HINFormation

Welcome to a special edition of HINFormation, celebrating 25 years of excellence in Education.

In the late seventies, Dr. William Gibson, then Chairman of the Universities Council of British Columbia, envisaged a need for a new type of professional who had the knowledge and skills to effectively introduce information technology into Canada's health care system.

> On January 9, 1980 after almost a year of study and consultation by its Planning Committee, the Senate of the University of Victoria passed the following two resolutions:
>
> *(1) That, with the understanding that the proposed curriculum is simply illustrative and that before any programme is given final approval by the Senate affected Faculties will be fully consulted, the Senate approve and recommend to the Universities Council of British Columbia, the establishment at the University of Victoria, of an undergraduate programme in Health Information Science leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science.*
>
> *(2) That, should the University be authorized to offer an undergraduate degree programme in Health Information Science, the responsibility for administering the programme be assigned to the Faculty of Human and Social Development.*

On February 16, 2007, the current faculty and staff of the School of Health Information Science were joined by alumni, students, adjuncts and special supporters of the school.   Our very special guest was Dr. William Gibson, whose vision was responsible for the establishment of the School of Health Information Science.

Dr. Gibson (seated) is shown sharing remembrances with the School's current director, Dr. Andre Kushniruk, while Denis Protti, the School's first director, looks on.

Message from the Director

I know this has been a busy time of year, as spring term courses near completion and preparations for final exams are underway. This term has been productive and successful for the School for a number of reasons. Firstly the ITCH 2007 conference took place February 15-18 at the Laurel Point Inn and was a great success. The conference attracted over 225 health informatics professionals, researchers and students from across Canada, nationally and internationally. The conference was at full capacity and included a mix of keynotes (including keynote presentations by Dr. Edward Shortliffe of Columbia University, Richard Alvarez, CEO of Canada Health Infoway and Steven Huesing, Executive Director of the International Medical Informatics Association). Attendees came from as far away as Japan and Africa and there were over 90 presentations and panels covering a blended mix from all sectors including academia, government and industry. We look forward to ITCH 2009 to be held again in Victoria (stay tuned!). Thanks for all the great presentations and support from all who attended. I would also like to thank all the members of the conference program committee, the student volunteers and especially Leslie Wood, whose hard work made the conference possible!

In addition to hosting ITCH during the same week we held our 25th Anniversary Reunion to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the School of Health Information Science. To make this a special occasion we reserved the Maritime Museum of BC. We had the entire museum, all 3 floors, for people to meander about and meet with other alumni, students, adjuncts and supporters of the School.

Our special guest was Dr. William Gibson, whose vision was responsible for the establishment of the School in 1981. Alumni came from as far away as New York City and St. John's Newfoundland. Adjuncts came from as far as Edmonton to join us for the evening. In addition, as the 25th Celebration was held in conjunction with the ITCH 2007 conference, we were honoured to have all three keynote speakers join us. Pictures in this newsletter tell the story of the good times had at ITCH and the 25th anniversary reunion.

Congratulations to the HINF students (Amir Kabesh and Manbir Atwal) who took part in the University of Victoria's first ever Interdisciplinary Health Team Challenge, which was held at the Cinecenta Theatre on March 8. This event was well attended by HINF students and faculty. Thanks to Lara Dahl and Elizabeth Borycki for helping to organize this interesting event.

I would also like to let you know that if any of you are contemplating graduate studies in Health Information Science there is still time to submit an application for our on-campus Masters degree program and our new distributed on-line program which now has over 30 students (and has three flexible start times -- see our page on academic programs at http://hinf.uvic.ca/programs/index.htm for more details about applying).

Andre Kushniruk

TODAY'S INFORMATION for TOMORROW'S IMPROVEMENTS

To start the celebrations for the 25th anniversary, the School played host to the more than 225 delegates who attended an international conference addressing Information Technology and Communications in Health (ITCH 2007). Held at the Laurel Point Inn in Victoria, BC, February 15 – 18th, the theme of the conference was "Today's Information for Tomorrow's Improvements." In addition to Canada and the USA we welcomed delegates from Austria, Brazil, France, Germany, Japan, and Taiwan. In addition a professor from the Health Sciences Division of the Higher Colleges of Technology, United Arab Emirates, brought seven of his students.

Mary Ellen Purkis and Andre Kushniruk

Mary Ellen Purkis, Dean of the Faculty of Human and Social Development, gave the welcoming remarks at the Opening Reception on February 15th.

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A special note of thanks goes to Jason Bond who spent almost 200 hours assisting with registration and conference planning. Jason, along with a team of volunteers, staffed the registration desk for three days of the conference.

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Student Poster Contest

Paul Fisher and Larry Keith

Yun Zhi Zhan ('03) is a graduate student at the University of Calgary majoring in health research. She won first prize for her poster "Information Technology Support for Shared Care Model of Home Care in Chronic Disease Management."

Second prize was awarded to Sihong Huang, a graduate student in our Distributed Stream MSc program, for her poster "A Regional Palliative Service Reporting System at Vancouver Island."

"Methodologic Issues in Health Informatics Trials – Today's Decisions for Tomorrow's Improvements" by Ivan Shcherbatykh of McMaster University received third prize. All three students received a complimentary full registration for the conference (value $550) plus prizes of $500, $300 and $200 respectively.

The three judges were Paul Fisher (Brazil), Don Juzwishin (Edmonton) and Larry Keith (BC Ministry of Health). They were so impressed with all the posters that after the judging they sequestered themselves for over two hours to debate the merits of each before they came to their final decision.

Workshops

Scott Robertson ('00) ensured the conference got off to a good start by organizing six half day pre-conference workshops. One of the most popular was "EMR Toolkit: Tools for Implementing Electronic Medical Records in Multi-Disciplinary Primary Health Care Settings", presented by Rosemary Gray ('95) and Marty McLeod ('96).

A Quick Overview

Four concurrent tracks ran each of the three days. The papers were presented on topics as diverse as "A Public Health Care Information System for Guyana" to "Development of Measures of Health Literacy for Canadian Schools."

HINF students, alumni and faculty were well represented at the conference. Elizabeth Borycki presented a workshop and two papers and was a member of the panel "Ensuring the Safety of Healthcare Information Systems".

In addition to chairing the conference, Andre Kushniruk presented a workshop and two papers and was a member of the panel "Ensuring the Safety of Healthcare Information Systems."

Andre Kushniruk

Denis Protti presented his paper "A Comparison of Information Technology in General Practice in Ten Countries" on the Friday, and was a member of the panel "Implementation of Electronic Health Records: Issues and Challenges" on Sunday.

The complete conference final program can be found at http://hinf.uvic.ca/itch/Program/index.htm

Graduate students John Copen and Mowafa Househ each presented a paper. John also assisted Karim Keshavjee with his workshop.

Craig Kuziemsky (PhD '06) presented two papers, one with Mary Ellen Purkis, while fellow PhD graduate Stefan Pantazi ('06) flew back from Kitchener to present his paper.

Craig Kuziemsky (standing)

Adjuncts Ellen Balka, Paul Fisher, Marilynne Hebert, Jens Jahnke, Malcolm Maclure, Jim McDaniel, Yuri Quintana, and Tom Rosenal all presented papers. The Times Colonist newspaper even ran a story about Yuri's presentation.

Yuri Quintana

HINF alumni John Bartle-Clar ('01), Rosemary Gray ('95), Jim McDaniel (PhD '94), Marty McLeod ('96) and Scott Robertson ('00) were all members of the Conference Steering Committee. Kathleen Jones ('06), Katie Mackle ('05), John Waldron ('01) and Yun Zhi Zhan ('03) presented papers. Katie and John also staffed the Courtyard Group exhibit booth. Jill Strachan ('91) was in attendance with the CIHI exhibit booth and Alicia Campbell ('02) did the honors at the Wolf Medical Systems booth.

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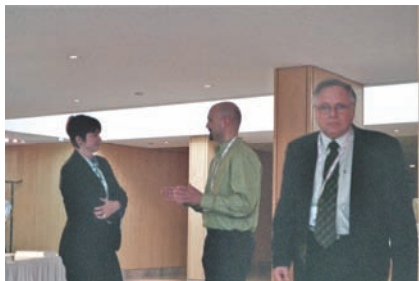Website: http://hinf.uvic.ca
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Katie Mackle ('05)

HINF students were volunteers for the conference assisting with the registration desk, technical problems, and running errands. They were easy to spot in tee shirts donated by IBM.

Student volunteer, Shujin Wang

Seen Around and About

Rosemary Gray, Scott Robertson and Don Juzwishin

Paul Fisher

Marilynne Hebert

Andre Kushniruk and Richard Alvarez

John Bartle-Clar ('01) and Karim Keshavjee

Mark Marquette ('00)

Francis Ho and Mowafa Househ

THEN AND NOW

In 1982, the University calendar listed Denis Protti as Professor and Director of the School of Health Information Science, with a Community Advisory Committee consisting of Mrs. C. Grierson, GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre; Mrs. L. King, Victoria General Hospital; Mrs. L. Lambert, Riverview Hospital; and, Dr. K. Thornton, Royal Jubilee Hospital.

In 2007, we have 6 full-time faculty, 1 professor emeritus, 27 adjunct faculty, 1 co-op coordinator, 1 senior laboratory instructor and four office staff.

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The first School brochure boasted that:
"The University of Victoria offers an extensive range of computing services. The main computing facility includes a DEC VAX 11/780 and dual IBM 4331's."

Today students have access to a range of computer resources that include the Student Computing Facilities located in the Human and Social Development building, Business and Economics building, and Clearihue building. These facilities combined have over 500 PC workstations running Windows XP, and over 100 Macintosh workstations running OS X, and offer black and white printers, colour printers, scanners, photocopiers and other resources.

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25 Year Celebration

To commemorate the School's 25th anniversary on February 16th, the current faculty and staff of the School of Health Information Science were joined by alumni, students, adjuncts and special supporters of the school. To make it a very special evening we reserved the entire Maritime Museum of BC for the evening. Located in Bastion Square, it is a wonderful place, filled with a vast collection of maritime art, historic memorabilia, naval artifacts and exquisite ship models. It also boasts the oldest operating birdcage elevator in North America.

Gerhard Brauer, Pauline and Rudi Samoszynski

Former staff member, Rudi Samoszynski, now working for the World Health Organization (WHO) was also able to join us. Alumni came from as far away as New York City (John Waldron ('01)) and St. John's, Newfoundland (James Ayles ('02).).

As the 25th celebration was held in conjunction with the ITCH 2007 conference, we were honoured to have all three keynote speakers join us (Edward Shortliffe, Columbia University; Richard Alvarez, President and CEO, Canada Health Infoway; and, Steven Huesing, Executive Director, International Medical Informatics Association) along Jim Anderson from Purdue University, Indiana and Yuri Quintana from St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee.

Jochen Moehr and Gerrit Clements

Denis Protti, Gerhard Brauer and Leslie Wood

Steven Huesing and Jeff Barnett

Jason Bond

Jean Grant, Debbie Robertson, Leslie Wood, Angie Francis and Chris Anglin

Jean Grant ('96)

Don Juzwishin and Elizabeth Borycki

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Richard Alvarez, Pat Protti and Steven Huesing

Jim Anderson and Don Juzwishin

Angie Francis, Dave Hutchinson and Debbie Robertson

Gerry Bliss ('87) and Denis Protti

Fraser Hacking ('05), Alicia Brazier ('05),
Alan Schyf ('98) and Monica Balicki ('05)