



Community Contacts Newsletter

University of Northern British Columbia

March 18, 2009

Volume 5, Number 2

**"Northern
Strength to
Northern
Strength."**

Welcome

We are pleased to present the March 2009 newsletter of the Community Development Institute (CDI) at UNBC. We hope that this quarterly newsletter will help to keep you informed about developments at the CDI. If you have any comments on how we can improve the newsletter, or if you have news that you would like us to include in our next edition, feel free to contact our coordinator at manson@unbc.ca

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The CDI at UNBC

The Community Development Institute at UNBC is interested in two fundamental issues for communities in northern BC: community capacity and community development. By undertaking research, sharing information, and supporting education outreach, the Institute is becoming an important partner to communities interested in making informed decisions about their own futures.

The Institute emphasizes the importance of capacity-building, collaboration, learning, and complementarity. Research that is undertaken balances academic credibility with practical relevance. Beyond research, the Institute is involved in outreach activities and serves as a conduit to expand local educational opportunities related to community development. For more information please visit: <http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/>

Our changing orientation of community development assistance

In the 1950s, much of Canada's community development and regional economic development policy and programming was imposed from the 'top-down' by governments or their affiliated agencies. Through the 1980s, there was a move towards more 'bottom-up' or grassroots community based economic development activity. Analysis has highlighted that neither of these uni-directional approaches was able to sustain long term success. More recently, research at the CDI, as well as that conducted nationally and internationally, is highlighting the need for a more blended and mutually supportive approach. Bottom-up community processes are especially important in identifying local assets and aspirations to help guide development debate, but these need to be complemented by supportive public policy in areas where senior governments hold key decision-making authority. Recent studies by the CDI reinforce the value of such a blended approach.

For further reading please see:

http://www.unbc.ca/assets/cdi/research/re_orient_report.pdf
<http://web.unbc.ca/geography/faculty/greg/research/edvs/>

Notices

BC Community Forest Association Annual General Meeting and Conference

The BC Community Forest Association and the City of Port Alberni invite you to attend the BCCFA Annual General Meeting and Conference May 28 to May 31.

Conference information is available on the BCCFA website at:

<http://www.bccfa.ca/conferences.php>

Northwest Community College's House of Learning and Applied Research is hosting **Challenging the Paradigm 2009** June 21 -25 in Terrace. This summer, the focus will be on *community engagement, innovations in pedagogy, and successes*. Keynote speeches will frame the discussions of the most innovative practitioners.

For more information contact:

Jim McDonald (250)638-5470 jmdonald@nwcc.bc.ca
Anita Davis (250)635-6511 ext 5265 adavis@nwcc.bc.ca

Community Energy Association

The Community Energy Association, with the support of its partners including the Province of BC and the Union of BC Municipalities is the 'first stop' for local government leaders addressing energy sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction.
<http://www.communityenergy.bc.ca/>

Institute News

Bridges: An Arts & Culture Festival in Our City

The festival will take place at the University of Northern British Columbia on June 11th – 13th, 2009. There will be displays and performances of original work by Prince George visual artists, writers, and musicians; academic presentations, panel discussions on the cultural economy of small cities and the culture of small cities, with a focus on Prince George. Local artists and arts organizations will be in the spotlight as they share audiences, network, and build new partnerships.

The foundation for this project was laid in late 2005, when Thompson Rivers University (TRU) put together a Community-University Research Alliance (CURA). This proposal built off of an earlier very successful CURA project involving the arts community in Kamloops and TRU. The goal of this second CURA project was to work with other small cities including Prince George. The Community Development Institute at UNBC offered to coordinate UNBC's involvement.

For more information please visit: <http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/bridges.html>

"Space to Place: The Next Rural Economies" follow-up

In May 2008, the Community Development Institute at UNBC hosted 23 rural and small town scholars from 8 OECD countries who discussed possibilities regarding what our next rural economies will look like. The workshop was called "Space to Place: The Next Rural Economies" and was open to government and community participants.

One issue discussed at the workshop concerned the "creative class" and its impact in rural and small town places. Transition in the new global economy, and the emergence of the knowledge-based economy, is creating whole new sectors as key economic drivers. Most of these new sectors require an educated workforce to be successful. Attention to attracting and retaining this talented workforce is the focus of the "creative class" debate.

Chris Bryant, editor of the Canadian Journal of Regional Science, was at the workshop. He identified that his journal was just about to bring out a special issue on the Creative Class topic. Copies of this special issue have been obtained at a discount by the UNBC bookstore and are available for purchase.

The cost is \$26.70 each. To order, contact: Sandra Wray, Book Buyer, UNBC Bookstore, 960-6421 swray@unbc.ca

Please reference: The Canadian Journal of Regional Science Vol. 30.

Revitalization: Fate and Choice: This publication focuses on comparative rural development in Canada and Japan. The electronic publication can be accessed at <http://revitalization.brandonu.ca> free of charge.

Community Speakers Series

The CDI is pleased to announce that the spring 2009 Community Speakers Series speaker will be Dr. Gail Fondahl, Vice President of Research at UNBC. The title of Dr. Fondahl's talk is "Building together: Community/UNBC research partnerships". Topics will include President Jago's New North Foundation initiative for a research trust, forest products and bio-energy projects, plus past projects including; Community Development Institute projects, as well as past UNBC Community University Research Alliance's.

Monday, April 06 at 7:00 pm at the Terrace Campus of Northwest Community College

Tuesday, April 07 at 7:00 pm at the Kitimat Valley Institute, Kitimat

Thursday, April 09 at 7:00 pm, Room 7-150, UNBC Prince George Campus

For information on past Community Speakers Series presentations please visit:
http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/speakers_series.html

If your community would like to co-host our next Community Speaker's Series event, please contact: Don Manson at manson@unbc.ca or phone (250) 960-5018.