Historic gift is icing on the (birthday) cake

$10M GIFT FROM PETER S. GUSTAVSON TO UVIC BUSINESS TO SUPPORT SCHOLARSHIPS, PROFESSORSHIPS, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

By Dianne George

UVic Business celebrated its 20th anniversary on March 19 with a community open house and birthday party. The celebrations were spectacularly enhanced with a historic gift of $10 million given by Peter B. Gustavson. This is the largest philanthropic gift ever to UVic Business and will support scholarships, professorships, research and innovation at the Faculty of Business.

Gustavson is the founder of Custom House, a Victoria-based global foreign exchange payments powerhouse. He sold the company in 2009 to Western Union for US $370 million.

Gustavson had been involved with the business school since 2003 as an employer, member of its advisory board and chair of the Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award event that he helped establish in 2004.

“I know what it’s like to struggle to find the money for tuition and living expenses,” said Gustavson, speaking to more than 250 people who attended the festivities. “I worked full-time while at university and with the help of my grandma would have $2 a week for gas.

‘I’d pray I didn’t run out and have to walk to a gas station—you could freeze to death outside in a Winnipeg winter. I’d rather see students pursuing studies rather than pursuing ways to fund their studies,’ he added.

UVic President David Turpin said the gift will turn the already remarkable business school into an internationally renowned centre of excellence for business education.

“It will literally transform the way we do business education, and it will benefit generations of students,” said Turpin. “When students enrol here, our greatest hope is to see the trajectory of their lives changed, their aspirations elevated and their minds sharpened.”

The funds will be invested in an endowment, and the interest earned will support scholarships, enhance student experiences, create more professorships and research funding, and develop new programs such as the faculty’s new Master of Global Business degree.

“Peter is a wonderful friend,” said Dean of Business Dr. Ali Dastmalchian. “His unprecedented generosity will spur innovation and new ideas for educating students to understand the big picture of business. By enhancing our learning environment—particularly in the international arena—we can expose our students to more opportunities.”

SEE GUSTAVSON P.2

Canada Research Chair does big things in a small way

By Maria Liron

Dr. Reuven Gordon (electrical and computer engineering) is UVic’s newest Canada Research Chair. At the Canada Research Chair in Nanoplasmonics, Gordon will conduct research that will help in the creation of sensors for the early detection of cancer, new tools to study viral infection and more efficient and cost-effective solar devices.

Under a microscope, human cells can be seen with our eyes. Viruses or cancer markers, however, are invisible because they are much smaller than the wavelength of light. “To see them, the light must be reduced to the nanometre scale,” says Gordon. “A nanometre is one billionth of a meter.” Gordon is using nanoplasmonics, with nano-fabricated metals, to “squeeze” the light.

Gordon is also researching the use of nanoplasmonics for more efficient solar energy conversion. While solar energy is the most bountiful of green energy sources, it is also the most expensive, so it is hardly used. Again, nano-structured metals show promise in this area because they allow for more efficient light absorption from the sun with lower material costs.

“By shrinking light to the nanometre scale—the size of viruses, for example—it is possible to increase the interaction of light with materials,” says Gordon. “This has obvious benefits when trying to detect a single molecule that identifies if someone has cancer, or when trying to capture and study a virus with light. Even large-scale devices, like solar cells, can benefit from nanoplasmonics because they enhance light-matter interaction dramatically.”

“Dr. Gordon conducts leading-edge work that will push the limits of his study area with medical and sustainable energy applications,” says UVic President David Turpin. “The Canada Research Chairs program helps universities to attract and retain the best talent from around the world, assuring universities like the University of Victoria to achieve research excellence in natural sciences and engineering, health sciences, and social sciences and humanities.”

Gordon’s five-year appointment is as a $500,000 tier-2 chair, recognizing exceptional emerging researchers acknowledged by their peers as
Dr. Cecilia Benoit (sociology) is a recipient of a 2010 BC Community Achievement Award. “Cecilia Benoit has improved the content and delivery of programs for people in her community who are the mainstream,” reads the award citation. “Her research with at-risk youth, pregnant women with substance use issues and sex workers has found widespread application and benefits.” Benoit is the only award winner from Victoria.

Dr. John Lutz (history) is the winner of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences 2010 Harold Adams Innis award for best English language work in the social sciences. He won the award for his book Makah: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations in which he explains how Canada’s Aboriginal people fell from prosperity to poverty and the origins of the myth of the ‘lazy Indian’.

“Lutz’s book challenges our ways of thinking about the history of relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people,” says the award citation.

BY GENEVIEVE VON PETZINGER

On Feb. 16, if you had Googled your name, you would have come up with your Facebook profile and the abstract for your presentation last April at the Paleoanthropology Society meeting in Chicago. The next day, when New Scientist published an online version of their Feb. 20 cover story on my research (“Stone Age Code: The Writing on the Cave Wall”), there were pages of hits returned with my name—my research had gone “viral.”

Since then, there has been an absolute storm of media requests, and the global response has far exceeded my wildest imaginations. I recently appeared on the Daily Planet on the Discovery Channel; my research is going to be part of a French/German documentary for the ARTE network in Continental Europe; and my work has been featured in nearly a dozen countries in substantial articles for national newspapers or national science magazines. The countries include Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Russia, Poland, Iran. I have also done multiple radio interviews in both English and French. I am currently collaborating with the Smithsonian Museum to add a section about my research to their permanent online exhibit on human origins. As well, the Bradshaw Foundation rock art website has asked me to be a permanent contributor.

Obviously, there is a lot of luck and timing involved when it comes to attracting the kind of worldwide reaction that my research has received, but there are also quite a few things that can be done to make sure that the right people know when this is happening. I knew this was going to be a huge opportunity for me to publicize my research, and I wanted to make sure that I did not miss out. With that in mind, I contacted the Uvic Communications office before the New Scientist article came out, and we had a media ready to be released at the same time that the story was published.

The instant media reaction was nearly overwhelming, and I had to quickly become a lot more media savvy than I ever thought would be required for someone quietly studying Ice age cave art.

Below are a few of the most useful things I learned over the course of this wild ride:

- **Giving reporters adequate time and comprehensive answers to their questions will result in better stories.** All journalists want to write a great piece, so make sure you give them enough to work with.
- **Explore all possibilities.** Sometimes what starts out as seeming like an insignificant piece can become a major article, so my policy was to respond to all media requests, whether they seemed “important” or not.
- **Don’t re-invent the wheel.** If you have gone to the trouble of creating well thought out answers to one reporter’s email questions, there is nothing wrong with using the same answer or a slightly altered version of that answer for another interview.

Going Viral

News media latch onto grad student’s research

Dr. Bob Lipson is the new dean of science, effective July 1. He is currently a professor in the University of Western Ontario’s Department of Physics and Astronomy and is the Department of Chemistry’s former chair.

Lipson is a fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada (2009) and was the former director of the Western Institute for Nanomaterials Science (2004-10), is the recipient of numerous academic prizes, including the Florence Buck Prize for Research Excellence (2008), a Distinguished Research Professorship from the UWO Faculty of Science (2008), and the E.G. Plaxa Award (2008) — Western’s highest accolade for teaching. He is also the senior editor for the Canadian Journal of Chemistry. Lipson serves on numerous boards, including the Technical Advisory Board of the Ontario Centres of Excellence, the Canadian Science and Technology Characterization Committee (CSCC), and is an executive director for conferences of CSC. He has served as a member (2004-06) and chair (2007) of the NSERC Grant Selection Committee for Physical and Analytical Chemistry, as a member of the NSERC E.R. Steacie Award Committee (2008-10), and on several committees for the Optical Society of America.

“The faculty and the university will hugely benefit from Dr. Lipson’s experience,” says Vice-President Academic and Provost Jamie Cassels. “He is known to be a strong and effective advocate for education and research, both within the university and beyond, and to be effective in securing support for academic initiatives.”

“I am thrilled to be coming to the University of Victoria,” says Lipson. “I have long admired the chemistry department, whose research excellence is well known on the national and international stages. What I have recently learned by exploring the expertise and accomplishments of the University of Victoria is just how strong the entire Faculty of Science is across the board in both teaching and in research activities, ranging from fundamental mathematics to more applied work. From my perspective, Uvic science is already making an impact in my understanding of space, the planet, biology, environmental and materials science. I am looking forward to working with such a distinguished academic and research mission and I am truly honored and humbled to have been selected as its new dean.”

More information about Lipson: http://www.uvic.ca/chemistry/faculty/lipson.htm

GORDON CONT’D FROM P.1

having the potential to lead in their field. For more information about Gordon, read his faculty profile at http://www.uvic.ca/faculty/gordon.html

The latest round of Canada Research Chairs program was announced at Uvic last month. Also included were 10 Uvic chair renewals: Robert Chow (retinal and early eye development); Ted Darcie (optical systems for communications, imaging, and sensing); Xiaodong Dong (ultra-wideband communications); Arthur Kraker (technology, culture and theory); Ian Putnam (operator algebras and dynamical systems); Anthony Quas (measurable dynamics and ergodic theory); Raymond Sin (human-computer interaction); Margaret-Anne Stoate (cognitive support for software and knowledge engineering); Verena Tunnicliffe (deep oceans research) and JoAnn Wheat Higgins (hydrosphere, climate and oceans). These chairs are for seven- and five-year terms respectively. Uvic holds 35 CRC positions.

GUSTAVSON CONT’D FROM P.1

“They will gain the knowledge and critical thinking skills that will help them solve some of the most pressing issues of the day and help improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the global community.”

David Herr, a fourth-year BCom student, was the first to work with Gustavson and the students, acknowledging the importance of scholarships and aid in allowing him to take advantage of the opportunities.

“These allowed me to focus on my education and doing well rather than just make the most of my experience,” said Herr. “It is so motivating as students to know that the business community supports us and believes in the value of our education,” he added.

“I believe that society’s best invest-ment is the investment in its youth,” said Gustavson. “I think investing in students in the school of business will be creating the business leaders for our community in the future. They’re the ones that will create new enter-prises, new products, new services and all the associated jobs that go along, and will ensure the continued success of our communities. For that reason, I am pleased to be in the fortunate position to be able to assist the faculty and its students with a birthday gift of $10 million.”

David Herr is one of the students who believe Uvic’s recent investment is helping to realize the opportunities that will allow them to plan the future they wish to see for themselves and their communities.

Gordon’s research: http://www.ece.uvic.

PHOTO: MITCH ZIMMER
Vice-President Academic and Provost

On March 30, UVic’s Board of Governors approved a balanced 2010/11 budget framework that, in spite of increasingly constrained resources, funds new graduate and undergraduate programs, increases student financial aid and expands student support services.

The 2010/11 budget framework is based on an operating budget of over $300 million supported primarily through the provincial government operating grant, student fees and other funding sources. The framework provides for an increase of 126 full-time equivalent graduate-student positions.

As in previous years, the framework includes a 2-per cent increase in tuition fees. This brings annual domestic and international tuition in $4,766 from $4,673. Domestic graduate student tuition in $4,950 from $4,853 effective May 1, 2010. This places UVic tuition in the mid-range of Canadian universities.

The framework provides for an additional $800,000 in student financial aid and $100,000 in ancillary services to assist with the cost of its collections and services for new programs, and almost $200,000 in ancillary services and support services to assist with initiatives such as academic support in writing centers and additional recruitment, disability accommodation and a new welcome centre. The improved financial performance of the University of Victoria Foundation and support from UVic’s major donor families have made these contributions possible.

UVic estimates its total revenue for 2010/11 at $390 million, including continued strong research from funding granting agencies, revenue from ancillary operations, and capital funds.

Many other universities are having to cut programming and positions, yet there are no cuts specified in UVic’s budget framework. How has UVic managed to maintain the status quo?

Cassels: We have used the integrated planning process as a way of identifying priorities and subsequently managing our costs pressures so as to minimize surprises and develop solutions to anticipated challenges. As a result, we’re in fairly good shape and do not anticipate any cuts this year.

However, we do anticipate that over the next several years, any growth in resources will be very constrained. The continuing economic downturn means that UVic will face reduced endowment revenues due to lower investment returns, constrained government revenues and slower student growth and the revenue that accompanies it.

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Each year, several UVic faculties confer awards for excellence in research to faculty members who have made significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge in their field. In this issue, we profile four recent recipients of such awards for leading edge work in multiculturalism, the evolution of galaxies, digital humanities and sustainable business.

Dr. Avigail Eisenberg (political science)
Faculty of Social Sciences Award for Research Excellence 2010
Dr. Avigail Eisenberg is widely acknowledged for her leading work in the field of multiculturalism in Canada and abroad. This award recognizes both her scholarly work and her remarkable ability to bring together in networks and conferences a wide range of researchers from around the world.

Eisenberg's scholarship is notable for the range of issues she considers—not only cultural differences but also differences of gender, indigeneity, religion and ethnicity. "The way in which we understand identity is central to how we understand human relations," says Eisenberg.

She also has expertise in both the political and legal dimensions of multiculturalism, including the careful analysis of legal reasoning in critical cases in Canada and abroad. In this respect, her work is both sophisticated and relevant to real-world politics and political change," she says.

With two single-authored books from acclaimed university presses, four co-edited books, 13 refereed articles in leading journals in the field and 18 chapters in books, Eisenberg's portfolio is outstanding. Her works are read and taught widely in Canada, the United States and Europe. Her most recent book is Reasons of Identity: A Normative Guide to the Political and Legal Assessment of Identity Claims, published by Oxford University Press.

Dr. Sara Ellison (physics and astrophysics)
Faculty of Science Award for Research Excellence 2009
Dr. Sara Ellison, Canada Research Chair in Observational Cosmology, has made significant contributions to the study of the chemical evolution of galaxies, with the aim of illuminating how the simple ingredients that came out of the Big Bang have become the rich fabric of galaxies and stars that we see around us today.

Using powerful optical and radio telescopes—including the Hubble Space Telescope—Ellison analyzes the light transmitted from quasars at the far reaches of the universe. "Some of this light will pass through a galaxy on its way to Earth, interacting with the gases in that galaxy," she explains. "We can then analyze that light using spectroscopy and learn what elements and molecules are present in the galaxy."

By studying light from the more distant galaxies, transmitted billions of years ago, Ellison is able to look back into the early history of the universe.

In 2003, the American Astronomical Society awarded Ellison the Annie Jump Cannon Award, given annually to a female astronomer within five years of receipt of a PhD for distinguished contributions to the field. Her work is supported by funding from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the British Columbia Knowledge Development Fund, and the Canada Research Chairs program.

Dr. Ray Siemens (English)
Faculty of Humanities Award for Research Excellence 2009
Dr. Ray Siemens, Canada Research Chair in Humanities Computing, is internationally recognized as one of the founders of the interdisciplinary field of digital humanities. He is involved in several large collaborative research projects on human-computer interaction, interface, and the electronic book and is leader of the Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) project, a multi-million-dollar study involving an international team of 35 researchers and 21 partner agencies that is developing our understanding of literacy in the digital age.

"We’re looking at several thousands of years of societal interaction with book-like objects and examining through them how society mobilizes and interacts with knowledge. Will we be able to contribute directly to digital developments that will help us read better, write better and communicate better?" he explains.

Siemens describes his field as “the future of the history of the book,” and as a scholar of both 16th- and 17th-century English manuscripts and literary computing, he is well-versed in the evolution of reading technologies throughout history. A prolific writer and editor, Siemens is founding editor of the electronic scholarly journal Early Modern English Studies, is conducting research on two early Tudor manuscripts, and co-authored Blackwells Companion to Digital Humanities (the seminal text in this field). He is also founder of the annual Digital Humanities Summer Institute, which brings scholars from around the world to UVic to explore issues at the forefront of the field.

Monika Winn (business)
Faculty of Business Research Excellence Award 2009
Dr. Monika Winn, associate professor of strategy and sustainability, has been at the forefront of research into business and sustainability since the early 1990s. "At that time in management scholarship, nature just didn’t exist," she says.

Now, the topic is in the mainstream and she adds to the body of knowledge through her research into how business and organizations can work with nature rather than against it. "Business and organizations have a tremendous capacity to get things done," she says. "They can funnel resources and galvanize energy towards building the capacity to deal with the challenges of climate change and transform the way we do things."

Winn is a prolific researcher and contributes extensively to the body of knowledge in her field. She is writing the editorial for a special issue of Business and Society on the topic of adapting management theory and business strategy in light of environmental and social change, and her article on the impact of climate change on organizational environments has been accepted by Business Strategy and the Environment. She has recently published on the topics of stakeholder influence tactics and corporate reputation management and contributed to the book From Impacts to Adaptation: Canada in a Changing Climate on the expected climate impacts on BC’s key sectors.

Winn serves on several editorial boards, including Business and Society, Business Strategy and the Environment, and the Journal of Business Venturing; she also sits on the program committee of British Columbia’s Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions and co-founded the Organizations and the Natural Environment (ONE) Division in the Academy of Management.
CanAssist's podWiz rocks their world

BY ANNE TOLSON

The first time Ashley Cook played rocks their world

Ashley loved her iPod from the moment she received it, says her dad, Rodney Cook, who is at his daughter's high school in Mission, BC, on the day a new adapter for the iPod was unveiled. "She gets very excited about operating the iPod and shows us if she is proud when she activates the switch."

Developed by CanAssist engineers at the University of Victoria, the podWiz is a unique device that enables people with severe disabilities to perform many functions on an iPod independently—simply by pressing a large button. Ashley, who has cerebral palsy, was among 11 youngsters to receive the adapter during the Dec. 9 unveiling in Mission.

“Staring at what I was doing, I thought ‘We’ve got a new tool.’” Ashley says.

Ashley also happens to be indirectly responsible for the genesis of this remarkable project, which today is opening a new world to 200 young people with very challenging disabilities across British Columbia.

The Ahha! moment

The inspiration for the iPod project can be traced to the corridors of Ashley's school almost two years earlier.

Chris Jenkins, a teacher-consultant, had arrived at Heritage Park Secondary and was preparing to meet with Ashley and her teachers to create a special curriculum for the girl. He is one of a small team called the Provincial Integration Support Program. Part of the Ministry of Education, PISP has a caseload of more than 100 kids who have been deemed the most severely disabled in BC's school system.

Like many kids with challenging disabilities, Ashley has a curriculum that includes learning to hit a large single button—called an accessibility switch—that turns on a tape deck or other device, a crucial step in learning cause and effect as well as a means of controlling one’s environment. For years the PISP team used tape decks, since CD players didn’t work well with accessibility switches.

"I was sitting in the hallway, transferring a high School Musical CD onto a cassette tape for Ashley," Jenkins recalls. "There were all these kids walking by, staring at what I was doing because they didn’t understand the technology I was using."

Not surprisingly, many of the teens were carrying Apple's ubiquitous iPod and wearing earphones.

At that moment, Jenkins realized that the way he and his team were using music to teach the kids with disabilities was antiquated, cumbersome and tended to isolate them from their peers.

"I remember thinking ‘We’ve got to do something to update this’,” says Jenkins. “It’s got to be current, portable and something that their peers can identify with."

Of course, given his role with PISP there was one more fundamental requirement. "It’s got to have the capability to be a teaching tool,” he added.

CanAssist gets involved

Jenkins had already heard about CanAssist at the University of Victoria, which for the past 10 years has been developing customized technologies and innovative programs for people with special needs. So he contacted CanAssist on behalf of PISP.

Typically, a project undertaken by CanAssist is the result of a request from an individual or their caregiver. If the device requested doesn’t already exist and the idea is technically feasible, an engineer or programmer will be assigned to create a new technology. Sometimes, a particular device becomes popular and is re-issued by several companies.

But the iPod project represented new territory for CanAssist.

In 2008, Ashley had been using music to teach the kids with disabilities at PISP, and had a permanent smile on her face, often saying, “Thank you, thank you.”

"Delivering the iPods and watching the kids use them for the first time was amazing,” says Spili, one of several CanAssist employees who lent their support during that first delivery at Ashley's school.

"Seeing them smile when they realized they were controlling their music was magical. It was like magic for these kids.”

Developing the podWiz

With funding secure, Carl Spani, an electrical engineer at CanAssist, began working in earnest on a prototype for the iPod adapter.

The adapter was built to connect the iPod and an accessibility switch or button. Operating the iPod involved repeatedly pressing this button, which activates a series of voice prompts built into the adapter. These prompts guide the user to control functions such as Play, Pause and Volume adjustment. (Voice prompts are especially important for the children with vision impairments.)

In addition to ensuring that the device was small and portable, Spani programmed five levels of complexity which each user could choose. The simplest level requires children to use a single switch and teaches them how to turn their music on and off. The most complex makes a person to use two switches to scan through music and menus more smoothly. Several other parameters were included, each supporting the requirements of a range of abilities.

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Interest spreads

Today, Jenkins and his colleagues at PISP are using the iPod systems as part of the curriculum for all the kids in their program. He says the iPods are proving a versatile teaching tool in the classroom. Importantly, the device is also a means of socialization and inclusion for kids with disabilities.

"If you’re using the same device that everyone else is using, you can be more involved in it,” he explains. "You can be out in the common area in your high school and you’ve got speakers on the back of your wheel chair. People can come up to you and say, ‘Hey what have you got on your iPod?’ Play something!"

Elahj, an eight-year-old from Courtenay, provides an example of how the adapted iPod system offers this greater sense of inclusion.

“When we first got the iPod, Elijah took it to school for sharing in his class. Everybody thought it was so cool,” says his mom, Joanne Lund. And Ashley, although despite ongoing health problems that kept her away from school for much of the time, the podWiz that sits on her wheelchair tray has been a source of daily happiness and respite from her discomfort.

“When we brought it home, her brother took the liberty to fill it with all kinds of music,” says her dad. “She has a permanent smile and often says ‘Look what I can do’ while listening to her iPod.”

CanAssist benefits enormously from the generosity of partners, funders and individuals who deeply appreciate the critical role they play in helping provide programs to technologies to those with special needs. For more information on CanAssist, visit www.canassist.ca. To view a video on the podWiz, visit www.youtube.com/user/CanAssist1999.

Contact Chris Jenkins, podWiz project coordinator, at cjenkins@uvic.ca.
Twenty-five-year-old graduate from the Department of Theatre Eva Markvoort succumbed to a lifetime battle with cystic fibrosis on March 28. Eva’s indomitable spirit and energy were inspiring to everyone who learned of her struggles. Her blog, “65 RedRoses,” chronicled her experiences with the disease and advocated support for cystic fibrosis and the importance of organ donation. As an acting student, Eva performed in four mainstage productions at the Phoenix Theatre. Her professors remember her as a talented actor and a person who fearlessly embraced every opportunity. In 2007, Eva became too ill to continue her education. Later that year, she received a double lung transplant, which went into chronic rejection last summer. This February, although she was short two credits, UVic fast-tracked her degree, which was delivered to her hospital room in Vancouver. Eva’s story gained an international presence through a documentary film, also named “65 RedRoses,” which won awards at the 2009 Hot Docs festival in Toronto and the Vancouver International Film Festival. In 2010, the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation recognized her commitment and advocacy work with the prestigious Sammies Award. Eva leaves an exemplary legacy—not only of her tireless efforts for the cause that impassioned her, but also of her strength, love, courage, dignity and hope that has motivated thousands around the world. Donations can be made in Markvoort’s name to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation at www.cysticfibrosis.ca and more information about organ transplants can be found at www.transplant.bc.ca.

Contributed by her friends and professors in the Department of Theatre

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Peter Williamson, manager of the University Club. Peter passed away Wednesday, March 24, before he was able to enjoy his well-deserved retirement. Peter joined the University Club in November 1999. He was kind, generous and highly respected by club staff, board of directors, members, the university community and clients alike. Peter spent long hours at the club, always ready to accommodate clients with their numerous event changes. He was always eager to jump in to help wherever he was needed. He served the club and the university with integrity, honesty and sincerity. Peter loved to read and watch sports—but most of all, he adored his grandsons. Peter’s personable, easygoing manner and good sense of humour will be missed by all, especially the staff. A memorial service will be held at the University Club, April 14 at 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by Rashna Chanana, assistant manager, University Club

Gold, times five Woolstencroft skis to Paralympics podium

BY MIKE MCMENEMY

When skier Lauren Woolstencroft, Birg 65, was interviewed for a feature profile in her Aluminium grad magazine, UVic Alumni Magazine, she said—in her usual, understated way—that she would be “unhappy” if she didn’t make it to the podium at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Paralympics. In the five days, she had five incredibly good reasons to be happy with her performance after winning all of her races and bringing home five gold medals in the alpine standing ski races. Her five victories match a single-games Paralympic record set by swimmer Stephanie Dixon, BA ’99, in Sydney. Woolstencroft, born with no legs below the knee and no arm below her left elbow, far exceeded her own expectations. She had been having a sub-par season on the World Cup circuit but worked hard in the final month before the games and felt confident heading into her events at Whistler. “After stepping in my favourite. I feel extremely lucky,” she said afterwards in an interview with the Globe & Mail.

She became “Canada’s Golden Girl” and carried the Canadian flag at the close of the Games. She dropped the puck at the 2010 NHL Winter Classic in an all-star game alongside other BC-based Paralympic and Olympic athletes, at the March 30 Vancouver Canucks game. Her passion for skiing was fostered early by her athletic family. She grew up in Calgary and was skiing the slopes of Whitefish, Montana, and Lake Louise by age four. At 14, she skied in her first competition. She joined the national team in 1998. At her first big competition, in 1999, “I was deadlast,” she told the Globe. “But I accelerated really quickly.” She chose engineering “because I liked that it is very applied,” she says.

Hold the spam please UVic Systems—with your help—keeps the email flowing

BY SHERRI PUENTES GRAVERAN

Not to be confused with a luncheon meat, spam—the electronic equivalent of junk mail—has become a serious problem for many organizations including the University of Victoria. On average UVic receives 1.5 million email messages per day, approximately two thirds of what comes in is discarded as they are considered spam. Recently, hacked or stolen UVic Exchange email accounts have been used to send phishing and spam messages. Most Internet service providers have sophisticated software filters in place to detect and control spam, and as a result of these incidents, Hotmail temporarily paralyzed the university on its two thirds, blocking access to their customers.

UVic is actively researching ways to reduce spam and has recently implemented stronger countermeasures to protect the university’s reputation and prevent future sanctions by Internet service providers such as Hotmail and others.

Spam is a global problem that affects both incoming and outgoing email—even legitimate bulk emails that are sent from the university to non-UVic addresses. Senders of such Innocuous bulk emails could be regarded by email service providers as a source of spam, making it difficult for them to deliver the message to their audience. To help the university reduce spam, we encourage users to protect their resources both inside and outside UVic.

The following tips can help individuals and departments avoid spam and ensure important emails are delivered reliably.

To avoid receiving spam:

Don’t reply to spam or attempt to unsubscribe. This simply validates your email address, causing you to receive more spam.

Be extremely careful about using your email address on websites—it’s often difficult to tell which sites will share your email address with spammers. Don’t share your personal credentials with others.

Check your Inbox often and delete old and/or no-longer-needed messages on a regular basis.

Empty your Trash—deleted messages are moved to the Trash folder but are not removed from the system. To ensure your important messages are delivered reliably:

Avoid sending lengthy messages or large attachments that occupy large amounts of storage on the university’s email system. Placing the file on a website or Sharepoint site makes it readily available without using local disk space.

● Offices sending bulk emails to students should endeavour to unscope the students’ UVic email addresses.

● Choose your language carefully such as U.S. or Canadian English. A word or phrase used to intentionally send spam.

● Avoid using capitalized subject lines. This draws unnecessary attention to your email message.

● Review subject lines and content.

Common problems are words and characters like Free, Hello, Guarantee, a number, a & symbol or white space. Words in all capital letters are typically picked up.

Additional security tips:

● Avoid using capitalized subject lines.

● Watch your punctuation–using punctuation marks such as “.” or “&” or unusual punctuation like “” can draw unnecessary attention to your email message.

● Review subject lines and content.

● Common problems are words and characters like Free, Hello, Guarantee, a number, a & symbol or white space. Words in all capital letters are typically picked up.

● Avoid capitalization sparingly–avoid using capitalized subject lines.

● Watch your punctuation–using punctuation marks such as “.” or “&” or unusual punctuation like “” can draw unnecessary attention to your email message.

● Review subject lines and content.

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“Because of someone’s support and generosity, while I am working or studying, it’s all about the quality of my experiences, not the quantity of my expenses.”
Mosqoy means “to dream”
Student’s work supports education, preserves tradition in the Andes

BY PATTY PITTS

Most people who visit Peru’s Sacred Valley near Cusco take the train to Machu Picchu, buy some whisper-soft alpaca scarves and marvel at the intricate weavings produced by the Indigenous Quechua people from the surrounding villages. But UVic grad Ashley Akins’ 2006 visit turned into so much more. Since first visiting Peru’s high-altitude valley, she’s established Mosqoy, an organization to fund the post-secondary education of the villages’ young people, and the Q’ente Textile Revitalization Society to preserve and expand the Quechua weaving tradition. It is, in turn, partially funds Mosqoy.

“It’s funny,” she said, back at UVic to complete a community research fellowship with the Centre for Co-operative and Community-Based Economy. “Four years ago I thought my life was complete. Now I couldn’t imagine it without Mosqoy.”

The Q’ente Society now involves 230 weavers from 35 communities who create intricate work on traditional backstrap looms using pure wool and natural dyes. Akins sells the weavings in Canada and divides the proceeds into quarters among the individual weavers, community initiatives of their choosing, Mosqoy and a reinvestment into the Q’ente Society.

In May Mosqoy will graduate its first 18 students and one of them, Rolando Auccapuri Iturriaga, is deferring the practicum placement all students must complete before receiving their diploma to spend a term at UVic studying English through UVic’s English Language Centre, which has between Peru and Canada.

Iturriaga says he likes “everything” about his stay in Victoria, despite finding it difficult to find some of his favourite foods. “At home you don’t need to go to a store,” he explains. “You just pick fruit off a tree or go to a neighbour’s farm.” Mosqoy has also spawned its own campus club which raises $10,000 each year through various events under the guidance of club director Jasmine Nielsen.

“Mosqoy is a very dynamic organization,” she says, “and it provides the opportunity to critically reflect on what we’re doing,” says Akins and environmental science student’s major. “It’s more of a partnership than a ‘top down’ organization, which is what often happens in the NGO world.”

Although Mosqoy is just four years old, Akins is already anticipating its future. One of the organization’s first two co-op students, Beatriz Palacios Fernandez, is working to make Mosqoy “sustainable in the long term” by developing a strategy and governance structure that will guide it through the next five to 10 years. Akins concern for the sustainability of Sacred Valley’s population and its weaving culture extended to Mosqoy itself and this will probably be the focus of her graduate studies, as she pursues her master’s in international human rights law at Oxford University. She’s hoping to determine whether the Mosqoy/Q’ente model can be adapted to serve other communities where poverty limits the ability of young people to pursue the education required for better employment and where a traditional culture is under threat from a tourist market demanding cheaper, less authentic products.

But first, she has a graduation ceremony to attend in Peru.

PHOTO: UVIC systems department

Horak grew up playing music in Calgary. In his 20s, he, like many others of his age, began to realize that music just wasn’t paying the rent. He decided to take up electronics. That way he could fix his amp if it broke.

Horak moved to Victoria in 1992 and landed his current job at UVic. Now, 12 years later, Horak has a wife, two kids, and a successful rock band called The Laundronauts. The band has been featured as 91.3 The Zone’s band of the month, has toured California and most of Canada, and has a music video rotating on Much Music.

“The band and my job do two different things that satisfy different parts of my personal- ity,” says Horak. “There’s something about being creative that’s important to me. There’s also something about being able to accomplish very concrete tasks that is rewarding.”

Last year, The Laundronauts set up a mini BC tour with a California band called The Love Me Nots, who are also Horak’s daughter’s favourite band.

“If you can imagine being six years old, and your favourite band is staying in your house, that’s pretty cool.”

You can listen to some Laundronauts tracks on their MySpace page: http://www.myspace.com/thelaundronauts

Bookstore now offers computer sales

The UVic Bookstore is now a one-stop shop for books, gifts, clothing—and computers. UVic’s computer store closed last month and retail sales of computers for personal use shifted to the Bookstore on April 6. UVic Systems will continue to offer computer sales for institutional use and service for computers previously purchased from the Computer Store or from the Bookstore. Such sales and service are available at systems’ new computer purchase centre, located in the former Computer Store location (Clearihue C143).

“This operational change takes advantage of the strength of both units,” says Director of Campus Services Jim Forbes. The consolidation of the two services resulted in the loss of four positions. One of the affected employees has already found a new position on campus.

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