THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VOL 55 | NO 8 | AUGUST 9, 2009

UBC REPORTS

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Imagine that:
UBC plans a big new orientation day

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

All first day classes for 35,000 undergraduates are being replaced by orientation activities. UBC's student development team is helping organize the expansion.

BY RANDY SCHMIDT

Get ready for a major change this fall on UBC's Vancouver campus. Orientation day, called Imagine UBC, has become much bigger: all classes have been replaced on the first day of school for more than 35,000 undergraduate students. In their place, faculty and staff will turn their attention to a wide range of new first-day activities designed to connect students with their professors and classmates to find the support they need for starting campus life, finding out more about their major, or getting ready to graduate. It's a format UBC Okanagan has modeled since its inception in 2005.

Until this year, Imagine UBC, already thought to be the largest one-day student orientation in Canada, has replaced 100-level classes with orientation activities for about 5,000 first-year students each fall.

> **"Undoubtedly, this will be a model and an inspiration to many universities ..."**
> **Janina Montero, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs, UCLA.**

"This is a large campus, with many opportunities, but it can also be overwhelming for new students," says Margot Bell, Associate Director of Student Development on the Vancouver campus. "Our goals are for students to feel welcomed and excited about their decision to come to UBC."

Traditionally new students come to campus on the first day and meet up in small MUG groups (My Undergraduate

continued on back cover

International Service Learning programs grow

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Students wishing to take their university education around the world will have a new opportunity when UBC's Go Global International Service Learning (ISL) program opens its registration again this fall.

Go Global will recruit students in September for its ISL placement in Lesotho, a small southern African country. The project was first held this past summer and is one of six ISL programs.

The ISL placements – also offered in Costa Rica, Rwanda, Mexico, Swaziland and Uganda – connect students and their academic interests with grassroots community organizations around the world for volunteer programs that focus on reciprocal learning.

"For each of the programs we've set learning objectives with the community partners based on their priorities," says Associate Director Tamara Baldwin. "Students then have the opportunity to take a hands-on approach to projects that genuinely interest them, both personally and academically."

In Lesotho, engineering students partnered with a community based organization, Mohoma Temeng, to design and build ventilated improved pit latrines in a rural area of Lesotho called Qacha's Nek.

A 2004 study by UNICEF found that about one-third of the country's rural population lack access to acceptable sanitation facilities, which often causes contamination of nearby water sources.

The project took hold after Mathabo Tsepa, born and raised in Lesotho, completed doctoral studies in education at UBC. She now teaches at the University of Lesotho and is Go Global's primary contact, and a liaison with individuals from the academic, civil society and local communities.

Baldwin, who recently returned from Lesotho, says the results of this summer's project are "amazing on so many fronts.

"The students were able to build a number of latrines, but the focus they took was on working with the community organization to ensure the work would continue after they left," she says. "Together they've trained local youths who have gained important work skills and will be better able to contribute to their community."

For next summer's placement, a team will be selected by November, with pre-departure learning sessions held through May.

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UBC Engineering students learn from community partners in Lesotho.

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IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC media coverage in June 2009. COMPILED BY SEAN SULLIVAN

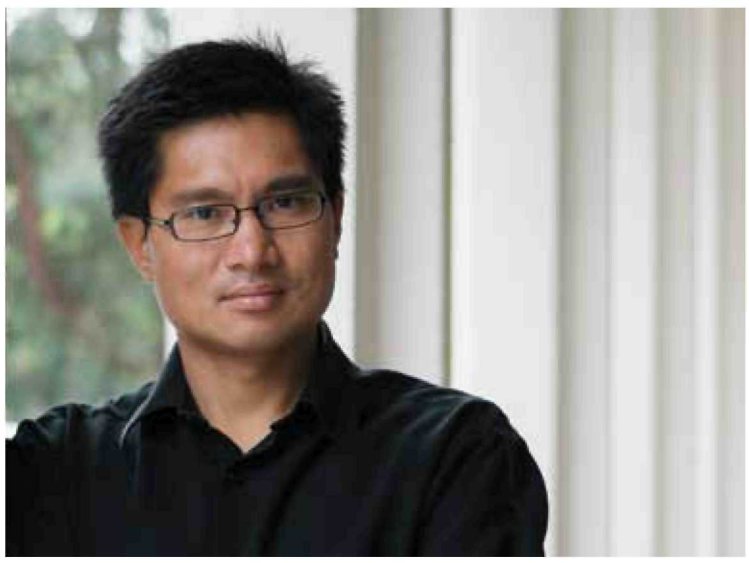

PHOTO: EUGENE LIN

Prof. Karl Aquino's study on customer surveys earned international interest.

Atleo elected chief

Shawn Atleo, longtime friend of the Faculty of Education and a graduate of the UBC Adult Learning and Global Change program, has been elected Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief.

The 42-year-old businessman was picked as chief after a marathon election that saw eight rounds of voting over 23 hours.

Atleo's connection to UBC was mentioned in media reports by *The Canadian Press*, *Global and Mail* and *Canwest News Service*.

Education was an important plank of his leadership platform. Atleo's father, E. Richard Atleo, was the first aboriginal to graduate from UBC with a PhD.

Canada's moon rock

UBC Prof. **Jaymie Matthews** was thrust into the limelight last month as NASA celebrated the 40th anniversary of Apollo 11's lunar landing

Matthews, a professor of astronomy and astrophysics, was the youth ambassador who received Canada's moon rock – worth upwards of $5 million – in 1972.

As a 13-year-old, Matthews won an essay contest on the subject of "The Importance of Space Flight to Mankind," which netted him a trip to Washington. There he met President Richard Nixon and roomed next to Neil Armstrong, later watching the Apollo 17 moon landing from NASA's Mission Control Center.

In interviews with the *Ottawa Citizen*, *Vancouver Province* and *Vancouver Sun*, Matthews said he's glad to know the sliver of rock is soon to be on display in Ottawa. "For people to see a moon rock, a piece of another world, it's the gateway for them to learn more about our solar system," he said.

Court rejects ski jump bid

The Globe and Mail and *NPR* turned to UBC Law Prof. **Margot Young** for expert analysis after a B.C. Supreme Court judge dismissed a high-profile bid by women ski jumpers to compete at next year's Winter Olympics.

Madam Justice Lauri Ann Fenlon ruled that the women ski jumpers were discriminated against by the International Olympic Committee's decision to keep them off the 2010 Olympic calendar, but said that the Switzerland-based IOC was beyond the reach of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

UBC law professor Margot Young said the implication of the judge's decision is worrisome.

"If these were black Canadians and Jewish Canadians being excluded from the event, it would be intolerable," said Young. "We should raise questions about what is going on at the Olympics."

Customer surveys show race bias

A UBC study that examines customer attitudes shows white male employees are more likely to receive higher customer satisfaction scores than women or people of colour.

Karl Aquino, a professor at UBC's Sauder School of Business, found that customers anonymously reported lower satisfaction with service from women and minority employees performing at the same level and offering the same service as white male employees.

"What's unsettling about our study is that when women and minorities perform better, they actually get lower performance ratings and are perceived more negatively. And we don't yet really know why," he said.

The Canadian Press, *Canwest News Service*, *Toronto Star*, *Toronto Sun* and the *Boston Globe* were among the news organizations that reported on the study.

A boost for stroke victims

Wired reports that a "brain-tingling technique" pioneered by UBC physical therapist **Lara Boyd** might eventually help stroke victims recover their coordination.

In an experiment published last month in *BMC Neuroscience*, Boyd put 30 people into a machine that sent electromagnetic waves into their premotor cortexes, a brain region associated with learning motor skills.

Boyd says the stimulation may help neurons in the premotor cortex form connections, allowing motor memories to form rapidly.

The Telegraph, *Popular Science* and *The Statesman* also reported on the experiment.

UBC REPORTS

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New University Centre a hub for student activity

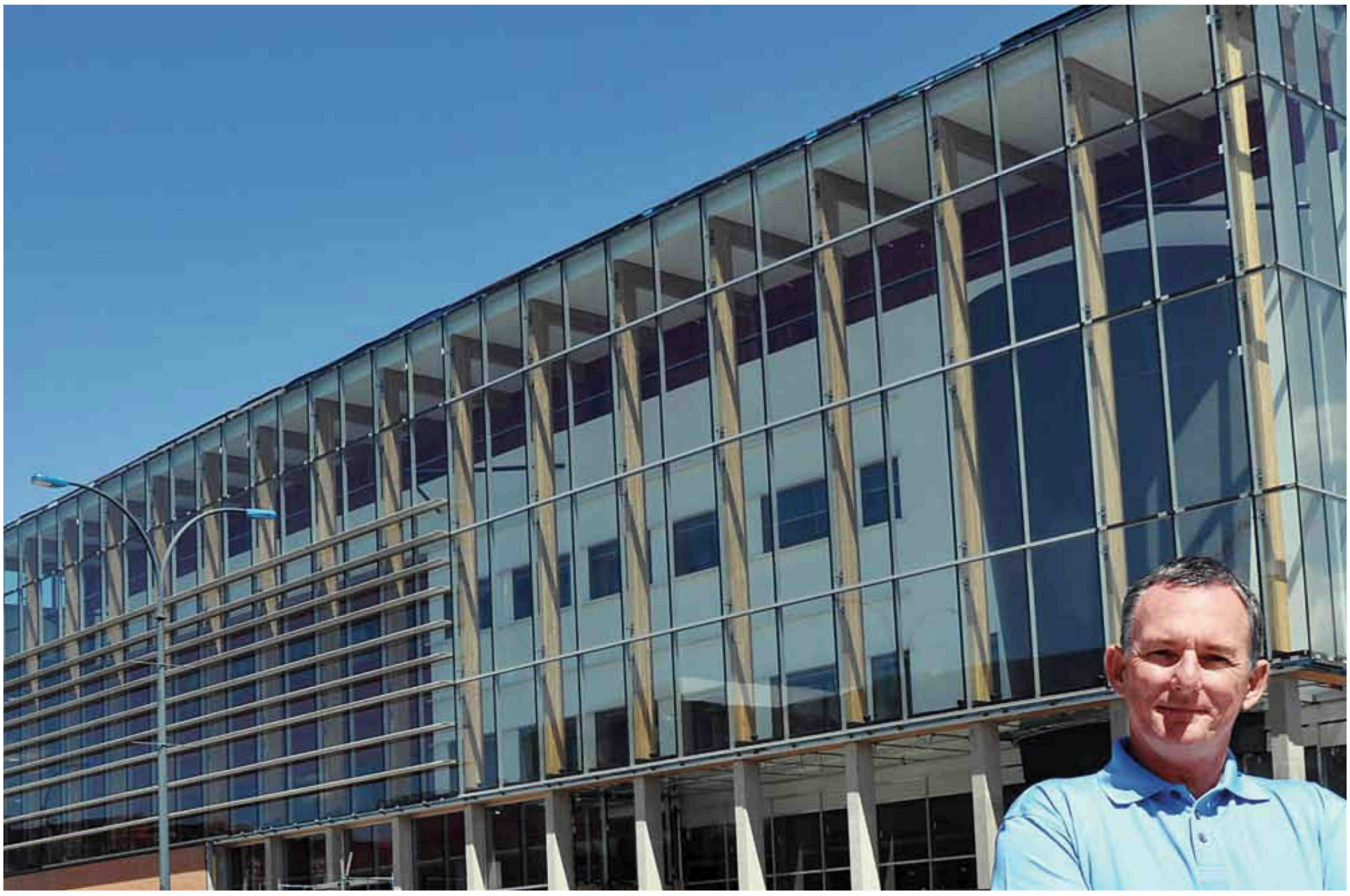


PHOTO: JODY JACOB

Ian Cull, Associate Vice President of Students at UBC Okanagan, says the new University Centre has been designed as a central hub of activity and services for students.

BY JODY JACOB

Students have more places to relax, study and get together with the addition of the University Centre at UBC Okanagan. Opened this summer, the $33-million building is a hub for student activity -- offering everything from fresh food to financial aid.

"We wanted to create a central place for student activity and engagement," says Ian Cull, Associate Vice President, Students, at UBC Okanagan. "One of the main things this new building will do is provide a focal point where students can gather and have immediate access to services and activity. It also features some spaces – specifically, three collegia – that provide a home away from home for students who commute."

Collegia are spaces designed to serve as a home away from home for students who commute to campus. They serve as places to hang out, eat lunch, spend time with classmates, and do school work. Each collegium has a relaxing lounge-style atmosphere and is outfitted with comfortable furniture, individual and group work spaces, and kitchen facilities.

Included in the 79,000-sq.-ft. building are learning centres, student services offices for several UBC Okanagan departments, UBC Students' Union Okanagan offices, a sushi bar, student club space, a variety of social and gathering spaces and a pub/restaurant.

"There is also a new cafeteria with a unique food program that focuses on organic foods and local produce and provides a full-range of food options, such as vegan or vegetarian," says Cull. "There is a credit union, a state-of-the-art movie cinema that seats about 100 people, a multi-faith space that students can book for meditation or prayer, and a medical clinic that will operate similar to a walk-in clinic."

> **"One of the main things this new building will do is provide a focal point where students can gather and have immediate access to services and activity."**

The University Centre has been more than two and a half years in the making. The UBC Students' Union Okanagan contributed $3 million to the project, and a private anonymous donor gave more than $1 million to establish the J. Peter Meekison Student Centre, located on the ground floor. Meekison was the public administrator appointed by the B.C. government to oversee the transition from the former Okanagan University College into two new institutions: Okanagan College and UBC Okanagan in 2005.

"The growth of our student population is the main reason the University Centre was built," says Cull. "We went from 3,000 students to about 6,000 students and expect that number to increase to 7,500 students by 2012. We know the University Centre will contribute greatly to the student experience at UBC Okanagan." R

PHOTO: BUD MORTENSON

Peter and Patti Meekison visited the University Centre at UBC Okanagan this summer. The ground floor of the facility comprises the J. Peter Meekison Student Centre, home of the students' union and a host of student amenities.

Okanagan growing in graduate studies

BY JODY JACOB

The very first doctoral degree to be completed at UBC Okanagan – a PhD in chemistry, awarded to Sarrah Vakili in June – was an important milestone for graduate studies at UBC's campus in Kelowna, says Marvin Krank, Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

Another 59 students are pursuing doctoral degrees right now, says Krank, and 29 more candidates are expected to be admitted to doctoral programs over the next year.

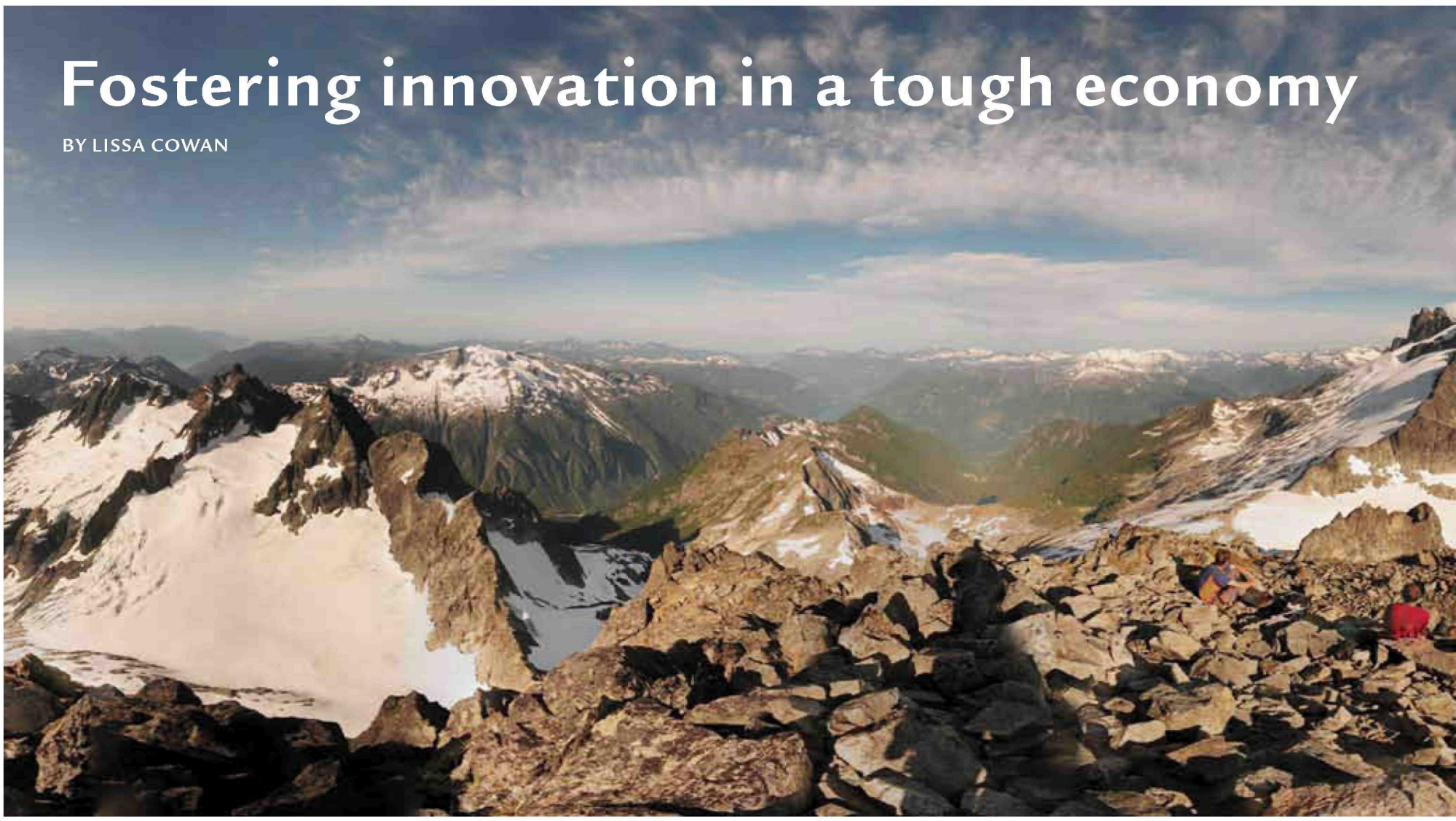
"We have already graduated many master's students and our doctoral programs have grown dramatically over the past few years," says Krank.

June's graduation ceremonies saw 55 master's degrees conferred in social work, nursing science, education, applied science, arts and fine arts. Last year, 218 students entered master's degree programs. This year another 158 master's students have been accepted.

"Graduate programs span the breadth of academic disciplines here, from science and engineering to creative arts," says Krank. R

Fostering innovation in a tough economy

BY LISSA COWAN



Clouburst Research co-founder Matthew Brown took this panorama of Serratus Mountain, B.C. using the company's new Autostitch iPhone application.

Three spin-off companies are achieving success in a difficult economy thanks to innovations that were established through UBC's University-Industry Liaison Office (UILO).

Cloudburst

Ever wanted to create eye-catching panoramas by combining several photos to make one complete picture?

Dubbed the "first automatic image stitcher for the iPhone," the Autostitch iPhone does exactly that. It was developed by Cloudburst Research and sold thousands of copies the first two weeks it was released this past June. Cloudburst co-founder Matthew Brown invented Autostitch as part of his PhD thesis research at UBC.

Formed in 2009, Cloudburst is one of 137 spin-offs developed through UBC's UILO. UBC is a recognized leader in commercialization activities, with technologies created at UBC having generated more than $5 billion in sales. The university currently holds approximately 250 license agreements with companies world-wide.

David Lowe, professor of computer science at UBC and CEO of Cloudburst Research, developed the baseline technology for Autostitch, called Scale-Invariant Feature Transform or SIFT, which has since been licensed to a number of companies. He attributes the company's success to the help they received from UILO.

"UBC's Industry-Liaison Office has been very supportive in helping the company to license our research to other companies and in setting up our own company to create a mobile phone product," he says.

Lowe says the development at UBC of their technology has been instrumental in enabling Cloudburst to take academic research from the lab and develop it into consumer products.

Ostara

Another UBC spin-off, Ostara Nutrient Recovery Technologies, is showing a high degree of success in spite of the economic shakedown.

Donald Mavinic, UBC civil engineering professor, knew early on that he and his research team were developing a technology that was ahead of its time.

The researchers underwent a five-year development process at UBC to find a 'green' alternative to depleting the world's dwindling supply of rock phosphate. The result was equipment and expertise for recovering phosphorus and other resources from municipal wastewater treatment facilities and in doing so recycling the nutrients into sustainable products such as fertilizers. A major benefit of the technology to municipalities was to solve the costly problem of blocked pipes and treatment costs in the plants caused by a buildup of phosphorus and other minerals.

"The world is running out of phosphorus and this chemical element is required for everything that lives on land and in our waters," says Mavinic. "We cannot survive without it and there is no known substitute for it."

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Two new master's degrees for our times

BY LISSA COWAN

PHOTO: ©iStock/melhi

Graduate students enrolled in the new Master of Food and Resource Economics (MFRE) at the faculty of Land and Food Systems will discuss world grain prices and other related issues.

New master's degree helps students tackle global food issues

What caused two recent spikes in grain prices? Are we facing a global food crisis? Graduate students enrolled in the new Master of Food and Resource Economics (MFRE) at the Faculty of Land and Food Systems will probe these and other real world issues when the program launches this fall.

"The world is faced with increasingly complex economic issues dealing with food security, safety and trade and the effects of the food sector on the environment," says Shoren Jin, one of 15 graduate students to enter the program this September. "The marketplace needs people who can analyze, evaluate and solve these public policy and business issues."

The MFRE is the first professional masters degree in Canada to offer a combination of applied economics, policy analysis and agribusiness management. The 30-credit program can be completed in one year and should be of particular interest to graduates and professionals such as policy analysts, market consultants and researchers looking to sharpen their skill-sets with more advanced economics and real world applications. MFRE courses are taught by faculty members as well as people in industry or government from the food and resource sectors.

The Food and Resource Economics (FRE) group in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems devised the program to fulfill a demand of bachelor's degree graduates from

continued on page 5

PHOTO: MATTHEW BROWN

FOSTERING INNOVATION *continued from page 4*

Ostara Nutrient Recovery Technologies was founded in 2006 and its flagship product Crystal Green, a slow release commercial fertilizer, is already in large demand from golf courses, parks, nurseries, and the forest industry, which can use the product to boost tree growth. The B.C. Conservation Foundation that works closely with the B.C. Ministry of Environment Fish and Wildlife Branch, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Greater Georgia Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan, is now using Crystal Green pellets to replace the nutrient value of dead salmon carcasses missing from rivers as a result of low salmon stocks.

The Goldbar treatment plant in Edmonton was host to the first full scale installation to produce Crystal Green starting in 2007, followed by the Durham plant operated by Clean Water Services near Portland, Oregon in spring 2009. Ostara has plans to build three to five more facilities in the next year in Canada, the U.S. and parts of Europe to keep up with demand. Six to eight metric tons of carbon dioxide credits will be produced for every ton of Crystal Green as a result of the technology, which represents a radical cut to CO_2 emissions from fertilizer production.

"Countries such as Germany, Sweden, China, Australia and Holland also want to come on board because we've invented a better mousetrap," says Mavinic.

OncoGenex

Martin Gleave, professor of Urologic Sciences at UBC and Chief Scientific Officer of OncoGenex Pharmaceuticals, has a different target: cancer.

Gleave and his research team at OncoGenex, an eight-year-old biopharmaceutical company that started at UBC, are developing new therapies for cancer patients. As director of the Prostate Centre at Vancouver General Hospital, Gleave is also the chief inventor of OGX-011, a drug that was shown in recent clinical trials to prolong the life of men with advanced prostate cancer by seven months.

"The discovery and development of OGX-011 illustrates our capacity to retain and add value to products spun out of the Prostate Centre which, in turn, supports Canadian biotech and economic growth in Canada," says Gleave.

OncoGenex currently has five products in development. With this second phase of clinical trials showing significant benefit in advanced prostate cancer, the company is well positioned to partner OGX-011 into the third phase of trials for commercial development.

UBC spin-offs Ostara Nutrient Recovery Technologies, Cloudburst Research and OncoGenex Pharmaceuticals are bringing considerable economic benefit to B.C., but also to the everyday lives of local and global communities.

"During difficult economic times it is encouraging to see not only the success of UBC spin-off companies, but also that industry partners are looking increasingly to UBC's innovation capacity," says Angus Livingstone, UILO managing director.

For more information about UILO and UBC spin-offs, *www.uilo.ubc.ca.* R

MASTER'S DEGREES *continued from page 4*

agricultural economics and related programs for a master's degree adapted to their interests and education.

"The new program will prepare students to understand changes in food markets, undertake agricultural and resource policy analyses, and evaluate proposals to solve environmental problems," says Rick Barichello, associate professor in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems. "This will enable graduates to contribute better in government and industry as policy-makers and marketing managers."

Jin likes the practical focus of the program.

"I'm hoping to learn more about issues in the food and resource sectors relating to natural resources and sustainable growth that I can then apply in the workplace when I graduate," she says.

Xuhui Yuan, a recent UBC graduate with a major in economics, also likes the MFRE's straightforward approach to tackling today's economic issues.

"I want to study something that can be used in the real world," Yuan says. "The MFRE seems to fit what's going on right now in the food and resource sectors."

Already working for a trading company that imports food and owns a supermarket, Yuan says she didn't want to enter a graduate degree program that was too sweeping and theoretical. She first became interested in pursuing graduate studies as a UBC undergraduate student. Finding no specialized focus for economics majors at the undergraduate level, Yuan took several Food and Resource Economics courses in her third and fourth years. She hopes the MFRE will deepen her knowledge of food markets and give her a better understanding of ways to cut down on waste and use scarce resources more sustainably.

"I could work for government, futures markets, a trading company, a resource company, or in the agricultural sector. The possibilities for me once I graduate are many."

Both students like the fact that there seems to be an increasing demand for jobs in those sectors and that, through the MFRE program, they can learn more about sustainable practices.

"With this degree I am more likely to be hired in a management position in the food industry," says Yuan. "I could work for government, futures markets, a trading company, a resource company, or in the agricultural sector. The possibilities for me once I graduate are many."

For more information about the MFRE program, *www.landfood.ubc.ca/programs/master_food_res_econ.htm.*

A New Masters of Engineering with a Clean Energy Focus

The Faculty of Applied Science and the Clean Energy Research Centre (CERC) at UBC are offering a new master's degree in Clean Energy Engineering to help conserve and meet the global need for energy while minimizing the release of greenhouse gases and other emissions.

The first of its kind in Canada, the program is aimed at engineering graduates looking for advanced training in both reducing energy demand through energy-efficient technologies and improving the supply of energy from sustainable energy sources such as biomass, solar, wind and small-scale hydro. The 12-16-month program will also focus on energy conservation, social change concepts, efficient use of electricity and acquiring the tools to compare and evaluate alternative energy scenarios.

The program combines courses with a co-operative work term where students will have the opportunity to begin to develop their career goals in areas such as technology development, management, business and leadership.

In partnership with the UBC Sustainability Office and the Faculty of Applied Science, BC Hydro Power Smart will support the program by providing expertise with a focus on energy conservation, co-funding engineering co-op work placements, and supporting a BC Hydro Power Smart Instructional Fellow and program curriculum development.

For more information about the program, *www.cerc.ubc.ca.* R

UBC Child Care adds five new daycare centres

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

UBC Child Care Services serve about 500 children, making it Vancouver's largest daycare provider.

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Daycares facilitate meeting of minds

UBC's Child Care service marks its 40th anniversary this month and there's plenty to celebrate: five new daycare facilities have opened in 2009, with others on the drawing board for the near future.

"The need to expand has been clear for a number of years, but the demand was so great we've had to open a number at once," says Darcelle Cottons, director of UBC Child Care Services. "Even doing that hasn't shortened our waiting list as much as it should."

Staff turnover and a demographic change on campus are driving the demand. As well, new housing on campus may mean a rise in the number of young families in the near future, Cottons says.

The waiting list for one of the child care spaces is now 15-18 months, down from a recent high of three years. About 500 children, from the age of four months to 12 years, are enrolled in the centres.

UBC Child Care Services is already the largest campus-based child care system in North America, and the largest provider of infant and toddler childcare in Vancouver.

However, a steering committee of students, faculty, staff, community members and members of the administration is looking at how UBC can double the number of childcare spaces on campus, says Nancy Knight, associate vice-president campus and community planning.

The administration will be providing the board of governors with a report this fall, in part based on the feedback received during a recent open house.

Operating in tandem with a large university often leads to interesting research projects pioneered by staff and students. Four of the 12 centres is experimenting with grouping toddlers with preschool-aged children, a first in Canada and a move that could lead a nationwide change.

UBC Child Care Services is already the largest campus-based child care system in North America.

Rather than splitting the youngest kids into two groups – toddlers and three-to-five year olds – researchers are experimenting with grouping the children into a bigger space with a smaller child-to-staff ratio.

"For young children, relationships are critical, and this allows the child to be with the same caregivers for up to four years," Cottons says.

"Innovation is what we're all about: finding better ways to do what we do," she says. "The community interest in this project is huge."

UBC Child Care services operate on one campus block, giving parents and staff greater access to each other.

"The community is made up mostly of students, faculty and staff, but they're all just someone's parent," says Cottons. The daycares often host potluck dinners, where parents can get to know each other socially.

It was at one such potluck that Todd Handy, the director of the neuroimaging lab in the UBC Department of Psychology, met Lara Boyd, a UBC physical therapist and neuroscientist.

They got to talking, and found they had common interests.

Her work involves studying how people recover motor function after having strokes. She had a new study to contact, but didn't have necessary equipment. Handy did.

"It just so happened I had a spare EEG recording system she could borrow," he says.

That chance meeting last fall has led to an ongoing research collaboration that marries cognitive neuroscience and physical therapy.

"It's sometimes challenging to make connections on this campus for interdisciplinary research," says ErinRose Handy, communications manager for the Faculty of Applied Science and parent of two children in the system. "The daycares provide opportunity on this campus to connect with people from different faculties." R

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UBC GRAD *continued from page 1*

Participants will learn about the country and its culture, and gain team-building and intercultural communication skills.

The recruiting for the summer programs is in September and October, with applications due Oct. 18.

The ISL programs span disciplines as broad as engineering, psychology, social work education and science.

In Swaziland, students work with SOS Children's Villages on community-strengthening initiatives that include assisting youth with job search strategies and conducting training sessions focused on strengthening families impacted by HIV/AIDS.

In Uganda, one project is focused on assisting with community libraries that are working to increase the reading culture and computer literacy.

The environmental impacts of tourism and the effects the industry has on the habitat of animals such as sea turtles is studied in Costa Rica, while students who venture to Mexico

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Students poised to become stars

BY LISSA COWAN

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Pamela Lincez is a fifth year student in the Biotechnology Honors program at UBC who was chosen to participate in this year's Rising Stars of Research.

Sometimes love at first sight can be a simple matter of biology.

After Calgary native Leah Lim attended last year's inaugural Rising Stars of Research National Undergraduate Science and Engineering Research Poster Competition at UBC as a fifth-year undergraduate student, she became convinced graduate school was for her. She looked at her options in November 2008 and remembered a brief talk she had with Charles Thompson, professor in UBC's Department of Microbiology and Immunology, during a tour of science labs.

"He showed us an agar plate with *Mycobacteria* growing on it," says Lim. "Then he gave a quick description of what his lab studied, and I was captivated."

Lim is one of nine students who attended Rising Stars of Research in 2008 and decided to come back to UBC to pursue graduate studies this year. Now in the first year of her master's, Lim is studying and working at the Thompson Lab in the Life Sciences Centre.

"My research looks at the role of a specific regulatory protein, *whiB7*, that confers antibiotic resistance in *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*," says Lim. "Learning about this protein will help researchers develop drugs to more successfully treat tuberculosis with antibiotics."

Rising Stars of Research is coordinated by the UBC Faculty of Graduate Studies and brings together dozens of professors from several faculties to help organize the event, review applications and judge student posters.

"As a professor I feel it is one of my responsibilities to provide support through teaching and helping to guide students who wish to pursue graduate studies," says François Jean, an associate professor at the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at UBC and organizer of the competition.

In 2007, Jean first came up with the idea of holding a national undergraduate science poster competition at UBC to support and encourage students in their ongoing development as scientists and interest them to pursue graduate studies. This year, he is actively involved in the co-ordination of the Rising Stars of Research events with other UBC faculty members.

A new component of this year's event, August 19-22, is the participation of international students.

UBC's Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) is leveraging existing relationships to attract top students from the region's universities. This summer, the University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology will cover the costs for seven students to travel to UBC to participate in the Rising Stars of Research event. They'll be joined by 100 students from universities across Canada.

"The ultimate goal of the event is to position UBC worldwide as a place where we develop, support and celebrate outstanding young researchers," says Jenny Phelps, assistant dean and director, Graduate Enrollment Services at the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Pamela Lincez is a fifth-year student in the Biotechnology Honours program at UBC who was chosen to participate in this year's event. She is attracted to the field of virology because of the significant impact infections cause on a global scale, especially with viruses like Influenza A virus, Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and Hepatitis C virus (HCV).

"This event is an opportunity for me to network with students and learn about Canadian and Hong Kong research groups that may be of assistance with future research," she says. "I hope to receive constructive advice about my work and my plans for graduate research."

> **"I hope to receive constructive advice about my work and my plans for graduate research."**

Rising Stars of Research includes a workshop to help students with scholarship applications, opportunities for small groups of students to tour facilities, and interaction with UBC faculty, graduate students and peers from more than 30 Canadian and Hong Kong universities. The highlight of the event is a poster presentation by students in the areas of health sciences, biochemistry and molecular biology, life sciences and psychology, computational sciences and technology, physical and earth sciences, and engineering.

The poster session will be held in the Life Sciences Centre West Atrium on August 20, 11am-2pm, and is open to the public. Awards in each category are valued at $500 each. Co-sponsors of the event include the BC Innovation Council, Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, UNBC, BC Mental Health and Addictions Research Network, UBC Facility for Infectious Disease and Epidemic Research (FINDER), and UBC Life Sciences Institute. R

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help small cooperatives establish a dialog for greater leadership and development.

In Rwanda students most recently taught business planning to a weavers cooperative, and assisted in English-language training to allow the women to better interact with their customers.

Students are drawn to UBC's Go Global ISL program because of its reputation and emphasis on developing real-world skills that can apply inside and outside of the classroom, Baldwin says.

"They've studied this or that, but often say that it's all theoretical," she says. "We also hear a lot of students saying they've wanted to volunteer, but have been cautious about other international programs."

In the case of Lesotho, a successful first run means the program will continue next summer.

"I think a lot of stereotypes were broken on a lot of sides," Baldwin says.

"Our group went in thinking about this being a technical project, but came out seeing it as so much more." One student said that he can't wait to get back and learn more about politics and economics – topics he says he wasn't interested in before this project.

On the other hand, some community members told Baldwin they've never seen young people work so hard. "They said they thought this may be another group of 'white' people with their hands in the pockets," she says. R

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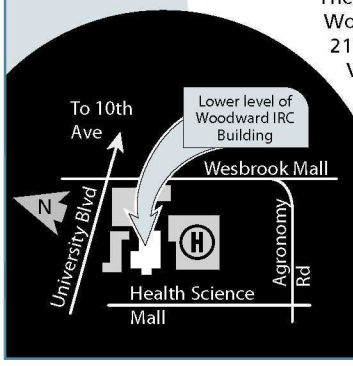

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Emperor and Empress of Japan visit UBC

PHOTO: GOH IROMOTO

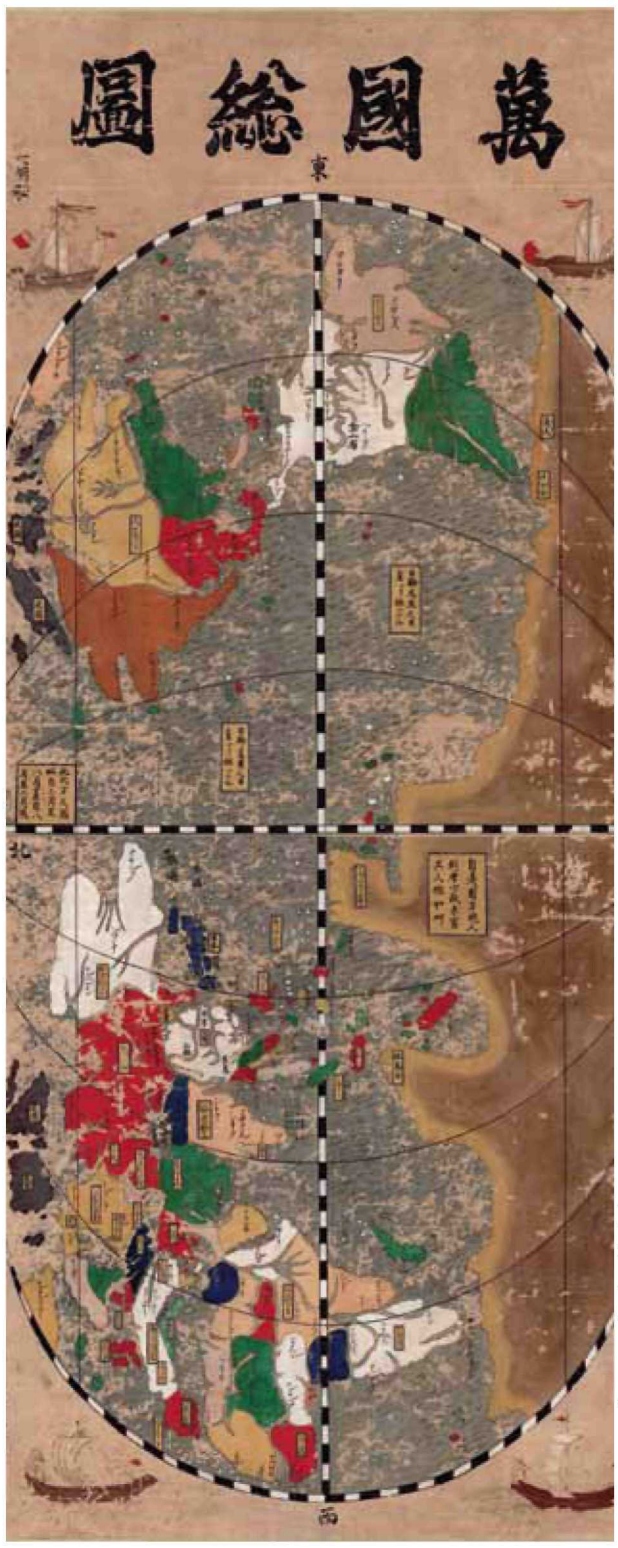

PHOTO: courtesy UBC Library Rare Books and Special Collections

The Bankoku Sōzu map, created in the 1600s and usually displayed vertically along with a glossary of world costumes, was among the rare artifacts from the UBC Library perused by Their Majesties.

BY BRIAN LIN

More than half a century after his first visit to UBC, His Majesty Emperor Akihito of Japan returned to the now fully mature Nitobe Memorial Garden July 13 as part of a cross-Canada tour celebrating the 80th anniversary of Japan-Canada diplomatic relations.

In 1953, then Crown Prince Akihito toured a smaller predecessor of the Garden on his way to attend Queen Elizabeth's coronation. It was the 19-year-old Crown Prince's first trip abroad.

His Majesty – who is also referred to as the Heisei Emperor to denote the era over which he reigns – was accompanied by Empress Michiko and spent more than 20 minutes conversing with 20 UBC students in the Garden, widely recognized as the most authentic traditional Japanese tea garden in North America.

"Being afforded an audience with Their Majesties was an extraordinary honour," says Ciaran Dudley, a fourth-year Honours Asian Languages and Culture major. "I was most impressed by Their Majesties' sincere interest in us students. They spoke *with* us rather than *at* us, which was very humbling."

The tour of the Garden followed a brief presentation by Provost David Farrar at the Asian Centre, where Their Majesties perused rare maps and *utagaruta* poem cards from the UBC Library, including the Bankoku Sōzu, a Japanese map of the world created in the late 1600s. A short film of His Majesty's 1953 to UBC visit was also shown.

Upon seeing the footage of His Majesty as a young man, "Her Majesty's face just lit up," says Farrar, whose presentation highlighted a long history of academic linkages between UBC and Japan, including the UBC-Ritsumeikan University Academic Exchange Program, the Centre for Japanese Research, and the Dept. of Asian Studies.

The royal couple also toured the Museum of Anthropology's Great Hall and viewed Bill Reid's iconic *Raven and The First Men* sculpture before a luncheon hosted by President Stephen Toope.

UBC has also hosted other members of the Japanese royalty, including Prince and Princess Chichibu in 1937 and Prince Takamado, who attended the Asian Centre's opening in 1981 and the opening of the Nitobe Memorial Garden in 1992. Princess Takamado returned in 2004 to mark the donation of a book collection by the Japan Foundation to the Asian Library.

This year, 328 Japanese students and hundreds more who are Canadian citizens of Japanese heritage studied at UBC. The university also attracts exchange students from and sends exchange students to Waseda, Keio, Osaka, Ritsumeikan, Sophia and Hitotsubashi universities and is world renowned for its research and education in Asian Studies. R

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Group) organized by a shared common class, and led by a senior student from their faculty. Throughout the day they meet their deans, take a campus tour, attend a student success workshop with a professor and visit the main event carnival, with more than 200 booths that showcase student life and services. A highlight for many is a high-energy pep rally that has the entire incoming class assemble for speeches and wild faculty cheers.

Cecilia Huang, a recent Science graduate who now works for the Student Development team, recalls her first day on the Vancouver campus. "Coming out of high school, you have this vision of what it is going to be like. The first day was so fun– it really fulfilled that vision."

Programming for first-year students will remain the same, but the university now plans to build on it with the expansion to include transfer and returning students.

"We started to see a couple of hiccups," says Bell. "We rely on 750 student leaders to run the event. But their classes were running as usual, so we were asking them to miss class. We also recognized a real gap for transfer students who weren't coming into 100 level courses."

And with the challenges was a growing campus understanding that students would benefit from support for the many other transitions they make in their four years.

"There was a lot of campus consultation leading up to Senate approval this year," says Bell. "Frankly, it is an institutional statement about the importance of orientation and transition programs. We're hoping it is not business as usual, where faculty members have to worry about the first day of classes. Rather, they can now put their energies to welcoming all returning students."

What will the day now hold for returning students?

Assoc. Prof. Fred Cutler is helping organize a research session, a debate and a reception for Political Science majors. "In the past, we've had no events to provide orientation and inspiration for our new majors – about 250 per year. That's our main objective with Imagine day this year."

Senior Instructor Mary Lou Bevier, Dept. of Earth and Ocean Sciences, says her department is looking forward to having more than 150 returning students participate in a degree program advising session and a department barbecue.

"This should be a fun event and an opportunity to get to know new people, to say hi to familiar faces, and to get student questions answered about advising, department facilities, clubs, and other aspects of life around EOS," says Bevier.

Leanne Perry, Campus Life Coordinator at UBC Okanagan believes the broader approach has paid off for all levels of students at the Kelowna campus orientation day, called Create. "The day allows upper-year students to attend the afternoon activities and new transfer students to experience the entire Create program. Students can spend a full day on campus getting ready for class."

Nevertheless, making this move for a student population of more than 35,000 students on the Vancouver campus reflects a major shift that has other North American institutions watching.

"This is a massive undertaking for UBC but it will pay off immediately in the way students enter and re-enter the institution," says Janina Montero, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). "Undoubtedly, this will be a model and an inspiration to many universities and a clear sign that with courage, teamwork, and imagination, large and complicated efforts like this one can be brought to spectacular fruition."

The recently graduated Huang draws on her own experiences to offer advice to students getting ready to come to UBC this fall.

"As a new student, come in with an open mind. Don't be afraid to connect with people, because there are so many others who are also new. Make good use of all those trying to reach out to you."

For listings of departmental orientation events this year, visit ***www.events.ubc.ca***. For information on Vancouver orientation programs for international students, graduate students, and parents, visit: ***http://www.students.ubc.ca/newtoubc/orientations.cfm***. For information on Kelowna campus orientations, visit: ***http://web.ubc.ca/okanagan/students/newtoubc/orientations.html***. R