

WHAT DO
FISH SEE?

P.5

THE RING

FEBRUARY 2016

The University of Victoria's
community newspaper

ring.uvic.ca



University
of Victoria

SPEED READING

UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

World-leading international perspective

The UK-based *Times Higher Education* (THE) released its list of the world's 200 most international universities in the world on Jan. 14, with UVic at #175. The ranking represents a broad mix of indicators including research, teaching, citations, reputation, international collaborations, knowledge transfer and the ratio of domestic-to-international students and staff. This ranking joins the Leiden University ranking in recognizing UVic's world-leading international perspective in teaching and research.

WEBSITE REFRESH

Is "current" set as your home page?

You've probably noticed the new look of the main uvic.ca home page rolled out Jan. 19—cleaner layout, larger billboard images, prominent UVic Edge elements, a dynamic "story grid" and useful popular links. Change has come to the current faculty and staff (CF/S) page as well—the home page designed specifically for UVic faculty and staff, providing up-to-date campus notices, news and information relevant to us, as well as links to useful electronic tools and resources. If you're a faculty or staff member and CF/S (bit.ly/uvic-cfs) isn't already your default home page, we encourage you to adjust your browser settings. Current students home page: bit.ly/uvic-cs



Budd and co-op supervisor Christine Young. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

\$770m

CO-OP STUDENTS
HAVE EARNED
CLOSE TO \$770
MILLION IN
COMBINED
SALARY (BASED
ON THE AVERAGE
SALARY
AVERAGED OVER
THE PAST 15
YEARS)

75,000 co-op work term placements ... and counting

BY JOY POLIQUIN

Forty years after launching one of Canada's largest co-operative education programs, the University of Victoria is celebrating its 75,000th co-op placement.

Master of Public Administration student Anabelle Budd became the 75,000th co-op student to secure a co-op work term when she was hired last month by the BC Ministry of Health. She is working as a research and policy analyst for a four-month work term.

"I chose the UVic Masters of Public Administration over other offers largely due to its integrated co-op program," says Budd,

an international student from France. "The opportunity to gain work experience in my field while studying is invaluable." This is Budd's first work term.

"Anabelle is one of more than 30,000 hard-working students who have pursued a co-op degree at UVic," says Dr. Norah McRae, executive director of UVic's Co-operative Education Program and Career Services. "Work-integrated learning is truly a form of community engagement—since 1976, co-op students have helped link campus and community, contributing to organizations that are making a positive impact on the world. More than 3,250 placements were completed last year alone."

Co-op plays a major role at UVic, with one in three students taking part. Students apply their academic knowledge in placements related to their areas of study, while employers benefit from students' knowledge, skills and ideas.

In 2015, 1,130 different employer organizations hired UVic co-op students here in BC, across Canada and around the world. Students have the skills that employers are looking for—of the more than 1,000 co-op employers surveyed in 2015, 90 per cent rated co-op students' preparedness for the workplace as impressive.

SEE CO-OP P. 6

A Davos dynasty

MBA students repeat first-place performance in international sustainability business competition

BY KRISTA BOEHNERT

Competing in the Corporate Knights' "Business for a Better World Case Competition" is not for the faint of heart. Teams are pitted against fellow MBA students from universities across the globe for the opportunity to present their green business plan to a panel of elite judges in Davos, Switzerland during the World Economic Forum.

No pressure, right?

Having sustainability as one of the central pillars at the Gustavson School

of Business certainly gives UVic MBA students an advantage—but the competition is still fierce.

The 2016 team representing UVic's Sardul S. Gill Graduate School had an added dollop of stress to contend with that other entrants did not: they were defending the university's 2015 championship title—and they were determined not to disappoint.

In 2015, the UVic team had taken the top prize for presenting environmental recommendations and social and governance initiatives to help improve pharmaceutical heavy-hitter Novartis's standing on Corporate Knights' ranking. Mock presentations and Q&A sessions with business faculty

and industry executives helped prepare the 2015 team, helping them refine their presentation for the Davos audience.

In the 2016 competition, teams from 14 countries provided recommendations to decarbonize the holdings of the Norway Government Pension Fund Global. Worth approx. \$940 billion (USD), the fund has been built from the surpluses of Norway's petroleum income. As part of the competition, students were given access to a tool that allowed them to assess the carbon profile of the fund's holdings.

After two elimination rounds, judges

SEE DAVOS P. 3



L-R: Seigny, Pan, Dhatwalia and Dulku in Davos

ringers



Dr. S. Martin Taylor—emeritus professor of geography at UVic—has been appointed as the new executive director of the Canadian Research Data Centre Network (CRDCN). Taylor was UVic's first vice-president research, serving from 1998 to 2007. During his nine years as vice-president research, UVic tripled its external research funding and solidified its stature as one of Canada's leading research universities. He then went on to become founding president and CEO of Ocean Networks Canada.

The CRDCN, which Taylor will now head, is a research infrastructure created in the early 2000s to provide researchers with ready access to confidential microdata files from Statistics Canada surveys and, more recently, to a growing range of administrative data sets. It is now established as the only platform with national reach and comprises what will soon be 31 secure computer labs located on university campuses across the country. Taylor begins on April 1, for a five-year term.



Updated Campus Plan finalized

After an extensive 15-month planning and consultation process, and with the formal approval of the Board of Governors on Jan. 26, UVic's Campus Plan has now been finalized.

Building on UVic's 2003 Campus Plan, the updated plan provides a refreshed vision, guidelines and direction for future campus development, and responds to new challenges and opportunities. The document covers a planning horizon of 10 years, with longer-term considerations given for the next 25 years, on topics such as building placement and design, transportation, and open and natural spaces. It also plays a key role in supporting the university's academic priorities and commitments to sustainability.

The new Campus Plan describes the vision of the future campus, rather than detailing specific new building projects or activities. The plan provides the guidelines to be used in future consultations and decision-making.

Goals

The Campus Plan lays out the four main goals that will guide the vision of a future UVic. In the document, each goal lays out specific policy directions, opportunities and potential actions:

Natural and landscaped open space goal: Maintain and continue to evolve an open space system which protects and enhances environmentally significant natural areas, provides safe, pedestrian-friendly links throughout the campus, and encourages social interaction through outdoor meeting places, relaxation spaces, playing fields and other outdoor recreational venues.

Land and buildings goal: Evolve a land-use and building pattern that supports the university's academic mission, respects the physical environment, creates a welcoming campus, encourages social interaction and activity into the evenings and all week long, and promotes compact, pedestrian-friendly, and sustainable development.

Movement and accessibility goal: Encourage increased walking or wheelchair use, cycling, and use of public transit, making these priority modes convenient, safe and enjoyable for all users; provide safe access (and reduced demand) for personal vehicles, to help manage pressures on surrounding neighbourhoods.

Engagement goal: Provide for meaningful engagement of both the campus and broader communities during on-

going implementation of the campus plan, supporting mutual learning and inclusiveness in the campus planning process.

Big Moves

But what does that all mean, on the ground? The Plan describes a number of design strategies, or "big moves" that comprise the key physical elements of the concept plan for the future campus:

A compact campus: Focus new development within and near Ring Road, growing upward rather than outward.

Ring Road as a people place: Re-imagine Ring Road as a place for people; a place for walking, cycling, lingering, socializing and more. Numerous options will be studied to determine the most appropriate mixture of pedestrian, cycling and vehicle uses.

New and invigorated centres of animation: Reinforce existing activity hubs and create new hubs in under-utilized areas of campus.

Enhancing cycling and transit: Make cycling and transit use more enjoyable by enhancing the sense of safety and convenience.

Grand promenade: Strengthen the primary east-west promenade across campus as both a connection and a destination unto itself.

A focused first phase: Focus the first phase of public realm improvements in the centre of campus, along the primary grand promenade, at key anchors on Ring Road and in areas that would benefit from more natural surveillance.

Long-term flexibility for outlying lands: Retain flexibility in use for outlying lands—including the Queenswood and Cedar Hill Corner properties and the Ian Stewart Complex—so that they can be utilized to serve UVic's academic mission as needed.

Implementation of the Plan will occur in various incremental steps over the next 10 years, within the guiding foundation of the Plan's vision, goals, principles and policy directions. As each new project is proposed and developed, the support and involvement of students, faculty, staff and community members will be encouraged, welcomed and critical to success, as it has been with the development of the Campus Plan itself.

uvic.ca/campusplanning

Full steam ahead for Strategic Research Plan

Ta da! After 18 months of extensive consultations with faculties, divisions, deans and other organizational units that support research, as well as external stakeholders, the University of Victoria has its first full-blown Strategic Research Plan.

"This plan marks an important milestone in our ascent to being one of Canada's top research-intensive universities and a significant contributor internationally," says Vice-President Research David Castle. "It will steer our investment and management decisions for the next five years and further extend our reputation for excellence in research and innovation."

"Future success for UVic research depends on a clear sense of our organizational values, understanding the changing landscape of research, and being nimble enough to channel our existing strengths and resources toward new opportunities," he says. "This plan is a road map for achieving that."

The plan affirms UVic's commitment to vital impact through excellence in research; discovery, creation and invention; community-engaged research; research-inspired educational programs; and international research.

Also detailed are the university's research resources, including a steady growth in research income; a proven track record in innovation; consistently high placement in national and global research rankings; award-winning researchers; world-class research infrastructure; 17 interdisciplinary research centres, and a strong body of talented graduate students and post-doctoral fellows.

"Taken together, these resources reflect UVic's accumulation of research expertise and achievements," says Castle. "They empower us to anticipate and exploit new opportunities in an ever-changing and highly competitive research environment."

The plan identifies eight broad areas of existing research strength—or dynamic research capabilities—that provide UVic with a strong foundation for future research success. They are (in alphabetical order):

- creativity and culture
- data science and cyber physical systems
- environment, climate and energy
- global studies and social justice
- health and life sciences
- Indigenous research
- ocean science and technology
- physical sciences and engineering, mathematics and computer science.

These eight areas were discussed during the Strategic Research Plan engagement process, says Castle. They were validated for continued



relevance and updated to include newly emerged capabilities.

At the heart of the plan are five high-level priorities that will guide the university's research-focused investments and management decisions for the next five years. They are:

- defining and achieving research excellence
- enhancing the integration of research and education
- expanding partnerships, innovation and entrepreneurship
- improving research competitiveness through differentiation and specialization
- enhancing and optimizing the provision of research services.

Associated with these priority areas are dozens of specific objectives, along with strategies that describe how the objectives will be achieved and how progress will be measured.

Implementation will be aligned with other university planning processes and will take place over the five-year term of the plan, says Castle, adding that strategies taken up in any given year will be subject to resource considerations and other constraints and opportunities that arise.

Castle thanks the UVic research community, and key funders and partners, for the time and effort they invested in the strategic research planning process, as well as the invaluable leadership of the Strategic Research Plan advisory committee.

"All of these contributions have created a plan that will guide our research mission in the coming years and support our researchers as they continue to push new ideas, discoveries and creations forward for the benefit of society and the world around us."

Browse, print or download a copy of the Strategic Research Plan at bit.ly/uvic-srp.

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The UVic Alumni Association proudly unveiled the Spirit Section of the CARSA Performance Gym on Jan. 29, 2016—a night also dedicated to the Shoot for the Cure. CREDIT: UVICVIKES/APSHUTTER.COM

Waves of support for CARSA to boost UVic Students, Athletics

BY ALI LEE

UVic's Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities (CARSA) has had an overwhelming amount of recreation usage and community support since it opened in May 2015. Barely one month into 2016, Vikes Athletics and Recreation are pleased to announce three new partnerships in the naming of CARSA's RBC Blue and Gold Room, the UVic Alumni Association Spirit Section and the Ian and Gillian Stewart Varsity Weight Room.

Long-time Victoria residents and community leaders, Ian and Gillian Stewart announced their support on Feb. 4 to name the varsity-dedicated section of the weight room in CARSA. Ian Stewart was a member and chair of the university's Board of Governors for 12 years and helped set the course for Vikes Athletics and Recreation. In 1991 the Ian H. Stewart Complex opened and was the hub of campus recreation until the opening of CARSA. "The qualities we develop while

training, such as perseverance, teamwork and determination, extend far beyond the confines of this weight room," said James Pitblado, Vikes men's rugby captain, who spoke at the unveiling event. "They make us better athletes, students but more importantly, better people. With the contribution of the Stewart family, we are able to continue building our athletic program into one of the best in the country."

On Jan. 29, the UVic Alumni Association announced a \$100,000 donation to support scholarships, bursaries and athletics, including a new alumni-supported cheering zone in the CARSA performance gym. The new Student Spirit section was unveiled on a night that saw a capacity crowd in pink to show support for the 9th Annual Shoot for the Cure. The UVic Alumni Association's gift included \$75,000 for bursaries and scholarships and \$25,000 for CARSA—with the ceremony kicking off the start of this year's Alumni Week.

"The history and accomplishments of student-athletes are sources of incredible pride at UVic," said Lesley Patten, UVic Alumni Association President. "The link between active, healthy lifestyles and education has always been important at UVic. This donation reflects and enhances that connection even more."

In early January the Vikes also celebrated the naming of the official RBC Blue and Gold Room, the special box suite that overlooks the performance gym. Representatives from the Royal Bank of Canada were on site on Jan. 8 to celebrate the newly named space that is sold out for all 20 regular-season Vikes men's and women's basketball games.

These newly-minted areas of CARSA follow other community partners in supporting the CARSA building: the Peninsula Co-op Climbing Centre and the Lynda and Murray Farmer Walk of Excellence are also iconic parts of the 190,000-square-foot athletics and recreation facility.

DAVOS CONTINUED FROM P.1

named three finalists—and the UVic team finished "in good company" alongside student teams from Duke and York University.

With that win, the UVic team was headed to the World Economic Forum. The race was on to score a repeat victory, and it was all hands on deck.

Faculty, staff and business community advisers held a special dress rehearsal for team members Laurent Sevigny, Bhupinder Dulku, Dorothy Pan, and Mukesh Dhatwalia. Dr. Matt Murphy, the team's faculty adviser, knew the importance of providing the team with as real a presentation simulation as possible so that when

they presented in Davos, the team would have a similar experience to draw from—a technique that proved successful for the 2015 championship team. Jesal Shah and Andrew Spence, members of last year's team, joined this practice judging panel. The simulation mimicked what the students would experience in Davos: 10 minutes to present their case to the panel, followed by a short Q&A. After the dress rehearsal, the team got feedback on how to improve their performance.

Once in Davos, Sevigny, Dulku, Pan and Dhatwalia presented to the panel of five judges their plan for the trillion dollar Norwegian Oil Fund to reduce

its equity portfolio carbon intensity and reduce exposure to fossil fuel reserves, while shifting \$18.8 billion of the fund's holdings from carbon-intensive high-risk stocks to clean stocks with more attractive financial prospects. The team's re-investment strategy generated total returns of 219 per cent over a 10 year back-test—besting comparable benchmarks by a wide margin.

So what about that repeat victory? Sevigny, Dulku, Pan, and Dhatwalia have their bragging rights. UVic's Gill Graduate School reclaimed first prize—with Duke second and York third.

New civil engineering department poised to lead a green industrial revolution

UVic's civil engineering program is focused around four strategic areas, all centred on making the best use of natural resources and lessening environmental burdens: green buildings, sustainable cities, industrial ecology and water resources.

BY SUZANNE AHEARNE

When UVic's civil engineering program first launched in 2013, nested in mechanical engineering, its intent was to grow into the go-to program in Canada for green civil engineering. Under the direction of new chair, industrial ecologist Chris Kennedy, the fledgling department is taking a big step forward.

"Climate change is a shared societal challenge and everyone has to contribute to finding solutions," says Kennedy, formerly of the University of Toronto. Some of the main causes of emissions—transportation systems, buildings and waste facilities—are the core things that civil engineers design. And because of heavy reliance on steel and concrete—cement being a major cause of greenhouse gas emissions—civil engineers need to take a bigger leadership role in the climate change challenge, he says. "There has to be a green industrial revolution."

UVic's civil program—its first class of 41 students will graduate in 2017—is focused around four strategic areas, all centred on making the best use of natural resources and lessening environmental burdens: green buildings, sustainable cities, industrial ecology and water resources.

Recruitment of world-leading researchers in the forefront of these fields has already begun. Currently, the department has expertise that includes groundwater systems, innovative construction materials, energy-efficient buildings, steel structures, transportation system modeling and urban stormwater. The goal is to have a faculty of 15 within three years.

"We would like to achieve a 50/50 gender split in both faculty and students," Kennedy says. UVic now follows close to the national trend, where 22 per cent of civil engineering undergrads are female. National female enrolment

numbers are higher for biomedical engineering and lower for electrical, mechanical, software and computer engineering. UVic's other engineering disciplines.

Dean Tom Tiedje sees the department as a great fit with UVic's environmental ethos and he envisions collaborations with other engineering departments, and units such as Environmental Studies, Earth and Ocean Sciences, IESVic and PICS.

"We hope for impacts in many ways," says Kennedy. "Our expertise will have impact on cities and communities in BC. One way is to help develop strategies and inform building codes to decrease energy consumption of buildings."

Before the program launched, the school received 40 letters of support from employers on Vancouver Island and elsewhere in BC who told the school that they have trouble finding civil engineers.

"By establishing a new engineering program, we are creating opportunities for BC young people to have rewarding careers in good paying jobs while enabling growth in the province's technology-related industries," says Tiedje.

In BC, the average age of civil engineers is 50—the highest in the country—and labour market projections show that in BC and Alberta, the numbers of civil engineering graduates falls short of expected job openings. Of the four civil programs in the province, UVic is the only one that's 100 per cent co-op.

Student demand for the new program is already strong: after the civil program was established in 2013 (alongside biomedical engineering), domestic student applications doubled. At the same time, the percentage of female students entering UVic's Faculty of Engineering also doubled. The department expects to begin accepting graduate students this year.

By 2050, the world's population will be close to nine billion and the economy is expected to quadruple, with much of that growth in cities in India, China and Africa. "As grad students come here to study with our internationally recognized researchers in sustainable cities and building design," says Kennedy, "we can make a big difference in how these booming cities are being planned and built."

Chart a Course for Success
DAVE LYNN

Navigate the ever-changing market

A longtime 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.

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Minimum Payout *		\$238	\$278	\$333	\$440	\$485	\$568
Total Payout to Age 100		\$152,234	\$143,035	\$134,543	\$125,220	\$119,262	\$111,203
Accelerated Payout:							
Income over 5 years.....		\$1,763				\$105,739	
Income over 10 years.....		\$930				\$111,614	
Income over 15 years.....		\$654				\$117,694	

* Based on best current GIC of 2.25%. Returns will vary depending on investment vehicle. Monthly income based on \$100,000

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	AGE	55	60	65	71	75	80
Male							
...payments cease at death		\$443	\$494	\$564	\$690	\$808	\$1,012
...10 years guaranteed		\$446	\$485	\$546	\$635	\$697	\$812
Female							
...payments cease at death		\$410	\$450	\$506	\$606	\$705	\$881
...10 years guaranteed		\$418	\$451	\$500	\$571	\$646	\$761
Joint Life: 10 yrs guaranteed		\$385	\$413	\$455	\$521	\$580	\$685

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around the ring



Get ready for IdeaFest

Why does war inspire great art? How do you say 'I love you' in Tla-o-qui-aht? What happens when two galaxies collide? These are just some of the big questions that will be brought to life at the fifth annual IdeaFest, from March 7–12. Join hundreds of UVic thinkers, innovators and artists as they explore topics ranging from human health and urban renewal, to space exploration and climate change. There are over 50 panels, workshops, exhibits, performances, open mics and tours to choose from this year. Come celebrate UVic and be inspired by research and creative endeavours from across campus. The full program of more than 50 events is available for easy online browsing on any device at uvic.ca/ideafest.

Elliott pole restoration

What's with the tent in the Quad? The S,yewe Legend Pole (also known as the Elliott pole) in the UVic Quad was commissioned by Coast Salish carver Charles Elliott to mark the 1990 Learned Societies conference at UVic. Recent inspection showed signs of rot at the core and base of the pole. The pole will be taken down by Facilities Management early this month to restore the pole and alleviate the problem of continued water damage. This may take up to two months depending on how long the drying process takes. The refurbished pole will be raised on a new mounting system that will keep it from touching the ground and away from water. Later in the spring UVic will hold a rededication ceremony. Details: bit.ly/elliott-pole

Nominate an educator for one of three new teaching awards

Since 1989, the UVic Alumni Association has honoured faculty and instructors through the Harry Hickman and the Gilian Sherwin Alumni Awards. 2016 expands these with the creation of three new teaching awards: one each for excellence in graduate student supervision and mentorship, for research-inspired teaching and in teaching for experiential learning. "These three new awards, building on the strong legacy of the Alumni Association teaching awards, will increase recognition of UVic faculty members who provide such a rich, dynamic learning environment for our students," says Provost Valerie Kuehne. "Strong mentorship, experiential learning and integration of research in the classroom make for both a positive experience and strong learning outcomes for our students. We look forward to celebrating outstanding leaders at UVic who excel in these areas." Nominations are open until March 1. Info: bit.ly/teach-award

New findings on 1940s Vancouver properties

BY TARA SHARPE

The role played by the City of Vancouver in the dispossession of Japanese Canadians during the 1940s is now more clearly drawn, thanks to exhaustive work over the past two years by one of the biggest humanities research projects in Canada.

A team of researchers within Landscapes of Injustice—the federally funded, seven-year, multi-partner research project launched in 2014 and led by UVic—uncovered a historical trail in municipal and federal archives about an overlooked urban history. The findings, forthcoming in an article entitled "Suspect Properties: The Vancouver Origins of the Forced Sale of Japanese-Canadian-owned Property, WWII," generated advance media coverage in Vancouver last month.

The history of the uprooting and internment of 22,000 Japanese Canadians in coastal BC during the war has received scholarly and popular attention over the years, but the story of dispossession is not at all as well known. The project team led by associate history professor Jordan Stanger-Ross wants people to understand exactly how much this history still matters.

"We risk overlooking the most important lessons of our past if we do not hold deep conversations about the legacies of 20th-century racism," Stanger-Ross pointed out at the time of the project's launch.

In the spring of 1942, Japanese

Canadians were uprooted from their homes by the federal government. One year later, despite assurances to the contrary, the government resolved to sell all of their property—homes, businesses, farms, personal effects—without their consent. The material losses of Japanese Canadians during the decade would, in today's currency, amount to at least one billion dollars.

The first four years of Landscapes of Injustice involves a research and documentation phase and is focusing on four locations—Steveston, Maple Ridge, Salt Spring Island and Powell Street in Vancouver.

The forthcoming article—analyzing internal memos, minutes of council and town planning commission meetings, and minutes of meetings of federal cabinet ministers—shows clearly that town planners with aspirations to improve low-income housing in Vancouver initially thought they could take advantage of the uprooting of Japanese Canadians to redevelop the East End, specifically the Powell Street area where they had concentrated—replacing older and sometimes deteriorating properties with modern housing. The city sent in inspectors to condemn the existing rental housing owned by Japanese Canadians, rather than preserve and protect it.

The city's intention was to convince federal officials the neighbourhood's buildings were uninhabitable. Federal officials seized on the notion that the properties were substandard,



Young women walking in kimonos in a Vancouver parade. NIKKEI NATIONAL MUSEUM.

but abandoned the redevelopment project, deciding simply to sell everything that Japanese Canadians owned. "The misguided notion that all Japanese-Canadian-owned property constituted a 'slum' was twisted into additional justification for the forced sales," explains Stanger-Ross, a co-author of this new study.

Project member Vivian Rygenstad, chair of the Landscapes of Injustice Community Council (an arms-length committee comprised of established and emerging leaders in the community), spoke last month with CBC Vancouver about her own family's history. Her parents were forcibly uprooted but not before hiding valuables

like cameras in the walls of their home "because the government had assured them they'd be coming back."

"These stories need to be taught. They need to be learned. It's Canadian history and we learn from our history."

In 2013, Vancouver council formally apologized for the internment motion passed on Feb. 16, 1942.

"Does apology mean that the door is closed on this history, whatever researchers may find?" Stanger-Ross asks. "This new evidence merits a discussion between city officials and Japanese Canadian community members, including the members of our project's community council."

landscapesofinjustice.com

What can fish see?

Artists and biologists collaborate on flatfish camouflage response study

BY JOHN THRELFALL

The gap between the molecular foundations of fish vision and the colour calibrations of a large-format printer may seem as wide as the space between the biology and visual arts departments, but a recent collaborative project brought the two much closer together.

Tom Iwanicki, a MSc candidate studying starry flounder opsin genes with biology professor John Taylor had a very basic question: what is colour?

"As biologists, we can ask ourselves questions about things like opsin genes and colour vision in fish and then, you would think, come up with various strategies to answer those questions" said Taylor. "But we quickly realized we lacked some very basic knowledge. For example, we wanted to print a particular colour on a sheet of paper. That is, we wanted the paper to reflect a particular wavelength of light. We had no idea how to do that, or even if it was possible. What about a second sheet of paper that reflects the same amount of light, but at a different wavelength?"

The eyes have it

Starry flounders change the pattern on their back when they settle on a traditional black-and-white checkerboard—but what about one with red and green squares? Opsin genes encode the light receptors in the eye, and while humans are trichromatic—we have three different types of light receptors distributed among the 'cone' cells of our retina—fish have many more. "We know that species with only two cone cell opsins, like cats and dogs, can't discriminate among as many colours as we can," says Taylor. "We want to know if the surprisingly large

fish opsin gene repertoire enhances their colour vision."

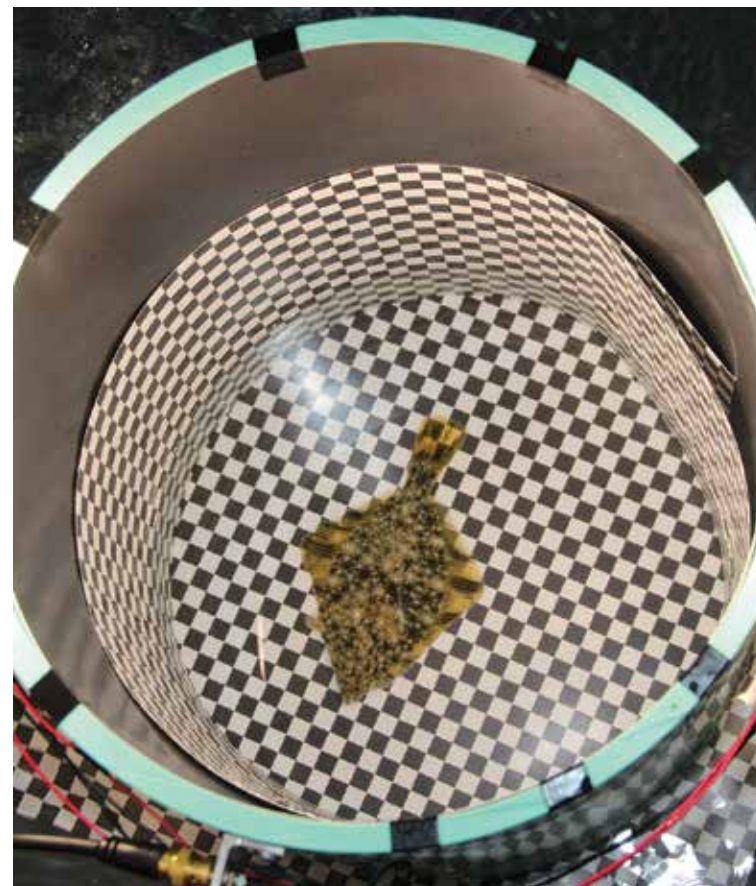
Iwanicki also hoped to discover if opsins could be influenced by raising the fish in different light environments. "We're very passionate about going from molecular data to actual behavior," he explains. "We discovered these flatfish are capable of active camouflage—they can change colour quite quickly and convincingly—so we honed in on using differently coloured and patterned checkerboards as a model for studying vision in general."

After six weeks under broad-spectrum (as a control) and green-filtered (test) lighting that mimicked ocean conditions, Iwanicki set out to discover if the opsins changed under different light environments—and if this also influenced their ability to camouflage. Taylor and Iwanicki found they were out of their depth when it came to creating the essential test patterns. That's when they called Cliff Haman, Senior Academic Assistant in Visual Arts.

The theory of colour

Using the large-format printer in the Fine Arts Studios for Integrated Media, Haman was able to create consistent, reliable prints that matched the spectrophotometer-measured colour intensities. "We work with colour daily, and our labs are very well-equipped for the creation and manipulation of digital media," says Haman. "[Biology] had specific requirements for various swatch colours and luminosity values, particularly when laid out in checkerboard patterns. Our imaging software provides superb control and accuracy with such colour data."

Haman also assisted with photo documentation, which required calibrated, diffuse lighting and a fairly



A starry flounder demonstrates its camouflage response to different colour patterns.

complex camera installation. "It can all boggle the mind of someone who's not familiar with it," admits Iwanicki. "Visual Arts wasn't the first place that came to mind, but we luckily ended up going there. It's just been fantastic."

To be clear, the goal of the experiment was to see if the fish echoed the pattern, not the colour. "If we give them a red and green background, we're not expecting the fish to turn red and green," says Taylor. "Instead, we're looking to see if they adapt to a smooth, mottled or disruptive pattern; the fish can do each of those things. If it recognizes a smooth pattern, it will turn a single colour, whereas mottled or disruptive patterns will result in stippled or big-block colours."

Final results

And the result? "They're definitely camouflaging differently—which is quite exciting," says Iwanicki. "As far as I know, no one has explored camouflage response as a way of figuring out what fish can and can't see."

Taylor is clearly pleased. "Obviously, we don't know everything about vision, but if you think about the opsin repertoire as a toolkit, there's way more tools in there than we expected," he says. "The job of light sensitivity is much more diverse than we thought it was."

For his part, Haman enjoys the opportunities offered by such interdisciplinary research. "When we collaborate in other environments, we're actively exposed to new ways of thinking and doing—which to my mind is fertile soil for sprouting new ideas."

World's only chair in transgender studies

BY ANNE MacLAURIN

A million-dollar donation to establish a chair in transgender studies—the first of its kind—will make all the difference to students such as Alyx MacAdams, who self-identifies as a genderqueer and trans-masculine person.

“I am very grateful that this chair now exists, and I look forward to participating in and witnessing what happens over the next few years,” says MacAdams.

“It was through building community at university, taking courses that included content about gender identity and expression, and volunteering with student advocacy groups that I came to understand my identity as a genderqueer and trans-masculine person,” MacAdams adds.

Supporters, friends, MLAs, students, faculty and members of the university executive were on hand for the historic announcement on Jan. 15 in the UVic library archives and special collections. UVic President Jamie Cassels, Dean of Social Sciences Catherine Krull, MP Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke Randall Garrison, Dr. Aaron Devor and social work masters student MacAdams all provided remarks.

“The overwhelming reality for transgender people during most of the 20th century was profound isolation, secrecy, silence and shame,” according to Devor, who will fill the chair for its inaugural five-year term in UVic’s Faculty of Social Sciences.

UVic established the new chair to inspire research and discussion, and tackle essential issues that can make a difference for members of the trans and genderqueer community, who often occupy complicated, vulnerable and contested positions in wider society. The chair is supported by a donation of \$1 million USD from the Tawani Foundation, founded and



Devor and MacAdams. PHOTO: UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

led by Lieutenant Colonel Jennifer N. Pritzker, US Army (Retired). In addition, the foundation has also pledged up to another \$1 million USD to match contributions from other donors toward the Chair in Transgender Studies at UVic.

“The Chair in Transgender Studies sets UVic apart as a place that offers the highest quality research and is also home to exceptional students, faculty and staff who inspire bold action for positive impact on the lives of others,” says President Jamie Cassels. “I am proud of our campus community’s commitment to diversity, as well as grateful to Dr. Devor, Lt.-Col. Pritzker, the Tawani Foundation and all those who help us continually learn and grow in a welcoming environment that promotes the rights and affirms the dignity of all persons.”

As the first Chair in Transgender Studies, Devor will work with some of the world’s top researchers and

scholars, thought leaders, transgender community activists and students to further research into a broad range of topics concerned with the lives of trans and gender-nonconforming people—including crucial issues such as healthcare, poverty, discrimination and suicide.

“The University of Victoria has made itself a leader in the subject of human gender identity,” Pritzker noted. “It has already established a first-class archive on the topic—the largest and most comprehensive in the world. My support is an investment in success. It is a major personal goal of mine that this chair in transgender studies stimulates the outstanding work of other institutions and creates a global network for the study of this topic.”

“Far too many trans and gender-nonconforming people still live in poverty and fear,” added Devor. “As the inaugural chair, I will act as a re-

source locally and internally for those needing information for their own research or for policy development, as well as building linkages between community-based and academic scholars working in transgender studies,” continued Devor, who is also the founder and academic director of the Transgender Archives at UVic, unveiled in June 2012.

The Transgender Archives at UVic represents 17 countries on five continents, more than a century of research and over 50 years of activism. If the materials were lined up along one long shelf, the collection would stretch the length of a football field.

Devor is an elected member of the elite International Academy of Sex Research, an elected Fellow of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality and a national award-winning teacher. He is a sociology professor and former dean of UVic’s Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Lending voice to an international initiative

BY TARA SHARPE

UVic linguistics associate professor Dr. Sonya Bird was listening to the CBC Radio “Spark” program in early 2014 when she first heard the voice of Rupal Patel, a Canadian researcher based in Boston who launched the VocaliD Human Voicebank (*vocalid.co*) in May 2014.

The interview ignited Bird’s interest in contributing to Patel’s mission to connect those living with a severe speech disorder or limited speech to their own unique vocal identities. As a result of an eight-month volunteer effort by the Voice Drive Victoria group, in collaboration with local speech language pathologist Gail Poole, more than 100 people in our region have now donated their voices to the global effort.

Theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking, arguably the most easily recognizable user of synthesized speech, is British—but his familiar voice carries an American accent. The VocaliD project aims to match recipients with voices that can be more authentically their own.

The donor process first involves a short survey about a person’s linguistic background, the particular sound of their voice (for instance, is it loud, soft, “twangy” or child-like) and even their height, which in turn indicates the size of the “voicebox” or vocal tract.

Each donor reads and repeats nearly 3,500 sentences, some of which are popular fairy tales or well-known stories but jumbled up like scattered pieces of a jigsaw puzzle; this is so that the donor doesn’t fall into a sto-



Bird (right) and Regan in sound booth of Speech Research Lab. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

rytelling rhythm. There is a natural variability in pronunciation: Bird explains that a person won’t pronounce a word—even “hello”—exactly the same way twice; “we’re not robots.” The sentences are then broken up into sound combinations. Using technical engineering, those combinations are blended and synthesized into distinct personalized voices to neatly fit individual recipient profiles.

Bird says she will personally find it “very moving to hear from people whose voices finally match them now.” And there shouldn’t be any “voice doppelgangers” either. The higher the quality of the audio equipment and acoustical environment, the more consistent the donor voice will be and the resulting synthesized voices

will be even clearer and more natural.

Funded by the Canada Foundation for Innovation, both the UVic Phonetics Lab with its sound-treated recording room and latest hardware and software for studio-level recording, and the Speech Research Lab (SRL), with its sophisticated sound booth and post-production workstations, played a significant role during the voice drive.

So did 19 UVic students, including fourth-year student Kelly Regan who helped Poole and Bird spearhead the Victoria effort. More than 100 voice donations are now complete, which included approximately seven hours for each donor and 800 volunteer hours.

“Most of our donors are retired,

many of them had British accents [but there was also a mix of accents], and they seemed very excited about the technology,” recalls Regan. She too donated her voice.

The Humanities Computing and Media Centre at UVic assisted with technological troubleshooting. “Because ours was the first big unified drive, you could say we were the ‘test case’ for VocaliD,” says Bird.

The Department of Linguistics houses three labs—the Phonetics Lab, the SRL and the Sociolinguistics Lab—which contribute in various ways to teaching and researching the phonetic details of speech, from the physiological properties underlying speech to the acoustic signal that we hear and make sense of.

around the ring

National student health survey

UVic will be participating in the National College Health Assessment in Feb.–March, 2016. A survey will be sent to a random selection of 6,000 undergraduate and graduate students at UVic by email and will cover a variety of health topics relating to students. Results from this survey provide the university with valuable information about the health of our student population and direct us in improving services. Participants will have the option to be entered into a draw for an iPad Mini, so for students selected, we encourage you to participate. Keep your eyes on your inbox during February for an invitation.

What we gave the planet over the holidays

During the Dec.–Jan. holiday campus closure, everyone was asked to shut off computers, lights and heating to save energy. We all did our part, and as a result, we reduced energy consumption by an equivalent of over 140 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions during that period. That’s about the same as taking 20 houses off the grid or 35 cars off the road for a full year. Electricity use was down by 25 per cent and natural gas was reduced by 29 per cent. Well done, everyone!

Planned computing systems outage

In order to upgrade the campus network, there will be a nine-hour outage of most computing services from Feb. 7–8. Affected services include file shares hosted on home.uvic.ca and netdrive.uvic.ca; CourseSpaces; student email (webmail.uvic.ca); FAST; Banner; FMIS; My Page; and other administrative systems and databases starting on Sunday, Feb. 7 at midnight and ending on Monday, Feb. 8 at 9 a.m. Microsoft Exchange email and calendaring, Sharepoint, Connect (*connect.uvic.ca*) and *uvic.ca* should remain available during this maintenance.

A decade of pioneering ocean science

On Feb. 8, 2006, Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) installed the world’s most advanced cabled seafloor observatory in Saanich Inlet—making history with the world’s first interactive real-time portal into the ocean. This allowed scientists, policy-makers, educators and the public to “enter” the ocean from anywhere, at anytime, via the internet, starting a decade of exploration, innovation and expansion that continues today. In celebration of this milestone, ONC has gathered together the top 10 reasons to celebrate: bit.ly/oceans-decade

Designing for the Future

Theatre MFA student Graham McMonagle dresses for theatrical success

BY JOHN THRELFALL

The Phoenix Theatre's new main-stage production, *Wild Honey*, runs from Feb. 11–20—and behind those efforts are a number of graduate students who are stepping up established careers by pursuing MFAs at UVic.

Costume designer Graham McMonagle is an extraordinary example, as a professional dancer for 20 years and the co-founder of Victoria's Canadian Pacific Ballet company, which operated locally from 2007 to 2014.

"I knew getting my MFA would be challenging visually and mentally for me," says the soft-spoken but quick-witted McMonagle. "Design has been a lateral stream with dancing my whole life and, as I come to the end of my dancing age, this is as much a moment to begin anew as it is to wind something up."

McMonagle's design credits are many and numerous, including the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada and the Columbus Dance Theatre. "Design plays a huge role in theatre, especially dance theatre," he says. "Design is half of dramaturgy, and I'm really stimulated by that."

His skills are being put to the test with *Wild Honey*, a comedic rewrite of Anton Chekhov's first unpublished play, as adapted by British playwright Michael Frayn (*Noises Off*). Heavy on love triangles and the kind of country estate-entanglements for which Chekhov is

known, McMonagle says his designs are less "slavish historicism" and more "anachronistic hybrid" of the kind of "dirty luxury" director and theatre professor Peter McGuire is bringing to the stage.

McGuire is another theatre professional who sought to enhance his career by earning an MFA at UVic in the late '90s. "I walked away from a very lucrative career in Ontario to come back here," says McGuire. "For me, it was the right thing to do. It was both a reinvention and a renewal of spirit." Not only did his MFA further his career, but it also sparked a love of teaching evident in his latest production.

"I'm excited to be working with Peter, and to be working on this play," says McMonagle, as he flips through colourful sketches of his costume designs. "There are multiple ways to draw an audience into a narrative: Peter wanted to use 1900 as an anchor, but his visual association with the principal actor was more the shirtless, greasy-haired, 1970s Keith Richards."

The 15-person cast will sport a mix of "skirts and jeans, rubber boots and overalls, caps and traditional dresses . . . in a way, we've created our own 1900-by-way-of-1970 Russian country look. It's beautiful, because both of those periods were about landed people who were becoming lost from their anchored place and experiencing disintegration, substance use and a kind of disaffected glamour."

McGuire can't emphasize enough



McMonagle

the importance of costume design. "A good actor will look at a good costume design and really see their character—they may have read the script and been thinking about their role, but will look at the sketch and understand their character so much more. Costumes really help to tell the story."

McMonagle clearly enjoys the challenge of costuming, creating something that's as relevant for the actor's process as it is for the audience's enjoyment. "There's a balance to be drawn between how directly we reveal something to the audience: if I help the actor to reveal their role, I am in fact revealing something to the audience—but if it impedes the actor, then I'm diminishing their role."

CO-OP CONTINUED FROM P.1

Employers like Recreation Integration Victoria (RIV) have been hiring UVic co-op students for more than 25 years. The inter-municipally funded service assists people with disabilities in Greater Victoria to pursue active lifestyles, and has hired more than 180 students since 1990 to help work towards this goal. In a 2011 study, these students overwhelmingly reported that their co-op experiences at RIV have positively impacted their career motivations and their lives.

Many other long-term co-op employers use co-op as a recruitment tool by hiring outstanding co-op students into full-time positions after graduation. "Co-op students make the greatest impact of anything we do," says Doug Nutting, RIV's executive director. "At RIV, students are immersed in a culture of inclusion and the philosophy and values that go with that, which is something the student takes with them when they leave us."

The UVic Co-op Program uses a unique learning outcome assessment to measure student experiences on the work term. All co-op students assess their workplace experiences based on competencies that align with UVic's 10 learning outcomes at the beginning, middle and end of these experiences. Students are also encouraged to develop intercultural competencies to help them contribute to culturally diverse workplaces.

UVic's Co-op Program was established in 1976 in the Departments of Chemistry and Physics. The program secured 58 placements in its first year; today it includes 13 co-op offices that provide opportunities for students in nearly every academic program at UVic. The program is indebted to Graham Branton, its longest-service director who dedicated 17 years to the development of UVic Co-op.

CO-OP FAST FACTS

- 1 in 3 UVic students completes co-operative education work terms as part of their degrees (an estimated 30,000 students in total since 1976).
- Students have worked in 119 countries since 1976 (40 countries last year, including Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Sweden and Uganda)—international placements have made up 8.2% of total placements over the past 20 years.
- Students have earned close to \$770,000,000 in combined salary (based on the average salary averaged over the past 15 years).
- In the past 20 years, 44.9% of placements have been in the public sector versus 55.1% in the private sector (including 5.5% with non-profit organizations).
- For the past 20 years, 1.6% of placements have been with municipal government, 30.4% with provincial government, and 12.9% with the federal government.
- For the past 20 years in British Columbia, 48% of placements have been on Vancouver Island, 20.3% in the Lower Mainland, 6.9% across British Columbia, and 16.7% across the rest of Canada.

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calendar highlights

Events free unless otherwise indicated. For a complete list of events, visit the online calendar at events.uvic.ca

at the galleries

uvac.uvic.ca
250-721-6562

■ **Exhibit.** *Emerging Through the Fog: Tsa-qwa-supp and Tlehpik—Together.* Feb. 13 to May 28. This is an exhibition of two Nuu-chah-nulth men, Art Thompson / Tsa-qwa-supp from Ditidaht (1948–2003) and Hjalmer Wenstob / Tlehpik from Tla-o-qui-aht. *Emerging Through the Fog* seeks to honour and commemorate the life and work of the dedicated teacher Tsa-qwa-supp on the occasion of Tlehpik's BFA from UVic's Visual Arts Department. Legacy Art Gallery, Downtown, 630 Yates St.

■ **Exhibit.** *New Book Histories: Publishers, Printers and Presses.* Feb. 19–May 16. A look at the key roles publishers and printers play in both the art and business of book production. Learn how early publishers remade the codex in the sixteenth century, what drove Dickens to become his own publisher, how *Lady Chatterley's Lover* escaped the censors, and why serial publication mattered. Legacy Maltwood, Mearns Centre-McPherson Library.

at the theatre

phoenixtheatres.ca
250-721-8000

■ **Theatre.** 8 p.m. *Wild Honey.* Feb. 11–20. Platonov has a way with women. It's both his blessing and his curse. He knows he's a cad, but he just can't help it: women simply believe everything he says. This "Brilliant!" (*London Guardian*) re-visioning of Chekhov's unfinished play swings between the polar opposites of melodrama and farce, and shakes them into an intoxicating cocktail. Phoenix Theatre. \$15–25. 250-8000

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 4:30 p.m. *History, Faith & Preferred Futures.* Tom Saunders (UVic). HSD A240.

■ **CAVI Lecture/Seminar.** 7:30 p.m. *A New Papyrus of Euripides.* Prof. Patrick Finglass (Univ. of Nottingham). UVic Centre A180 (Senate chambers). 250-721-8514

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 11 a.m. *Compassionate Classrooms: The Invisible Hand of Empathy.* Hickman 128. 250-721-8571

■ **Music.** 12:30 p.m. *Fridaymusic: Guitar.* Also Feb. 19 (woodwinds) and Feb. 26 (voice). Featuring School of Music students in a concert of varied repertoire. Admission by donation. 250-721-8634

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 2:30 p.m. *Pitying Oedipus.* Prof. Patrick Finglass (Univ. of Nottingham) Clearihue B415. 250-721-8514

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 2:45 p.m. *Seaweed Strife: Ecological, Commercial and Social Perspectives on the Invasion of the Red Alga, Mazzaella Japonica.* Sarah Dudas, (Vancouver Island Univ.). Turpin B215. 250-721-7327

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 7:30 p.m. *Natural History Night: Urban Deer and Urban Wildlife Stewardship Society.* Fraser 159.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 10 a.m. *Science for the Conservation of Marine Biodiversity in Canada.* Dr. Paul Snelgrove (Memorial Univ.). Elliott 062. 250-721-6120

■ **Café Scientifique.** 6:30 p.m. *Iron Overload: Why Too Much of a Good Thing can be Bad.* Dr. Patrick Walter (UVic / Children's Hospital of Oakland, CA). Hermann's Jazz Club, 753 View St. Seating is limited; please reserve via bit.ly/U-cafe. 250-721-7700

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15

■ **Music.** 1 p.m. *10 Steps to Self-editing.* (Also Feb. 18.) This workshop will give you the necessary tools to independently edit your own writing. Free and open to students. Mearns-McPherson 129.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

■ **Music.** 12:30 p.m. *Tuesdaymusic.* Also Feb. 23 and March 1. Take an afternoon break to enjoy a concert of varied repertoire and instruments featuring School of Music students. MacLaurin B125. Admission by donation.

■ **Café Scientifique.** 6:30 p.m. *The Quest for a Habitable Exoplanet.* Dr. Christian Marois (UVic / NRC Herzberg). Hermann's Jazz Club, 753 View St. Seating is limited; please reserve via bit.ly/U-cafe. 250-721-7700

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 8 p.m. *Visiting Artist Series presents Diana Freund.* Visual Arts A162. 250-721-8011

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 4:30 p.m. *The Pope, the Poor and the Planet: Francis on the Tyranny of Money.* David Seljak (St. Jerome's Univ. in Waterloo). HSD A240.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 2:30 p.m. *Philosophy colloquium.* Nicole Wyatt (U-Calgary). Clearihue A203.

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 2:45 p.m. *Mesh-free Computing: Powerful Modelling Tool for Violent Hydro-environmental and Geophysical Flows.* Ahmad Shakibaeinia. NSERC Fellow, UVic/Environment Canada. Turpin B215.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

■ **Lecture/Seminar.** 3 p.m. *Volcanism, Plutonism, and Porphyry-style Mineralization During Arc-arc Collision: An Example from the Stikine Terrane, Northwestern BC, Canada.* Dr. Bram van Straaten (Ministry of Energy & Mines). Bob Wright Centre A104. 250-721-6120



Climbing into their hearts

UVic earned the People's Choice Award at the Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island's annual Bear Wear event, which wrapped up in January. UVic's display celebrated CARSA and featured several intrepid teddy bears scaling the climbing wall. UVic's Community and Government Relations Office sponsored and created the display, which included almost \$2,000 in raffle prizes. The bears go to the raffle winner (coincidentally, a UVic staff member) while the display will find a permanent home at CARSA. Thousands of individuals and families visited the displays this year and voted on their favourite bears. The event raised \$26,500, which will go to Jeneece Place to improve the health and well being of over 20,000 children, youth and their families in communities throughout Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.



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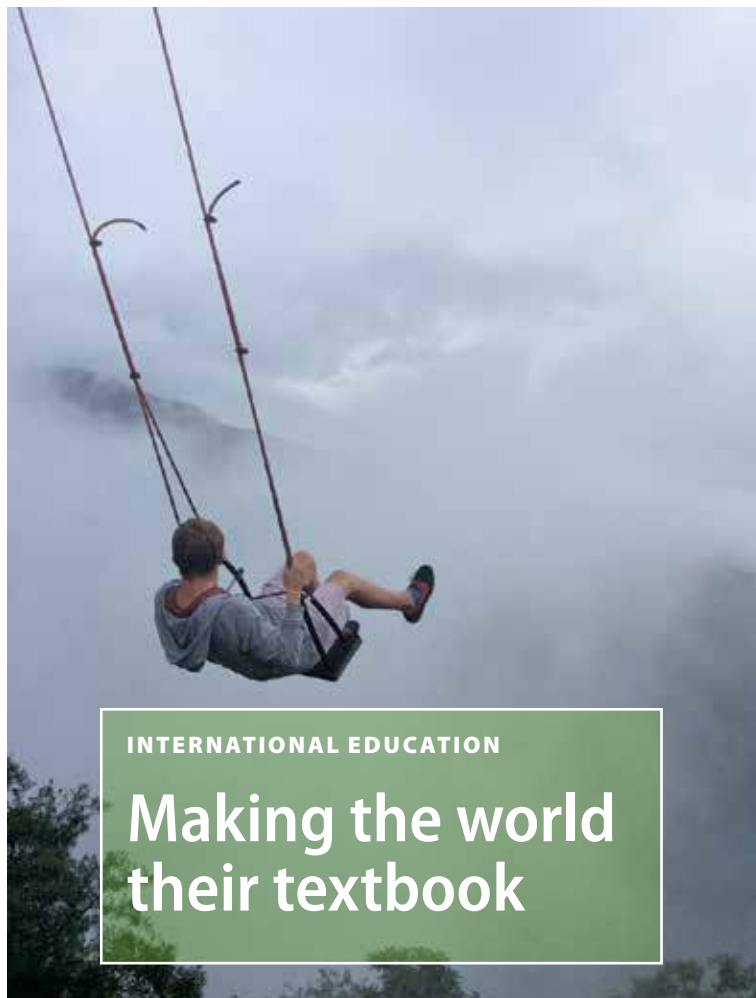


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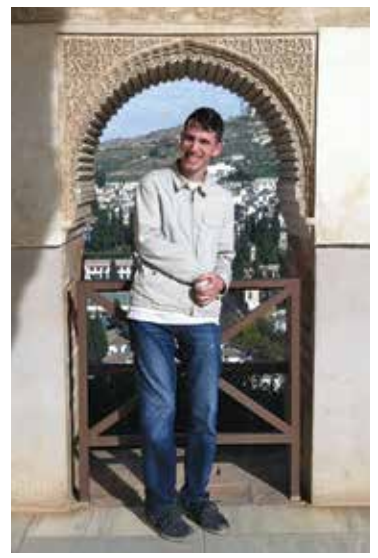
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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Making the world their textbook



International exchange experiences take students deeper into Hispanic studies

BY TARA SHARPE

The study abroad programs offered last year by the Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies left two UVic undergraduate students not only with an amplified fluency in Spanish but also with unforgettable memories and an incomparable immersion in language and culture.

In 2015, the department—in partnership with the Universidad de Cuenca (Ecuador) and the Universidad de Alcalá (Spain)—offered 15 UVic students intensive language classes for the fall term in Cuenca and Alcalá de Henares respectively, complemented by cultural and literary readings, volunteer opportunities, field trips and visits to museums.

“Language and living in a foreign country is transformational at a very basic level,” explained Pablo Restrepo-Gautier, acting chair of the department last year, while the students were studying abroad. “It’s like day and night when the students return to campus—they are suddenly so very aware of the world outside Canada and their hometowns.”

At school in the Andes

Cuenca, located 2,500m above sea level, is a vibrant cultural nexus of Ecuador nestled within the Andes Mountains. Everett (“Dane”) Rogers, a second-year student majoring in

Hispanic and Italian studies combined with French and a minor in German, is from Seattle and hopes to be a translator for the UN or a government body once he graduates from UVic.

Rogers “decided on a whim” to go to Cuenca and there discovered an instant interest in teaching English while providing volunteer instruction to Indigenous children in the province of Loja in southern Ecuador. He’s now considering ESL as part of his university education. Rogers says he came to UVic “for what I’m getting; some of the best language programs and exchange opportunities anywhere, on a campus that’s just the right size.”

When he arrived in Ecuador, he had to acclimatize.

While still adjusting to the altitude, Rogers quickly became out of breath scaling the steep staircase leading up from the river to the old town where his homestay was situated, above the newer part of Cuenca where the school is located.

It took him 25 minutes to walk—downhill—to school each day. Classes ran 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., then broke for lunch, the longest meal of the day: “It is usually three to four courses, with lots of soup and more rice than you could ever eat.” Another regional food—which he did not eat—was roast Andean rat or “cuy” (pronounced KOO-ee).

The nightlife in Cuenca “is wild and crazy, with lots of discotheques.”

One of his best memories is when his school group (which included students from New Mexico and Michigan, as well as the six from UVic) took a weekend excursion to Máncora on the coast of Perú: at night, it felt like the “whole city ‘wakes up’ and heads down to dance in the water, which is warmer than the air.”

“The Hispanic and Latin American culture is very warm too. The people are so dramatic, and kind.” Lights were strung along the beach like a trail leading to his future, which he is completely certain will include a myriad mix of culture and language.

An immersive experience in Spain

Isaac Nazaroff’s experience was somewhat different than that of his peer “because Spain is considered a ‘first world’ country—but the people are just as passionate and it feels just as tight knit.”

A third-year student in Hispanic studies, Nazaroff journeyed to Alcalá, a city of 200,000 people just outside Madrid in the heart of Spain. Alcalá is a popular tourist destination with significant archaeological interest and, like Cuenca, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Nazaroff himself comes from “a town of 5,000 people”—Oliver, in the Okanagan—and had visited Barcelona the year before with his parents. Alcalá

PHOTOS: CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT: 1) Rogers on the swing at the ‘End of the World’ in Banos Ambato, Ecuador. 2) Rogers with a turtle, discovered after canoeing in the Amazon Jungle. 3) Nazaroff visiting the Alhambra in Granada. 4) Nazaroff at a Real Madrid soccer match at Santiago Bernabeu stadium, Madrid. 5) Nazaroff at a docking port in Santander.

was a welcome choice.

“And Spain is its own thing: life is a lot more relaxed than home, but there’s ‘rush’ when there needs to be.” Like Rogers, he took classes from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. But then siesta would shut everything down at approximately 3 p.m. for two to three hours. “At the time of dinner back home, everything starts back up again. Is it 8 p.m.? That’s still afternoon in Alcalá!” After a couple of weeks, he adjusted to not eating dinner till 9 p.m. Like in Cuenca, lunch was the biggest meal anyway: spine-on fish cooked in olive oil; fried eggs and fries; chorizo sausages; baguette-like bread; and paella.

“I knew I wanted to further my knowledge of Spanish,” Nazaroff says. “And I think the only way to really do that is to go on a full-immersion experience.”

Nazaroff first chose UVic not only because his parents are alumni, but also because he wanted to “get out of the Okanagan” and, like Rogers, he finds UVic to be “just the right size. But it is also a really respectful university. It’s very accepting.”

“Back in Spain, the relationships

I cultivated with the host family and teachers will be long lasting and I’ll never forget my host mother.” Not to mention his new girlfriend, whom he met there—“a pivotal part of the trip.”

A seamless academic experience

What he found particularly beneficial academically was how the program is “UVic Abroad,” with all credits transferable and grades submitted as smoothly as if the professors in Alcalá were here within Ring Road.

The two programs are aimed at students who have finished first-year Spanish (Ecuador) or second-year Spanish (Spain). Upon successful completion, students earn full credit of 7.5 units. Last year was the first year that UVic joined the Ecuadorian program.

The department also offers a four-week program in Recanati, Italy during the summer for students in the Italian program.

Contact the Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies at spanit@uvic.ca for details.

More info: bit.ly/1RMnTYy

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