Researchers combat internet fraud
Grad student goes undercover to infiltrate “Water Army”

BY JEAN MACGREGOR

A virtual flood is on the rise, and it’s not just your email inbox overflowing.

There’s a growing “water army” of online posters at work who earn their name by flooding websites with fake comments and paid endorsements in an orchestrated deluge.

A UVic graduate student went underground to conduct research that could ensure you don’t take a bath from their cyber confidence tricks.

Cheng Chen is a second-year master’s student at the Department of Computer Science. With his co-supervisors and co-authors, Dr. Kui Wu and Dr. Venkatesh Srinivasan, Chen is developing a systematic approach to detect these hidden paid posters.

Posing as one of the legion of unemployed students or underemployed workers in China who sign on with PR firms as paid posters, Chen got a job.

“Willkommen, bienvenue, welcome” are not just words in the popular song “Cabaret,” but part of the everyday vocabulary and philosophy for staff at who have rolled out the welcome mat at UVic’s newly opened Welcome Centre.

Located on the first floor of the University Centre next to the cafeteria, the new centre promises to be a “one stop shop” of information for prospective and current students, staff, faculty and visitors to campus.

“We’re planning to avoid the ‘run around’ that some students may experience,” says Welcome Centre Manager, Bruno Roccia.

“We’re promising to get people where they need to be, answer the questions they have, provide them with correct, up-to-date information or direct them to the appropriate person, department or faculty in one referral.”

The experienced staff of five shares a wealth of diversity and backgrounds ranging from recruitment and communications to education and customer service. Their combined experience as former UVic students and their years of employment in different positions on campus will certainly add to the success of the centre.

“The Welcome Centre has been in the plans for several years now,” says Jim Forbes, director of campus services. “It’s wonderful to see such an important initiative come to fruition to enable us to be an even more diverse, welcoming learning community.”

In addition to delivering campus knowledge and excellence in customer service, the Welcome Centre will serve as home to the UVic Campus Tours Program, which offers daily tours for prospective students and their families, school groups, dignitaries and other visitors to campus. “We have 186 enthusiastic campus tour guides who are thrilled to have a place to call their own,” adds Roccia. “The new space will be an excellent place for students, faculty and staff to learn about their campus.”
The fine arts count down

BY DR. LYNNIE VAN LUVEN

Almost all university educators have met parents who do not want their daughters, or especially their sons, to pursue a career in the arts. Why? Because most parents want to see their children well established in the world, and they have heard all the tales about low wages and uncertain futures in fine arts as opposed to more stable and lucrative careers in the sciences or law. And yet, we have just emerged from a holiday season where symphonies, plays, art shows, ballets, choirs, pasticcions, and all other manner of entertainments abounded. And, again, why? Because at certain times of the year, special times, we turn to the arts to refresh and revitalize ourselves, to reflect anew our ideals and values as a society.

Even though fine arts graduates often enjoy satisfying careers—you will find them as curators, educators, critics, administrators, artists, dealers, as well as creators in various media—they are often in the lowest quarter of average earnings among the more than 500 occupations surveyed by Statistics Canada.

What a strange disconnect exists in Canadian society: the arts are not a place for children to seek careers, yet they are the sites to which we want to take our children for holiday treats. The arts are both unstable yet vital. We expect them to be there for us, as long as someone else takes the risks to create them.

Certainly, whenever times get tough, the arts are designated as frills or fripperies and become the first things our society cannot "af- ford." For instance, Queen's University suspended its fine arts program in November, and the University of Windsor recently consolidated its fine arts and music schools, to make economies. But Canada is part of a larger malaise: last year, the University of East Anglia cut its fine arts program.

In the United States, the situation is even more dire for the past two years.

And yet there are bright spots amid the gloom: in mid-December, the 125-year-old Nova Scotia School of Art and Design was saved from immediate closure when the provincial government agreed to cover its $2.4-million deficit. But the school must find ways to cut costs and to collaborate with other universities to offer shared programs.

In Saskatchewan, where prairie pragmatism often prevails, the Univer- sity of Regina isn’t seeing enrollment plunge in the Faculty of Fine Arts. But Dean Sheila Petty said in a recent interview that ‘because her program is evolving. She maintains that the traditional model of fine arts needs to change.'

"At UVic the Faculty of Fine Arts has a stable budget situation for now," says Dean Sarah Blackstone. "But we must continue to achieve our enrollment goals and work to be sure our students receive the very best education we can provide. These are challenging times, and we must be ready to respond to increasing budget pressures as they develop." So, change is coming, and we need to be part of it. At UVic we already have co-op programs that give our fine arts students valuable practical experience that makes them attractive to employers. We have programs such as professional writing and applied theatre that enable our students to work within the broader community.

But I’m thinking we all need to be- come more proactive both on and off campus. We need to speak out more for the arts in our city and across our province. And we must work to find ways to take more of our programs off campus. And when our former students are successful—and many are, in many fields—we need to brag a whole lot more. Making our achievements and our students visible is the best way to counteract that mentality, that believes "the arts don’t count."

Dr. Lynnie Van Luven is associate dean of fine arts and a faculty mem- ber in the Department of Writing.

Views expressed in this article are the author’s and do not necessarily reflect those of The Ring or the Uni- versity of Victoria.

Welcome Centre continued from P1

also enable us to provide even more creative educational programming to school groups who visit campus from all over the world on a regular basis.

And welcoming it is—after four months of construction the centre itself is comfortable and appealing. Encased with tempered glass walls to take greatest advantage of the natu- ral light, it is bright and cheery. The interior walls and ceilings are lined with fir, reflecting the natural beauty of Vancouver Island.

In addition to three administra- tive offices, the centre has a large and comfortable seating area for students and visitors to relax, several public computer work stations, a state-of-the-art presentation room and two private consultation rooms for recruit- ment and administrative staff to meet with prospective students and their families.

The centre opened for business on Tuesday, Jan. 3. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. M–F and 11:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. on Saturday. Students, parents and families are encouraged to visit anytime and make the Welcome Centre their first stop for campus information. An official opening celebration is slated for Monday, Feb. 6 with a public open house from 10:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 9.

Navigating the ever-changing market

A long-time resident and UVic grad, Dave is helping local residents and new- comers to navigate their way through the real estate market. Whether buying or selling, he will assure smooth sailing. Just ask his many clients at UVic.
You can’t hear it. You certainly hidden or imagined? Higgs boson—

Dr. Rob McPherson, an adjunct professor at UVic, echoes last year’s sentiment: “Physics may well be true. The theory—citing that the elusive particle is responsible for the building blocks of matter. The trick is to prove it.”

On Dec. 13, researchers released new results offering indications the Higgs boson particle actually exists and that a long-standing theory of physics may well be true. The theory is that the elusive particle is responsible for the building blocks of matter. The trick is to prove it.

The UVic-ATLAS team played a role in the latest announcement of another round of new data from the Large Hadron Collider. The ATLAS—recently named by Popular Science as one of humankind’s 10 most ambitious science projects—is a 27-km circular ring buried deep underground near Geneva to accelerate beams made up of trillions of protons into deliberate head-on collisions. Physicists hope the data from the collisions will help unveil the secrets of nature by allowing them to examine the very building blocks of matter.

Last chance to submit your Great Moment

By Tara Sharpe

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There was international, national and local media attention revolving around the LHC results, including coverage by the Globe and Mail, Vancouver Sun and Times Colonist. BBC News also mentioned the role played by UVic-ATLAS in two different experiments. No statistically independent analyses of another round of new data from the LHC, saying that the elusive particle is responsible for the building blocks of matter. The trick is to prove it.

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Swanson’s legacy—a library transformed

By Jean Macgregor

Change and collaboration are keywords for Marnie Swanson’s tenure as UVic’s librarians. Retiring last month after more than 23 years as head of UVic Libraries, Swanson not only piloted the library through extensive brick-and-mortar renovations, but also oversaw an electronic transformation of the library’s collection and practices.

A long-term member of the University of Victoria Senate and many senior executive committees at UVic, Swanson has been a leader in research library consortia, including the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) and the Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (CPPUL). She received the 2011 Helen Gordon Stewart Award for an outstanding career in librarianship from the British Columbia Library Association, and the 2011 CARL award for Distinguished Service to Research Librarianship.

The recent renovations to the D. A. MacPriestly Law Library and the expansion of McPherson Library to include the William C. Mears Centre for Learning are evidence of dramatic change at UVic Libraries with Swanson at the helm.

When she arrived in 1988, stacks and shelves covered the windows in parts of McPherson Library. Now, the building better reflects the ways students work and study, with light-filled galleries, group study spaces and comfortable seating.

“It’s a more welcoming space now,” says Swanson. “Unlike some more impersonal libraries, ours still feels like a library. We were so lucky to have architects who got to know us and understand the functions of our library. They did a great job of combining the aesthetics with function. It works and it looks good.”

Renovation and expansion of McPherson Library was a 15-year undertaking, starting with seismic upgraging and reconfiguring of the loan desk. “It was a real feat to keep services running and the building open during that time,” says Swanson. “We spent a lot of money on earplugs,” she chuckles.

McPherson’s tenure hasn’t been all wood and windows. She was cited with a mandate to computerize the library—a tall order in 1988. Under her direction, librarians and library staff started from scratch, with few automated functions in place at that time.

“Library staff have been through change like no other department on campus,” says Swanson. “And librarians still hold the same fundamental values, but they are doing very different jobs now.”

The library’s role in powering the research libraries in British Columbia, which now includes new areas of service, such as support for open source publications, digitization, copyright management, social media and mobile text reference. According to Swanson, these innovations and greater collaboration between librarians, researchers and faculty are increasingly important to UVic Libraries.

It was rewarding to get to know the campus and meet lots of different, very interesting people.

One of the greatest rewards of her position has been working with people all over the university, says Swanson.

“I worked with the deans, but also with all faculties, finance, the budget office—you name it—it came in contact with most people at one time or another. It was rewarding to get to know the campus and meet lots of different, very interesting people. I felt lucky to have that opportunity—it’s a unique position,” she says.

Promoting collaboration, not only around the Ring but also among research librarians in British Columbia, has been a hallmark of Swanson’s career. Co-operative collection and service development projects, such as stewardship of Canadian research data resources and development of shared storage, or “last copy” facilities have been a priority for Swanson.

Swanson says her biggest surprise in the job came on her last day of work, when Dr. Reeta Trenlay, VP Academic & Provost, announced the development of the Marnie Swanson International Commons in the Marners Centre for Learning. The new commons will provide space and support for international students, and reflects the personal touch Swanson brought to all her projects at the university.

“I am very, very honored,” says Swanson.

Renovation of the space for the new commons falls to the new University Librarian, Jonathan Bengston. Bengston comes to UVic Libraries from concurrent positions as director of Library and Archives at University of St. Michael’s College, University of Toronto and at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto.

Despite the rewards of the job and the honours, Swanson is ready to get her retirement project under way alongside her husband, Chuck Swanson, who also starts in 2012 in retirement from his position as Vice-president of real estate at BC Investment Management Corporation. The Swansons plan to move up-island later this year to be closer to their grandchildren.

Island food security means bounty for future

By Tara Sharpe

A new report by the Vancouver Island Community Research Alliance (VICRA)—of which UVic is a member—points out that less than 150 years ago there was an abundance of locally produced food available for Vancouver Island inhabitants; yet now the major- ity of food is imported.

The report proposes a plan for producing and keeping food on the island. It explores how a changing global climate and existing food systems can be counterbalanced or augmented by traditional wisdoms, urban agriculture, local food initiatives and enhanced purchasing policies.

It is the result of an 18-month research collaboration funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and including all five VICRA members—UVic, Royal Roads University, Camosun College, Vancouver Island University and North Island College. The project was co-ordinated by UVic’s Office of Community Based Research and led by Lifecycles Project Steering Committee member, UVic research associate Linda Greggie and principal investigators Dr. Alec Ostry (geography) and Dr. John Lutz (history).

“This project helps people on Vancouver Island predict and prepare for the changes that are coming and in fact are already here,” says Ostry. “It will help us understand what policy levers move the disparate pieces of this system.”


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Marjorie MacDonald (nursing), Canadian Institutes of Health Research Applied Public Health Chair in Public Health Education and Population Health Intervention Research, has begun a two-year term as president of the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC). The voluntary non-profit, non-governmental organization is dedicated to protecting and promoting the public’s health by working to strengthen disease and injury prevention, health promotion and healthy public policy. MacDonald aims to focus on enhancing community and civic engagement, promoting involvement of students and developing relationships with the new First Nations Health Authority of BC. She is an advisory council member of UVic’s new School of Public Health and Social Policy.

Heather Raven (law) has been appointed Queen’s Counsel, an honour conferred on members of the legal profession by the provincial government to recognize exceptional merit and contribution. Her citation says, “Raven became the first Aboriginal person to become a senior administrator in a Canadian common law faculty when she was appointed associate dean of the University of Victoria Faculty of Law in 2009. Along with being a legal educator, she is a commercial lawyer. She is a member of the University of Victoria Faculty of Law.”

PhOTO: UViC PhOTO SERViCES
Local students benefit from after-school outreach programs, but we’d love to expand our reach. CORE Club provides after-school tutoring on campus three days a week, and we could expand CORE Mobile to other locations if we were able to share it,” says Caro, communications director at the HTG and creator of the original board game. “A video game is a fun way to teach our community about the treaty process and provide information about the land, uses of the land, and historic place names associated with the land.”

Caro wants the video game to be accessible to everyone in the First Nations community and beyond. And the developers hope that other communities will embrace the idea when they demo the video game to the Assembly of First Nations and First Nations Summit.

“At a time when First Nations and the general public are reflecting critically on the treaty process,” says Thom, “it makes sense to look for innovative ways to educate everyone concerned about what’s at stake—and make it interesting in the process.”

The video game is available online at web.urv.ca/~htg and www.hul-qumi-num.bc.ca/

The deadline for applications is Jan. 15 and CORE grant applications and funding information can be found online at www.core.urv.ca/applyform.html.

Roberts would love to see other donors build on that initial anonymous gift to enlarge CORE’s budget and allow for new programs and the expansion of existing ones.

“We have the capacity to extend CORE Club into Friday and Saturday, and we could expand CORE Mobile to include more First Nations communities and inner-city schools where families face difficulties bringing their children to us,” says Caro. “We all have this expertise in the faculty, and UVic and the community would be a better place if we were able to share it.”

BY PATTY PITTS

Just over two years ago UVic’s Faculty of Education learned that an anonymous graduate of Victoria College—a former teacher—had left the faculty an estate worth $700,000. The only instructions given was to enhance the educational experience of First Nations students.

Creating a $2 million endowment in the first year for CORE’s steering committee has a mandate to solicit new program ideas annually. “The CORE grants program is driven by the interests of the faculty members,” says Roberts. “Next year’s focus may change depending on who applies for a grant.”

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Dancing (and scoring and filming) the poetic word

BY JOHN THRELFALL

Neve underestimated the power of interdisciplinary chit-chat. When assistant theatre professor Conrad Alexandrowicz, not famed poet and writing professor Lorna Crozier at the annual Faculty of Fine Arts retreat last year, he had no idea their discussion would soon translate into nearly $175,000 in grant funding.

“I introduced myself to Lorna and said, ‘I’ve really admired your work for a long time and think it’d be neat to collaborate on a project,’” recalls Alexandrowicz. And while Crozier was intrigued by his initial idea of adapting the work of Canadian poets into a dance/movement piece for the stage, she was of suggestion to an entirely new poetry cycle that became the basis for Alexandrowicz’s winning SSHRC grant proposal.

Now titled Words Made Flesh: Staging Poetic Text, Alexandrowicz’s SSHRC project has evolved into an artistically interdisciplinary fine arts production. Not only is Alexandrowicz the poet and his own directing/choreography skills a part of it, he was able to involve director Janis Fawcett and associate writing professor and experimental filmmaker Maureen Bradley.

“I wanted to examine different kinds of text and how they could lend themselves as a source for physical theatre creation,” Alexandrowicz explains. “But I didn’t want to do anything that was purely abstract; I wanted to do something that has a lot of emotional power and a consistent narrative line. It’s already hard enough to get people to sit still when you’re doing interdisciplinary performance, so you have to make sure that they’re touched by what you’re doing emotionally.”

Alexandrowicz is no stranger to adapting words and music to movement; a noted director, writer and choreographer who specializes in the creation of interdisciplinary productions that address subjects central to the human journey, he has received critical acclaim for his projects across Canada for the past 30 years.

But he says Words Made Flesh—currently preparing for a spring 2012 test-run, with the final production set for a fall 2013 debut—will be more than just another dance piece. “I want to embody the poetic text as much as I can,” he says, “so it’s not just going to be voice-over accompaniment; I’ve done that for years with my own work and I want to do something quite different here.”

Another intriguing aspect to this production is its cinematic future. “I’ll start off a short dance film that can be developed into a chance-based application for iPads, Androids and Blackberries using the I Ching, where you can shuffle together different pieces of text and music and movement.”

Alexandrowicz will be addressing some of his primary research questions: “What kind of poetic text best lends itself to performance?” “What becomes of the narrative voice of the poem when the text is staged?” “How does the text interact with music, both improvise and scored?”

And the process will allow Alexandrowicz to discover how the finished performance text is transformed via the additional media of film and interactive applications.

Ultimately, Alexandrowicz is grateful for the opportunity this generous SSHRC grant has given him to create new work—especially considering the current Canadian arts climate. “Even if you spread it out over three years, this is more than a lot of companies get in annual funding from the Canada Council,” he says of his nearly $175,000 windfall. “It’s huge amount of money; it’s astronomical. It’s just a lot and lucky and I was able to get this on my first attempt.”
Events free unless otherwise indicated.
For a complete list of events, visit the online calendar at uvic.ca/events

at the galleries
uvic.ca/galleries
250-721-5652

Shimizu presents a series of paintings documenting his experience as a teenaged internee at the New Denmark, BC, Japanese internment camp from 1942-45. Multimodal Prints and Drawings Gallery, McPherson Library. 250-384-6188

■ Exhibit: The Emergence of Architectural Modernism R: UVic and the Regional Aesthetics in the Late 1950s and 1960s. Until Feb 26, Legacy Art Gallery, 630 Yates St. 250-384-7645

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13
Music 12:30 p.m. FridayMusic. A concert of varied repertoire and instruments featuring composers and performers from each of UBC, SFU and UVic. Three concerts take place during the afternoon, featuring student composers from UBC, SFU and UVic. Annual meeting of the Music brass students. MacLaurin B125. Admissions: free. 250-721-8634

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17
Music 2:30 p.m. Guest Investor: Tempus. Internationally celebrated sound sculptor, composer and mentor, Tempus talks about his upcoming installation (Canyon x 433-100). Visual Arts 648. 250-721-8634

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18
Lecture/Seminar 10:30 a.m. The Empires and Friendship of Two Women and Two Worlds. Author Grant Harper-Mercer. Holman 110. 250-721-3654
Film 6:00 p.m. TR!MPOR. The Sound of Invention. Peter Eatsman’s 2009 feature documentary examines the life and work of Seattle-based artist/inventor/composer who will be creating an installation piece at UVic. Visual Arts 648. 250-721-8634

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19
Lecture/Seminar 10:30 a.m. Wave of the Future: Water Policy in Western Canada. The third webinar in the POLIS Water Sustainability Project’s series creating a Blue Dialogue webinar series. To register: communications@polisproject.org
John Albert Hall Lecture 7:30 p.m. Video: Spirited and Imagining Canada. Pamela E. Kluson (UVic, Toronto). Social Sciences & Math A102. 250-721-6135
Lecture/Seminar 7:30 p.m. The City Talks Parents: Roger Keil Governing the City. Somehow Hotel 619 Douglas St, Maple Ridge

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20
Music 12:30 p.m. FridayMusic. School of Music keyboard students. MacLaurin B125. 250-721-8634

MONDAY, JANUARY 23
John Albert Hall Lecture 7:30 p.m. Protestant Pastoral: Confession and the Ethics of Storytelling. Pamela E. Kluson (University of Toronto). Social Sciences & Math A102. 250-721-6135

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24
Café Scientifique 6:30 p.m. Artificial Intelligence: Friend or Fo. Dr. Alexandra Branescu Albu (UVic). RSVP required at (250) 472-4067. Strathcona Hotel 919 Douglas St, Maple Ridge
Lecture/Seminar 7:10 p.m. UVic Distinguished Professor Lecture Series: Robert Redeker. The Art of Schuman's Last Songs: Dr. Harold Krebs (music) with Sharon Krebs, soprano. MacLaurin B125. 250-721-8634

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26
Lecture/Seminar 7 p.m. Disarming Empire with Derrick Jensen. Author of Endgame: A Language Older Than Words, and Songs of the Dead. Admission by donation. Info: wildlifist. can/volunteer or zoe@wildcoast.ca. David Lam Auditorium. 250-813-3569
Landsdowne Lecture 7:30 p.m. Using the Sights of Rhodes, 1480 and 1522, as a Laboratory to Study Changes in Early Gunpowder Weapons and Defences Against Them. Kelly Butler. (University of Exeter, England). Social Sciences & Math A102. 250-721-7664

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27
Music 12:30 p.m. FridayMusic. School of Music brass students. MacLaurin B125. Admissions: free. 250-721-8634

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1
Lecture/Seminar 6 p.m. Living Art: Elspeth Prat. Elspeth Prat (School for the Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser Univ.) UVic Arts A104. 250-721-6135

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3
Music 12:30 p.m. West Coast Student Composers Symposium: Annual meeting of student composers from UBC, SFU and UVic. Three concerts take place during the afternoon, featuring composers and performers from each institution. MacLaurin B125. 250-721-8634

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4
Music 5 p.m. Faculty Recital: Lafayette String Quartet—25th Anniversary Concert. MacLaurin B125. 250-721-7664

MARCH 6

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7
Landsdowne Lecture 7 p.m. The Archaeology of Intangibility—Monumentality in Cameroon. Dr. Nicholas Daniel (University of Calgary). Social Sciences & Math A102. 250-721-7664

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8
Other 12 p.m. Bringing Biographies to Life. Documentary film workshop led by filmmaker and producer Reta Caduff. RSVP required (rudesign.ca). Hickman 200. 250-721-7131
Lecture/Seminar 7:30 p.m. Meaning and Memory: Reflections on Contemporary Aboriginal Art in Canada. Winter and media artist Steven Laff. First Peoples House. 250-721-6135

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9
Open House 10 a.m. Welcome Centre. Info: www.uvic.ca/welcome or broca@ uvic.ca. University Centre, Welcome Centre. 250-721-7819

Leaders in our community
Alumni Week recognizes the thousands of UVic graduates who are leaders in our community.
Some of our featured events:

Campus Alumni Lunch
Celebration of Teaching
Meet Paralympic multi–gold medalist Lauren Woolstencroft, BEng ’95
Distinguished Alumni Awards
Faculty and Department events
Win a $3,000-flight voucher or Canucks tickets!

Find full details and event registration at alumni.uvic.ca
day in the life

BY JEAN MACGREGOR

Elizabeth Stevenson likes to play a little Bob Marley or Mozart to help students relax at exam time. A library assistant in the Bessie Brooks Mary Winspear Music & Media Commons at UVic Libraries, Stevenson is in tune with the highs and lows of student life. She and her colleagues at the music and media loan desk know the regulars.

“Laptop for you?”

Stevenson anticipates a student’s usual order as he approaches the Music & Media desk, and she checks his laptop out with a swipe of his ID card. “We get to know students pretty well,” she says. “A student might show up every day for one term and then disappear. But for that one term, we make a connection with the student and we get to know what they want.”

The Music & Media desk—or M&M—loans not only music, but also audio recorders, cameras and camcorders, and accessories like noise-cancelling headphones, data projectors, graphic tablets, remotes and tripods, with laptops in high demand.

With an abundance of gadgets like that, it’s no surprise that the M&M desk is a busy place. “Very busy!” says Stevenson. “In addition to providing service at the desk—and answering email and phone calls—we process equipment in a constant cycle, handle returns of laptops and DVDs, give orientation to the multimedia iMacs, clean headphones, set up equipment, and of course, communicate with each other.”

“It’s busy, but we listen to music and have fun, and the people we help are by and large, a lot of fun,” she says. “We get along well, so we listen to each other and we’re friends.”

Stevenson came to UVic Libraries in 2005 and worked in the stacks for a year before starting at Music & Media. With a BA in anthropology and certification in permaculture design, Stevenson is a committed life-long learner.

So much so that she’s undertaken a self-directed program of study toward a practice in prenatal and childbirth support. Stevenson has taken educational leave for a couple of months annually for the past three years, and since last fall, she’s worked a reduced work week in order to fulfill her training goals.

Stevenson participated in a year-long training program for lay counselors at Equinox Neighbourhood House, and now volunteers in that capacity once a week. She’s combining her counselling skills, meditation training and a conscious birthing study program toward her aspiration to support women in childbirth.

Stevenson says her permaculture training—the principles of which are based on systems ecology—activated her desire to apply her energy to effect the most positive change possible.

“I’ve been honing in on what that means for me—and it’s birth,” she says. “If a woman has a great birth experience, she might feel like she can take on anything. The confidence she gains will inform every aspect of her world, and she’ll pass it on to her kids as well. The ripple effects will just keep going and going. Once one person starts to shine, others are inspired.”

Now, that seems to hit the right note.

Diversity conference highlights social justice

Learn about innovative research from UVic faculty, staff and students at the Provost’s Diversity Research Forum, Critical Conversations: Living Social Justice, taking place on campus Jan. 23 and 24. Engage in critical conversations on gender, race, identity, ability, Indigenous knowledge, mental wellness, sexuality, internationalization and more.

This year’s program features keynote speaker Her Honour Gwендолyn Point and dynamic panel presentations, including:

• Associate vice-presidents’ forum: Social justice and the UVic Strategic Plan
• “Just” sustainability: Balancing environmental protection and human rights
• Pursuing social justice in institutional contexts
• Perspectives on Indigenous wellness
• Walking the talk: Navigating by narrative
• Learning without borders: Promoting social justice through the internationalization of teaching.

Registration is free and includes deliciously diverse meals, and all rooms are accessible. Everyone is welcome: faculty, staff, students and community members. Register soon as space is limited.

For more information visit the website at www.uvic.ca/diversity2012 or contact divers@uvic.ca

Interested in Science Outreach for Youth?

This is a free workshop, but space is limited. Pre-registration is required.

February 6, 2012, 12 p.m. – 3 p.m.
MacPharris Building, Room D114, University of Victoria
Facilitator: Niamh Kelly
To register or for more information contact:
Susie Taylor at susie@letstalkscience.ca or 1-877-474-4081
www.letstalkscience.ca

John Albert Hall Lectures

The John Albert Hall Lectures are sponsored by the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia and the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria.

Testimonies of the Spirit: Christianity, Media and the Politics of Confession

Pamela Klassen
Department and Centre for the Study of Religion University of Toronto

Lecture 1 Thursday, Jan 19, 7:00 pm
Media, Spirituality and Imagining Canada
Lecture 2 Friday, Jan 20, 7:00 pm
Picturing the Soul: Protestant Missionaries and their Photographs
Lecture 3 Monday, Jan 23, 7:00 pm
Preventing Postcolonial Confusion and the Ethics of Storytelling
Lecture 4 Wednesday, Jan 25, 7:00 pm
“Spiritual Audacity” – Testimony and the Optimism of Communications Technologies

Location: Social Sciences and Math Building, Room A102

University of Victoria Centre for Studies in Religion and Society

Visit our online events calendar at www.uvic.ca/diity012 or phone 250-721-6325.

For more information visit www.csrs.uvic.ca or phone 250-721-6325.

Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria.

Visit our online events calendar at www.uvic.ca/diity012 or phone 250-721-6325.

For more information visit www.csrs.uvic.ca or phone 250-721-6325.

Professor Pamela Klassen is an anthropologist of religion at the University of Toronto. Her work draws on approaches from history, ethnography and religious studies to explore the significance of religion in North American society. Her major publications include Spirits of Protestantism: Medicine, Healing and Civil Christianity (2001), Religious and Gender Identity in America (2007) and Aboriginal Religion: An Introduction (2010).

February 8, 2012, 12 p.m. – 3 p.m.

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• Associate vice-presidents’ forum: Social justice and the UVic Strategic Plan
• “Just” sustainability: Balancing environmental protection and human rights
• Pursuing social justice in institutional contexts
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