

President's Update to the College Community



Serving the communities of Northwestern BC

January 22, 2007

House of Learning and Applied Research

Effective February 1, 2007, the Centre for Learning and Applied Research undergoes a name change and an expanded mandate. The name, *House of Learning and Applied Research*, was explicitly chosen to highlight First Nations knowledge, culture and practice within the College. The House will foster and support this goal.

In a motion moved by the Board of Governors and supported by Education Council, First Nations Council, Union leaders, management and the Cultural Knowledge in Practice Committee, this new 'House' will focus not only on providing support to instructors and faculty in teaching excellence but will also provide support to applied research activities currently underway at the College, and will encourage future applied research activities. With respect to applied research at the College, the House will support, promote and disseminate the findings of current and new research through the hosting of workshops, seminars, dialogues and conferences.

The House of Learning and Applied Research is a significant priority in the implementation of the College's Strategic Plan. A Director position will be posted to spearhead the House of Learning and Applied Research. Faculty and instructors will be encouraged to work within the House to offer workshops and seminars and to lead dialogues. The broadened mandate and the hiring of the Director will lead to increased applied research, and professional development opportunities and instructional support for faculty and instructors, as well as educators external to the College.

The applied research role is new for NWCC. Many individuals have been engaged in formal or informal action-research projects within the College, but to date we have not had a place where this information could be acknowledged, supported, and the results of the same, collected and shared.

The Cultural Knowledge in Practice Committee has already recommended one assignment for the new House of Learning and Applied Research - hosting a conference on Aboriginal education issues and best practices in the fall of 2007. This motion was brought to the attention of Education Council in November and will be taken to First Nations Council in February.

College Board News

At the November meeting of the College Board, Directors reviewed the progress being made to enhance participation of Aboriginal students at the College. In so doing, they passed a motion directing me to undertake the following:

1. Identify an additional, Aboriginal name for Northwest Community College that will recognize the significant presence of Aboriginal people involved with, and attending the College, and;
2. Identify additional Aboriginal names for NWCC campuses and buildings (where more than two buildings exist at a campus location).

Over the next semester, these directives will be discussed with campus staff and First Nations Council and I hope to have a response formulated for the Board by their June meeting.

Administrative Changes

The following administrative changes have been made to support new developments at the College:

1. Diane Clements, Dean of Health Sciences

Diane has been hired on for an interim period of time to assist us with development of Health Sciences at the College. Diane is based in Terrace and will be assisting us with Ministry discussions, licensing requirements, new program initiatives and exploring the feasibility of initiating a Centre for Allied Health in Terrace.

2. Katherine McIndoe, Senior Instructional Officer & Dean of University Credit

While Diane Clements is with us, Katherine will take on the following specific projects: facilitate the review and (as needed) revision of educational processes, policy gaps and procedures; lead the completion and implementation of the Education Plan; monitor and facilitate the achievement of the College's fte targets; monitor new program initiatives and reviews; and enhance liaison with potential university degree partners.

The following titles have been changed to reflect enhanced responsibilities and duties:

1. **Linda McMurray** (formerly Human Resources Consultant) is now Manager, Human Resources
2. **Cynthia Preyser** (formerly Manager, Financial Services) is now Controller



Programs and Services Expand

Over the past year the College has again seen an increase in program offerings and services. This increase is as a direct result of demands from our communities and industry. Trades training, for example, has doubled in the past eighteen months. The Essential Skills for Work program, initiated in January of 2006 in partnership with three First Nations Bands, is now being offered in eight different locations including our Masset campus. High School partnerships have resulted in NWCC working in five different schools across the northwest. Other new or increased program activity includes: Special Education Assistant, Mining and Exploration training, CCP in partnership with Northwest Training, Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art, Home Support/Resident Care Assistant, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, University Credit, Applied Business Support, Business Technology online, online delivery, and many others.

Increased program growth has meant increased fte activity and increased workloads for staff, along with many new instructors and staff, in various departments across the College. I am optimistic that this trend will continue as we forge new partnerships and expand our outreach in the northwest.

Special Education Assistant Program (SEA)

After a long absence, and revision, the SEA program is up and running again. At the request of school districts across the northwest, programs were initiated in three locations. The first of these started in January in Smithers with the offering of the first course in the program, *Understanding Family Dynamics*. There are 18 students from the eastern region enrolled.

Sharron McCrimmon will be instructing students in the eastern region with program coordinator, Martine Gautier providing instruction to central and western based students.

Classes will commence this semester in Smithers, Terrace and Prince Rupert, currently showing 18, 16, and 20 registrations respectively.

Hooking up with Desire2Learn

NWCC is moving to implement Desire2Learn learning management system facilitated by BCcampus shared services. It is a Canadian-hosted system, providing institutional control over course management and branding, and the ability to support fully-online and classroom-based courses. This will provide a complete web-based suite of easy-to-use tools and functionality enabling effective, and timely course development, delivery, assessment, communication, collaboration, management and community building. An implementation plan and training will be developed over the Spring. For more information contact Terrie McAloney at the Smithers Campus.

NWCC will feature prominently at the upcoming national, ACCC Annual General Meeting and Conference

NWCC submitted five workshop and presentation proposals to the ACCC conference selection committee for the upcoming ACCC conference to be held in Montreal, May 27 to 29, 2007 - and all submissions were accepted! It is an extraordinary situation to have so many proposals accepted; and clearly the work we are doing at the College is attracting interest. Our presentations will focus primarily on the work we are doing with our aboriginal communities.

The following people will be making presentations at the conference: Ken Downs, Jacinda Mack and Barb Wilson (from Haida Gwaii) on the Coastal Guardian/Watchmen project; Sheree Ronaasen, Cecil Paul Sr, Cecil Paul Jr on the Kittlope program; Arlene Herman and Kaarlene Lindsay on retention strategies for First Nations students; Stephanie Forsyth on organizational transformation; and Terrie McAloney on 'Creating and sustaining an integrated model for province-wide collaborative online programs at autonomous institutions'.

CFNR 'Tribal Tracks'

NWCC and CFNR are teaming up for a second semester of "Tribal Tracks" a radio show that features stories of interest to First Nations listeners. The show features weekly interviews with graduates and students of College programs in an effort to promote higher learning to members of the Aboriginal community. The show airs week-nights at 6 pm.



Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art Co-sponsors Art Exhibit in New Zealand

Through the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art, NWCC has become a co-sponsor of the *People of the Cedar* exhibition, which will now feature the College's collection of Freda Diesing art as well as art pieces produced by former students of Freda.

People of the Cedar is a major exhibition of First Nations art that was originally shown at the National Museum of Australia in March-May 2006. This exhibition is moving on to the Pataka Museum of Arts and Culture in New Zealand (followed by tours to other New Zealand and Australian venues) as the centerpiece for a major program of First Nations and Maori cultural exchange and artistic interaction.

The exhibition celebrates the renewed expression of identity, both artistic and cultural, among Canada's First Nations Peoples, and was developed in cooperation with artists **Dempsey Bob, Stan Bevan, Ken McNeil, William White and Christian White**, all of whom are associated with NWCC's Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art.

The Exhibit opens February 10th and will run until April 1, 2007.

[the connections continue...](#)

There are strong and enduring ties between a group of Northwest artists from our region (some of who are involved with our Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art) and Maori artists in New Zealand that have been developed over the last decade. This is not surprising since great similarities exist between these two cultures and their cultural artistic expressions.

In addition to the *People of the Cedar* exhibit, two other significant events will be held in New Zealand in February 2007. These events have the support of the Maori cultural and artistic community including Maori Arts New Zealand and the Pataka Museum of Arts and Cultures and will continue to build and strengthen these ties.

Ceremonial Waka (canoe) launch, 6 February 2007

The launching of a ceremonial Maori waka (canoe) on New Zealand's national day is the culmination of a collaborative project between Maori builders and carvers Ben Mamaku, Jack Brookings and Tamati Holmes, and Northwest Coast master carvers **Dempsey Bob, Stan Bevan (of the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art)** and Norman Jackson. Artists Bob, Bevan and Jackson, all of the Tlingit clan, have carved the figure of an Eagle to be fitted onto the canoe, making it the only ceremonial canoe with a unique relationship between the Maori and Tlingit people. The canoe will be launched with the songs and dances associated with the naming of this canoe.

Toi Maori The Eternal Thread: The Changing Art of Maori Weaving, Christchurch, 15 February 2007

This exhibition opened at Pataka in January 2004 and has been touring on both sides of the Pacific to universal acclaim. A massive exhibition in size and scope it showcases some of the finest examples of Maori weaving and is complemented by a small but significant Northwest Coast weaving collection from the Tlingit and Tsimshian nations, featuring Ravenstail, Chilkat and button-blanket styles by visiting artists **William White, Linda Bob and Virginia Bob**, among others. The northwest group will take part in the ceremonial return of this touring exhibition and participate in the exhibition public program, including lectures, seminars and workshops.

A sample of the College's Freda Diesing art collection on exhibit



Frontlet, circa 1969



Bentwood Box, circa 1969



Panel - 1971 - Killer Whale



'Raven finds human in a shell' - 1980 - Artist Proof