VIU opens new Health & Wellness Centre
see more on page 2

I enjoy going to VIU because my instructors know who I am and really care about my learning.
Trevor Grewal, VIU Student in Bachelor of Business Administration
see more on page 10

GrandKids University was so much FUN!
Gwen Buechler, 2015 GrandKids University participant
see more on page 14

I’m proud to be part of VIU’s network of alumni.
Gina Mowatt, graduate of VIU’s Bachelor of Arts in First Nations Studies
see more on page 15

You never stop learning! I’m taking and teaching ElderCollege courses!
Greg Fraser, ElderCollege participant
see more on page 6

Trades programs translate into jobs
see more on page 5

VIU’s newest research institute highlights community partnerships
see more on page 8
In the countdown to Christmas, put in your order for a VIU student-grown poinsettia.

Holiday poinsettias grown by students in VIU’s Horticulture program will be ready in early December at VIU’s G.R. Paine Horticulture Training Centre, located at 2335 East Wellington Road. The Centre is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday for poinsettia purchase and pick up from Dec. 1 to 11. Grown pesticide free, the poinsettia program offers valuable lessons in greenhouse production for students taking the one-year Horticulture Foundation certificate program. Poinsettias can be reserved by calling Anne Kivari at 250.754.8796, or by email at anne.kivari@viu.ca.

Premier announces Shqwi’ qwal for Indigenous Dialogue

In October 2014 Premier Christy Clark announced that Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, VIU’s former Chancellor, would become Canada’s first Shqwi’ qwal (Speaker) for Indigenous Dialogue. The role will be housed at VIU’s Centre for Pre-Confederation Treaties and Reconciliation and will develop and support dialogue sessions on education and other topics to foster understanding and partnerships between Indigenous peoples and the broader public, private and corporate sectors. The Shqwi’ qwal will also support the development of research and public policy papers in this area with the overall goal to help support a new path for reconciliation within British Columbia.

New speaker series on Indigenous peoples

VIU has joined The Laurier Institution and CBC Radio One ideas to host an annual speakers’ series focused on reconciliation and engagement with Canada’s Indigenous peoples. The series was announced as part of an event marking the release of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in June. It will be held each year in Nanaimo on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw people. The lectures will be hosted by VIU’s Centre for Pre-Confederation Treaties and Reconciliation with support from VIU’s Shqwi’ qwal (Speaker) for Indigenous Dialogue Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo.

Kw’umut Lelum partners with VIU to connect children in care to Canada Learning Bond

Twenty Aboriginal children in care under the guardianship of Nanaimo-based Kw’umut Lelum Child and Family Services will receive up to $2,000 for their future post-secondary education through the Canada Learning Bond program. Kw’umut Lelum partnered with VIU to register the children for the federal program that exists to help eligible families save for the future costs of children’s post-secondary education. “At VIU we’re focused on taking a leadership role in encouraging and supporting as many people as possible to access post-secondary education and all the opportunities it creates,” said Dr. Ralph Nilson, President and Vice-Chancellor. VIU’s Canada Learning Bond coordinator Rolanda Murray is also working with Kw’umut Lelum and many other regional families and organizations to ensure they access funds now available through the BC Training and Education Savings Program. This program will contribute up to $5,200 to eligible children who are residents of BC and born in 2007 or later.

VIU awards honorary doctorates to two extraordinary Canadians

His Excellency The Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, is awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Laws by VIU President Dr. Ralph Nilson and VIU Chancellor Louise Mandell.

In January 2015 His Excellency, Governor General of Canada, and the Right Honourable David Johnston, will be presented an Honorary Doctorate of Laws at VIU’s convocation ceremony at the Port Theatre in Nanaimo on January 29.

VIU’s Chancellor, Louise Mandell, said of His Excellency “Their Excellencies demonstrate a remarkable standard of excellence in service which is exemplary to students, faculty, staff and our broader society.”

Kw’umut Lelum executive director Bill Yoachim celebrates 2015 high school graduation in Nanaimo with graduates (l-r) Roy Seward, Randi Thomas and Jocelyn Antoine Lightfoot. Kw’umut Lelum encourages the dreams and aspirations of all First Nations students, supporting them in many ways to complete high school, pursue post-secondary education, and choose a meaningful career path.

Randi Thomas and Jocelyn Antoine Lightfoot. Kw’umut Lelum executive director Bill Yoachim celebrates 2015 high school graduation in Nanaimo with graduates (l-r) Roy Seward, Randi Thomas and Jocelyn Antoine Lightfoot. Kw’umut Lelum encourages the dreams and aspirations of all First Nations students, supporting them in many ways to complete high school, pursue post-secondary education, and choose a meaningful career path.
Louis Mandell, Q.C., appointed as second Chancellor

Louise Mandell Q.C., one of Canada’s foremost Aboriginal rights lawyers and a tireless advocate for Canada’s First Nations, was installed as VIU’s second chancellor at VIU’s January convocation ceremonies.

Mandell is recognized for her exceptional and forward-thinking work in advancing Aboriginal and Treaty rights. She is one of the founders of the nationally recognized and respected law firm Mandell Pinder, established in 1983 specifically to support Canada’s Indigenous and First Nations communities. The suite was created in September, which focuses on small city planning, and First Nations planning with world-renowned artist Arthur Vickers, OBC, DFA, to inspire and celebrate VIU’s students, graduates and alumni. It is an integral part of the University’s convocation ceremonies.

VIU’s Ceremonial Convocation Suite was presented to VIU by Coast Capital Savings in June 2015 to reflect a shared belief in the power of education to change peoples’ lives and build strong, vibrant communities. The suite was created by world-renowned artist Arthur Vickers, OBC, DFA, to inspire and celebrate VIU’s students, graduates and alumni. It is an integral part of the University’s convocation ceremonies.

The suite has three pieces:
- the Chancellor’s Chair, The Keeper of Wisdom & Knowledge;
- the President & Vice-Chancellor’s Chair, The Keeper of Knowledge; and
- the Ceremonial Parchment Bentcorner Box where the degrees are held.

The Chancellor and President & Vice-Chancellor reside in the two chairs during the ceremony, surrounded by the University’s faculty and graduates. During the ceremony each graduate, after receiving their degree, touches the lid of the Ceremonial Parchment Bentcorner Box, marking the end of their VIU education and the beginning of the next chapter of their lives. Through this tradition they leave their imprint on the wood, symbolizing the impact and impression they will leave on VIU. This also symbolizes how their story is now woven together with the stories of all the graduates who came before them and all who will come after them – they are forever connected to the VIU family.

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Visual Arts students make big prints by steamroller

Emily Hannah completed a three-month Global Studies internship in Belize as part of her Bachelor of Arts degree program at VIU. The overseas internship was a “highlight” of her degree, says Hannah, who graduated with double majors in Geography and Global Studies in January. In Belize she lived with a host family and worked for a non-governmental organization called Plenty Belize that focuses on solar energy, sustainable farming and small business development.

“I think every student should study abroad, even for one semester,” says Hannah, born and raised in Nanaimo and a graduate of Dover Bay Secondary. “I had never travelled overseas before. Going to Belize on my own was definitely a growth experience. Motivating myself, setting deadlines and getting things done used to be a challenge, but not anymore.”

Global Studies professor Dr. Catherine Schitetez says VIU students have pursued internships in places as far away as Geneva, India, Belize, Uganda and Brazil. “Many of them have had transformational experiences,” she says. “Students learn in a completely foreign environment and get to practice on the ground what we learn in the classroom and from textbooks.”

Refugee students supported by VIU students and WUSC

Students Aden Mumim and Abdullahi Mohamud, who lived in Kenya’s Dadaab refugee camp, came to VIU as part of the Student Refugee Program in fall 2014. Ten students from refugee camps, came to VIU in the WUSC Local Committee’s Student Refugee Program in fall 2014.

Students in VIU’s Visual Arts program collaborate on a large woodblock print that was printed by steamroller.

Students in VIU’s Visual Arts program use an unusual method to create large scale woodblock art prints at their annual year-end show titled Progressions. After collaborating in their Advanced Printmaking course for several months on the creation and carving of the four by eight foot woodblock, they employed a steamroller to create prints in a public demonstration.

VIU’s entrepreneurial students explore ideas at SquareOne

VIU students with great ideas for launching a business are taking advantage of no-cost co-op work spaces made available through a new partnership between VIU and SquareOne, Nanaimo’s downtown tech incubator and co-working hub. Three workspaces are offered to students who successfully apply to SquareOne with details about their idea. SquareOne offers workspaces with desk, chair, file cabinet, wireless and hardwired Internet service, as well as access to printing, scanning and fax. There are meeting rooms, and support from community manager Kelsey Wolff. “SquareOne is a great space to connect to community, grow your network, and collaborate with other out-of-the-box thinkers,” said Wolff.

The VIU Mariners enjoyed a “stellar season” last year including representation at seven out of eight Canadian College Athletic Association (CCAA) national championships. The Mariners won five provincial gold medals (women’s soccer, women’s volleyball, men’s basketball, badminton, golf), and three provincial silver medals (men’s soccer, men’s basketball, badminton).

VIU Mariners also received 24 All Star awards, four Players of the Year, 10 Academic Excellence awards, and the Team of the Year Award for women’s soccer from PACWEST.

VIU coaches including Bill Merriman (men’s soccer), Janice Walker (badminton), and Matt Kuzminski (women’s basketball) won PACWEST Coach of the Year awards. Kuzminski also won National Coach of the Year. Anup Kang (women’s soccer) won High performance Coach of the Year at Nanaimo Sports Achievement Awards.

Come out and cheer on VIU’s award-winning scholar athletes. Games and tournaments are played throughout the year. For tickets and schedule information go to mariners.viu.ca.
In May, the lab hosted a fun, interactive symposium to showcase the work of students and faculty as part of an ongoing conversation with local individuals, businesses, industries and community groups. In May, the lab hosted a fun, productive and engaging public symposium to showcase the research students and faculty had been working on throughout the year, with a focus on robotics, technology and community outreach. One of the projects involved digitizing First Nations and Inuit stories in both English and Inuvialuktun, one of the Indigenous languages. Another presentation highlighted a project involving Penelakut Elder Florence James, which includes the recording of a collection of stories in the Hulqu’umi’num’ language. The hope is that these stories will be incorporated into the local elementary school curriculum. The symposium also featured the recording of a collection of stories from VIU Cowichan’s Residential Building Maintenance Worker program, which saw a group of school district students participate in a unique “Story Trails” project. Along with learning introductory trades skills, the students, aged 15 to 19, helped create trails on Maple Mountain in partnership with the Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society, the House of Friendship, and the Cowichan Valley Regional District. The class also devoted their newfound skills to local partnerships, projects such as building a new playground for Parkside Academy, a non-profit child care centre. “The Mind over Metal” Summer Welding Camp held in August at VIU Cowichan Trades Centre, had 20 grade seven students aged 12 to 15 trying their hand at the trade. Funded by a generous donation of $10,000 from the Canadian Welding Association (CWA), the week-long camp was offered in partnership with School District 79. “It’s a try-a-trade experience that hopefully will encourage these students to follow through by taking metal work in high school, and possibly training as a Dual Credit student once they get a little older,” said Welding Program Chair, Mike Hallam. Art donations enrich Cowichan Campus Original art by talented BC artists grace the walls of VIU’s Cowichan Campus, thanks to two generous donations. Long-time Cowichan Valley resident and avid art collector and supporter Bruce Blyth donated an original painting titled Howe Sound 2010, by Vancouver Island artist Peter Lawson. VIU Cowichan also received a collection of 18 First Nations prints from the Salish Weave Collection. Box Sets I & II, the prints, donated by Victoria residents Christiane and George Smyth, represent work by seven different First Nations artists, six of whom reside on Vancouver Island. "Story Trails" project builds community This year, a new twist was added to VIU Cowichan’s Residential Building Maintenance Worker program, which saw a group of school district students participate in a unique “Story Trails” project. Along with learning introductory trades skills, the students, aged 15 to 19, helped create trails on Maple Mountain in partnership with the Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society, the House of Friendship, and the Cowichan Valley Regional District. The class also devoted their newfound skills to local partnerships, projects such as building a new playground for Parkside Academy, a not-for-profit child care centre. “The connections that we have continued to form and enhance with our local community through programming and outreach truly make the VIU regional Cowichan Campus a relevant and valued community partner,” says Warren Weir, Cowichan Campus Academic Administrator. The Cowichan Campus Innovation Lab was designed with the purpose of linking the regional community to VIU students and faculty. Now two years old, the lab facilitates lectures, workshops, courses and seminars as part of an ongoing conversation with local individuals, businesses, industries and community groups. In May, the lab hosted a fun, productive and engaging public symposium to showcase the research students and faculty had been working on throughout the year, with a focus on robotics, technology and community outreach. 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Box Sets I & II, the prints, donated by Victoria residents Christiane and George Smyth, represent work by seven different First Nations artists, six of whom reside on Vancouver Island. Education program popular with students VIU Cowichan’s five-year Bachelor of Education teacher training program is proving popular with students. “Our second intake of students going into third year in September is close to full enrollment,” says Warren Weir, Cowichan Campus Academic Administrator. “Students are excited they can pursue their studies without leaving the Cowichan Valley.” The program is also providing students with the skills to teach in First Nations schools as it includes an Aboriginal Perspectives in Education course in the first semester and students are also encouraged to take Aboriginal content courses as electives. As the program grows students will be able to take advantage of community-based teaching and learning experiences. VIU carpenters in the community VIU Cowichan is focused on partnering on meaningful community projects that add value to the local community, while helping VIU students meet their intended learning outcomes. The activities taking place in the Carpentry program provide excellent examples. This year, the carpentry class partnered with Glenora Farm, a non-profit organization and therapeutic village for people with developmental disabilities. They built a 20 by 40 foot vegetable processing and storage facility. The class also assisted the Introduction to Trades class in completing numerous buildings for SunFest, Duncan’s hugely popular summer music festival.

Mind over Metal summer camp sparks interest in welding The “Mind over Metal” Summer Welding Camp held in August at VIU Cowichan Trades Centre, had 20 grade seven students aged 12 to 15 trying their hand at the trade. Funded by a generous donation of $10,000 from the Canadian Welding Association (CWA), the week-long camp was offered in partnership with School District 79. “It’s a try-a-trade experience that hopefully will encourage these students to follow through by taking metal work in high school, and possibly training as a Dual Credit student once they get a little older,” said Welding Program Chair, Mike Hallam.

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VIU committed to Oceanside region

VIU’s ongoing commitment to the Oceanside region is significant and there are plenty of ways for the public to engage with the University. Educational programs and public events are offered year round at Millner Gardens & Woodland and the Deep Bay Marine Field Station. VIU’s Parksville-Qualicum Centre also provides life-long learning opportunities for people 50 years or better through the ElderCollege program. Included among the programs, the University is exploring new programming through the revamped Centre for Healthy Aging (see below).

New vision for Centre for Healthy Aging

VIU launched a community consultation meeting in May to obtain public input on programming that would see Oceanside become a leader in gerontology education on Vancouver Island and beyond. “We have an exciting new vision for the Centre for Healthy Aging, which has operated out of VIU’s Parksville-Qualicum Centre since 2013,” said Dr. Carol Stuart, Dean of VIU’s Faculty of Health and Human Services. “The proposal calls for a locally managed educational hub within the Centre for Healthy Aging with a focus on a new graduate diploma program in gerontology.”

Students from Parksville and Nanaimo would be involved in experiential education and undergraduate research with older adults in the Oceanside community, while existing local health care practitioners would have ongoing access to training and professional development. “We believe that great opportunities exist for the Centre for Healthy Aging to thrive and serve as an institutional and community asset.”

VIU launches new community health promotion program

A new Community Health Promotion for Aboriginal Communities certificate program, the first of its kind in BC, was launched at VIU’s Parksville-Qualicum Centre in September. Funding by the province of BC ($95,000 for 12 seats) will support the initial delivery of the program, developed in collaboration with the Inter Tribal Health Authority.

Graduates will gain skills in community health education, health promotion, injury prevention and community development within Aboriginal communities.

Dr. Greg Cran appointed new campus administrator

Dr. Greg Cran has joined VIU Powell River as the new Campus Administrator. Dr. Cran, a Lund resident, joined VIU in August from North Island College where he was Dean of University and Applied Studies. He has taught at the University of Victoria and at Royal Roads University where he was Director of the School of Peace and Conflict Management and later Director of Business Development. Dr. Cran has past experience working for the BC government in treaty negotiations and policy analysis, and also has a broad range of international experience in teaching and working as a consultant to the World Bank Institute.

“Greg is keen to start working toward a reinvigorated model that includes the advent of new program ideas and business possibilities for skills development, which fits right in with his entrepreneurial spirit,” said Dr. David Witty, Provost and Vice-President Academic.

Dual credit students earn gold medals in provincial skills competition

Two Brooks Secondary students in VIU Powell River’s Dual Credit Trades program brought home gold medals from the Skills Canada Provincial Competition in May. Devon Degraag took the Gold in the Automotive Service Technician competition, and Zane Hernandez took the top spot in Carpentry.

In February at the Skills Regional competition, seven of 13 Powell River students in dual credit returned home with medals. In that day-long competition, they tested their skills against students from other Vancouver Island communities in automotive service technician, carpentry, culinary arts and welding. Powell River medalists in the Skills Canada Regional Competition were: Devon Degraag (Gold) and Blair Massullo (Bronze) in Auto Service Technician; Zane Hernandez (Gold) in Carpentry; Téa Mayer (Silver) and Daniel Woodruff (Bronze) in Culinary Arts; and Graham Hanson (Silver) and Eric Rairie (Bronze) in Welding.

POWELL RIVER

VIU awarded more than $1.4M in scholarships, awards and bursaries last year, up from just over $1 million the year before – this is the most ever disbursed.

VIU announced new $1 million scholarship initiative French Professor John Yamagishi, who is the first and only professor in Canada to hold a chair in the language, has received a $1 million scholarship endowment fund at VIU, which was announced in February. The fund is the largest gift the University has received.
Each year the Canadian Federation of Students organizes a week-long coordinated lobby effort in Ottawa where student representatives from across Canada, including VIU students, meet with more than 200 Members of Parliament and Senators. In the meetings they advocate for such things as increased funding for post-secondary education and changes to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program for Aboriginal learners. A key recommendation discussed was the conversion of education-related tax credits to the Canada Student Grant Program—a change that would eliminate federal student loan debt without costing the government any additional funds.

Two of three totem poles representing the major First Nations language groups on Vancouver Island, and carved on site by artists from Snuneymuxw and Nuu-chah-nulth Territories were unveiled on VIU’s Nanaimo campus in June. The VIU Totem Pole Project was spearheaded by the Chair of the VIU Students’ Union Sherry McCarthy with the goal of supporting and inspiring the University community, and providing an ongoing educational opportunity that honours the importance of traditional knowledge at VIU and the strong relationships between the First Nations communities and the University.

The Western Red Cedar trees, from which the totems were created, were provided as gifts from Island Timberlands, Western Forest Products, TimberWest, and First Nations from Vancouver Island. A third totem pole will be carved on site by an artist from the Kwakwaka’wakw Territory this coming year in the final phase of the project.

Here are some highlights of how VIUSU supported students in the 2014-15 academic year:

- New totems celebrated at VIU

Supporting students at VIU

Here are some highlights of how VIUSU supported students in the 2014-15 academic year:

- More than 37 students received access to free, timely legal advice as part of VIUSU’s Legal Advice Service.
- More than 36 students received assistance from VIUSU’s student advocate.
- More than 2,600 students were covered by VIUSU’s extended health and dental benefits plan.
- More than 1,900 students consigned books as part of VIUSU’s used book service, which collectively put almost $200,000 back into students’ pockets.
- More than 460,000 dollars in discounted bus passes were sold to students, who saved as much as 25% off regular transit fares.
- More than 130 students received direct financial assistance from VIUSU through one of several ongoing emergency aid, bursary and food voucher programs.
- VIUSU Board members negotiated more than 70 discounts at local stores, coffee shops, restaurants and other businesses in Duncan, Ladysmith, Nanaimo and Powell River.
- More than 2,000 global student discount cards were distributed free to students.

VIUSU lobbies federal government

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New totems celebrated at VIU

VIU Students’ Union enhances campus life:

- sponsored more than 50 clubs with more than 1,000 students participating;
- financially supported the World University Services of Canada (WUSC) Club, which operates the Student Refugee Program at VIU (see story pg 4);
- financially supported initiatives at Shq’apthut, VIU’s Aboriginal Gathering Place, including feasts and workshops such as drum-making;
- hosted Welcome Week events on the Nanaimo campus, which included a movie night, outdoor concert/beer garden and pancake breakfast;
- participated in the Canadian Federation of Students’ campaign to increase funding for post-secondary education and to implement a BC student grants program;
- engaged in a campaign to promote sweatshop free and ethically produced materials being used and sold on campus.
VIU celebrates International Development Week

VIU marks International Development Week in February each year with community events on campus that celebrate global citizenship and explore international development initiatives at home and abroad. In 2015, VIU’s International Development Week (February 2-5) tackled the theme of “Nourishing the World,” and a showcase of work by students, staff and invited visitors and classroom dialogues on international career opportunities.

VIU will mark International Development Week 2016 (Feb. 1-4) with campus events, visiting speakers and classroom dialogues that celebrate global changemakers on campus and beyond. The community is invited to delve into global issues and view a showcase of work by students, staff and faculty who are making positive change in their communities and around the globe.

VIU and community speak out against racial intolerance and hate

Nanaimo is an inclusive community, where racism and intolerance have no place. That was the message delivered by VIU and a long list of community partners in response to a racist incident in June. The statement reads, in part: “As leaders we celebrate the diversity of our community and stand together in solidarity to reaffirm our commitment to remain a community that welcomes everyone. Furthermore, we are united in our belief that expressions of intolerance, racism and hate do not belong in our community, and must be challenged by our own expressions of openness, mutual respect and, above all, by how we care for and support one another.”

Grey whale exhibit leaves legacy for future generations

The unveiling of a 10-metre long grey whale skeleton at VIU’s Deep Bay Marine Field Station in Bower was an emotional moment for Sharon Cooper of S’Klallaw First Nation. Cooper first saw the body of the grey whale five years ago when it washed up at East Sooke Park near Victoria.

“I was so sad,” said Cooper. “I knew that I had to save this whale and leave a legacy for future generations.”

On June 23, 2015, Cooper’s vision became a reality. She joined more than 100 people at VIU’s Deep Bay Marine Field Station for the grand unveiling of the Underwater Harvesters Association Grey Whale Exhibit. The whale skeleton hangs as a grand centrepiece on the main floor of the Field Station. More than 1,000 volunteer hours went into the project.

Field Station Manager Brian Kingzett and VIU’s Advancement & Alumni Relations Office launched a unique “Raise the Whale” online fundraising campaign, and sold more than 160 bones to raise the $175,000 to cover the costs of creating the exhibit.

VIU’s newest research institute highlights community partnerships

Founded in August 2014, VIU’s Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI) is focused on working collaboratively with VIU faculty and students, community and government partners, First Nations, businesses, non-profits, landowners, and citizens to explore the varied ways of the different species in the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABRRI) can live together in a sustainable way.

Stretching across 1,186 square kilometres, the MABR – just north of Nanaimo – is a spectacular region encompassing the largest variety of ecosystems on Vancouver Island. In 1990, the area was designated as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) biosphere reserve in recognition that it is a unique and significant environmental region where people sustainably engage with the land.

UNESCO biosphere reserves are challenged with finding ways to create a profound and positive connection between people and the natural environment, supporting and sustaining all the different ecosystems and species in the region. MABRRI was established to link the expertise and experience of university researchers with the priorities and concerns of the community to develop new approaches to development and conservation that support all the species in the biosphere – including humans. MABRRI coordinates interdisciplinary research projects that engage VIU faculty and students as well as citizen scientists. For more information go to www.mabr.ca.
Nanaimo teacher Sharon Busby was inspired to start a high school knitting club at Dover Bay Secondary as a community action project while taking VIU’s Anthropology of Homelessness class taught by professor Helene Demers. Every Monday at lunch hour, Busby’s students gathered to knit colourful scarves, toques and Afghan blankets for those in need. Last year, they donated two boxes of hand-knit creations to Gordon Fuller, Chair of the VIU Anthropology majors at VIU, and their mother Alana Bourque who audited the class, targeted about 200 homes in Ladysmith, collecting hundreds of bags of food items and $400 in cheques for the Ladysmith Community Resources Centre. Demers aims to incorporate community action and social justice assignments in all her classes and encourages students to conduct applied research that promotes safe, healthy and inclusive communities.

Names of WWI’s fallen soldiers displayed at VIU

More than 527,000 names of soldiers killed in 1915 during WWI — including 472 Canadians — will flash across a section of a 72-foot wall at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford until sunrise on Remembrance Day, including those who are homeless or living on fixed incomes.

In March, VIU’s Scholarship and Community Engagement office hosted a three-day CREATE Conference which was open to students, staff, faculty and the wider community. This annual event highlights major projects completed by VIU students during the academic year through posters, displays, performances and presentations. CREATE aims to promote and celebrate the diversity of student research and scholarship at VIU, while allowing students to develop their public speaking and presentation skills. Prizes are awarded for best poster and best presentation.

Forty sculptures created by VIU Visual Arts students were on display at Milner Gardens & Woodland last summer. Interactive events at Milner Gardens thrill visitors

Robots, spaceships, and rockets crash-landed at VIU’s Milner Gardens & Woodland this summer in a new art exhibit created by VIU Visual Arts students. The exhibit was just one of the many interactive events at VIU that draw the public year round to the spectacular 70-acre site that encompasses an estate garden with native and non-native plants, including a 400-species Rhododendron grove, an old-growth Douglas fir forest and a teahouse.

As well as serving as an outdoor classroom for VIU’s students, Milner hosts community events throughout the year, including plant sales, concerts, Easter parties and art exhibits. A popular summer event is Christmas Magic in December, when the gardens become a winter wonderland decorated with thousands of lights.

VIU hosts Canada-Mexico Roundtable

VIU hosted the eighth annual Canada-Mexico Roundtable on the Nanaimo Campus in June. More than 60 University presidents and dignitaries from across Canada and Mexico came together to discuss ways they could collaborate to support Indigenous education and build relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Discussions were led by keynote speakers including Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, VIU’s Shq’apts’íq School of Indigenous Dialogue; Chief Osceola Mercier; Chief Joe Alphonse, as well as VIU Elders, faculty and students. The speakers led interactive discussions on topics related to Natural Resource Extraction in traditional territories of Indigenous people and on best practices on Indigenous Language retention and education strategies.

Creating a Connected Community, a keynote presentation Nov. 3 at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre, Montgomery creates transformative conversations about cities, science and human well-being using design interventions and participatory programs that foster social connections.
Students win national research awards and summer internships

Several VIU students gained hands-on research experience this summer after receiving national Undergraduate Student Research Awards from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, valued at $4,500 each. Darien Feehan, Bachelor of Science; and Hannah Greg Vandergrift, Abbi Adams and Daisy Yeung, Chemistry and Computer Science; were among the students selected as SOS’s Exam-AID’s Instructor of the Year for 2015 due to exceptional feedback from the first and second year VIU students they tutored.

The students were enrolled in several courses at VIU including biology, zoology, molecular and cellular biology and genetics. They paid $20 for the Exam-AID tutorials, which supported sustainable educational projects in Latin America. Money raised through local tutoring went towards the construction of a Kindergarten class in Pueblo Viejo, Nicaragua. In May, a group of VIU students travelled to the community with SOS to assist in the construction of a classroom. Hampshire also completed VIU’s six-week field school in Belize in June and spent part of the summer working with VIU faculty member Dr. Erik Demers on a bird-banding project at the Hakai Institute Field Station on BC’s Calvert Island.

VIU grad nominated for national Innovation Award

Prior to graduating from VIU’s Master of Education in Educational Leadership, Breanne Quist was nominated for a national honour – the Ernest C. Manning Innovation Award. Quist was nominated for her work creating The Privacy Compass (www.privacycompass.ca), a website designed to help BC teachers, parents, and schools navigate privacy issues when selecting and using learning management systems and social media. These awards are dubbed the ‘most prestigious innovation awards in Canada’.

VIU grad receives national award

VIU biology grad Elise Hampshire’s love of learning and teaching has earned her a national award as a top instructor through the charitable organization Students Offering Support (SOS). Hampshire was selected as SOS’s Exam-AID’s Instructor of the Year for 2015 due to exceptional feedback from the first and second year VIU students she tutored.

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Business plan competition kicks off year 2

A group of Master of Business Administration (MBA) students at VIU welcomed fellow MBA students from around BC to the first ever BC MBA Games, from Oct. 16 to 18 in Nanaimo. The idea to host the BC MBA Games arose after 30 VIU MBA students to Nanaimo for a business plan competition.

Three time VIU grad wins academic gold medal

A Ladysmith high school teacher who goes out of her way to help students living in poverty won a Governor General’s Gold Medal for academic excellence at VIU’s convocation ceremony in June. Julia Armstrong, a graduate of VIU’s Master of Education in Educational Leadership program, was thrilled to receive one of the highest honours bestowed on Canadian university students. In 2009, Armstrong earned a degree in Physical Education and Anthropology from VIU and in 2011 she earned a Bachelor of Education degree, also from VIU.

MBA students go for the games

As fundraising for charity is one component of the competition, the group partnered with the Canucks Autism Network and the Autism Society of BC. Teams from five BC universities competed in academic, team sport and fundraising challenges.

Students’ Association and began to develop the idea of inviting other MBA students to Nanaimo for a provincial competition.
Automotive grad awarded Lt. Governor’s Silver Medal

Ines Alvarado works in VIU’s Automotive shop.

Ines Alvarado’s positive outlook along with her relentless curiosity, work ethic, and attention to detail are all characteristics observed in the Automotive Service Technician program graduate, her instructors say. These qualities have also earned the 33-year-old mother of five and Nanoose First Nation member the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia’s Silver Medal, awarded in June at VIU’s convocation ceremonies for graduates in Trades and Applied Technology programs. Alvarado also completed a Certificate in Business Management in June, as well as a Management Skills for Supervisors Certificate offered through VIU’s Professional Development and Training. Her dream is to one day open her own automotive shop.

Fisheries grad finds her calling

Lenora Turcotte once dreamed of flying the skies as a flight attendant, but instead she’s delving into the ocean’s depths, working on a fisheries research vessel for the Pacific Biological Station. Her change in course was thanks to an aptitude test she took that led her to the Fisheries & Aquaculture program at VIU. In March, Turcotte received special kudos at VIU’s annual CREATE Conference, (see story pg 9) which showcases major research and scholarly projects completed by VIU students. Turcotte won numerous prizes including second place in the Scholarship Slam – one of the highlights of CREATE – where students have up to three minutes to verbally describe their research to the audience. Turcotte graduated in June from VIU’s Bachelor of Fisheries and Aquaculture program and immediately landed the full-time job in Nanaimo.

VIU grad wins Governor General’s Silver Medal

Graduate Jayson Sinnott, his wife Lisa and two young daughters, Gabrielle (right) and Grace, celebrate his graduation and outstanding academic achievement.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduate Jayson Sinnott received the Governor General’s Academic Silver Medal for achieving the highest academic standing upon graduation from a bachelor degree program. Sinnott says the “holistic and humanistic approach to health promotion” drew him to nursing and he credits the support of his family for his success. “Although I did the academic work, many others—my wife and two young daughters especially—sacrificed and pulled together to give me the space I needed to do so. This achievement was the result of a team effort.” Sinnott now works for Island Health in the main operating room at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital. The Governor General’s academic medals recognize the outstanding scholastic achievements in Canadian high schools, colleges and universities.

Culinary student wins national skills silver

A trio of chocolate desserts finished off two intense days of competition in May for VIU Culinary student Kaya Peters, who won a silver medal in the Skills Canada National Competition. Chef Joerg Gabler said he worked with Peters through many 10-hour days to perfect her techniques and recipes, and observed the young woman succeeding at every challenge he put before her. “She is very determined and very creative and the more she struggles, the harder she works,” he said.

Full entrance scholarships awarded to 27 high school students

VIU awarded 27 full tuition scholarships through the University’s President’s and Chancellor’s scholarship program. The scholarships are awarded to the top students in Vancouver Island and Powell River public high schools in three different categories: top academic student, top scholar athlete and top Aboriginal student. The award is potentially worth more than $21,000 as it’s renewable each year, providing students meet course load and grade requirements.

VIU to award 31 Canadian QE II Diamond Jubilee Scholarships

VIU will award more than $800,000 in scholarships to 31 undergraduate, graduate and international students through the Canadian Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarships program. The students will participate in internships or academic study for periods of three to six months in Belize. Scholarships will also be available to students from Belize to complete one of VIU’s master’s degree programs. Both inbound and outbound students will be selected based on the contribution of their work to strengthen the resilience of coastal communities.

VIU will work in partnership with the University of Belize and community partners in Belize and in Canada. VIU is among 34 Canadian universities to receive funding for the scholarships through a joint initiative of the Rideau Hall Foundation, Community Foundations of Canada and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.
A special honouring ceremony for Health and Human Services faculty and VIU leaders took place in April at Snuneymuxw First Nation's traditional Big House in Nanaimo, with Elders, students and community members bearing witness. The Snuneymuxw ceremony was the culmination of a week of special activities tied to Health & Human Services’ Seasons of Health and Healing event, now in its third year. Events such as this support students in programs ranging from Bachelor of Science in Nursing, to Health Care Assistant, Social Work, Dental Hygiene, Practical Nursing and Child and Youth Care. The students benefit from learning about Aboriginal perspectives in healthcare, healing and wellness, and learn cultural protocol that will prove helpful and valuable in their future careers.

Heavy Equipment Operator students, with instructor Brandon Lindsay (centre), gained hands-on skills working on a Habitat for Humanity home project in Nanaimo.

A team of VIU researchers released a final report on volume and distribution of a seaweed called Mazzaella japonica (MJ) during the 2014/15 harvest season. Since 2007, the BC Ministry of Agriculture has been issuing licenses that permit commercial operators to remove beach-cast seaweed from beaches between Deep Bay and Bowser. MJ is a Japanese red alga, rich in carrageenan, a compound used as a gelling and thickening agent in a variety of food, pharmaceutical and industrial processes.

*While this harvest has raised environmental concerns, the available information to date has been largely based on literature reviews and anecdotal observations,” says Dr. Sarah Dudas, Canada Research Chair with VIU’s Centre for Shellfish Research. The report focused on quantifying the amount of beach-cast seaweed that washes up in relation to amounts harvested.

VIU Faculty of Education faculty have designed a new way to teach elementary and secondary school teachers. Breaking Barriers in Education is a visionary program aimed at fifth year Bachelor of Education and sixth year post-baccalaureate degree students. It was developed in response to observations and feedback from previous students who said they wanted more ownership over their learning and more authentic learning experiences.

With the program now in place, students are getting involved in community action projects, seminars, book clubs, speaker and film series, and personal inquiry projects. Faculty are finding the new program allows them to provide better support to budding teachers. The end result is that student learners are more accountable for their learning, and gain skills needed to help them become the best professional educators they can be.

VIU students in the Construction and Heavy Equipment Operator programs are gaining hands-on job skills while making an important contribution to their community, thanks to the coordinating efforts and volunteer commitment of Jessie Magee-Chalmers. As chair and instructor in the Construction program, and volunteer board member with Habitat for Humanity Mid-Vancouver Island, Magee-Chalmers has forged a strong partnership that supports both student learning and the high quality construction of affordable housing units in the region.

As Habitat for Humanity’s vice chair, he oversees the building committee, and hopes to involve students from the Electrical and Interior Design programs in future projects.

VIU faculty engage in lifelong learning

With support from VIU’s Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning (CIEL), VIU’s faculty are sharpening their teaching skills and inspiring their students to learn in new and innovative ways. This fall new faculty are participating in the Faculty Fast Start Institute to make the transition to their new role at VIU a positive one and to support them to develop skills, perspectives, attitudes and insights needed for long-term successes in teaching and learning at the post-secondary level. Every year CIEL also organizes workshops for all faculty to provide them with on-going professional development opportunities such as the “Teaching and Learning Engagement Club” – monthly hour-long gatherings geared around breakfast or afternoon coffee where faculty meet to discuss issues related to impactful teaching practices and student learning.

Using the power of math to help cancer patients

VIU mathematics professor Dr. Lev Idels is using the power of math to help uncover the underlying biology of cancer tumours. Dr. Idels received a two-year Discovery Grant from the National Science Engineering Research Council of Canada for a pilot project that will focus on determining how best to use complex mathematical equations to develop “a new vision of cancer dynamics.” Idels says that according to new research, certain mathematical models can predict the outcomes and responses of lung cancer patients to treatment. The goal is that doctors will be able to use this information to decide when best to apply cancer therapy, as well as indicating the most efficient treatment protocols.

Idels says the pilot project will serve as ideal training ground for graduate and undergraduate students in applied mathematics, mathematical biology and computer science. The project will also include collaboration and cooperation with national and international research university groups from France, Italy, Norway, Brazil and Argentina.
Sally Vinden, Chair of VIU’s Parksville-Qualicum Centre. and the Esthetics program at VIU’s program at the Nanaimo campus (Youth Training and Employment Trinidad and Tobago’s YTEPP Limited Tobago. Two representatives from island nation of Trinidad and partnership with the Caribbean experience for instructors from VIU practitioners has been a great future hairdressers and esthetics Sharing best practices and awards www.viu.ca/convocation/provost_
VIU CAMPS FOR KIDS!

- GrandKids University
- Mariners Sports Camps
- Science Camps for Kids
- Marine Biology Summer Camp
- Shoots with Roots
- Geneeskool Camp

viu.ca/summercamps

FUN FACT

VIU students awarded $5,000 scholarships

VIU Heavy Equipment Operator students awarded $5,000 scholarships

VIU Heavy Equipment Operator students Jesse Creighton, from Sooke, and Breanna Thompson, from Gabriola Island, were the first to receive new $5,000 scholarships from the Truck Loggers Association (TLA) in January. The new scholarships were created by the TLA and Chevron in response to the TLA’s labour market analysis, which predicts the coastal forest industry will need 4,700 skilled workers over the next decade.

Great prizes in VIU Online Auction

Get ready to bid on a long list of great prizes in VIU’s Online Auction, which opens at 9 am on Friday, October 23. With 100 per cent of proceeds going to support VIU students, you might want to start a bidding war on a two-night stay at Ucluelet’s Black Rock Oceanfront Resort, a Seafood Soirée, an overnight in Vancouver with Canucks tickets, tickets for the Port Theatre’s Spotlight Series, Vancity Rockers tickets, a Sea to Sky Helicopter tour for two, and many more great experiences and gift items. Get ready to bid on a long list of great prizes in VIU’s Online Auction, which opens at 9 am on Friday, October 23. With 100 per cent of proceeds going to support VIU students, you might want to start a bidding war on a two-night stay at Ucluelet’s Black Rock Oceanfront Resort, a Seafood Soirée, an overnight in Vancouver with Canucks tickets, tickets for the Port Theatre’s Spotlight Series, a trip for two on the Victoria Clipper, passes to Wildplay Elements Parks, and many more great experiences and gift items. All are being added to the auction list at press time, including unique experiences and one-of-a-kind and collector items. The bidding goes until 4 pm on Sunday, Nov. 1. www.viu.ca/auction

New Car Dealers donate $7K tire changer to Automotive program

Students in VIU’s Automotive Service Technician program are practicing their skills on a new state-of-the-art tire change thanks to a generous donation by the New Car Dealers Association of BC. The $7,180 John Bean tire changer donated to VIU supports the education of future mechanics.

“Students will eventually find jobs in the industry as apprentices, and some are already working as second, third or fourth year apprentices,” says John Wynia, Chairman of the Board for New Car Dealers Association of BC. “Our goal is to ensure there are quality mechanics in industry. A big part of their training is the opportunity to practice on modern, industry standard equipment and machines. We’re happy to help make that happen.”

Brittany Palmer

Tuition waiver student charts path to career goal

Brittany Palmer is in the final year of her studies toward a Bachelor’s degree in Criminology at VIU, honing her skills in her classes and part-time work, and as a community volunteer. The lifelong Vancouver Island resident went into care as a teen and has lived independently since age 17, and now has the support of VIU’s Youth in Care Tuition Waiver program to complete her degree. The upbeat young woman volunteers with the Nanaimo Region John Howard Society in three of their programs: the Restorative Justice Program, a youth mentorship program, and the “Story Book Dads” program in the Nanaimo Correctional Centre. In the latter program she volunteers by audio-recording innmates as they read favourite stories aloud for their children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews, which are then shared with these family members. She also secured part-time work in a supported housing residence for people with autism. Palmer’s career goal is to work with youth and to attain more supportive housing for the homeless, particularly youth and young adults.

New study abroad award a gift from 2015 alumnus

VIU is seeking broad support in a one-day fundraising campaign on GivingTuesday, a global movement for charitable giving and volunteering which falls on Dec. 1. Last year, more than $32,000 was raised. Donations to VIU on GivingTuesday will make a difference in the lives of students currently attending VIU, or to prospective students who hope to attend in the future and may require financial assistance. With a one-day fundraising goal of $30,000, the VIU Foundation invites alumni, staff and friends of the University throughout the region, to make a donation to VIU on Dec. 1. Donations are matched by the VIU Foundation and can be directed to support a scholarship, award or bursary, or designated to a particular faculty or program.

Record number of awards for Fisheries students

Twelve top students in VIU’s Fisheries and Aquaculture degree and diploma programs received more than $27,750 in awards and scholarships last fall – the largest amount of money for internal awards ever dispersed to Fisheries students. Donors include world-renowned scientists, businesses and organizations related to the aquaculture and commercial fishing industry, community members, VIU faculty and alumni. Monica Redmond, a third-year student in VIU’s Bachelor of Science Fisheries & Aquaculture program, was the big winner receiving the $1,000 Eunice Lam Award; a $1,500 VIU entrance scholarship; and $1,500 from the BC Freshwater Fisheries Society. Redmond also received the $5,000 High North Fellowship from VIU’s International Education Study Abroad program, entitling her to an all-expense paid internship at Norway’s Nordland University to study Fisheries and Aquaculture for six months. For a complete list of 2015 award winners and donors, or for more information on how to give visit www.viu.ca/giving.

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Alumnus Trevor Styan among

**BC Business** magazine’s ‘Top 30 Under 30’

VIU alumnus Trevor Styan has been named to **BC Business** magazine’s Top 30 Under 30 list for 2015, in recognition of the rapid growth and success of his Nanaimo-based company, Northern Civil Energy. An alumnus of the welding program, Styan attended VIU in 2004 as a dual credit student from Wellington Secondary School. Spending his youth in Nanaimo and Quesnel, Styan drew inspiration from mentors including his father, uncle and step-father, who modelled a strong work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit.

After completing BCIT’s Mechanical Manufacturing diploma program and gaining experience in his uncle’s business, he and two business partners co-founded Northern Civil Energy in 2012. With a specialty in civil construction work in the utility and power generating sector, the company has seen rapid growth in revenue, projects and employees. Just four years later, the company has annual gross revenues of approximately $40 million, has completed 40 projects across Western Canada, and employs between 80 and 150 employees.

For more on Trevor Styan and his entrepreneurial vision for Northern Civil Energy, see our first issue of the new VIU Magazine, scheduled to be published in November.

**Dr. Skye Creba receives 2015 Distinguished Alumni Early Achievement Award**

Dr. Skye Creba, an emergency room doctor at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, credits VIU’s Bachelor of Science program for igniting her passion for science and medicine. A graduate of Nanaimo District Secondary School in 2000 and VIU in 2006, Creba received the Distinguished Alumni Early Achievement Award at VIU’s convocation ceremonies in June.

While a student at VIU, Creba conducted outstanding research in the Chemistry department’s Applied Environmental Research Laboratory (AERL), published two peer-reviewed papers and won the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) Undergraduate Student Research Award. Creba, who majored in Biology and Chemistry, also received one of Canada’s most prestigious post-graduate awards – a $17,500 NSERC research scholarship. She completed a degree in medicine in 2010 at the University of Calgary, and returned home to embark on a family practice residency in Nanaimo through the University of British Columbia. After further training, she began her full-time position in the emergency room at NRGH.

**Alumni invited to connect**

The VIU Alumni Association is reaching out to alumni to reconnect and strengthen ties, update alumni contact information, explain alumni benefits, and invite participation in alumni and community activities and events at the University. The VIU Student Calling Centre employs 10 students who are calling VIU alumni during the evening hours Mondays through Fridays.

The VIU Alumni Association represents those who have studied at or graduated from Malaspina College, Malaspina University-College and VIU since 1969, and those who attended the Nanaimo-Dominion Provincial Vocational Training School between 1936 and 1976.

Alumni can also update their information directly on the "Get Connected" page of the website at www.viu.ca/alumni/register, by calling Kamala Haughton at 250.740.6215, or dropping by VIU’s Welcome Centre or the Alumni Relations office in Building 310.

**Alumni save in new partnership with Insurance Providers**

VIU alumni can save on their insurance with two new affinity partnerships announced in 2015. The VIU Alumni Association has partnered with Industrial Alliance Insurance and Financial Services and Canadian Direct Insurance to provide all alumni with savings on a wide range of insurance products. Life insurance, critical illness insurance, health and dental insurance, travel insurance, long term disability insurance, and home and auto insurance are among the products for which preferential rates to VIU alumni will be provided.

**Fun Fact**

Get your master’s at VIU!

- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Education in Educational Leadership
- Master of Education in Special Education
- Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management
- Master of Community Planning
- Master of Geographic Information Systems Applications

**www.viu.ca/mastersdegrees**

VIU alumni can help VIU students with donation of Aeroplan® Miles

Students enrolled at VIU now have a new way to help pay for their education. Through a new partnership with HigherEdPoints, students and their families and friends will now be able to convert Aeroplan Miles into funds that can be used to pay tuition fees at VIU. The HigherEdPoints program also provides a unique way for VIU alumni to give back. Aeroplan Miles donated to the VIU Foundation account will support students in need and other fundraising initiatives at VIU. For every 15,000 Aeroplan Miles, a $250 credit can be transferred to VIU students to cover fees, including tuition.
Fiscal Accountability

VIU prepares a balanced consolidated budget, with revenues and expenditures of approximately $136.7 million. The consolidated budget represents the full, comprehensive fiscal picture of the institution and includes all controlled entities (VIU Foundation, Western Student Housing Ltd., Milner Gardens and Woodlands Society, The International High School at VIU and The High School at VIU).

The University is funded by two main sources: provincial funding (41 percent) and tuition and student fees (42 percent). For VIU, the proportion of government funding as a percentage of total revenue has been steadily declining by approximately 10 percent per decade since the 1980s and is now below tuition and student fees.

With more than 2,300 employees in four employee groups, the salary and benefits costs comprise over 74 percent of total expenses. The proportion of the University’s resource invested in staff has remained within two to three percentage points of 70 percent for the last few decades.

An explanation of the budget process and supporting documents can be found at www.viu.ca/budget/BudgetPlan2015-2016.asp.