

# UPDATE

A Newsletter for UNBC Alumni and Friends

Fall 2004



## Realizing a Dream

4 years after thousands of people rallied to find a solution to BC's healthcare crisis, the Northern Medical Program is now a reality

### A double-shot of Conscience

Catherine Nolin on what your morning coffee really means to Guatemala

### Mild Times

From BC to Arizona: UNBC Grad Kirstin Campbell takes on climate change

### Something's Really Fishy

UNBC on the case of the missing sockeye

## Q &amp; A



On the Cover: NMP student Layne Harvey is proud to be in the first-ever group of Northern Medical Program students.

**UPDATE: Tell us a bit about yourself.**

**LH:** I grew up in the small town of Pemberton, BC, but I have been living in Vancouver for the past seven years. My educational background is in molecular genetics, and since completing a Master of Science, I have been working as a research assistant at UBC. My wife Kate and I love spending time in the great outdoors – especially skiing and rock climbing.

**UPDATE: Why the NMP?**

**LH:** I want to practice medicine in a rural community because I believe strong patient-doctor relationships are essential to fostering a preventative approach to health care. The NMP will allow me to develop the unique skills required to be an effective rural physician, and working in a smaller community will help me to develop a good and ongoing rapport with my patients.

**UPDATE: You were part of the opening of the Northern Health Sciences Centre. What was it like?**

**LH:** It was amazing to be there - I think the strength and commitment of the northern communities that came together to address the healthcare crisis is so admirable. The standing ovation that my fellow classmates and I received was truly inspirational - it reaffirmed my decision to pursue my medical career in a smaller community and through the NMP.



Northern Health Sciences Centre

Want to know more about the NMP? Visit [www.unbc.ca/nmp/](http://www.unbc.ca/nmp/).

## UNBC's 10th

On August 17th, more than 1500 people gathered at the Prince George campus to celebrate the 10th anniversary of UNBC's opening and officially open the Northern Health Sciences Centre, home of the Northern Medical Program. The day will go down as a major milestone in UNBC's history – it marks the end of a decade of “firsts” and the beginning of an exciting new era for the North.

## Highlights of the Event:

- A special convocation ceremony was held to present honorary degrees to those whose perseverance was instrumental in establishing UNBC. The recipients included community leaders Charles McCaffray, Murray Sadler, Tom Steadman, Edward John, and Elsie Gerdes; political leaders Bruce Strachan, Bill Vander Zalm, and Michael Harcourt; and academics John Ellis and John Chapman.
- Premier Gordon Campbell cut the ribbon to open the new Northern Health Sciences Centre and was joined by 15 NMP students. Tours of the new building followed – more than 1000 people passed through its hallways that day, taking in the unique architecture and innovative design.
- The Northern Medical Programs Trust held a barbecue to raise money in support of NMP students. Crowds also enjoyed games, entertainment, and a display of historical UNBC materials from the Northern BC Archives.



August 17th Honorary Degree Recipients

An issue of  
Oil & Gas

Nowhere will decisions on offshore development have more profound impacts than in the dozens of small communities dotting the shoreline from Prince Rupert to Port Hardy

One of the biggest issues currently being played out in northern BC concerns the possible development of an oil and gas industry off of BC's north coast. Currently, both provincial and federal government representatives are considering the merits of maintaining or lifting a long-standing moratorium on oil and gas development in the Queen Charlotte Basin (QCB). Municipal leaders have been the latest to enter the debate, voting at their annual conference this year to lift the moratorium for the sake of the region's economic growth.

Nowhere will decisions on offshore development have more profound social, economic, environmental and political impacts than in the dozens of small communities dotting the shoreline from Prince Rupert to Port Hardy. So it's appropriate that BC's northern university has taken a lead role in researching the potential outcomes of oil and gas development.

The Northern Coastal Information and Research Program was established in 2002 within UNBC's Northern Land Use Institute. It is now wrapping up a major program that included four core research projects as well as three additional partnerships with agencies and organizations throughout the North. While the size and scope of the program has been significant, it has been the high level of community engagement that has really distinguished the UNBC project from the many other government and technical studies that have been conducted to date. In addition to collaborating with UNBC in the actual research, citizens from communities throughout the QCB have served on the Community Guidance Group, which has been integral in developing, implementing, and guiding the entire program.

This high level of community involvement in the process will no doubt continue as the provincial and federal governments proceed with discussions on the future of offshore oil and gas exploration. After all, providing citizens with information about the potential effects of exploration was the initial mandate of the program. Funding for the NCIRP was provided by the BC Ministry of Energy and Mines.

## Projects on the Go

The four core research projects of the Northern Coastal Information and Research Program (NCIRP) are:

- A Review of the State of Knowledge of Marine and Shoreline Areas in the Queen Charlotte Basin
- A Strategy for a Community Information, Knowledge, and Learning System
- Socioeconomic Implications of Offshore Oil and Gas Activities: A Community Context
- A Review of the State of Knowledge of Ecosystems in the Queen Charlotte Basin

NCIRP also partnered on three other projects:

- An Education and Training Needs Assessment for the Offshore Oil and Gas Sector (with Northwest Community College)
- A Customized Approach to Offshore Oil and Gas Education (with North Pacific Regional Development Corporation)
- Survey and Mapping of Queen Charlotte Basin Sponge Reefs (with the Pacific Geoscience Centre, Natural Resources Canada)



Even if the moratorium on offshore oil and gas activities is lifted, there will be years of research and debate before an oil rig, such as this one, might appear in the Queen Charlotte Basin.

NCIRP is producing a series of publications from its research, called The UNBC Community-Collaborative Studies on British Columbia Offshore Oil and Gas. All materials, as well as further information, can be found at [www.unbc.ca/nlui/ncirp/](http://www.unbc.ca/nlui/ncirp/).



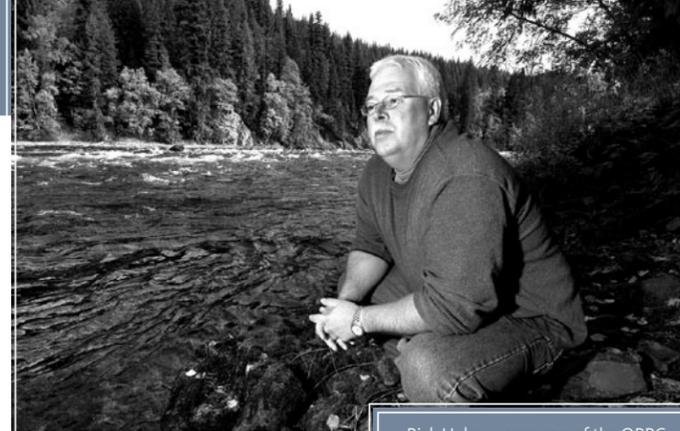
# Fishing for Answers

Fish rearing troughs at the Quesnel River Research Centre



The Quesnel River hosts one of the greatest sockeye salmon runs in the world. This year, the number passing through could end up being one of the lowest on record.

Enter UNBC.



Rick Holmes, manager of the QRRC

Standing on the bank of the Quesnel River, it's easy to be impressed by the natural and cultural history of British Columbia. A few kilometres upriver is Quesnel Lake, the deepest glacier-created lake in the world. And just over the hill is Quesnel Forks, an old gold mining town founded in 1859 that had early aspirations to be BC's first capital, until Barkerville stole the show in the 1860s.

The area remains significant today. The Quesnel River hosts one of the greatest sockeye salmon runs in the world. Three years ago, there were an estimated 3.6 million sockeye on their way to spawning grounds in the Quesnel Lake system. This year, there are only a few thousand. Sure, 2004 was expected to be a low year, but the number of fish swimming past today could end up being one of the lowest on record.

The vantage point for all of this is the Quesnel River Research Centre (QRRC) at the village of Likely, newly operated by UNBC to provide a home base for research into the complex linkages at play in the environment. The facility was previously a fish hatchery for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and as a result, information about the state of the river and the surrounding area had been collected for years. For example, decades worth of data on water flow, air and water temperature, and sunlight for the nearby Horsefly River were fed into UNBC's high-performance computer a few years ago, providing a glimpse into the combination of factors that affect fish habitat. The three-dimensional models that were created showed that the river was experiencing a long-term warming trend. If it continued, it would be trouble for salmon.

All around northern BC this fall, many rivers are experiencing historic lows in the number of sockeye salmon returning to spawn. The numbers can vary incredibly from year to year, and what can be

a bad year for sockeye can be a good year for other salmon – chinook salmon in the Nechako River, for example, are having one of their best years since 1988. Making sense of all this could position UNBC and the QRRC at the leading edge of research into fish, rivers, and lakes. Research Centre Manager Rick Holmes has lived in Likely for 30 years and appreciates the global opportunity the University has. "Water is going to be the most important commodity in the world and part of my job is to make researchers aware of the opportunities they have at this facility," says Holmes. "With such a big lake, a globally significant salmon run, and plenty of human impacts on the environment – from mining and forestry to tourism and road construction – it's a natural place for landscape-level research."

Researchers are beginning to take note. Besides UNBC, the QRRC has hosted researchers from the University of Toronto and a class from the University of Georgia. A field school from the University of Exeter in England is scheduled in April 2005. For more information, visit [www.unbc.ca/qrrc/](http://www.unbc.ca/qrrc/).

## Projects on the Go

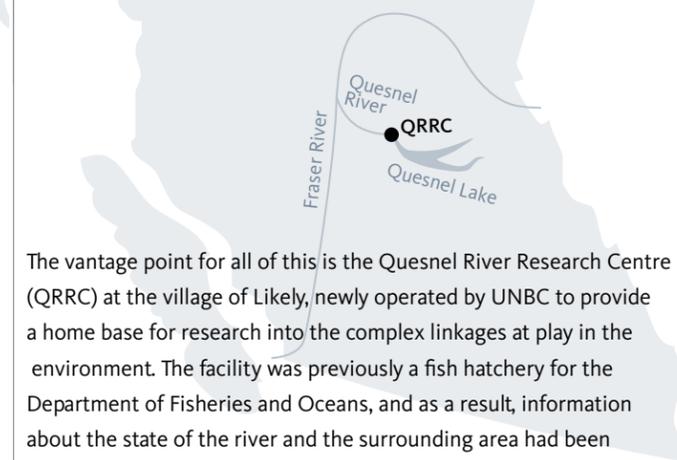
While the QRRC holds tremendous research potential, UNBC researchers are already pursuing a variety of questions related to the health of northern BC's fish, including chum salmon in the Liard River, eulachon in the Kemano River, and bull trout in the Williston Reservoir. Biology professor Mark Shrimpton has new equipment that allows him to gauge physiological changes in fish at different stages in their life. How do hormone levels, for example, affect the timing of salmon movement from freshwater to saltwater, and vice versa? What's the role of environmental factors? Some of this research on sockeye and chinook will be conducted at the QRRC.

### Picture This:

In every fish's head is an otolith, which incorporates minerals as the fish ages – essentially, a fish equivalent of tree rings. Mark Shrimpton and student Adrian Clarke have determined that different watersheds have different mineral "signatures" that leave their mark inside the fish. Comparing the mineral deposits on the fish's otolith to that of the water bodies shows where a fish has been, at what point in its life, and for generally how long.



Biology Professor Mark Shrimpton



# “It sure was colder when I was growing up!”

Kirstin Campbell, UNBC Grad

My friend, who has lived in Prince George most of her life, tells me stories about how much colder the winters were when she was growing up. One year, it was so cold that her mother froze her fingers to the clothesline pins. Temperatures hovering around  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  were common, and apparently, many houses were buried up to their rooftops in snow.

On the other hand, when I lived in Prince George 3 years ago, I never shoveled that much snow, nor did I have the pleasure of experiencing a  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  winter. So what are these changes that we are seeing?

According to the BC government, temperatures in the central interior have risen, on average,  $1^{\circ}$  to  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the past 100 years. Snowfall amounts are dropping, and rainfall is increasing. Warmer temperatures are causing massive pest outbreaks, such as the mountain pine beetle epidemic, and people are increasingly worried about forest fires near their homes.

Right now, I am living in Flagstaff Arizona, only 1 hour south of the Grand Canyon. I am visiting Northern Arizona University on a Canada-US Fulbright Scholarship, where I am working on issues of climate change and forest modelling with former UNBC assistant professor, Dr Stephen Dewhurst. I moved down here for 9 months to work with experts in the area of landscape ecology and gain experience with LURCH, a powerful computer forest model that Dr Dewhurst developed while at UNBC.

Here, climate change is happening right outside my back door. Flagstaff is in the middle of a severe drought, fire hazard is very high, and the water-starved forests are increasingly vulnerable to pest outbreaks. The similarities between Flagstaff and my research area in and around the Cheslatta Community Forest (near Francois Lake, BC) are surprising – and even a bit alarming.

Warmer temperatures are causing massive pest outbreaks, such as the mountain pine beetle epidemic, and people are increasingly worried about forest fires near their homes.

For my PhD research at UBC, I decided to take a different approach to studying how climate warming will affect our forest ecosystems. Instead of just projecting how climate will affect us in the future, I am first exploring how climate has affected us in the past, using historical data on fires, pest outbreaks, forest regeneration, and weather station data that dates as far back as 1920. Given that

the climate has warmed, how has the frequency of fires changed? Has tree regeneration been affected?

To help answer these questions, I am working with a number of researchers at UBC and UNBC, including Patience Byman, a UNBC master's student, who is studying the effects of the mountain pine beetle attack on lodgepole pine

regeneration in and around the Cheslatta Community Forest. We will link our research findings to give forest managers a strong sense of potential impacts in the near future and in the longer term. We also hope to provide valuable information to the Cheslatta people, to help them continue forest economic development even though 80% of the mature pine has already been killed by the mountain pine beetle.

When it comes to climate change, I know there will be no certain answers for any of us. What we do know is likely rooted in our past, and there is no doubt that ongoing changes are affecting our communities now, whether it is Prince George, Francois Lake, or Flagstaff, Arizona.



#### Kirstin Campbell

Kirstin graduated from UNBC with a Master of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies in 2001. She is a recipient of a prestigious Canada-US Fulbright Scholarship, to study climate change and forest management as a visiting researcher at a US university. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of British Columbia.

This space features an article by a UNBC grad in every issue of UPDATE

Shown here in Flagstaff, Arizona, UNBC grad Kirstin Campbell is visiting Northern Arizona University on a Canada-US Fulbright Scholarship.



## Alumni News

### Alumni Association Executive

- President:** Jacqueline Eaton (BA Political Science '00)
- Vice-President:** Gord Brownridge (BComm Marketing '00)
- Treasurer:** Paul Grewal (BComm Accounting '98)
- Secretary:** Darren Ditto (BSc Computer Science '00)
- Director:** Karl Penner (BComm Accounting '96)
- Director:** Zane Robison (BSc Forestry '00)
- Director:** Matt Thomson (BSc Chemistry '98)
- Director:** Ryan Schroeder (BSc Computer Science '01)
- Director:** Mark Stafford (BComm Finance '96)

### Annual UNBC Alumni Association Charity Golf Tournament

The UNBC Alumni Association would like to thank Western Chartered Financial for their generous sponsorship of another successful golf tournament, which was held in May. More than \$15,000 was raised for UNBC Athletics.

### Alumni Association Logo

The new Alumni Association logo (seen above) is into its first year of use. 2004 graduates will be the first to receive membership cards featuring the new design.



Razvutindar Mann, from Prince Rupert, graduated with a BSc in Computer Science in 2004.



UNBC's first-ever student to graduate Margaret Bathy (BA General '94), along with Alumni Association President Jacqueline Eaton (right).

## UNBC Grads: Where are they Now?

Approximately 64% of students who graduated in 2004 are from Northern BC. There are now 4,244 UNBC Alumni.

**Dennis Chow** (BComm Marketing '02) is a Relationship Officer with the Citic Ka Wah Bank in Hong Kong, while earning an MBA from University of Southern Alabama.

**Jayne Cloet** (BSc Forestry '99 and BEd Elementary '04) is working as a high school French teacher in Mackenzie.

**Dmitri Azarov** (BA Geography '02) is teaching English in Indonesia, Jakarta.

**Karrilyn Vince** (BSc Environmental Planning '04) started a company, Upward Environmental Planning, in Fort St. John.

**Victor Fast** (BComm Accounting '04) is a Financial Accountant with Canfor.

**Natasha Essar** (BSc Wildlife Biology '02) is an Air Quality Planner with Environment Canada in Vancouver.

**Shafiq Ialji** (BSc Computer Science '03) is working for a division of the Bank of Ireland as an IT Manager and Branch Manager.

**Chris Ghazouly** (MA Political Science '99) is Executive Assistant to the Honourable Lyle Oberg, Minister of Learning for the Government of Alberta.

**Basia Siedlecki** (MA Interdisciplinary '97) is completing her PhD in Community Health Sciences at the University of Calgary, which involved conducting telehealth research in the Yukon.

**Natalie Vogt** (BComm General Business '01) spent 6 months working in Australia at the Canadian High Commission as a Conference Convenor and is currently the Manager of Operations of the Waterloo Centre for Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Waterloo.

**Kiranjit Sidhu** (BSc Computer Science '04) works for Suncor Energy in Fort McMurray.

**Derek Iwanaka** (BComm Marketing '01) is working in the Investor Relations Sector of a Vancouver-based mining company called Bema Gold Corporation.

## UNBCGiving

### UNBC Donations

#### Office of University Development

University of Northern British Columbia  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9

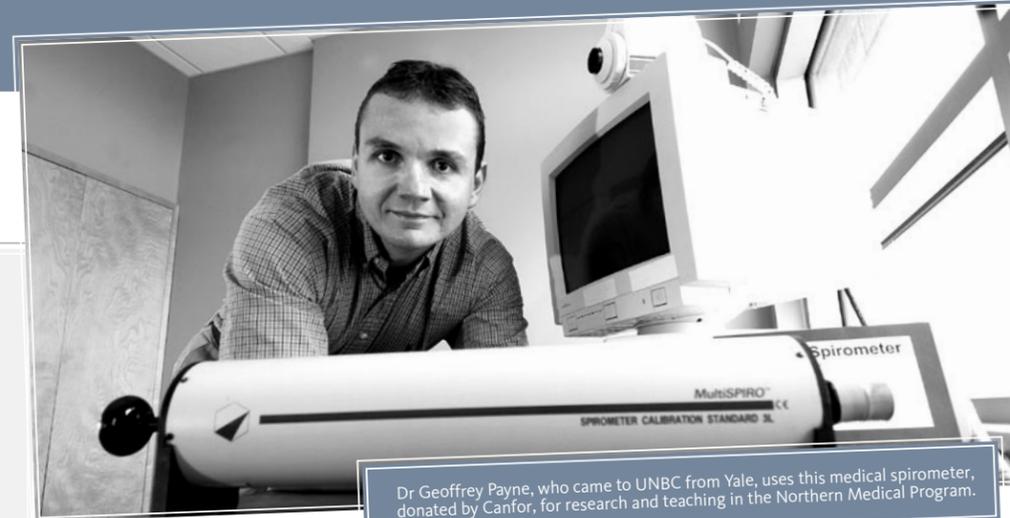
Phone: (250) 960-5750

1-866-960-5750

Fax: (250) 960-5799

Email: devoff@unbc.ca

Web: [www.unbc.ca/giving/](http://www.unbc.ca/giving/)



Dr. Geoffrey Payne, who came to UNBC from Yale, uses this medical spirometer, donated by Canfor, for research and teaching in the Northern Medical Program.

# Giving to UNBC

Supporting UNBC can be as simple as going online. Visit the new Giving website at [www.unbc.ca/giving](http://www.unbc.ca/giving)

### The 2004-2005 Annual Campaign

This year's Annual Campaign was launched in September with the goal of raising \$250,000. Last year, more than \$235,000 was raised and directed to priorities such as scholarships and bursaries, the Northern Medical Program, the library, athletics, and the development of a Student Union Building. The Annual Campaign provides student support and enhances programs beyond what can be covered through government grants and tuition fees.



UNBC President Charles Jago and Kathy Kielly at the Annual Williston Circle Reception

### Why I Give to UNBC

"UNBC is about building strength – individually and collectively. It's important to me that I give to the annual donor campaign because I want to make a difference in the lives of people who live in the North. Please consider how your individual contribution can have a profound impact on others that will follow you."

– Kathy Kielly, UNBC Deputy Registrar and donor

### Northern Medical Programs Trust

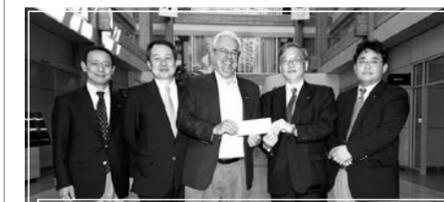
The NMPT is a partnership involving UNBC and the communities and citizens of northern BC, formed to support the effective recruitment, education, and retention of physicians. So far, the NMPT has raised more than \$1 million in donations and pledges. The goal is to raise \$6 million by 2008.

### Edward Epp Art Collection

Northern BC artist and UNBC grad Edward Epp has generously donated ten paintings to UNBC. Selections of his work, which depict landscape scenes of northern British Columbia, were on display in September. Edward is currently living in Prince Rupert, but he has also lived in Terrace and the Nass Valley.



Northern BC artist Edward Epp



Charles Jago receiving a donation from Mitsui Canada

### Recent Gifts to UNBC

- The Prince George Savings & Credit Union, Spruce Credit Union, Lakeview Credit Union, and the North Peace Credit Union have committed over \$150,000 to the NMPT.
- Mitsui Canada has donated \$10,000 towards a \$100,000 pledge for an endowed award for a student majoring in international business.
- The Prince George Multicultural Society has established an endowed award with a gift of \$20,000.
- Adam Zimmerman, former CEO of Noranda, has given a significant gift of personal and corporate papers. The Zimmerman collection is housed in the UNBC Archives.
- Mark and Davida Stafford have established a life insurance policy naming UNBC as the owner and beneficiary, the first official legacy gift from UNBC graduates.

“

There are profound cultural differences in the values that people place on natural resources. In Canada, as in many parts of the world, people have a long history of cultural and economic values attached to the use of such resources, whether they are wildlife, fish, or trees. I think it is important that the international community allow for such uses, as long as they are sustainable and humanely practiced. Unfortunately, the issues lend themselves to high emotion, flashy images, and then distorted information.

- Heather Myers

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International Studies prof Heather Myers

## Anti-sealing Campaigns

International Studies professor Heather Myers has been invited to Europe to provide lawmakers there with her opinion of the seal hunt in the Arctic and its importance to local communities. The European Union is considering a boycott against the Canadian seal hunt, and has asked for Dr Myers' input regarding the community-level effects of past anti-sealing campaigns. She spoke to a committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in October, and was also invited to speak on the issue in Rome, Amsterdam, The Hague, and Zurich. Dr Myers has considerable research experience in the Arctic and has recently focused on public knowledge of Arctic contaminants. She has published articles on the nature of anti-harvesting campaigns and their impacts on northern and rural communities, both in *Forestry Chronicle*, and more recently with Political Science professor Tracy Summerville, in *Policy Options*, the *National Post*, and the last issue of *Update* magazine.

UPDATE

## Student Satisfaction

1200 first-year students are currently experiencing what university life is like, but if the experience of their predecessors is any indication, they'll have an easier transition than other students across Canada. For the first time, UNBC has participated in a national survey of 11,000 first-year students and the survey shows that UNBC students are more satisfied in almost every category. For example, compared to other universities in Canada, nearly twice as many UNBC students report being very satisfied with how they've been treated by the University. They are also much more likely to report that their university experience has exceeded their expectations.



## Air Quality in PG

Having grown up in Prince George, recent master's grad Melanie Noullett knows how important air quality is in the area. While government agencies monitor air quality in the atmosphere, Melanie's research involved having schoolchildren wear personal air quality samplers to better measure their personal exposure to fine particulates all day – inside and outside. The samples were collected in the winter of 2001 and even though the kids were inside about 95% of the time, they were exposed to about half of the outdoor contaminants.

# People in the News

For the first time, UNBC has participated in a national survey of 11,000 first-year students and the survey shows that UNBC students are more satisfied in almost every category.



## Sedimentary Time Machine

Geography professor Brian Menounos is one of a group of researchers who have received new equipment that can acquire sediment cores from deep lakes; something that has not previously been possible. The tools will help Menounos study how lake and marine sediments are valuable archives of changes in environmental conditions over hundreds or thousands of years. He will look for past evidence of floods or glacier run-offs to better understand how climate change could affect our water supply or lead to future floods and landslides.

## Best Paper Nomination

Undergraduate student Brian Ollenberger of Prince George is going to MIT in Boston this fall to present the outcomes of a research project he was part of with Computer Science professor Waqar Haque. The research involved developing a tool that detects deadlocks when computers in different locations work together to solve large-scale problems, such as weather simulation. Research teams at Iowa State University and NASA were also working on the problem, but the UNBC duo were the first to crack it. As a result, they received a "best paper award" nomination and will present their findings at the International Conference on Parallel and Distributed Computing.



## What about Mycorrhizas?

UNBC professor Dr Hugues Massicotte is a co-author of a comprehensive new book called "Mycorrhizas: Anatomy and Cell Biology", that examines the close relationship between plant root cells and fungi that is critical to plant growth and survival. Among the 300 images that appear in the book, several originated from around Prince George, including the UNBC campus, Forests for the World, Willow River, Ness Lake, Bednesti, and Bear Lake.

## Regional Expansion

Blanca Schorcht and Judith Lapadat have recently taken on new positions at the University's regional centres, and both are adding construction expertise to their resumes. Based at the University's Quesnel campus, Blanca is working with CNC to build a new North Cariboo Community Campus that will open next fall and double the amount of local space for post-secondary offerings. Judith, meanwhile, oversees UNBC's operations in the Northwest region and is anxiously awaiting completion of a new college campus in Prince Rupert that will provide UNBC with more space to offer courses locally.



## Shinerama!

UNBC student Serena Hartl coordinated this year's Shinerama event, which raised a record \$16,000 for Cystic Fibrosis. Nearly 300 students were seen around Prince George on Sept 18, shining shoes, washing cars, and collecting bottles as part of the annual fundraising project. Last year, the students raised about \$12,000.

## Doctor-Patient Communication

Psychology prof Han Li and student Juanita Lundgren have recently completed a ground-breaking study on how to improve doctor-patient communication. 114 adults volunteered for the study – half received a 15 minute training session on how to interact with their doctor, while the other half received no training at all. All of the patients completed a questionnaire after a medical visit, with those receiving training consistently reporting much higher levels of satisfaction with their visit.



## National Conferences at UNBC

Political Science professor Gary Wilson took the lead in organizing a major conference at UNBC this summer, bringing together rural community reps to talk about the importance of the environment to resource-dependent communities. Other major events at UNBC included a national aboriginal youth business plan competition, Northern Doctors Day, and a national think-tank on revitalizing rural regions.

The stories on this page are pulled from UNBC's bi-weekly internal newsletter "Bulletin", which can be viewed online at [www.unbc.ca/newsletter](http://www.unbc.ca/newsletter).

UPDATE



### Catherine Nolin

Geography professor Catherine Nolin combines academic and activist concerns related to Guatemala's 1980s genocide, refugee movement to Canada, and Canadian immigration and refugee policy. Her research and teaching interests are shaped by a commitment to social justice and human rights. Dr Nolin's research projects focus on Canadian solidarity networks in support of Guatemala's social movements and migrant insecurity along the Guatemala-Mexico border. Related teaching includes social geography, geographies of international development, settlement & migration, and the Geography Field School. For more information, visit [web.unbc.ca/geography/whatsnew/guatemala2004/](http://web.unbc.ca/geography/whatsnew/guatemala2004/).

# A Cup of Social Justice

Geography professor Catherine Nolin

Canadian coffee consumption is at an all time high. So is our disconnection from global coffee producers: those men, women, and children – yes, children – who tend caffeine fields (rather than fields of corn, beans, squash, and other staple products) to meet the demands of our global thirst for yet another double-double. Oxfam Canada details that, per capita, Canadians drink 402 cups of coffee a year, 77 more than in the US, and 152 more than in Europe. If you are part of the 67% of Canadians who drink coffee, then you, like me, are tied directly to the more than 20 million people who produce coffee globally.

Guatemala is a coffee country in shock. In May 2004, I traveled with 10 UNBC students to several Guatemalan coffee-producing communities to explore the coffee crisis, meet with leaders advocating “fair trade” as a partial solution to the crisis, and make the connection between Canadian coffee consumption and Guatemalan production.

The UNBC Geography Field School allowed us to learn geography through the soles of our feet, to see first-hand how decisions we make at our local coffee shop have profound implications for whole communities tucked in the mountains of rural Guatemala. Issues of power, resistance, human rights, inequality, and social injustice are easy to see when you walk side-by-side with a *campesino* farmer who eloquently explains the exploitative relationships that shape the majority of Guatemala's coffee countryside, or a child picking ripe coffee berries under the hot sun, or a woman struggling to feed her family. The field school allowed us to explore an alternative vision of coffee production: one that champions Fair Trade agreements, organic and small-scale production, community-based decision-making, and the creation of hope for children, families, and communities. Our morning cup of coffee will never be the same.

Fair Trade Certified coffee ensures that farmers receive a fair price for their coffee which is purchased directly from cooperatives of small-scale farmers at a minimum price of US\$1.26 per pound. Farmers with the Campesino Committee of the Highlands (CCDA) told us that this price is still not “fair” but they see it as an alternative to the inevitable hunger and misery that accompany the US\$0.07 per pound received by others caught in non-Fair Trade negotiations.

After our delegation's experience with the CCDA-affiliated communities of San Lucas Tolimán and Chitlul (with active Fair Trade cooperatives), we are bound to order fair trade coffee when it is available and request it as often as possible. Why doesn't Starbucks have a Fair Trade option available EVERY day, in EVERY store (as we have at the campus venue)? The same goes for Tim Hortons and Second Cup. Why on earth, if given the choice, do we settle for a cup of social injustice rather than one that offers immediate and concrete support for those who worked the soil to produce one of our perks of living in Canada?

We are a coffee-consuming society that could re-shape the coffee map of social injustice from one which charts labour, environment, and social exploitation to one that illustrates solidarity, equitable relationships, small-scale land ownership, and healthy, sustainable coffee-producing communities. How about starting your day with a cup of social justice?

## Moving? Let us know!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 New Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a UNBC Graduate?  Yes  No

### Snail Mail

Fill out this form and mail to:

Office of Communications  
 University of Northern British Columbia  
 3333 University Way  
 Prince George, BC  
 V2N 4Z9

### Online

Email us your updated contact information at [communications@unbc.ca](mailto:communications@unbc.ca) or do it online at [www.unbc.ca/alumni/](http://www.unbc.ca/alumni/).