

# THIS IS UNBC

FALL 2018



**UNBC** UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

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# This is UNBC

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

An outstanding post-secondary experience for students. A research culture that drives new knowledge and seeks solutions to the pressing issues of our time. A spirit of philanthropy. A dedication to the North, with a vision of becoming Canada's leading destination University. Graduates who are changing the world.

This is UNBC.

And that's why you'll note the title of our University magazine has changed.

Because, after all, we're doing more than simply updating you regarding what's happening at UNBC. We're writing about how your advocacy and support for the University is having a demonstrable impact on the North and the world.

During my first term as UNBC's president, our community has enjoyed success across a wide range of fronts, from student recruitment and retention, aboriginal relationships, and academic planning to donor support, research, new programming and facilities, and more.

For example, our first-ever comprehensive campaign raised \$21.4 million, far in excess of our original \$15 million goal (you can read more on pages 10–11). Those funds will support

students, researchers and programs at the University that will have far-reaching implications.

Our recent rankings in Maclean's magazine and from Times Higher Education are glowing references to the good things happening here. This year, we finished second in our category in Maclean's, marking the fifth straight year we placed in the top two, and 11 straight years in the top three. This consistency is a remarkable feat and testament to the support from UNBC's extended community. And Times Higher Education World University rankings saw us place in the top five per cent of Universities worldwide. We're competing with Universities that have hundreds of years under their belts. And we're faring well.

Looking to the future, we'll start to chart a course towards the University's 50th anniversary, Destination 2040. The work we do now will have a significant positive impact on future generations to come.

All of these things add up to our cumulative story as a University.

This is education. This is innovation. This is research. This is community.

**This is UNBC!**



# Calling to say Thank-You

## ***Student Calling Program Strengthens Relationships***

To paraphrase Stevie Wonder,

***We just called to say thank-you.***

***We just called to say***

***how much we care.***

***We just called to say thank-you.***

***And we mean it from the bottom of our hearts.***

UNBC connected with hundreds of alumni, founders and donors this summer as part of a student calling program, completing nearly 3,000 calls and speaking with more than 650 alumni, founders and donors, to thank them, learn more about their experiences at UNBC and share the latest University news.

“The calls work to make people feel connected to UNBC,” says Furqana Khan, a UNBC Bachelor of Social Work graduate and current Master of Social Work student. “Whether the connection

is reinforced because they are already involved in some capacity with UNBC, or re-established for those who don't even remember why they signed the petition decades ago, it demonstrates to supporters that UNBC is still here for them and because of them.”

Student caller Kiera Bokvist said many people she spoke with were excited to share their UNBC experience.

“They're impressed that the University is reaching out to the community just to have a conversation,” she said. Through the calls, the students are also expanding their own networks and learning about new career opportunities.

“When I'm speaking with alumni and hearing their stories, I am gaining information about different career paths with my degree,” says Biochemistry and Molecular Biology student Sakshi Satish.

During the calls, the students asked alumni if they enjoyed their time at UNBC and what advice they have for current students. They thanked founders for signing the petition that led to the creation of UNBC and asked them if any of their family members have gone on to attend the University. Donors were also thanked for their ongoing support and asked about their motivation for giving.

“Reaching out to alumni, founders and donors through the student calling program is a great way to let them know that UNBC is there for them and that their opinions, feedback and experiences matter,” says caller Navita Dhillon, a Bachelor of Health Sciences in Biomedical Studies student.





# Mending Fences

**Archivist reaches out to Indigenous communities to preserve cultural heritage**

Archives play an indispensable role in safeguarding our public records and cultural artifacts, but their content can also be fraught with questions around cultural heritage and ownership.

As the Canadian archival community confronts its role in redressing the legacy of residential schools across the country, UNBC archivist Erica Hernández-Read is playing a leading role in ensuring the response is informed, culturally sensitive and empowering for both archivists and Indigenous communities.

Hernández-Read is leading the Response to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Taskforce with the Steering Committee on Canada's Archives. Working with colleagues from the archival Indigenous communities, task force members are seeking to establish, grow and sustain relationships between heritage professionals and the communities represented in their collections, as well as improve professional practices to ensure that materials in those collections are treated with respect and cultural sensitivity.

Hernández-Read received an \$180,000 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Grant to support her

outreach efforts with Indigenous communities across the country to learn more about how archives can become more culturally inclusive.

"We want to talk to people, from a collegial perspective and a patron-based perspective, to learn how Canadian archives have failed and what we can do to mend that fence," says Hernández-Read.

**"We want to talk to people, from a collegial perspective and a patron-based perspective."**

Among the issues the task force will discuss are the concepts of ownership and authorship and how they differ in the established archival conventions and Indigenous tradition.

The group is also exploring ideas for how to improve diversity within the professional archival community. Currently, archival education is at the Master's degree level, which is not accessible for everyone. Hernández-Read hopes it may be possible to get more marginalized people involved in

careers in archives through mentorship or other innovative educational ideas.

Over the next few years, the task force will complete a report, two guide books and a set of evergreen policies and procedures to assist archivists across the country to deal with material related to Indigenous community with respect.

# A Changing Watershed

## **UNBC Researchers Receive \$500,000 Grant to Study Local Watershed**

The summer of 2018 will be remembered for the record number of air quality advisories noted in north-central B.C. due to the worst forest fire season on record.

The past forest fire season and the drought we are experiencing have implications for a range of issues. These events are components of a long-term research project being conducted by local researchers.

For the past four years, a group of UNBC researchers have studied the effects of climate change and watershed management, and the issues of water security and watershed governance in the Nechako River basin. That work will continue for five more years thanks to funding provided by the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund (NEEF).

Created through an agreement between the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development, and Rio Tinto, NEEF is providing a \$499,950 grant to members of the Integrated Watershed Research Group (IWRG): Environmental Science professor Dr. Stephen Déry, Forest Renewal BC Research Chairs in Landscape Ecology Dr. Phil Owens and Dr. Ellen Petticrew, and Canada Research Chair in Health, Ecosystems and Society Dr. Margot Parkes. An additional \$499,950 will be realized by matching funds from other sources.

Dr. Déry and his students study climate change and water security. During the first research phase (2014-2017),

recent changes in air temperature, precipitation and runoff were compiled for the Nechako River basin and its main tributary sub-basins.

“Our analyses revealed that temperature warmed by approximately two degrees Celsius between 1950 and 2010 across the watershed, but there were few changes in precipitation; however, we have noted major changes in the type of precipitation, with much less snow and much more rain. This shift in the type of precipitation we have noted will have significant implications for water availability in the summer and fall seasons as we move forward,” said Dr. Déry.

Drs. Owens and Petticrew studied sediment sources and dynamics during the first phase. They determined the main sources of the contemporary fine sediment transported by the Nechako River and how these have changed over the last few decades in response to climate change, river management and land use change. The effects of the past forest fire season will now be an additional area of focus on sediment sources in the watershed during this phase of research.

Dr. Parkes and her group developed and refined a web-based spatially-referenced portal tool that brings together different forms of knowledge and provides a platform for watershed partners to share and exchange new and existing information about the Nechako River basin.

The four faculty members involved with IWRG have studied watershed-based issues for several years, with a focus on the Fraser River basin and other watersheds in Northern B.C., including the Nechako River basin.



# Passive House, Active Research

*The Wood Innovation Research Lab (WIRL) is more than a lab where UNBC researchers will make discoveries that will influence the next generation of tall wood construction.*

*It is more than a place where students in the Master of Engineering in Integrated Wood Design Program can test their theories and conduct experiments.*

*It is more than another example of innovative wood design.*



In addition to all of these things, WIRL is the first building of its kind in North America to meet the stringent Passive House standard for energy efficiency.

“We pulled off something really amazing here,” says UNBC Associate Professor of Engineering Dr. Guido Wimmers.

“This building has caught the attention of Passive House researchers around the world because it demonstrates how an industrial structure, constructed with wood, in Northern British Columbia’s climate can be a global leader in energy efficiency.”

Located in downtown Prince George, adjacent to the Wood Innovation and Design Centre, the new lab is not only home to world-class researchers in wood engineering, it is in itself a showcase of what is possible.

Certified Passive House buildings use up to 90 per cent less energy for heating and cooling when compared with standard buildings and use up to 70 per cent less energy overall. To reduce the building’s carbon footprint further, the University signed a biogas contract. By using gas recovered from

agricultural facilities and landfills, UNBC is able to lessen its reliance on fossil fuels.

The building set a new standard for air tightness, securing the best North American result of any building using the internationally recognized passive house standard. The testing protocol involves both pressurizing and depressurizing the building and measuring the number of air changes per hour that result. With a score of 0.07, the lab surpassed the Passive House requirement by nearly a factor of 10.

The result is all the more impressive given the design requirements of the building. With a large bay door installed to facilitate the delivery of materials and a state-of-the-art dust extraction system required, there is a lot of potential for air leakage.

“At UNBC, we have a lot of expertise in building science, the materials that go into Passive House buildings and how we operate our buildings,” says UNBC Assistant Director of Facilities Dr. David Claus. “We’ve been able to put that all into practice on this project.”

Some of the specialized materials such as windows and doors were sourced from Europe, but the wood came from British Columbia. Instead of using traditional wood studs, the walls were built with pre-fabricated wood trusses from Prince George.

The 50-cm wide walls are rated R-80 and contain blown-in mineral wool insulation. The roof is rated R-100 and required special certification from the Roofing Contractors Association of British Columbia. Even the floor sits atop 20 cm of expanded polystyrene insulation.

“The entire envelope needs to be really well insulated,” Wimmers explains. “Everything has to be nicely wrapped with a warm blanket.”

Inside, a massive concrete strong wall and strong floor, a CNC machine, an industrial robot and other tools allow researchers to build, design and test their hypotheses.

Canada Research Chair in Hybrid Wood Structures Engineering Dr. Thomas Tannert, an expert in hybrid design, is studying how wood can be combined with other construction materials to create composite designs that



allow for more wood to be used. New equipment purchased with grants from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and BC Knowledge Development Fund, will give Tannert and other UNBC researchers access to state-of-the-art technology as they seek to discover stronger and greener building materials.

“Our goal is to develop next-generation, high-performance wood and wood-hybrid



structural elements, joints, components and systems,” Tannert explains. “The infrastructure will enable conceptual, experimental, numerical and analytical research regarding the development of novel wood-based hybrid connections, components and systems for structural applications in tall residential and non-residential buildings.”

His research will focus on addressing the structural challenges of tall wood buildings.

“I’m very fortunate that my area of research right now is at the centre of not just a national, but an international movement to put more emphasis on wood construction,” Tannert says.

“Everyone agrees we need to tackle the problem of the carbon footprint of our buildings and wood is ideally suited to attack that problem. We can reduce the embodied energy and the operational energy of our buildings.”

The WIRL building also includes a meeting room, offices for visiting researchers and storage facilities for wood and tools.

Student research at the lab started while the project was still on the drawing

board. Students examined the feasibility of the project, identified issues around the sizes of beams required and other specific structural elements, and contributed ideas to improve acoustics inside the lab.

## “A Passive House building outperforms a code building substantially in the long run”

“The construction of the lab next door to our classroom also allowed myself, and the other students, a first-hand glimpse into the construction

of a building which employed the very principles of what we were learning every day,” says Alison Conroy, a 2017 Master of Engineering graduate. “My research helped prepare me for my career by introducing me to local agencies and companies who had similar interest and needs for building science professionals due to growing market and regulatory demand for high performance buildings.”

Wimmers and Master of Engineering program graduate Stephanie Wall produced a comparative life-cycle assessment, looking at the wood-based Passive House design of WIRL and comparing it to a wood structure built to standard building code requirements, a steel structure designed to be a Passive House, and a steel structure built to code.

The wood designs contained much less embodied energy – or energy consumed during the production of building materials and the construction itself – compared with the steel buildings. The Passive House buildings used much less energy operationally, and the wood-Passive House design scored the best overall.

“A Passive House building outperforms a code building substantially in the long run,” Wimmers says. “It’s about a third of the environmental impact compared to a code building over 60 years.”





# Finding answers under the ice

## *Researchers to study role of glaciers and snow cover in new facility*

Climate change is rapidly impacting glaciers across Northern B.C. and around the world, yet the effects of these fluctuations in glacial melt are still widely unknown.

A new \$2.4 million research project between UNBC and Vancouver Island University seeks to answer some of these questions by studying the role seasonal snow cover and glaciers play in the hydrology of key watersheds along B.C.'s Central and Southern Coast.

Supported by the Hakai Institute, the research will be co-ordinated at the new Hakai Cryosphere Node located at UNBC, and led by UNBC glaciologist Dr. Brian Menounos, a Canada Research Chair in Glacial Change, and Dr. Bill Floyd, a research hydrologist with the Province of B.C. and an adjunct

professor in Geography from VIU. The Node will provide groundbreaking multi-disciplinary geospatial research opportunities for faculty postdoctoral fellows and students.

Using a variety of methods, including geospatial mapping and satellite imagery, scientists will also determine rates of glacier loss that stretch along the B.C. coastline from the U.S. border to Bella Coola and how those rates have changed over the last 100 and 1,000 years.

“The new Node will greatly expand on our existing collaboration with researchers from UNBC, VIU and other institutions. We are very interested in fostering career development in this field for UNBC and VIU students, as we’ve seen the quality of graduates in our existing operations,”

said Eric Peterson, Founder and President of the Hakai Institute.

Plane-based LiDar and unmanned aerial vehicles will be used to measure snow and ice over various scales and time frames.

“This research will fundamentally change how we measure snow and ice in remote regions of B.C., vastly improving our understanding of its importance to freshwater discharge to the ocean, and the ecosystems and communities that rely on it,” adds Dr. Floyd. “It’s an incredibly exciting time to be a hydrologist with emerging technologies to not only collect big data related to water, but also having the computing power and expertise to analyze it.”

# \$21.4 M raised

143% of our goal

generous  
donors

1,900  
New

527  
Alumni

430  
Staff +  
Faculty

289  
Founders

16%  
of donors  
were UNBC Alumni

158  
new student awards  
created

\$245,150  
given by  
UNBC Alumni

Campaign Priorities

Strengthen  
Research and  
Teaching  
Excellence

\$13.1M

Inspire  
Next-Generation  
Leaders

\$6.4M

Create Local  
Solutions with  
Global Impact

\$1.9M



*That's a Wrap*

# Northern Leadership Campaign Surpasses Fundraising Goal

Because of YOU, the future looks bright at UNBC.

The University wrapped up its first comprehensive fundraising campaign on a high note, surpassing its \$15-million goal and raising a grand total of \$21.4 million to support a mix of institutional priorities and projects that will help advance UNBC's stature as one of Canada's best small research-intensive universities.

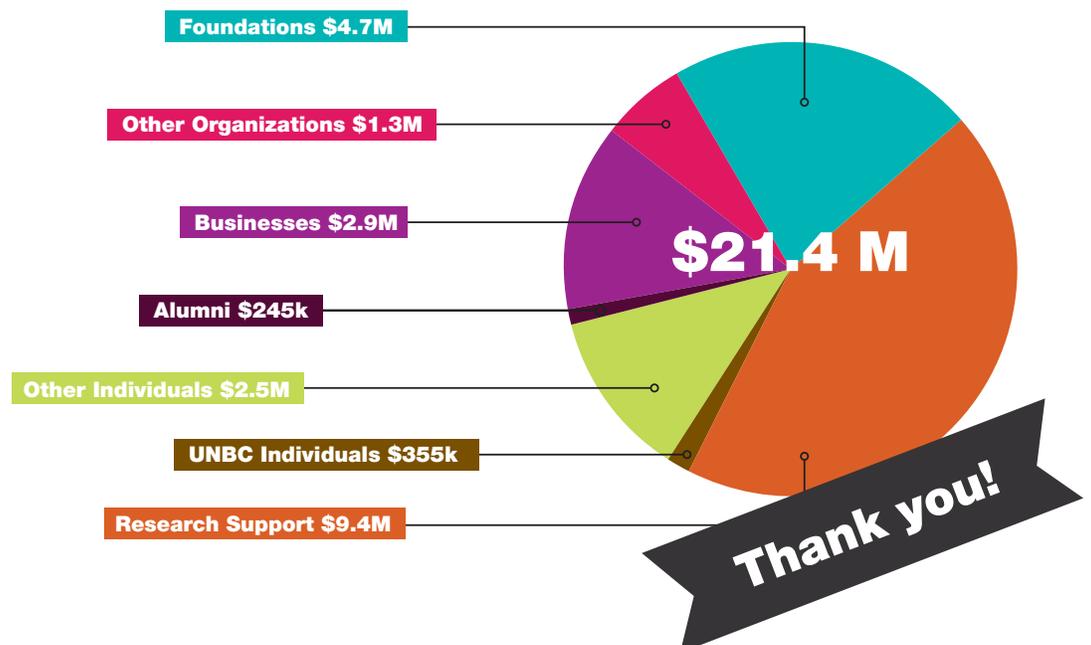
Launched in late 2014, the Northern Leadership Campaign focused on three key priorities: strengthening research and teaching

excellence; inspiring next-generation leaders; and creating local solutions with global impact.

A total of 3,306 donors contributed to the Northern Leadership Campaign, resulting in the creation of 158 new student awards. The funds also supported strategic investment in a number of institutional priorities and projects that will foster further innovation and high-quality academic programming and research that will have an immeasurable impact in Northern B.C. communities and across the globe.

"We are incredibly grateful and truly honoured by the generosity and outpouring of support shown by our donors, alumni, founders, community partners, faculty and staff. Their commitment to UNBC has made a huge impact that will transform lives and communities in the North and around the world for years to come," said UNBC President Dr. Daniel Weeks.

The \$21-million tally highlights the commitment and dedication of our community to educate a new wave of innovative leaders who can pioneer solutions that address our unique challenges in the North, and further strengthen economic, social and cultural prosperity across the region.



# Youth Vision, Community Futures

## ***Banting Fellow exploring how rural youth can address impacts of resource extraction***

For the second year in a row, a postdoctoral researcher at UNBC is receiving national accolades.

Dr. Vanessa Sloan Morgan is the recipient of a prestigious Banting Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, which will provide \$70,000 a year in funding for up to two years of research.

As a Banting Postdoctoral Fellow based in the Geography program, Sloan Morgan will explore how youth voices can be centered in community-engaged research and decision making to shape more environmentally, economically, and socially desirable futures. Her work will specifically look at how youth visions can help in addressing impacts of resource extraction on rural and northern communities.

“This project is about highlighting the knowledge and experience that youth bring to the table. My role, as I see it, is pulling that out and sharing it in a way driven by youth,” says Sloan Morgan. “I want to find avenues that can create the best space in which youth can have key conversations with decision-makers and be heard in meaningful ways.

As part of her project, Sloan Morgan will hold various workshops with northern and rural youth. Her first session this fall included students from School District 91 (Nechako Lakes) in Grades 10, 11 and 12.

“Post-doctoral research fellows are an important part of our University community, helping to further expand our research capacity in innovative and exciting directions,” says UNBC president Dr. Daniel Weeks. “The work that Dr. Sloan Morgan is pursuing with Northern youth from Indigenous and rural areas will not only have an impact on communities in our region but across the country and around the world.”

UNBC Geography Associate Professor Dr. Sarah de Leeuw and Health Sciences Associate Professor Dr. Margot Parkes will co-supervise Sloan Morgan’s fellowship. Both are also associate professors with the Northern Medical Program, a distributed site of UBC’s Faculty of Medicine MD Undergraduate Program, delivered in partnership with UNBC.

Sloan Morgan is the third UNBC postdoctoral researcher to receive this prestigious award.

A portrait of Dr. Vanessa Sloan Morgan, a woman with long brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. The background is a blurred window with a grid pattern. A quote box is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

**“This project is about highlighting the knowledge and experience that youth bring to the table.”**



# Seeking answers in a new culture

## **UNBC Student Wins Mitacs Globalink Research Award**

Fatimat Almentina Ramos Shidi embarked on a long journey from Prince George to France seeking answers to some complex questions.

As a recent graduate of UNBC's Masters in Biochemistry program, Shidi focused her thesis on the topic of processing messenger RNA (splicing) and investigating how the Sm protein complex assembles.

When her research results were not presenting as expected, she reached out to her supervisor, Chemistry Professor Dr. Stephen Rader, to discuss applying for the Mitacs award with the aim of collaborating with another researcher.

"He told me about a researcher in Montpellier, in the south of France, who

works on a protein related to my project who he felt could help me answer the questions I had regarding the assembly of the protein complex," she said.

Shidi applied for the Mitacs Globalink Research Award and was successful in securing funding, which enabled her to spend three months in France, from May to July, conducting research in the lab of Dr. Rémy Bordonné.

The Mitacs award provides \$6,000 for senior undergraduate and graduate students in Canada to conduct 12 to 24 weeks of research studies at universities in Australia, Brazil, China, Europe, the Middle East, United States and Mexico.

Originally from Brazil, Shidi is the first UNBC student to receive an esteemed

Mitacs Globalink Research Award.

While some of Shidi's friends have been reluctant to apply for the award given the stiff competition, she recommends taking the leap, as it allows recipients to gain unique experience in their field of study.

"In addition to being able to expand your network, gain experience in a new environment and increase your knowledge, the Mitacs award offers the opportunity to travel and study abroad, meet new people, and also learn a new culture and a new language, which I think is really important."

## **UNBC Places Second in Maclean's Rankings**

UNBC placed second out of 19 universities in the Primarily Undergraduate category of Maclean's Magazine's annual ranking of Canadian Universities, marking the fifth straight year it's landed in the top two in its category. Mount Allison finished first in the Primarily Undergraduate category, with Trent University coming third.

UNBC placed second in three of the 12 categories surveyed by Maclean's, including the number of students who have won national awards, student to faculty ratio, and library expenses. UNBC also received top grades in the amount of money available to faculty for research and two categories devoted to how the University allocates resources, including operating expenditures per student. UNBC also received strong marks for student satisfaction, and scored well in the number of faculty members winning national awards.

## **Moore to Complete Term as Chancellor in 2019**

The Honourable James Moore will complete his full term as UNBC's Chancellor in May 2019 after having fulfilled an important ambassadorial role for the University with honour and distinction.

Moore was named UNBC Chancellor in November 2015, and will continue in that role while the University begins its search for a new Chancellor.

"I thank James for his outstanding service as UNBC's Chancellor," said UNBC President and Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Daniel Weeks. "He served in his role in exemplary fashion; whether it was speaking with high school and prospective UNBC students, taking on a leading role in all Convocation ceremonies, celebrations and related events across the North, or supporting the University's philanthropic goals, James has helped advance the University in many ways, and I know he will continue to be a champion of UNBC."

## **Huber Named to Genome BC Project Team**

Building on his DNA mapping experience with the mountain pine beetle, Dr. Dezene Huber has joined a collaborative research team that is studying the genetic functions to identify traits for breeding a more pest-resistant spruce forest in the future. The study is part of a new Genome BC project that will help us understand the impacts of climate change and promote the development of adaptation and mitigation solutions using genomics.

# UNBC Stories

Our students, faculty, alumni and staff are making headlines for their work on campus and in the community. To learn more about these stories, please visit our website. [unbc.ca/newsroom](http://unbc.ca/newsroom)

## **Two Students Named 3M Fellows**

Yahlnaaw/Aaron Grant and Amy Blanding are recipients of the prestigious 3M National Student Fellowship for 2018. They are among a cohort of just 10 university students nationwide selected for their exceptional leadership and vision for enhancing the educational experience.

Both students embrace their individual challenges, have learned from them and teach others about the strength that comes with differences.

As an Indigenous scholar, Yahlnaaw is exploring how a colonial post-secondary education system does not encompass nor appreciate Indigenous knowledges. She is sharing her experience through the new Campus Cousins program at UNBC's First Nations Centre.

For Blanding, a knee injury during a hip-hop performance opened her eyes to the possibilities of using an apparent setback as a springboard for creativity. Unable to perform her usual choreography, she teamed up with other dancers to put together a new performance that was guided by their physical limitations.

Yahlnaaw and Blanding will attend the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education conference in Sherbrooke, Que., where they will begin work on a year-long project with eight other 3M Fellows. They also receive a \$5,000 financial award.



## Greening named Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Scholar

Spencer Greening is one of only 15 graduate students from across Canada to receive a Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Doctoral Scholarship, one of the most prestigious awards in Canada in the Social Sciences and Humanities field.

Greening is an Indigenous scholar and UNBC alumnus, completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in First Nation Studies and more recently a Master of Arts degree in Interdisciplinary Studies in 2018. Currently, he is a PhD candidate at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C.

Greening was a First Nations Studies teaching assistant and research assistant for the late UNBC professor Dr. Jim McDonald. He also worked with professor emeritus Dr. Antonia Mills.

The Trudeau Foundation receives nominations from approximately 300 top PhD candidates in the Social Sciences and Humanities Field from universities across in Canada.

## Lazenby selected Professor Emeritus

Founding UNBC faculty member and internationally-renowned researcher Dr. Richard Lazenby was bestowed the title of Professor Emeritus at UNBC's Convocation ceremony on May 25.

Dr. Lazenby is credited with developing the University's Anthropology Department along with the late Dr. Jim McDonald, the first chair of the department.

Internationally, he has worked closely with the Forensic Anthropology Foundation of Guatemala (FAFG) and was instrumental in building a partnership between UNBC and FAFG where students were trained in human skeletal biology and forensic anthropology. He received a UNBC University Excellence in Service Award in 2017, and was nominated twice for teaching excellence awards.

In addition to teaching in the Anthropology department from 2002 to 2015, Dr. Lazenby served the Faculty of Medicine as the Northern Medical Program's Course Director for the Doctor, Patient and Society course for Years 1 and 2. More recently he acted as the Co-Course Director for the Flexible Enhanced Learning course from 2014-2017.

After 23 years of service, research and teaching excellence, Lazenby retired in December 2017.

## UNBC Signs International Engineering Partnership

Researchers at UNBC are developing sustainable solutions that have the potential to revolutionize the construction industry in Canada and around the world.

UNBC and the Faculty of Engineering at the University Santiago de Chile recently signed an international agreement pledging to co-operate in research and teaching on topics related to wood engineering and wood-frame construction technologies. The partnership commits both institutions to investigate opportunities for joint research activities and explore the possibility of reciprocal visits by students and faculty members.

A close-up portrait of Dr. Baljeet Malhotra, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a black turban and a grey jacket. He is smiling and looking slightly to the right. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with a building.

# Give Where You Live

## **UNBC Grad Partners on Centre of Excellence**

UNBC Master of Science graduate and TeejLab founder Dr. Baljeet Malhotra personifies the “give where you live” philosophy.

His latest contribution has already left a lasting impact that will inspire the next generation of computer scientists for years to come.

TeejLab Inc. announced a partnership with UNBC to create a new Centre of Excellence in Data Privacy, Security and Integrity that will promote their mutual interest in fostering economic opportunities in B.C. and Western Canada.

The TeejLab-UNBC Centre of Excellence team will consist of award-winning computer scientists, innovators, Ph.D. and Master’s degree students advised by software industry veterans, and faculty members from premier institutes and universities in the United States and Canada. Researchers will collaborate to solve data privacy and security challenges, while conducting applied research in natural language processing, data mining and machine learning. Building commercial solutions that allow enterprises to create various data-driven software and services in a more secure and compliant way is a primary goal.

“As data-driven intelligence continues to evolve, industries will find new ways to turn data into knowledge that will improve our lives,” says Malhotra. “I strongly believe the TeejLab-UNBC Centre of Excellence will provide an important platform for creating state-of-the-art solutions that help our customers and partners in building world-class innovations without sacrificing the integrity, security and privacy of their data.”

The new Centre will build upon the relationship between UNBC and TeejLab that was established through the creation of a Research in Technology Fellowship that combines a \$10,000 financial award with the opportunity for a student to work on a research project with TeejLab scientists.

“This partnership is a wonderful example of collaboration between the University and a research-based software company founded by a UNBC graduate,” says UNBC Vice-President Research and Graduate Programs Dr. Geoffrey Payne. “It will facilitate innovation,

lead to the discovery of new approaches for data security and create job opportunities.”

**“This partnership is a wonderful example of collaboration between the University and a research-based software company founded by a UNBC graduate.”**

# Class Notes

Be part of class notes: visit [unbc.ca/alumni](http://unbc.ca/alumni)

## 1996

**Jason Robertson (BA International Studies)** is a Policy Analyst with the Canadian Intellectual Property Office in Ottawa.

## 1998

**Lynda Monk (MSW)** has been living on Salt Spring Island since 2000. Lynda is a wellness coach, speaker and best-selling author. Lynda is the director of Thrive Training + Coaching and the director of the International Association of Journal Writing.



**Charity Peal (BA First Nations Studies and MEd 2010)** is the Coordinator of Culture & Language Programs with School District #92 – Nisga'a in New Aiyansh, BC.

## 2000

**Stephanie Lin (BSc Psychology)** is the Head of Learning Resource Services at UWC ISAK Japan. She lives in Nagano.

## 2001

**Mike Biersteker (BSc Environmental Planning)** is the VP Land & Regulatory and Co-founder of Recover Energy Services in Calgary.



**Barclay Hoskins (BComm Finance & International Business)** is a Business Partner with the HR firm Canscott Management. Barclay lives in 108 Mile Ranch, BC.

**Rachael Ryder (BSc Environmental Science)** is the Waste Diversion Program Leader with the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George.

**Bill Floyd (BSc NRM Forestry & NRM Wildlife)** returned to campus recently for the Hakai Crysosphere Node announcement. Bill is research collaborator and adjunct professor in geography at Vancouver Island University and research hydrologist with the Province of BC.

## 2002

**Karen Roberts (BComm Accounting)** is a Gambling Auditor for the Province of BC, based in Prince George.

**Justin Bisson (BSc Mathematics)** has been teaching math in Delta, BC for 14 years. Justin is also head of the Math Department at North Delta Secondary School.

## 2004

**Eli Bukovnik (nee Wittenborn – BComm International Business)** is a Financial Advisor with CIBC in Invermere. She also teaches Spanish at the local college.

## 2005

**Tammy Virkutis (BA General)** recently returned to Canada after 10 years abroad. Tammy was teaching primary school in Abu Dhabi. She is now living in Terrace, BC.

## 2007

**Devrey Crossley (nee Robbins – BComm Accounting & Finance)** owns and operates Whole Wheat & Honey Café in Fort St. John. Devrey recently hosted the President's Alumni and Friends Reception.



# 2008

**Roger Dinnelle (BSW and MEd 2016)** is a Mental Health Clinician for Island Health in Port Hardy, BC.

# 2009

**David Gamble (BA English 2007 and MA Interdisciplinary Studies)** and **Lee Gamble (BA English)** enjoyed the President's Alumni & Friends Reception in Calgary in October. David and Lee are the leadership team behind management consulting firm Dandy, Inc.



**Dana Mathison (nee Walls – BComm Marketing)** and **Kaleena Lewis (nee Ross – BComm Accounting and General Business)** just launched Holly and Oak Design Company, based in Prince George.



# 2010

**Erin Berry (BScN)** is a Registered Nurse in the Post-Anesthetic Care Unit with Vancouver Island Health Authority in Nanaimo.

# 2011

**Sean Sweeney (MSc NRES Biology)** is an Endangered Species Biologist at the US Fish and Wildlife Service based in Spokane, WA.

# 2012

**Riley King (BComm General Business & Marketing)** is a Senior Manager for the Hays Recruitment Agency in Hong Kong, leading teams that recruit Accounting/Finance and Big Data/Digital Tech roles.

# 2013

**William Bradley (BA Anthropology)** is a Policy Analyst in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources with the Yukon Government in Whitehorse.

**Derek Glover (BSc Math & Physics and BEd 2015)** is a math/science teacher at North Peace Secondary School in Fort St. John.



**Lauren MacDonald (BSc Psychology)** is an Occupational Therapist for Vancouver Coastal Health.

**Amanda Upshaw (BSc Environmental Science)** is a GIS Analyst, providing operational mapping and analysis for BC Timber Sales in Prince George.

# 2015

**Samantha Shorson (BSW)** is an Aboriginal Child and Youth Care Worker with School District #36 in Surrey.

**Laurie Mercer (BComm Accounting)** is the Manager of Capacity Development for the First Nations Management Board. Laurie works with First Nation communities across Canada to obtain their Financial Management Certification. Laurie lives in Prince George.

# 2017

**Jessica Bagnall (BA Political Science)** is the Corporate Officer with the District of Houston, in Houston, BC.

# Email

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# Alumni Council

2018 – 2019

## Chair

Wendel Schwab  
(BA English 2016)

## Vice-Chair

Jennifer Young  
(BA Geography 2000 and BSW 2007)

## Members

Dori Alger  
(MBA 2010)  
Kyle Blais  
(BComm Finance & General  
Business 2008)

Dhruv Desai  
(MSc Computer Science 2016)

Paul Gruner  
(BSc Psychology 2000 and MBA  
2012)

Furqana Khan  
(BSW 2017)

Hoda Samadi  
BSc Psychology 2008)

Marianne Sprague  
(BA Economics 2002 and BA First  
Nations Studies 2008)

Isabella Wilson-Beaulieu  
(BScN 2011)

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**Story ideas,  
submissions and  
enquiries regarding all  
things alumni:  
[alumni@unbc.ca](mailto:alumni@unbc.ca)**

# 2018 Distinguished Alumni Awards

**Sam Milligan**, a Registered Nurse who earned his Master of Science degree in Community Health at UNBC in 2012, received the Professional Excellence Award based on his outstanding professional contributions to the social, cultural and economic well-being of society. (Pictured: Andrew Seabrook, 2017-2018 Alumni Council Chair; Sam Milligan; Dr. Daniel Weeks, UNBC President)



**Helen Domshy**, who received her Master of Arts degree in Gender Studies in 2001, earned the UNBC Alumni Community Service Award for her significant volunteer accomplishments and her impact with several volunteer organizations. Domshy, a retired medical radiation technologist, is a long-time champion for women's health and education, community service, and a UNBC advocate who has a passion for learning. (Pictured Denis and Helen Domshy).



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

Offers may change without notice. Certain conditions, limitations, exclusions and eligibility requirements apply to all offers. Not everyone will qualify for a phone or online quote. belairdirect only offers home insurance, travel insurance and optional auto coverage in British Columbia. Visit [belairdirect.com](http://belairdirect.com) for more details. Insurance products underwritten by **Belair Insurance Company Inc.** Services provided by belairdirect Agency Inc.  
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