

Northern Medical Programs Trust

A PARTNERSHIP OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMUNITIES AND UNBC

UNBC UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

2024 Highlights



L-R: UBC Master of Physical Therapy (MPT) – North student Nina Gibaldi with Kitimat General Hospital and Health Centre physiotherapy preceptor Carolyn Watt and UBC MPT student Nicole Zilberman.

Family medicine immersion in McBride

Class of 2025 *UBC Northern Medical Program (NMP) student Carmen Huang spent four weeks over summer immersed in a clinical learning placement in McBride.

“During my rural family medicine elective, I worked across the clinic, the emergency department, and on call,” said Carmen. “I was able to hone my skills in triaging, ordering appropriate investigations within a rural setting, and recognizing when to refer patients to higher-level care in Prince George.

“Recreationally, I thoroughly enjoyed exploring the surrounding region during my off-time. The stunning scenery and breathtaking sunsets made my placement time in the Robson Valley truly memorable.”



From Front Cover

Spring physio placements in Kitimat

Physiotherapy students Nina and Nicole spent several weeks in northwest B.C. on a spring clinical placement at the Kitimat General Hospital, with their travel supported in part by the Trust.

“My time in Kitimat was an incredibly positive experience,” said Nina, a second-year student studying in the *UBC Master of Physical Therapy – North program (MPT-N) at UNBC in Prince George.

“One of the major benefits of my hospital placement there was the broad scope of practice, time split between outpatient and acute care each day, and the additional opportunity to do home visits, school visits and visits to Kitimaat Village.”

**The UBC MPT-N program is delivered in collaboration with UNBC (hosted by the Division of Medical Sciences).*

FNP grad focuses on Indigenous health

A graduate of the UNBC Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) master's program, Kamal Dewan received the Trust's Family Nurse Practitioner Graduate Award in 2024. He credits his FNP rural placement experiences in Burns Lake, Williams Lake and Quesnel as catalysts for further developing his rural care knowledge.

"In smaller communities, healthcare services are limited. Therefore it is not uncommon for practitioners to encounter skills that may not be as utilized by FNPs in more urban areas, such as suturing, biopsies and casting. Being creative and thinking outside the box were valuable skills I learned."

He is now an FNP at Central Interior Native Health Society in Prince George (on the unceded territory of the Lheidli T'enneh people): "I am very appreciative for having the opportunity to provide services in an interdisciplinary medical clinic that respects the cultural diversity and uniqueness of each individual we serve. I am grateful to learn from Indigenous people, including elders, about their culture and perspectives on health."



Healthcare Travelling Roadshow in 2024

The annual Healthcare Travelling Roadshow, coordinated by the Northern Medical Program and supported in part by the Trust, connected with high school students on health careers in ten northern B.C. communities during the spring, including:

**Valemount
McBride
Mackenzie
Chetwynd**

**Fort Nelson
Vanderhoof
Fort St. James
Hazelton**

**Dease Lake
Stewart**



Rural medicine learning

Leah Blezard, a student in the *UBC Northern Medical Program Class of 2027 embarked on a special week-long trip in the summer, with travel partly supported by the Trust, to learn about rural medicine in Takla Landing and Yekooche.

“I learned so much about medicine, rural practice, and the unique needs of rural First Nations communities. Meeting patients in their home communities, learning about their lived experiences, and seeing not only the healthcare challenges but also the strengths and protective factors of these communities was an incredibly valuable experience.”

**The NMP is a distributed site of UBC's Faculty of Medicine MD Undergraduate Program, delivered in partnership with UNBC (hosted by the Division of Medical Sciences).*

Leah at Takla Lake.



**Thank you for
supporting health
care education
at UNBC
and helping
students with
opportunities to
learn more about
rural practice and
health service in
the North.**

Since 2006,
more than \$3.2 million
has been disbursed.

**For the academic
year of
2023/2024,
101 awards
were provided to
health professional
students**

**More than
1,340
student
awards**
have been provided
to students
participating in
northern and rural
clinical placements.