

UPDATE

**A Magazine for UNBC
Alumni and Friends**
– Fall 2017

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UNBC UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Fifth-year Environmental Engineering students (from left) Fatima Ansari, Leon Kennedy and Taspia Raka are using data and experiences from the SCDP as part of their research into the feasibility of a district energy system in Vanderhoof. Read more about the SCDP on Page 11.



Our Future is Leadership

A message from UNBC President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Daniel J. Weeks

Responsive.

It's become a word used to describe a website that looks great on various devices.

But at UNBC, it's part of our DNA. Over the past few months, we've seen remarkable responses to varied

circumstances. We'll tell you about many of these in this issue of UPDATE. From our remarkable response to the wildfire crisis or the continued flow of donations in support of our Northern Leadership Campaign, to students coming together to bring other students to UNBC from war-torn countries or a professor applying his unique knowledge

in support of wildlife in distress, this community continues to amaze me.

This year, we followed up our string of successes in the annual Maclean's Magazine rankings of Canadian universities. We finished second in our category, the 10th straight year we've finished in the top three. No other university in our category can say that. We also debuted on the prestigious Times Higher Education World University Rankings, finishing in the top four per cent of universities worldwide. Clearly, word of UNBC's excellence is spreading.

I recently saw a quote that provides further inspiration for all of us. Canadian tennis star Eugenie Bouchard says "I try and do the right thing each week, and the ranking will look after itself."

Clearly, the work we're all doing each week as part of the UNBC community, and our responsive nature to global challenges and opportunities, is forging a stronger University.

UNBC President Dr. Daniel Weeks and Prince George Mayor Lyn Hall are joined by members of UNBC's World University Service of Canada (WUSC) student-led organization. Through the Student Refugee Program, they give other students the chance to continue their education at UNBC and make Canada their new home.



Search & Rescue

Faculty, graduates deploy heart-warming rescue effort

From discovering new ways to mitigate moose-vehicle collisions to exploring the diet of moose in UNBC's Aleza Lake Research Forest, Senior Lab Instructor Dr. Roy Rea has spent his career examining Canada's most famous ungulate.

So it was no surprise that when two orphaned neonatal moose were in danger this spring, the call went out to one of UNBC's resident moose experts to lead the rescue effort. Rea, along with two UNBC alumni and other community members, helped rescue the calves and ensure their safe transport to the Northern Lights Wildlife Society in Smithers.

The rescue began with a text message on May 20 from Northern Lights co-owner Angelika Langen, who told Rea of a report of a moose-vehicle collision that took the life of a cow moose, but left two surviving baby moose without their mother. Rea contacted the woman who made the report and discovered it was his former student and UNBC graduate Amanda Mjolsness.

Mjolsness had marked the location on Northwood Pulpmill Road where the collision occurred and Rea began tramping through the bush, doing his best cow moose call.

During the search, Rea met Joe Myatovic, who got his brother Phil to help. Phil eventually located the calves later that day, but the young moose were in critical condition.

"They were beyond being on their last legs," Rea says. "They were both lying down and neither had the energy to stand up."

Rea took the calves to the Ospika Animal Hospital, where attending veterinarian and UNBC graduate Dr. Jennifer McLachlan helped get the two calves healthy enough for transport.

Under the care of Langen and Northern Lights staff, the young sister and brother have returned to health.

With declining moose populations in B.C.'s central interior, Rea said saving the calves helps in a very small way to secure a healthy moose population for the future.

"Each and every one of these calves are worth their weight in gold," he said.



Senior Laboratory Instructor Dr. Roy Rea cradles an orphaned moose calf after helping to rescue it and its sibling this spring. After receiving treatment in Prince George, the calves were transported to the Northern Lights Wildlife Society in Smithers.



Creating Bonds Through Education

Students send message with handmade birch bark canoe

Jacey Wolfe felt a sense of pride as she watched a birch bark canoe glide through the water.

Built by Wolfe, an Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management student, and her classmates as part of an experiential learning field school, the canoe floated gracefully on Ferguson Lake as a symbol of collaboration, cultural identity and shared history. Students in the field school combined classroom teaching on Cree and Métis culture and the history of French-speaking people in Northern B.C. with the hands-on process of building the canoe.

“To know that our canoe actually floats and we all did it as group, is a great feeling,” Wolfe says. “Some really great bonds were created among the students and instructors working together on the canoe.”

The project began with a desire by Le Cercle des Canadiens Français de Prince

George to use the 150th anniversary of Canadian confederation to further explore the history of French-speaking people in Northern B.C. They secured a grant from Heritage Canada to launch the project and collaborated with UNBC and Two Rivers Gallery to deliver it. The course was also supported through donations to UNBC’s Undergraduate Experiential Service Learning program.

“Building a canoe is a different type of knowledge and it helps you better appreciate what you are learning in the classroom.”

“The process of building the canoe gave the students insights into what it would have been like in the 19th century in Fort George,” says Anthropology Professor Dr. Michel Bouchard. “Building a canoe

is a different type of knowledge and it helps you better appreciate what you are learning in the classroom.”

Expert birch bark canoe builder Marcel Labelle came from Mattawa, Ont., to teach the hands-on portion of the class. Students learned every step of the process: from finding roots to attach parts of the canoe together and stitching the birch bark, to splitting the sheathing by hand and sealing the canoe with spruce gum.

Labelle said the name of the canoe, The Indian Act 2017, is a reflection of the ongoing project of Canada. The Indian Act, he says, is rooted in our history, but is something that needs to be improved.

“This group will be carrying the message of this canoe forward,” Labelle says. “This canoe is a tool they can use to talk about the Indian Act and this beautiful craft will support them when they have those discussions.”

Examining Impacts

Team focused on health, community and environmental aspects of resource development

Mining, oil and gas extraction, and other resource development activities are important economic drivers, but how can we best work together to prevent possible adverse impacts and optimize benefits from such projects?

UNBC’s Dr. Margot Parkes and a team of partners from across Canada have set out to explore that question as part of a \$2 million five-year study that will focus on rural, remote and Indigenous communities. The project is funded through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

“Our research team will look at the impacts of resource development as a whole, including health, community and environmental considerations,” says Parkes, Health Sciences associate professor and Canada Research Chair in Health, Ecosystems and Society.

“Exploring ways to work together across

sectors and jurisdictions is a key part of this project, as well as working with partners from across the country and globe.”

The team of more than 60 researchers is working together as the ECHO Network (Environment, Community, Health, Observatory) and draws on expertise spanning health, social and natural sciences, including UNBC co-lead and professor Dr. Henry Harder, Dr. Donald B. Rix BC Leadership Chair for Aboriginal Environmental Health, and other UNBC colleagues. The research also draws on experience from four regional cases (two in B.C. and one each in Alberta and New Brunswick).

“We have a lot to learn about how to work together on these kinds of issues,” says Parkes. “The aim is to take notice of issues in advance so that we can take action to enhance benefits and minimize harms.”

Building from a current understanding of impact assessment, indicators and lived experiences, the research will focus on better recognizing and responding to cumulative impacts arising from ongoing resource development.

The research team is led by a steering committee comprised of different sectors, disciplines and communities, co-chaired by Dr. Parkes and Dr. Sandra Allison, Northern Health chief medical health officer. Partners include Northern Health, First Nations Health Authority, Simon Fraser University, University of Alberta (U of A), Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, Université de Moncton, Battle River Watershed Alliance (Alberta), the New Brunswick Environmental Network, and others from across Canada and the world (including New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific).

UNBC’s Dr. Margot Parkes and ECHO partner Dr. Lars Hallstrom (U of A) visiting Alberta’s Battle River watershed. Photo courtesy of U of A.



A Breath of Fresh Air

UNBC research identifies source of improved air quality

The air in Prince George is getting cleaner and new analysis by a team of UNBC researchers suggests the city's industrial sector deserves much of the credit.

Environmental Science Professor Dr. Peter Jackson and a group of students analyzed fine particulate matter (PM2.5, particles less than 2.5 microns in diameter or 1/20th the width of a human hair) air quality data in Prince George. They discovered that the most dramatic improvements in air quality have come when the wind pushes the air from the heavy industrial zone into the city centre.

The students took 12 years' worth of air quality data collected at the Plaza 400 site in downtown Prince George and analyzed it, employing a new statistical tool that uses the R open-source programming language.

Jackson and the students found that although the highest overall values of particulate matter still occur when the wind comes from the east, that wind direction had the largest relative and absolute decrease in particulate matter. Among the findings are that fine particulate matter decreased overall by

29 per cent during the 12 years, but that was primarily driven by decreases of 35 per cent when the wind came from the east.

Studies Institute Research Extension Note, *Trends in Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5) Concentrations in Prince George, British Columbia, Canada.*

“It was a really unique experience being published as a student”

“We know that industry, especially the pulp mills, have been spending hundreds of millions of dollars on upgrades that reduce the amount of particulate matter they release into the air,” Jackson says. “It has been frustrating not being able to detect that in the actual monitoring data, but this study suggests that what they are doing is working.”

Jackson and the students published their findings as a peer-reviewed UNBC Natural Resources and Environmental

“It was a really unique experience being published as a student,” says Cody Birch, a fourth-year Geography student. “It was a little nerve-racking knowing that your work is going to be published. At first I was not overly certain of myself and my skills, but with the support of everyone in the class it turned out very well.”

From left, Cody Birch, Jordan Pawluk, Dr. Peter Jackson, Taras Tereshchak, Brayden Nilson and James Albino (not pictured), published a paper based on a class research project analyzing 12 years of Prince George air quality data.



Emergency Response

UNBC steps up to support wildfire evacuees



When B.C. experienced its worst wildfire season ever in 2017, UNBC found itself immersed in an emergency response situation unlike any it had ever faced. The aftermath is still affecting students and communities from the Cariboo and Chilcotin regions.

Within 24 hours of the B.C. government issuing a provincial state of emergency in early July, UNBC quickly responded, establishing an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) on campus, and collaborating with the City of Prince George, Northern Health and Emergency Management BC. The EOC managed UNBC's response, provided updates to senior administration, and kept the University community up to date.

Top right, Eric Depaneau, was on the front lines at the fires and documented his experience on Instagram. Bottom left, cots were set up on campus to host firefighters. Bottom right, staff deploy a subfloor on the indoor soccer pitch at the Northern Sport centre, allowing the facility to be used for lodging by evacuees.

The University immediately stepped up to the plate, providing space for group lodging for both evacuees from the Cariboo region and out-of-province firefighters.

“Our response was remarkable,” said UNBC President Dr. Daniel Weeks. “The UNBC community provided expertise to help partner agencies and worked through many nights providing service across a wide range of tasks.”

The Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre's gymnasium provided group lodging for almost 200 evacuees who were under evacuation order, while the field house was set up to house 400 more evacuees if the need arose. The flooring in the field house was comprised of 1,000 sheets of plywood, enough to build four two-storey houses.

The Neyoh student residence accommodated 60 seniors from a Williams Lake assisted living facility, while classrooms in and around

the Geoffrey R. Weller Library were transformed into sleeping quarters for out-of-province firefighters.

UNBC's social work and nursing faculty provided emergency social services immediately to the evacuees who arrived in the early stages of the evacuation order in the Cariboo region.

Working for the BC Wildfire Service, UNBC students were also on the front lines, battling the raging fires all summer before returning to class in September.

With the help of UNBC donors and champions, a special bursary was created for new and returning students in the Cariboo region who were affected by the wildfires. In total, 36 students received awards so they could continue their studies.

“I'm proud of all of our staff, faculty and students who played an important role in UNBC's response,” added Weeks.



Northern Leadership

The Campaign for UNBC

The public phase of UNBC's Northern Leadership Campaign launched on May 25 with a target to raise \$15 million for initiatives that will strengthen research and teaching excellence, inspire next generation leaders, and create local solutions with global impact.

Due to the generosity and philanthropic leadership of donors, UNBC is already well on its way to achieving and exceeding this goal.

Over the next three pages, you will learn about how some of these donations are helping our students and researchers achieve their goals. From a donation of climate-inspired art, to a campus infrastructure project capable of demonstrating sustainability to rural communities around the world, to an estate donation that is having a transformative impact on communities in the Nechako Lakes region, gifts to UNBC have a meaningful impact.

Follow **#northernleadership** and visit **unbc.ca/northern-leadership** to join us and learn how this Campaign is making a difference and advancing northern leadership to shape Canada's future.



K.A. Colorado has found a home for his masterpieces.

The internationally acclaimed artist recently donated some of his climate-inspired artwork to UNBC through the Northern Leadership Campaign, where he knows it will strengthen research and teaching excellence on the science surrounding climate change.

"I was searching for a place that I really thought was representative of a significant relationship to climate,"

Colorado says. "I believe in the impact this University is having through community-inspired research."

Colorado's connection to UNBC began in Rio Gallegos, a community in southern Argentina near South America's Patagonia ice fields, where he first met Geography Professor and Canada Research Chair in Glacier Change Dr. Brian Menounos.

The two share a passion for ice and snow. Through his art, Colorado can initiate discussions on the importance of deep

cold regions. Menounos approaches the same basic questions through a scientific lens.

"Art can send a strong message," Menounos said. "It does not always have to be a fancy graph or a sophisticated equation to get the point across about what the story is about."

UNBC's campus locations in Northern British Columbia also played an important symbolic role in the donation.

"Northern Canada is fundamental to the question of climate change because there are very few areas and latitudes that are proximate to glacier areas and areas of deep cold," Colorado said.

His art is now installed in two locations on the Prince George campus. Three paintings, titled *Iceberg with Airplanes*, *Twin Bergs in Warm Earth* and *Iceberg in Warm Earth* are displayed in the Bentley Centre along with two iceberg sculptures. The atrium of the Teaching and Learning Centre features Colorado's *60 Second Time-Lapse of the World*.

Evocative

Art Art donation connected to climate research



Artist and sculptor Ken Colorado poses in front of *60 Second Time-Lapse of the World* in the atrium of the Teaching and Learning Centre. Colorado donated the massive four-piece installation and other artwork because their climate-inspired messages complement UNBC research.

When Reuben and Janet Horwitz obtained their university degrees, they were the exception.

The couple, who graduated in 1923 and 1939 respectively, went to university at a time when only about one in 10 people completed a four-year degree program. That decision to pursue their post-secondary education had a profound impact on their lives and opened doors to professional success and personal growth.

After they passed on, the Horwitzes wanted to leave an educational legacy in their adopted hometown of Fort St. James. Through an estate contribution to the Northern Leadership Campaign, the Horwitzes are inspiring next-generation leaders by supporting scholarship and bursary growth.

The couple bequeathed nearly \$750,000 to UNBC to support students from Fort St. James and other communities in the Nechako Lakes region. The endowed awards will help at least eight students every year, forever, through bursaries

worth \$3,000 each. It's an incredible legacy, according to Don Boulton, a close family friend.

"Reuben and Janet believed that education was the key to opening the doors of a life leading to fulfillment and happiness," he says. "If their legacy can give a few young people the opportunity to reach their full potential, then I think their wishes will have come true."

The Reuben Horwitz Memorial Bursary, created after Janet passed away in 2014, began helping UNBC students from Fort St. James and surrounding communities in the fall of 2016. Reuben predeceased Janet in 1989.

After a successful career in Portland, Reuben and Janet retired to Fort St. James in 1955 and Reuben built their home on Stuart Lake.

They lived in Northern B.C. full time for a decade, and spent their summers in the community for another 30 years.

"Living in a log cabin that they built with their own hands beside a beautiful lake among friends from all walks of life were the happiest years of their lives," Boulton recalls. "Their university educations provided them with the prosperity to be able to live their dreams and provide an educational opportunity for future generations. They would be thrilled that they have been able to help so many outstanding students attend UNBC."

First-year student Sydney Thompson of Fort St. James is a 2017 recipient of the Reuben Horwitz Memorial Bursary. She says the award will help her pay for tuition, allowing her to keep her focus on her studies.



The Power of Education

Legacy gift transforming Nechako Lakes communities

Pellet Power

Energy system reduces carbon output, saves money

The transition to a low-carbon economy requires local solutions to global challenges. In the North, one such challenge is to find ways to heat buildings efficiently, sustainably and cost-effectively.

The Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project (SCDP) at UNBC is doing just that. By using wood pellets as the primary heating fuel for four campus buildings, UNBC is reducing its carbon output, saving money and demonstrating how other institutions and communities can reduce their fossil fuel consumption.

"This project is allowing us to measure how much it costs to convert heat and hot water sources from natural gas and electricity to wood, to examine how efficient a district system can be, and discover any other benefits to making the change," says UNBC Assistant Director, Facilities Dr. David Claus.

Through the Northern Leadership Campaign, industry and government partners joined UNBC in the \$2.2 million project. The Province of British Columbia,

the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition, TransCanada Corporation and the BC Bioenergy Network have also made funding commitments. Pacific BioEnergy is donating the wood pellets that fuel the system and helping UNBC invest in further energy related equipment.

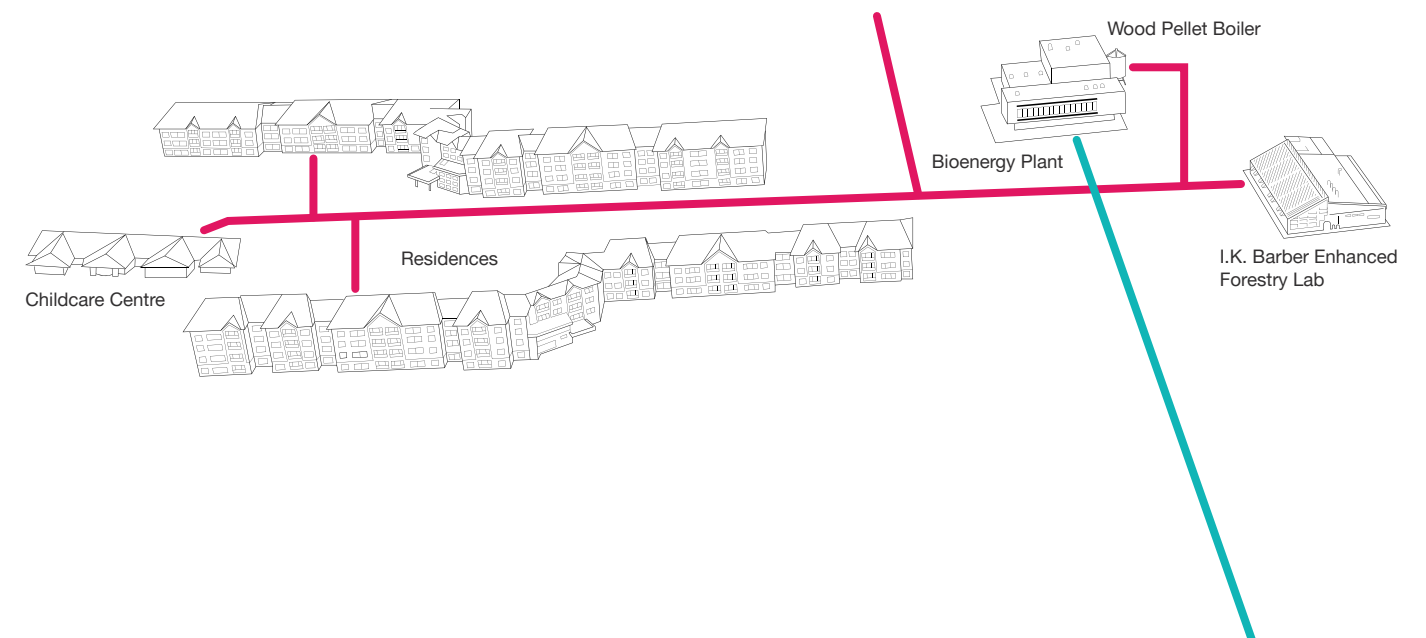
The wood pellet boiler is the primary heat source for the hot water loop. Energy transfer stations in each building extract heat from the water and use that heat to keep the buildings warm and provide on-demand hot water.

The early results demonstrate the system's efficiency and cost-effectiveness. In the first year, with only one residence building and the I.K. Barber Enhanced Forestry Lab connected, energy savings topped \$95,000. Projections indicate the SCDP will result in a 350-tonne decrease in emissions each year, equivalent to taking 110 cars off the road.

The UNBC system uses wood pellets, but other options include geo-exchange systems to pull heat out of the ground, excess heat produced by industrial plants or, in certain climates, air-source heat pumps that pull heat out of the air.

"Once you have converted your building from natural gas and electricity to a low-temperature hot water system, you have the luxury of switching heating sources," Claus explains.

The Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project (denoted by the pink pipes) connects the I.K. Barber Enhanced Forestry Lab, the two residence buildings and the UNBC Childcare Centre to the wood pellet boiler. The low-temperature loop provides the heat and hot water for the four buildings and the system can be expanded to handle future campus growth. The blue pipe denotes the district heating system for the other buildings in the main campus loop, heated by the award-winning Bioenergy Plant.



UNBC In The News

UNBC people and stories making headlines

Banting Fellow explores early intervention therapies

UNBC postdoctoral researcher Dr. Alison Gerlach is exploring how early intervention therapy services and programs, such as children's occupational therapy, speech language pathology, and physiotherapy, can be provided in ways that are responsive, culturally safe, and effective in Indigenous communities and families.

"There is a lot of research showing the earlier the intervention, the more benefits it can have for children who have developmental delays or disabilities," she explained. "But a lot of Indigenous children are not being identified and not getting services until they are in Kindergarten or Grade 1."

In June, Gerlach became the second UNBC researcher to receive a Banting Fellowship from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.



Paying innovation forward to students

Programmer analyst Warren Marusiak, senior database administrator Trevor Fuson and systems administrator James Pohl from UNBC's Information Technology department were recognized nationally in June for creating a local solution that benefits everyone at the University.

The trio took home the 2017 Canadian University Council Chief Information Officers Innovation Award for their work implementing the Docker environment. Their work resulted in an automated system that reduces the need for manual updates, which in turn frees up staff time and increases reliability of the system, providing a mechanism allowing UNBC to better withstand and recover from IT failures and respond to technological changes

They dedicated their \$1,000 prize to support the innovative work of the UNBC Synthetic Biology Club helping the student team take their biological invention that addresses multiple antibiotic resistance to the international Genetically Engineered Machines competition in Boston this fall.

Funding supports advanced research and techniques

Dr. Rob Olson, a Northern Medical Program faculty member, received up to \$270,000 in funding over three years from the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) to examine the use of new advanced radiation therapy techniques for cancer that has spread to the bone.

Working with partners including UNBC, UBC, the BC Cancer Agency, and stakeholders from across Canada,

Olson's research will compare patients' reported outcomes of both treatment benefits and side effects, and will compare differences in use and availability of these techniques across Canada, starting with a partnership in the three Atlantic provinces.

"The focus will be on determining if efficiencies in service can be improved, while also helping to enhance care and quality of life by identifying patients

most likely to benefit from advanced radiotherapy techniques," said Olson.

The funding is part of the MSFHR's inaugural Health Professional-Investigator Program. Olson was one of 11 recipients for the 2017 awards, and the only researcher selected from Northern B.C.



Accessing secure data made easier

Researchers at UNBC and around the region now have a secure connection to population, household survey and administrative microdata from Statistics Canada through the UNBC Research Data Centre.

Prior to the opening of the UNBC Research Data Centre, researchers from Northern B.C. travelled to larger centres, including Vancouver and Ottawa, to access the secure computers necessary to conduct their work. Now faculty members, graduate students and other researchers in the community that are approved for access can use that same survey, census and administrative microdata in the Centre located on the first floor of the Geoffrey R. Weller Library at UNBC's Prince George campus.



Ryan named Provost

Dr. Dan Ryan is UNBC's new Provost and Vice President Academic.

Since September 2015, he has played a key leadership role as interim Provost in developing the University's new integrated planning and academic planning process, formed through engagement with and input from students, faculty, staff and the broader University community.

Ryan leads comprehensive strategic planning and works to ensure the implementation of academic priorities at UNBC. He earned an undergraduate degree in Biology, and Master and Doctoral degrees in Applied Statistics, all from the University of Guelph. Prior to his role as interim Provost, Ryan served as Dean of UNBC's College of Science and Management, and as Dean of the College of Science at the University of the Fraser Valley.



Magazine reflects on Northern B.C.

UNBC English Professor and poet Dr. Rob Budde, and UNBC alumna, poet, and English instructor Kara-lee MacDonald have put their creative heads together to publish a new magazine, *ThimbleBerry*.

The magazine explores and reflects on various themes around the rich cultural landscape of Northern B.C. The inaugural edition, published in July, features columns, prose, poetry, arts reviews, arts features and book reviews from 23 different contributors.

Thanks to funding support from UNBC and an anonymous B.C. foundation, *ThimbleBerry* will be published twice per year. It's available at Books & Company, the UNBC Bookstore, and at bookstores and art galleries across Northern B.C.



Researcher appointed to Royal Society

Dr. Sarah de Leeuw, a Northern Medical Program and Geography associate professor, has been appointed as a member of the Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. She is one of 70 researchers from across the country slated to be inducted to Canada's first national system of multidisciplinary recognition for the emerging generation of Canadian intellectual leadership.

Her areas of interest include the medical humanities and determinants of marginalized peoples' health.

In addition to her research, de Leeuw is an accomplished author. She is a finalist for the 2017 Governor General's Literary Awards to be announced in November. Her book *Where It Hurts*, a collection of personal essays that reflects on the challenging realities of life in Northern B.C., is nominated in the Non-Fiction category.

Thinking Beyond the Classroom

TEDx UNBC inspires deep discussions, connections

Thought leadership is a hallmark of the UNBC experience.

A group of UNBC student and community leaders, faculty, alumni and the public gathered at the Canfor Theatre to be inspired and motivated by the powerful messages and voices they heard during the inaugural TEDx UNBC Conference.

The sold-out event featured seven live speakers who sparked thoughtfulness and integration of ideas around the theme of dispelling misconceptions. They included UNBC alumni Leona Prince, Cori Ramsay, Dahne Harding and Dr. Nadine Caron, an associate professor of surgery with the Northern Medical Program. Other speakers included Penny Jones, Shobha Sharma and Seth Shelley.

It was just one more example of how UNBC students, staff, faculty and alumni are making an impact locally, nationally and internationally.

“UNBC is such an important part of Prince George, and TED is a major player in the ideas industry,” explained TEDx UNBC president and lead organizer Grant Bachand. “Prince George has world-class talent and all of us in the city know that. TEDx allows us to showcase our talent to the world and it made sense to have it at a world-class institution such as UNBC.”

For Bachand, a UNBC graduate student, TEDx UNBC has been a labour of love for almost a year. He received a license to host the event in December 2016 and immediately created an organizing team of students, UNBC faculty, staff and alumni, and various community members also played a role in the organization.

Having students involved in leadership roles was key to the success of TEDx UNBC, Bachand said.

“Not only does having students as part of an event build the student experience at UNBC, but they bring a youthful passion and drive that is an asset to any event.”

TEDx UNBC sponsors were also important, including UNBC, the City of Prince George, the College of New Caledonia and RAJ Fabricating and Contracting. The Prince George Chamber of Commerce, SpeeDee Mills Printing and Settings Event Design and Décor provided in-kind sponsorship.

With the overwhelming positive response that TEDx UNBC organizers received, Bachand hopes to see it return.

“If this event taught me anything, it was that there is demand for an event like TEDx UNBC in Prince George,” he said. “We are building a community here and hope it will keep growing long into the future.”

If there are examples of UNBC graduates making a difference as leaders in their professions and in their communities, the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Award Winners would fit the criteria to a T.



Dr. Ronny Priefer



Leona Prince

In May, Western New England University chemistry professor Dr. Ronny Priefer, educator Leona Prince, and computer scientist Dr. Baljeet Malhotra received Professional Excellence Awards. Community champion and long-time volunteer Tamara Sweet was also recognized with a Community Service Award.

“The four Distinguished Alumni Award winners have all demonstrated excellence, whether it is in the laboratory, the classroom, business or through giving back,” said UNBC President Dr. Daniel Weeks.

Priefer, who grew up in Prince George and earned his Bachelor of Science (Chemistry) in 1998, is a Professor of Medicinal Chemistry at Western New England University in Springfield, Mass., in the College of Pharmacy.

An educator, innovator and researcher, he is the chief scientific officer with New England Breath Technologies, a bio-technology company he co-founded. He also supports a UNBC award, the R. Priefer Prize in Organic Chemistry for a promising undergraduate chemistry student.

Prince holds multiple degrees from UNBC. She earned a Bachelor of Science (Biology, and First Nations Studies) in 2004, a Bachelor of Education in 2006, and a Master of Education (Multidisciplinary Leadership) in 2017.

Prior to beginning her new role this fall as School District No. 91 vice-principal (Aboriginal Education) in Vanderhoof, Prince provided leadership at the school, district, and community as the vice-principal at Nusdeh Yoh (House of the Future), a public elementary Aboriginal choice school in Prince George.

Malhotra, who earned his Master of Science (Computer Science) in 2005, is an award-winning computer scientist and leading researcher who has made outstanding professional contributions to his field.

He was the founding member and research director at SAP, Vancouver and the founder and vice-president research of Black Duck Software (Canada). He recently established a new research fellowship at UNBC.

Sweet holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree in International and General Business that she earned in 2004. She devotes a significant amount of her personal time, effort and dedication to her numerous volunteer positions in Prince George.

Making a Difference

UNBC alumni recognized for their outstanding leadership

Dr. Baljeet Malhotra



Tamara Sweet



Class Notes

Be part of class notes: visit unbc.ca/alumni

1998

Philip Peters (BComm Accounting) recently completed his LL.M. (Master of Laws) in tax law at Osgoode Hall Law School. Philip lives in Edmonton.



2000

Monty Horton (BSc NRM Resource Recreation) is the Lands Manager with K'omoks First Nation in Qualicum Beach.

2001

Anne-Marie Brennan (BA International Studies) is a Policy and Standards Analyst with ATB Investor Services in Calgary.

Michael Reed (BComm General Business) and his wife Li-ching are proud to announce the birth of their third son, John-Michael Li Frederick Reed, born in May. Michael and his family live in Vanderhoof.

2003

Alison McNeill (BA General) is a secondary school teacher with School District No. 57 in Prince George.

Craig Metcalf (BComm International Business) is the 3rd Party and Major Distribution Director with Standard Life Investments in London, UK.

2004

Rhonda Lynn Thommasson (BA Northern Studies) is a Child and Youth Wellness Worker with the McLeod Lake Indian Band. She lives in Prince George.

2005

Christina Doll (BA English) is a Workforce Development Officer for the City of Prince George.



2006

Laverne MacKenzie (MSW) is an Addiction and Mental Health Therapist with Alberta Health Services in Edmonton.

Terry Teegee (BSc NRM Forestry 2006) was elected as the regional chief for the BC Assembly of First Nations.

2007

Jessie Laflamme (BComm General Business) is the Owner of College Heights Fitness, as well as the Branch Manager for Interstate Battery Systems in Prince George.

2009

Tyler Clarke (BA English) was inspired by his experience at UNBC's *Over the Edge* newspaper. He has been writing and editing for publications in Western Canada, and is now a reporter-photographer for the *Brandon Sun* in Manitoba.

Brian Burleigh (BSc Computer Science) is a network specialist with ESW IT in Fort St. John.

Rohail Masood (MBA) is an Accounting Manager with Kabafusion in Irvine, Calif.

2010

Roseanne Schuster (MSc Community Health Science) is the Director of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning for the Global Impact Collaboratory at Arizona State University, researching cross-cultural maternal and child food and water insecurity in the context of climate change.

Sunny Kullar (BComm Finance and Accounting) is the Chief Financial Officer for the Brink Group of Companies in Prince George.



2011

Vonda Robinson (BEd Elementary Education) recently travelled to France with a group of Charles Hays Secondary School students for the Vimy Ridge 100th Anniversary. Vonda is a Grade 7 teacher at Prince Rupert Middle School.

JoJo Beattie (BA International Studies) is the Public Relations and Communications Co-ordinator for the Canadian office of international charity Mercy Ships, which operates the world's largest volunteer-driven hospital ship, providing medical and dental care primarily in West Africa.

2012

Carol Bob (BEd Secondary Education) teaches grades 10 and 11 math in the Coast Mountain School District No. 82 in Gitsegukla, B.C.

Emily Wale (BHSc Community Population Health 2012) is the Manager, Chronic Conditions Support Program for the Yukon Government in Whitehorse.

Ivan Lys (BScN 2012) is a Registered Nurse with RockDoc Consulting, providing medical care and assessment for the Vancouver Police Department.

2013

Carleigh Benoit (MA Disability Management) is the Manager of Work Re-integration and Accommodation at the University of British Columbia in Kelowna.

Shane Doddridge (BA Geography) is a Geographic Information Systems Technician for the 'Tsilhqot'in National Government in Williams Lake. Shane also works as a consulting brewmaster for Jackson's Social Club & Brewhouse in 100 Mile House.



James Casey (MA International Studies) is the Manager of the Fraser Program with Bird Studies Canada in Delta.

Email

Did you know you have your very own UNBC alumni email address?

It's professional. It shows you have a UNBC degree. And it can be forwarded to other email addresses.

Learn more at unbc.ca/alumni/email-life



2014

Qincheng Yue (BComm Accounting) plans to return from Chongqing, China to pursue his Accounting Master's degree.

2015

Anna Brink (BA English) is the Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator for Tourism Prince George.

Samantha Shorson (BSW First Nations Specialization) is an Aboriginal Child and Youth Care Worker with School District No. 36 in Surrey.

2016

Breane Healey (BComm Human Resources) recently moved to Mackenzie to take a human resources position with Canfor.

Danielle Olson (BA Anthropology) is a Child and Youth Worker at Milieu Family Services in Vancouver.

2017

Kaylee Tower (BComm International Business and Marketing) is an Emergency Management Technician with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General in Prince George.



Enino Nicolía Izu (MSW) is a Case Manager at the Brain Injured Group in Prince George.



Barry Wong

Honorary Alumnus

Barry Wong, manager of UNBC Copy Services, was named Honorary Alumnus for his years as a behind-the-scenes contributor to the success of many on campus. Wong has helped countless students, staff and faculty members complete their copy and print jobs to the highest standard. Wong's dedication and ability to meet tight deadlines has saved many students who needed a project or report printed on short notice. His charm and exceptional customer service has made him a fixture on campus, with many graduates knowing him by name.

"I am very honoured to be the recipient of this prestigious Alumni award. I am proud and grateful to work at UNBC and interact with so many outstanding students. I am always happy to learn of the triumphs and achievements of UNBC alumni," said Wong.

Ken and Rhonda McIntosh

Honorary Alumni

Ken and Rhonda McIntosh were named Honorary Alumni for their long-time support of the University and the Timberwolves athletics program. Through their business, KJM Sales Ltd, the McIntosh family have provided financial support for athletic and leadership scholarships, the Adopt-A-Timberwolf program and the Wolf Club program among many others. They are also regular attendees at the Timberwolves basketball and soccer games, bringing a personal connection with student-athletes that the University values immensely.



New Affinity Partner belairdirect



UNBC is pleased to announce a new agreement with belairdirect, a Canadian car and home insurance company. Alumni and their families are now eligible for exclusive discounts on car and home insurance.

Affinity partnerships allow us to fund UNBC Alumni Scholarships and Bursaries and expand alumni programming. By supporting our affinity partners, you are also supporting UNBC students and your fellow alumni.

For more information go to unbc.ca/alumni

Alumni Council 2017-2018

Dori Alger, MBA 2010

Carolynne Burkholder-James,
BA Political Science 2005

Dhruv Desai,
MSc Computer Science 2016

Danielle Dysserinck,
BA Political Science 2015

Paul Gruner,
BSc Psychology 2000, MBA 2012

Wendel Schwab, BA English 2016

Andrew Seabrook,
BComm Accounting 2009

Marianne Sprague,
BA Economics 2002,
BA First Nations Studies 2008

Jennifer Young,
BA Geography 2000, BSW 2007

Dear fellow alumni and friends,

Over the last year, the Governance committee of the UNBC Alumni Association Board of Directors has been working hard to determine the best path forward. It has been a long standing objective of the Alumni Association to work more closely with the University, and UNBC has also wanted to engage graduates more directly in the advancement of the university. The implications of the new Societies Act in BC served as an additional impetus for action.

After extensive consultation by the Board and with UNBC, the Governance committee recommended the formation of an Alumni Council. This new structure will allow the Alumni leadership to continue in a more elevated position within the university and be tied more directly to its advancement. In early September, the Board accepted those recommendations and began the process of transition from the incorporated Alumni Association of UNBC to the UNBC Alumni Council. The inaugural meeting took place in October, and the Council will meet quarterly.

This new structure will allow UNBC's Office of University Advancement to bring greater focus to alumni relations programs and is a positive step forward for all graduates. This month UNBC is launching an affinity program with belairdirect providing discounted home and auto insurance to all grads. An alumni ambassador pilot program was launched this fall engaging graduates in student recruitment. Watch for a new e-newsletter, alumni events, and more developments that will serve you and grow the value of your UNBC degree.

With this transition, the Alumni Council now holds a unique place within the structure and community of UNBC. The Council has the responsibility of representing the collective voice of the alumni body in governance, as referenced by the University Act (BC); as well as, participating in the engagement of alumni in their lifelong mutually-beneficial relationship with UNBC. In the next year, look for opportunities to participate on the Council and within the other governing bodies of the University, as well as events, and programs specifically aimed to UNBC alumni. All graduates are eligible for membership on the Council. For more information go to unbc.ca/alumni/council.

The Council members are excited to raise the profile of UNBC alumni and continue the tradition of an engaged and strong alumni community.

Sincerely,

Andrew Seabrook (BComm '09)
Chair, UNBC Alumni Council



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Call 1.844.850.0285 or visit **unbc.ca/alumni** to learn more.

¹The following persons are eligible, provided they reside in British Columbia: University of Northern British Columbia Alumni, Family relatives residing with the Alumni, and Children of the Alumni.

²The savings amounts are based on filed and approved discounts and rates. These amounts may vary based on each person's individual insurance profile.

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