

University of Victoria

Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement



MINI-UNIVERSITY SUMMER CAMP

July 10-14, 2023

We acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and ƵSÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Mini-University Summer Camp

An immersive experience for Indigenous youth

For one week each summer, UVic's classrooms, dorms and outdoor spaces host some younger-than-usual visitors from all over BC and the Northwest Territories. A week full of academic, creative, cultural and social activities provides an immersive opportunity for participants to see for themselves what attending UVic would be like.

Since its inception in 2008, the Mini-U Summer Camp has made a significant impact, with a total of 315 students participating from grades 9–12. Among these participants, 36 students have either attended or are currently enrolled at UVic, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in exposing students to the university experience and contributing to their pursuit of higher education.

The impact that Mini-U has on Indigenous youth is evident in the many smiles you will see throughout this photo book.



Qwam Qwum tun Shqwalawun



"New Beginnings" - TEMOSEN̄FET (Charles Elliott)

Photography: Geoff Howe

Mini-U Logo: Butch Dick, Songhees Nation

IACE Logo: Late TEMOSEN̄FET
(Charles Elliott), Tsartlip First Nation

Welcoming ceremony

IACE Elders Kathy Horne and Doug LaFortune from Tsawout came to the welcoming ceremony. They shared wisdom and teachings with the students and chaperones. The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) Elders in Residence program is one of the many supports offered to Indigenous students attending UVic.







Scavenger hunt and campus tour

Students went on a scavenger hunt facilitated by chaperones. This allowed them to tour the campus and become acquainted with the buildings while participating in a fun activity.

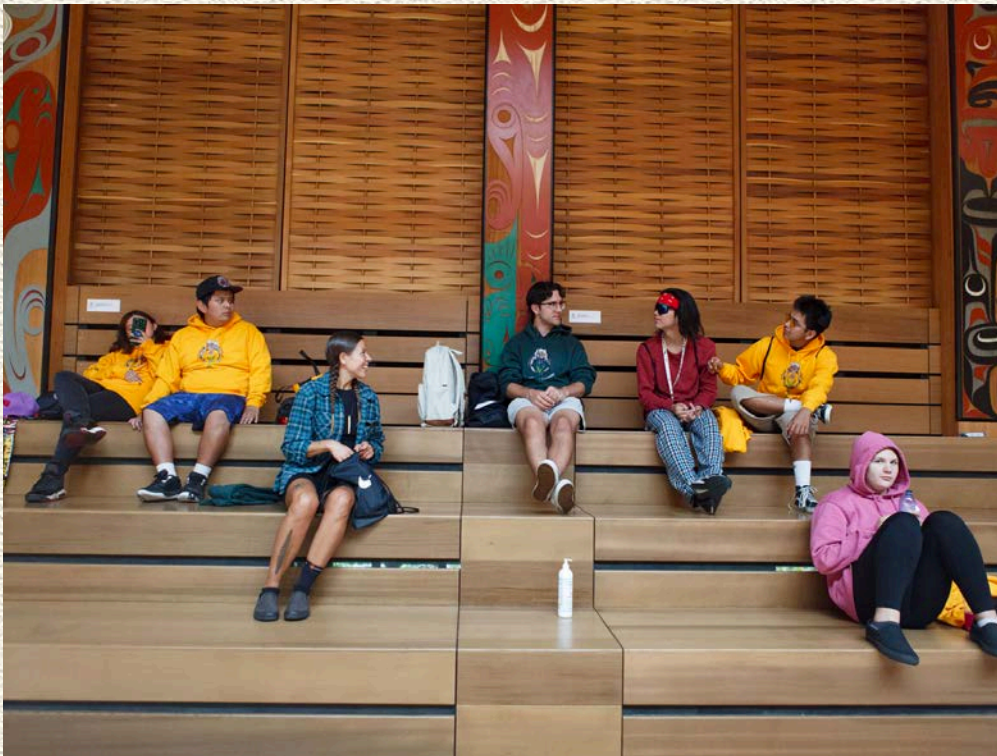




Games and recreation

During free time, chaperones facilitated games, such as football and spikeball. This was an essential element of the camp, as a lot of the students also bonded during this time. It allowed for natural and unplanned connection between the students, chaperones and other IACE staff.



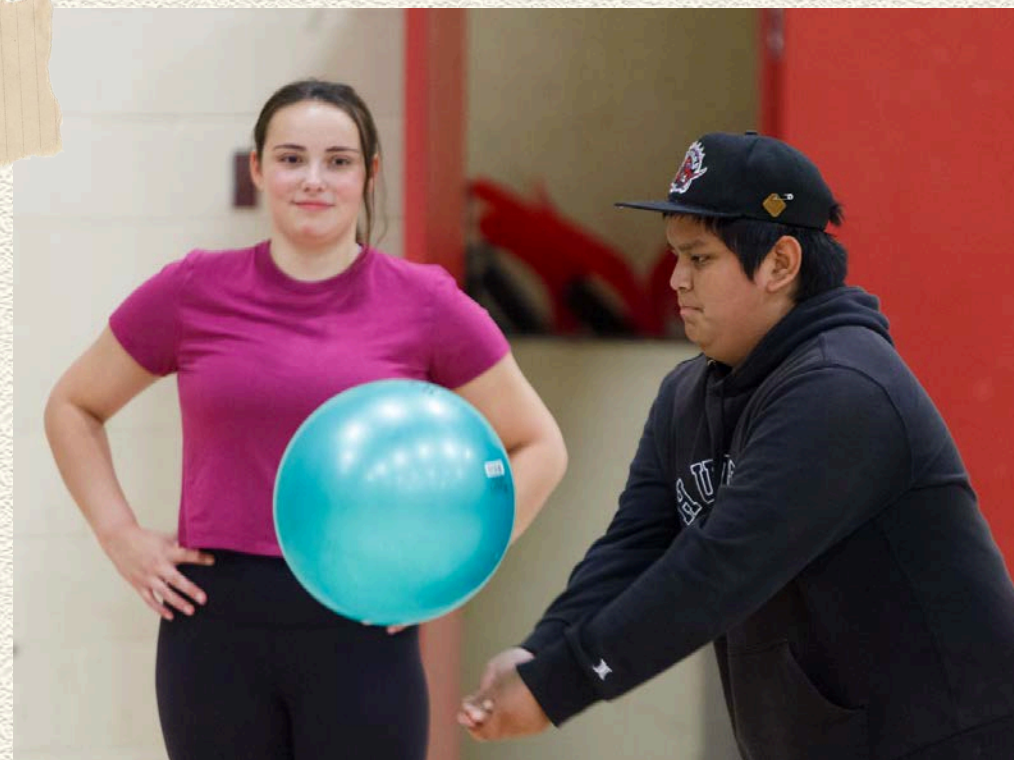


“It was really awesome to see culturally grounded activities and traditional skills being passed on and carrying the participants through their grad ceremony here at Mini-U.”

Mini-U 2023 chaperone

Community visit

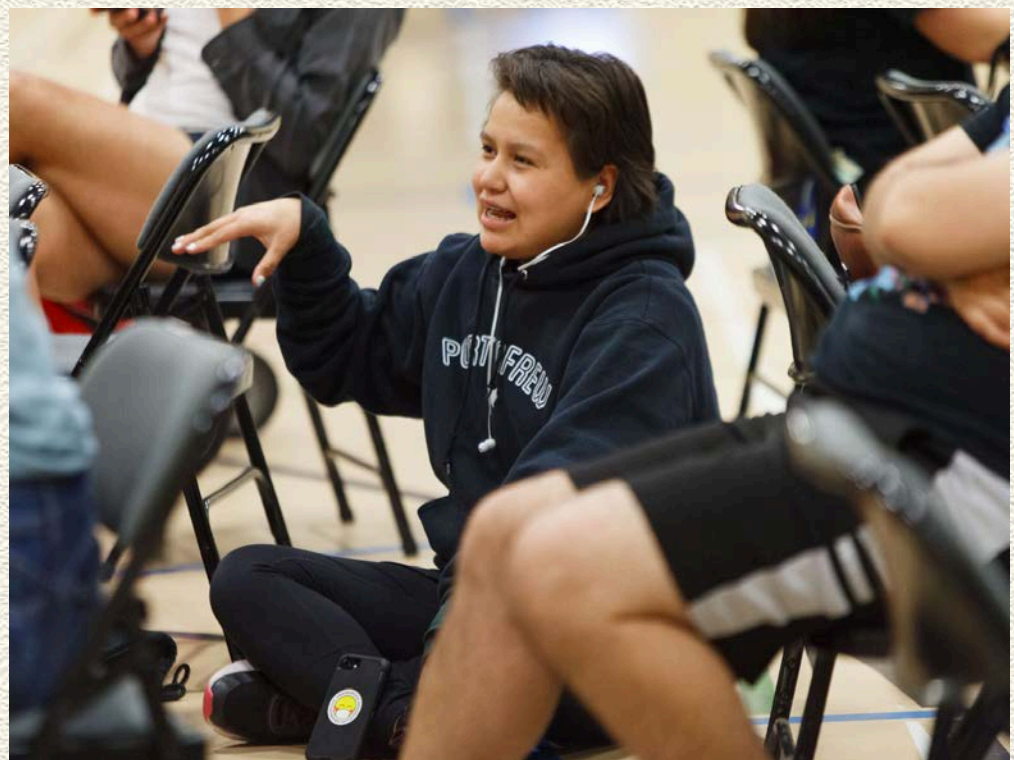
Students visited Tsawout First Nation, where Mini-U booked the gym for the day. Students and chaperones played dodgeball and other sports. A delicious lunch was prepared by Michelle Morris, who cooked bannock tacos to enjoy together. The students also visited the community's greenhouse and learned about native plants.

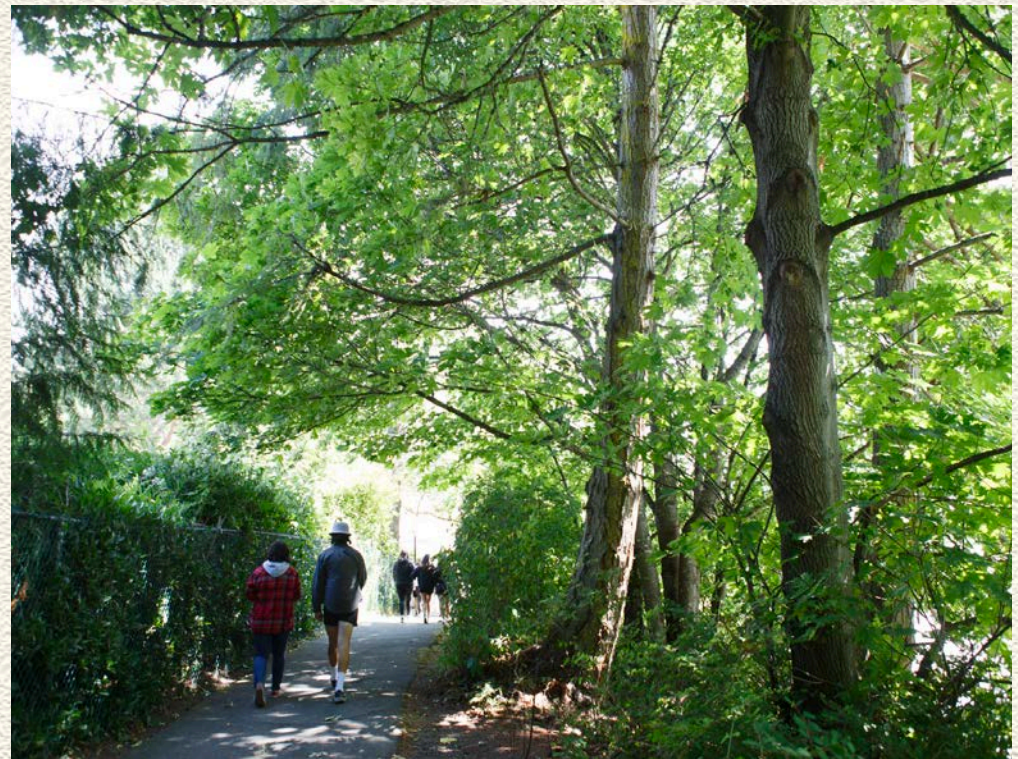


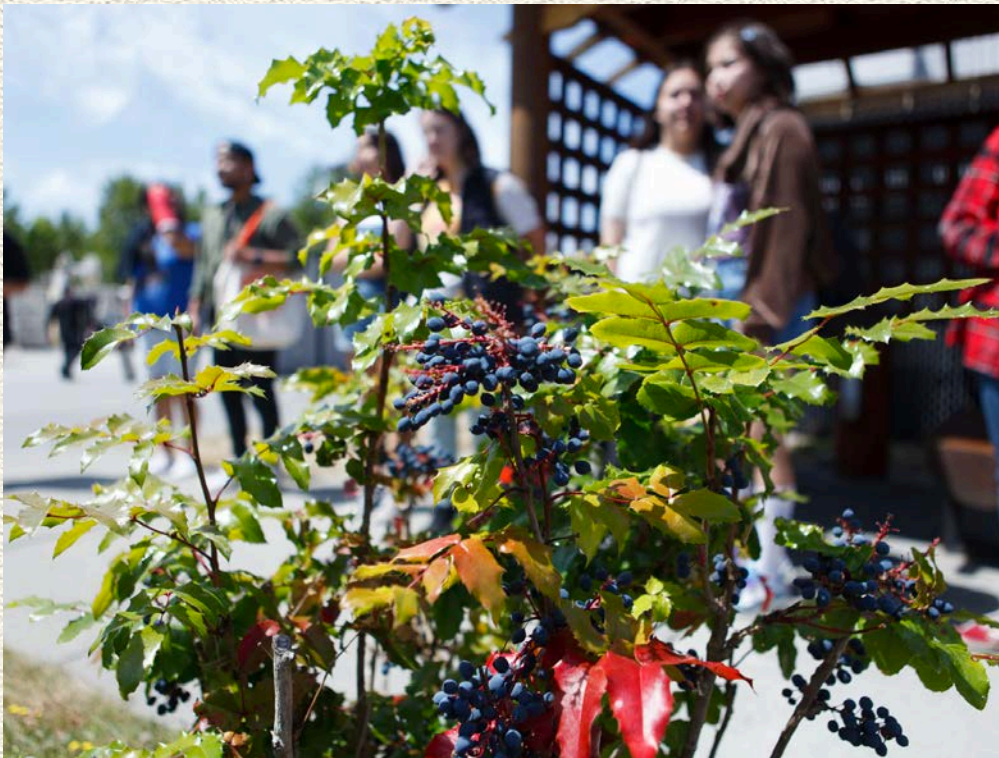






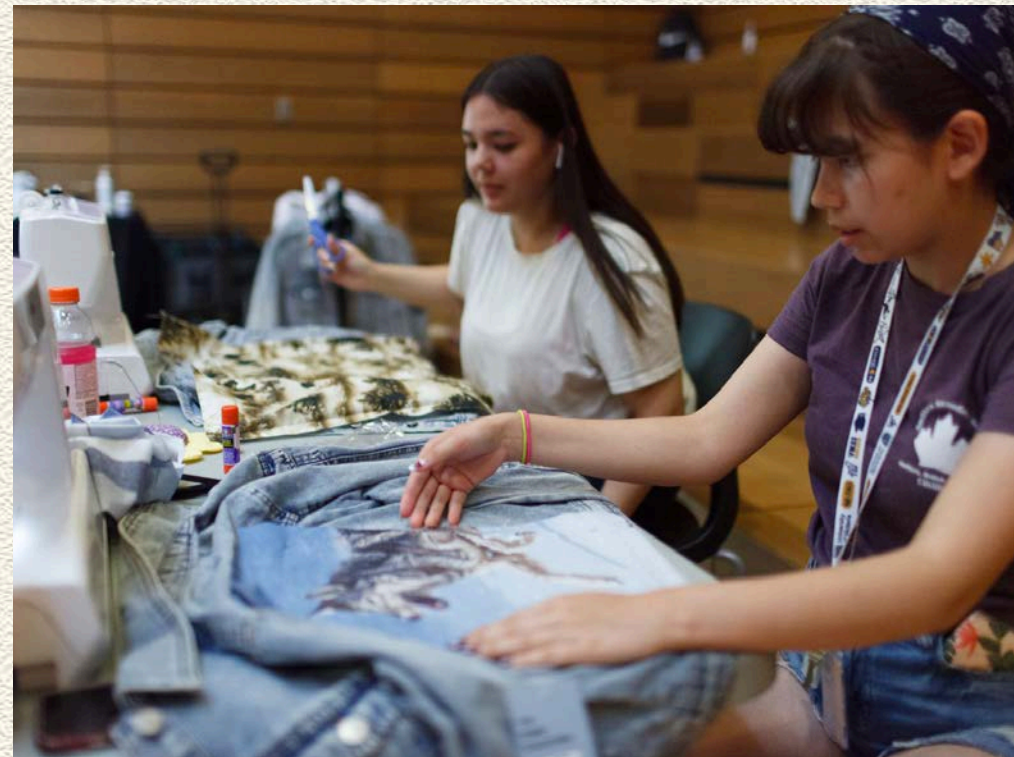






Ribbon apparel workshop

The workshop was facilitated by Crystal Brune, who taught the students to use sewing machines to make ribbon jackets, shirts or skirts. Métis Elder in Residence Barb Hulme was also there to support.



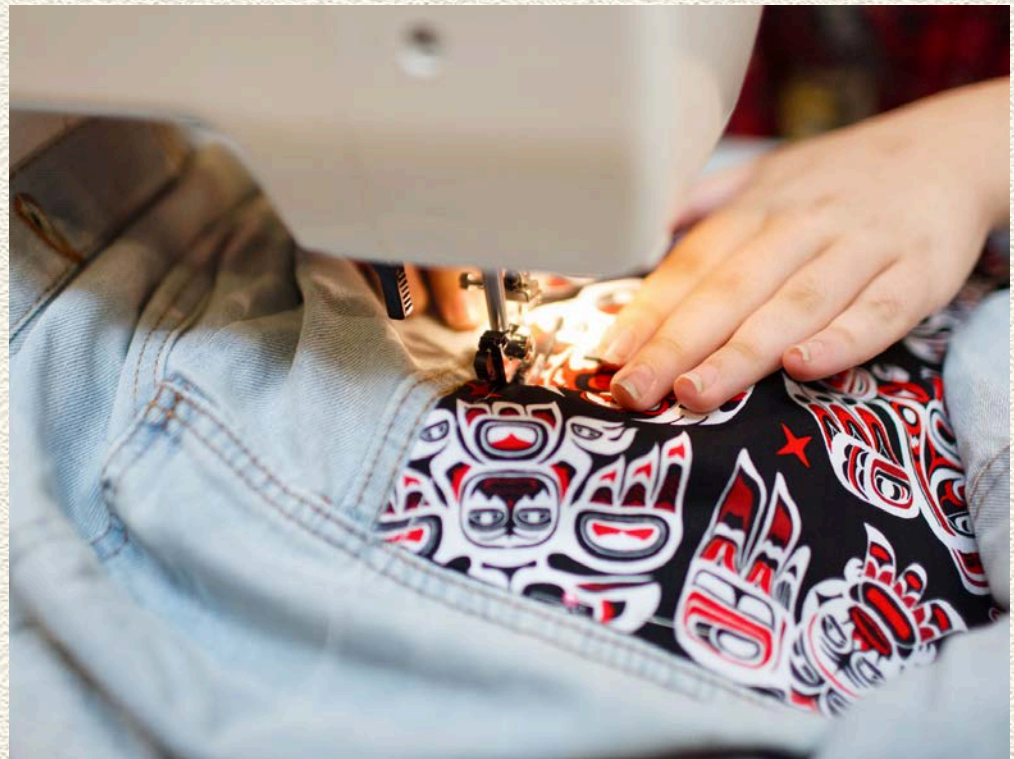


“My favourite was ribbon jacket making because I’ve never done it before and it was fun!”

Mini-U 2023 student









Career and faculty fair

Numerous UVic departments gathered in the Ceremonial Hall to inform students of the opportunities and job prospects associated with each field of study. The career and faculty fair kicked off with Mini-U coordinator Madeline Lucier introducing herself and asking faculty members to go around in a circle to share a little about what they do. This created a safer space for the students to go around and make new connections.





Drum making workshop

Sarah Rhude from The Aunty Collective facilitated this wonderful workshop, where students gathered in the Ceremonial Hall to create their own drums together. She shared cultural teachings with students and spoke to the importance of putting good energy into the work. Students were presented with their drum at the recognition celebration at the end of the camp.



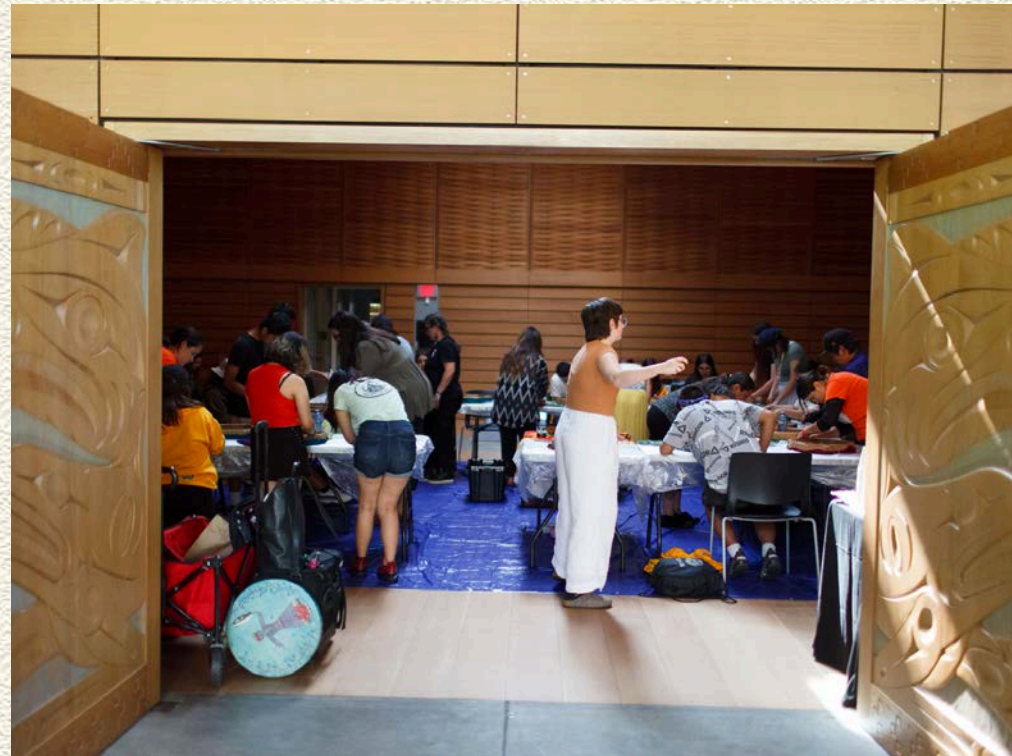






“My favourite workshop was making the drums because I got to experience drum making for the first time and I got to learn about everyone.”

Mini-U 2023 student



Activities on and off campus

During their fourth day at Mini-U, students had the opportunity to tour several UVic departments, use the climbing wall at the Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities, visit the Royal BC Museum, and take part in a water fight, karaoke and talent show.





“The chaperones were extremely helpful and extremely fun to hang out with.”

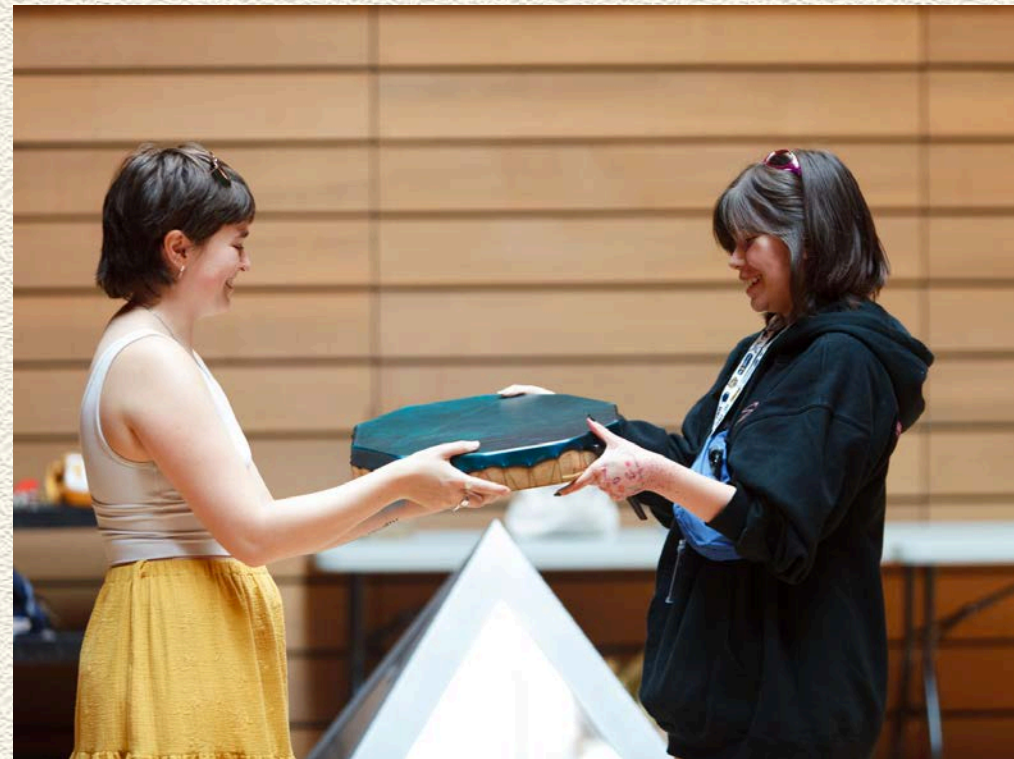
Mini-U 2023 student



Recognition celebration

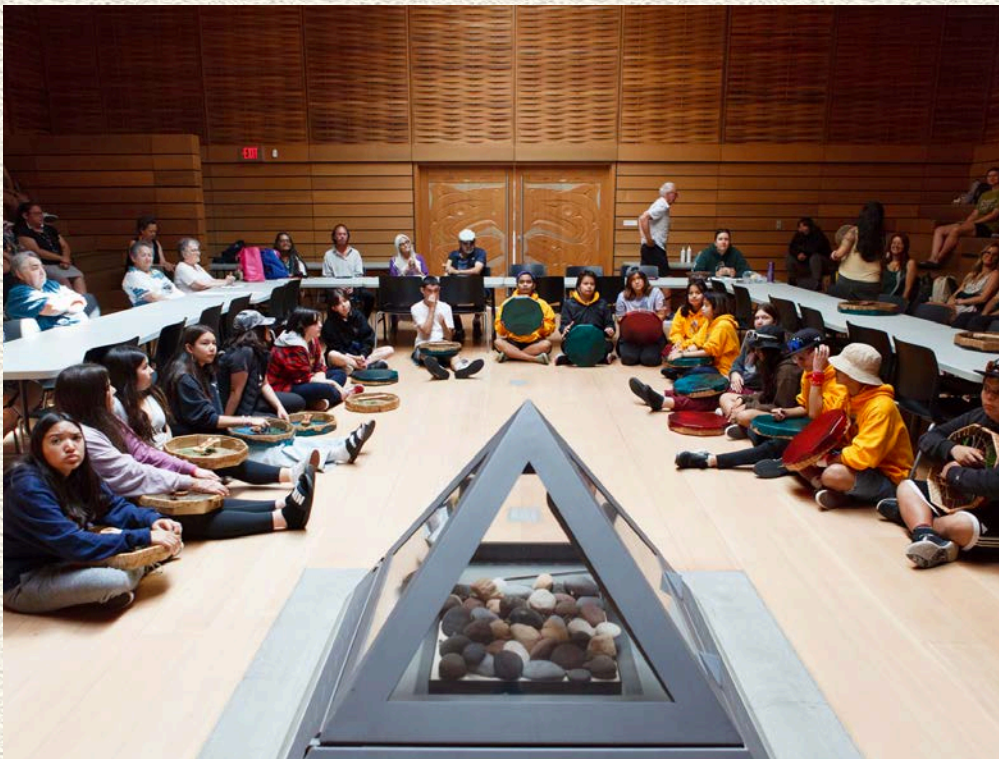
To conclude the event and reflect on the past week, a recognition ceremony was held to honour the students and congratulate them for the courage, strength, and knowledge they brought to the campus during the Mini-University Summer Camp.

Attendees included Elders, students, their families, IACE staff, Lalita Kines from the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous, and University of Victoria President Kevin Hall.



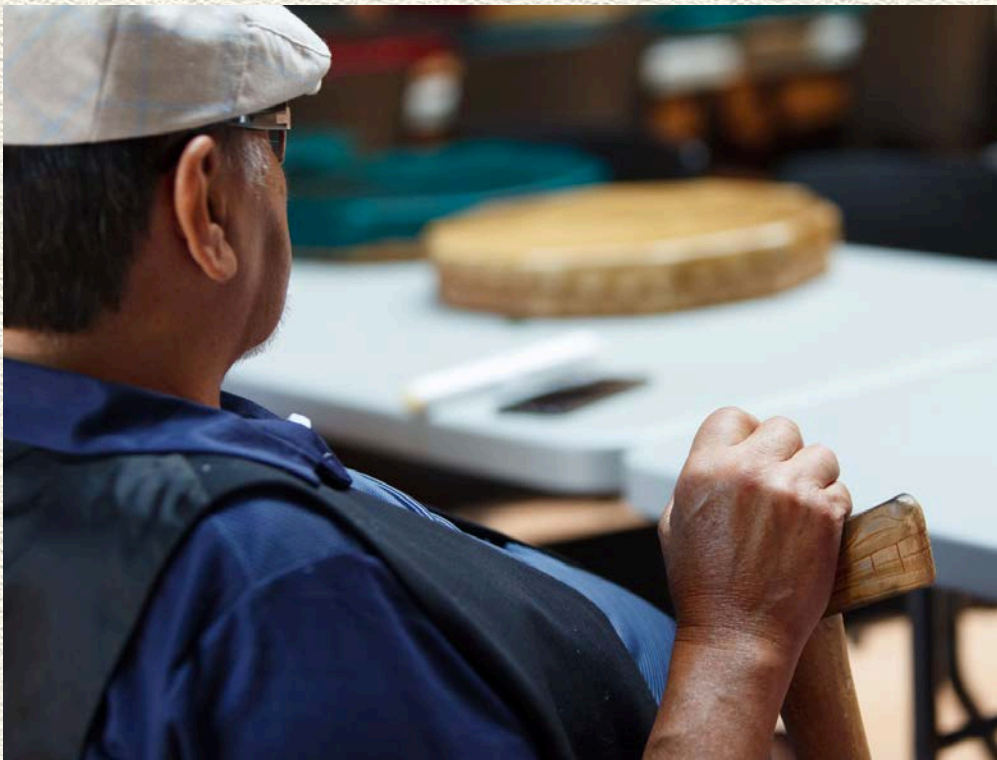
Day 5











“I had an incredible time and I am so grateful to the students and others who made this camp what it was.”

Mini-U 2023 student





**University
of Victoria**

For more information, please contact:

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