km.

“This funding support will nearly triple Ocean Networks Canada’s current instrumentation at this spectacular location in the deep ocean,” says Kim Marshall, NEPTUNE Canada’s associate director of science. “It’s a huge vote of confidence in the technology we offer to the global research community.”

Most previous research at mid-ocean ridges involved ship-based investigation, with retrieval of data and samples delayed by weeks or even months.

“We now will be able to see what’s happening immediately after a volcanic eruption or other disruption and understand how changes in the environment affect the surrounding ecosystems,” Coogan says, adding that installation is expected over the next few years with the data available to anyone who registers through ONC and NEPTUNE Canada to access it.


Savour the diversity

The winners of the 2012/13 Diversity Writing Contest and first annual UVic Diversity Slam Poetry Contest were announced on Feb. 20 at First Peoples House, during the opening reception of the Provost’s Diversity Research Forum: Rethinking Realities.

In the fiction category of the Diversity Writing Contest, third-year French student Jinh Yung Yeo took first place for her story Average, while chemistry master’s student Brian Coleman was second for 8 Down and Out. In the personal narrative category, there was a tie for first place between Natasha Clark for her piece Loving Like Mahatma and graduate student Septideh Heydari for Bon 25-year-old. First-year student Jordan Korek placed second with Artemis. In the poetry category, third-year social work student Frances Woodcock placed first for her piece Nigen Delta

By MiCh wrighT

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Film and TV actor moves in new direction

BY MAX JOHNSON

Christine Willes has been a doctor, a demon and a DC Comics super-villain—and this year she can add ‘director’ to the list. Willes, an actor well-known for her appearances on shows like Smallville, Dead Like Me and Emily Owens MD, came to UVic last year for her master’s in fine arts in directing. Now, as part of her final thesis, Willes is directing her fellow students of the UVic theatre department in Reasons To Be Pretty (Feb. 14–23).

The play, written by Neil LaBute, is a blue-collar black comedy about the relationships of four friends and lovers, and the perils of contemporary society’s obsession with beauty. Typical of LaBute’s work, it’s very four-letter friendly. Willes, also known for her work as an acting coach, has used scenes from this play and other works by LaBute to teach university actors in the past. She even appeared in LaBute’s 2006 remake of The Wicker Man, which he wrote and directed.

What is it about LaBute’s writing that speaks to her? “LaBute doesn’t sugar-coat human nature,” she says. “In theatre, we hold a mirror up to nature—and just as sometimes it’s very difficult to see our own reflection in the mirror (because it’s seven in the morning, you haven’t had any sleep; or with me, I don’t have any makeup on, my hair’s a mess) sometimes I just don’t want to see that. Coaxing the audience to look at something that they know intellectually is true, but don’t want to get all stirred up about without being gently guided…is a task.”

For the past month, Willes has beenitation leading the actors, who are gently guiding the student actors of the production through rehearsal. “They’ve been engaged very deeply, in ways that I haven’t seen before.” She thinks it’s because of the contemporary nature of LaBute’s script and themes—and because the actors contributed to which themes Willes chose to highlight in the production. “I put two on the table that were not negotiable,” she says. “One was appearances, and one was the battle of the sexes.” Both are topics Willes is passionate about (when she sends you an e-mail, her signature is automatically accompanied by a quote about how women constitute half the world’s population, perform two-thirds of the work, but earn just 10 percent of the income and own only 1 percent of property”). But the student actors found significance in other themes as well, and the production examines them too: for instance, the story’s coming-of-age nature and the questions it asks about “the slippery nature of ambition.”

It’s a storytelling process that Willes hasn’t had the luxury of experiencing in the more fast-paced film and TV world. “Collaboration there is: ‘You hire me to do a job, and you are paying me…to show up with a performance intact that you can tweak—but that’s all you’re going to have to do. That’s it…That is the process.’ At UVic, theatre allows for the kind of collaborative and organic working environment Willes doesn’t often see as a screen actor. “I’ve been surprised by joy, working on this. Because the people I’m working with also enjoy working in this way…that’s been very, very rewarding.”

“I use the metaphor of performance as a garment,” she says. “As an actor, I wear the garment one way. As a film and TV actor, I wear the garment another way. And as a director; I turn the garment inside-out. I have to approach it from a completely different point of view, even though the tasks are the same.”

Audiences can see the benefits of her approach when Reasons To Be Pretty opens at the Phoenix Theatre on Valentine’s Day.

UVic undergraduate students are ripe with innovative ideas, as UVic’s fifth annual Pitch It event proved on Jan. 24. This event welcomes students from all faculties to make a 90-second pitch for an existing or possible business venture.

Sporting the motto, “Dream it. Pitch it. Win it,” the event made an exciting pitch this year, and according to organizer and instructor for the Faculty of Business in Entrepreneurship Mia Maki, “it was done for the best year. We had two more teams pitching two years ago, but the quality of the pitches this year was by far the best of the five years that we have run the event.”

The teams had less than two minutes to pitch their idea, which was composed of Peter B. Gustavson Business School faculty members Brock Smith and Ana Maria Perea, and executive-in-residence Bob Milne. After each team pitched, they were led away to receive input from a panel of UVic’s Centre for Entrepreneurs (ICE) authorities, serving as feedback coaches.

The winners of the $300 prizes are Sean Wiggins (business), Ben Duthie (business and continuing studies), Marcin Koni (psychology and sociology), Aaron Lamour, Darrin Mah, and Yung You (business), and Kenyon Nisbett and Nathaniel Jordan (economics). Wiggins pitched a music-sharing online community named Music Market, which invites community members to share in the success of their favourite local artists by purchasing content online. Duthie pitched Eco-collaborative, which united passionate individuals by running information-rich eco-tours across Vancouver Island. Koni pitched Mika, a Schedzo software app designed specifically for students to align their schedule with those of their friends and colleagues. Lamour, Mah, and Yung pitched a Hotel U app, that allows for convenient hotel check-ins. Nisbet and Jordan pitched Scho
dastic Housing Connection, a social network for off-campus housing that connects students and landlords.

According to Smith, these con
tests were selected based on the feasibility of their ideas, the passion of the team members, the focus on a specific important problem, and the contest’s ability to carry out the venture. Also in attendance was previous Pitch-it winner Jill Doucette, who went on to compete and win UVic’s Plan-it competition in 2009. She also competed and won the national Nicola*

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This year marks the sixth annual Shoot for the Cure event, which has raised more than half a million dollars for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation so far.

UVic was one of the first schools to participate in this event and has played a special role ever since. The Vikes event raised over $2,300 last year, encouraged largely by community support for Vikes coaching legend and breast cancer survivor Kathy Shields. Shoot for the Cure has grown to involve 44 CIS basketball programs across the country—a national effort that connects fans and athletes with an important social issue.

On game day, the first 50 people wearing pink will receive a prize, and a portion of ticket sales will go to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. There will also be great prizes such as pink basketball wristbands and B.B. King tickets.

As an added bonus, the game on Feb. 16 is against Vikes’ archrivals the UBC Thunderbirds. The women tip off at 5 p.m. and the men at 7 p.m. on the Ken and Kathy Shields Court at the McKinnon Gym.

Blueberries are one of our favourite fruits, and no wonder—they’re tasty and they’re very good for us. They’re rich in antioxidants, substances that can help reduce the natural cell damage in our aging bodies that can lead to cancer, heart disease and other ailments.

A research team led by UVic plant biologist Dr. Peter Constabel became the first in the world to reveal—at a molecular genetic level—how blueberries ripen and produce antioxidants known as flavonoids.

“We already knew a lot about the chemical composition of blueberries, but until this study, very little about how flavonoid antioxidants are formed by the fruit as it ripens,” says Constabel. “This knowledge has tremendous potential for BC’s blueberry industry and, ultimately, for our health.”

Canada is the world’s third-largest producer of high-bush blueberries. Ninety-eight per cent of the berries’ trademark blue-purple flavonoid pigments are produced.

In the process, the team identified more than 17,000 gene sequences, quadrupling the number of newly discovered blueberry genes—information that is now available in public databases.

With collaborators in Alberta and Oregon, the team also conducted a detailed chemical analysis of the flavonoids, and determined that the skin of blueberries contains the greatest variety and quantity of these health-promoting chemicals.

And, working with researchers in Saskatchewan, they identified a plant hormone that appears to play a key role in blueberry ripening.

The study was the first of its kind to look at blueberries from a molecular and multidisciplinary perspective, says Constabel. “I don’t know of any other fruit where all of these research tools have been applied in one study.”

Constabel is now turning his attention to another berry in the same family, this time one that grows wild along the BC coast. Salal berries—also packed with healthy antioxidants—were a staple traditional food for northwest coastal peoples. They picked the berries in quantity, then mashed and dried them into cakes for winter use.

“Salal has been studied for its impact on tree regeneration, but not very much for its fruit,” says Constabel, who—on a broad scale—is interested in how and why plants, especially trees, produce biologically active compounds such as tannins.

“I find it fascinating that plant chemicals, which are produced as protection against stressful environmental conditions, can also help protect the human body. So eat your fresh fruit and grains!”

UVic plant biologist Dr. Peter Constabel, with a winter crop of blueberries at local green grocer The Root Cellar, in Saanich. Photo: UVic Photo Services
in memoriam

Patrick Robert Konkin, retired manager of the Student Facilities Group in University Services, passed away on Jan. 14 following a brief illness.

Pat was among the early graduates of the University of Victoria and took part in the walk from the Lansdowne campus, now occupied by Camosun College, to the then-new Gordon Head campus.

Upon his graduation, Pat was appointed as the first statistical consultant in the newly founded Statistics Laboratory. In this position, he participated in the research work of many graduate students and faculty members, particularly those in the social sciences, by providing advice in statistical analysis. His patience and assistance in helping resolve problems endeared him to many people, and in many cases profoundly influenced the course of their future careers.

At its inception, the Statistics Laboratory was equipped with electromechanical calculators, and Pat saw this machinery replaced with a network of computers as the laboratory was developed into the Current Computing Facility, one of the first of the student computer labs.

Pat subsequently played a key role in the development and management of the student computing laboratories in the Human and Social Development and the Business and Economics Buildings, working closely with the faculty members who would be using these labs in their teaching. These facilities became among the largest employers of students on campus, providing invaluable work-related experience while affording them the opportunity to work with and help fellow students.

The student computing facilities became a resource for computing support as faculty and staff members sought help with their computer problems from the student lab staff. To continue to provide this assistance without reducing support to students and faculty members using the labs, Pat devised an arrangement whereby dedicated computer support staff would be located in departments and faculties. As the number of such arrangements grew, Pat established what came to be known as the Faculty Support Team.

Pat oversaw a similar development in connection with the support of Windows network servers. Since the networked computers in the various student labs relied upon server machines for their software and data storage, Pat formed a team of specialists to develop and maintain these servers. Academic and administrative departments soon sought assistance from this team to help build and maintain their own servers. Pat’s original server support team subsequently evolved into the Windows Services group which now provides Windows-related network services throughout the campus.

Pat retired in 2009, but his contributions throughout a 43-year career continue to benefit members of the university. Through his efforts on their behalf, Pat contributed to the careers of numerous faculty and staff members and to the education of generations of students.

Contributed by Dr. Arthur Brett, adjunct associate professor, Department of Linguistics, and G.L. Black, senior analyst, Department of Economics

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Robinson based much of his research on extensive interviews with his subject and other individuals. From these beginnings, Reg went on to conduct 370 interviews with veterans of the First and Second World Wars and Korea. Since Reg’s retirement the oral history collection has continued to grow from donations and an active program of interviewing conducted by students of the Veterans Oral History Course. In 2005, at a special ceremony presided over by Lieutenant-Governor Iona Campagnolo, Reg was honoured when the collection was renamed the Reginald Roy Veterans Oral History Collection.

A memorial service to honour Reg will be held at the university’s Inter-Faith Chapel at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 14.

Submitted by Dr. David Zimmerman, Department of History

Dr. Trevor Williams died in Victoria on Jan. 11. The day before, at a special conduction ceremony at Royal Jubilee Hospital, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies David Capson presented Trevor Williams with his doctoral certificate on behalf of the UVic Senate. In view of the extraordinary circumstances and Trevor’s outstanding research progress toward his PhD degree, the university concluded that his completed work was well within the expected standards required for the completion of a PhD degree in mechanical engineering.

Attending the special conduction ceremony were Trevor’s wife Valerie, his brothers Stephen and Philip Williams and his mother Marian Williams, who had arrived from Wales the night before. Trevor generously shared this celebration with his fellow students, colleagues, friends as well as UVic faculty members who had worked with him during his doctoral studies.

Trevor graduated from Imperial College in 1987 with a BEng in aeronautical engineering followed, a few years later, by an MSc in management science from Southampton University. He worked for 23 years in the aerospace industry, for British Aerospace (UK), SEHER and CASA (Spain), Dynas (USA), Eutelsat (France) and MDA (Canada). During this part of his career, he worked on communications satellites, human-rated vehicles and low-earth orbit observation satellites.

In 2008, Trevor began PhD studies at UVic. The title of his dissertation is Probabilistic Flow Modeling of Renewable Energy and PEV Grid Interactions. His research makes significant contributions to our understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by the integration into distribution networks of plug-in electric vehicles and distributed energy resources.

A memorial ceremony was held on Jan. 11 at UVic’s Interfaith Chapel. The Faculty of Engineering has established the Dr. Trevor John Williams Memorial Fund to help advance Trevor’s research. Anyone wishing to make a donation may contact the Engineering Development office at 250-472-4310 or by e-mail at engdev@ uvic.ca.

Submitted by Roxane Kelly, external relations officer, faculties of science and engineering

A memorial service celebrating the life of Roderick Mackaas (1966–2012), a PhD student in the Faculty of Human and Social Development (School of Public Administration), was held at the Interfaith Chapel on Jan. 24. The memorial was attended by his family, and doctoral student, faculty and work colleagues. Evert Lindquist, director of the School of Public Administration, described Mackaas as killed in quantitative analysis and working with data, who had high standards and was hitting his stride as an applied researcher. “He was a quiet and methodical student with a very sense of humor and knowledgeable about a wide variety of topics,” said Lindquist.