



# President's Update to the College Community

*Serving the communities of Northwestern BC*

**December 6, 2007**

## 2007 Milestones

The end of the year is upon us and the snow is once again shrouding many parts of the northwest in a beautiful blanket of white. It is hard to believe 2008 is nearly here; 2007 went too quickly. It was another year with many milestones for the College. There are so many to highlight, and so much to be proud of.

- \$2.8 million was granted to the School of Exploration & Mining for a new Reclamation & Prospecting (RAP) program. \$900,000 is from the Provincial Government and \$1.9 million is being provided by Human Resources & Social Development Canada. This highly successful program saw its first graduates emerge from a nine week intensive field camp in early September.
- The School of Exploration & Mining launched a student scholarship fundraising campaign and to date has raised nearly \$100,000 largely due to the efforts of Christine Ogryzlo from Smithers Exploration Group.
- The Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art opened its first show in Pataka, New Zealand and exchange relationships with the Maori artists were launched.
- NWCC co-hosted the first Aboriginal Post-Education Roundtable between Alberta and British Columbia in Lac La Biche, Alberta.
- Freda Diesing Studio was built and opened! And our first Maori exchange student and Toi Maori visitors come to Terrace.
- The creation of Indigenous gardens is underway at Prince Rupert and Terrace.
- The House of Learning and Applied Research was established.
- The first conference on Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education was held at NWCC, Challenging the Paradigm: De-Colonizing Education.
- NWCC and the Qay Lhagaay Heritage Centre Society signed an Agreement establishing NWCC as the educational administrative body for the Centre.
- Renewal/Expansion of the Smithers Campus is underway.
- The College launched its goal to "Go Green" and formed Environmental Sustainability teams at every campus.

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## New Scholarship Opportunities

The YVR Foundation has entered into a 3 year contract with the College, committing to donating \$5000 per year for the next 3 years to a youth studying in the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art.

The Greg Palmer Memorial Scholarship is gaining in size as friends, family, and the Carpenters Union add to the College-initiated fund.

## New College Board Members

Three new community Board members joined the College Board of Governors this past fall:

- **Terrence Wright**, a lawyer from Terrace;
- **Sharon Robertson**, formerly of Nadina Community Futures. Sharon works for Northern Health in Hazelton;
- **Gerald Wesley**, Hereditary chief, Kitsumkalum Band, and works in the Treaty Office in Terrace.

The new student representatives are **Tammy Bahm** from Terrace, and **Danielle Dalton** from Prince Rupert.

## More Highlights...

- The Coastal Guardian program was launched at the Kitimat Campus.
- Special Education Assistant Program is up, running and in hot demand.
- Trades, Health and Essential Skills for Work programs continue to grow.
- Science World got bigger and better this year, with more departments and staff participating than ever.
- Video conferencing units are being installed at Prince Rupert, Smithers and Terrace and will be ready for use in January.
- Qingdao Technical College (QTC) sent its first group of Business faculty, initiating the faculty exchange program between NWCC and QTC.
- Over \$60,000 was awarded to NWCC students at the November Scholarships & Awards luncheon.
- The Culinary Arts department is preparing for an unbelievably busy year of participation in local, provincial, national and international competitions.

## The Aboriginal Centre for Health, Wellness, Sport & Recreation

A new initiative that hopes to bring together existing and new program offerings under one roof at the Mountainview School in Terrace is under development. The following Executive Summary is from the draft Concept Paper currently being circulated to key stakeholders in the north-west for input and feedback.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The July 2005 First Nations Health Blueprint for British Columbia identified a new vision for First Nations health systems and identified a number of gaps and barriers in health services for First Nations, among them - promoting health and well-being. It identified significant lack of access and services for First Nations people particularly those living in rural and remote areas, and particularly women. The First Nations Health Blueprint for BC is supported by numerous reports and longitudinal studies regarding Aboriginal health and wellness in BC and across the country. For example, the BC Provincial Health Officer report of 2001, the BC Coroners Service Child Death Review Report of 2005, and many others. These reports and studies articulate strategies for improving the health of Aboriginal people and all British Columbians, strategies which include the integration of health services, and improved access to education and information.

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## First Nations Council Executive

Elections were held for First Nations Council on December 7. Diane Collins was re-elected Chair and Irene Seguin was re-elected as Vice-Chair.

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## Recruitment efforts Underway

Prince Rupert hosted over 250 Charles Hays students in grades 10-12, along with students from the Friendship House. Similar activities are occurring at other campuses. In Terrace, Gord Weary and the staff hosted a NWCC-High School Teachers get together to build relationships and enhance awareness.

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## CCP expands to Moricetown

This past semester, Katherine Staiger and the Smithers CCP department have been bringing CCP to Moricetown. Biology is being offered once a week.

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## Continuing Education expands in Houston

Lack of space at the Smithers campus has meant many CE first aid courses have had to move to the Houston campus. Increased demand for CE, coupled with these additional First Aid courses has brought added activity to this campus.

## The Centre... con't

"Government has annually increased funding for health services; however, funding increases alone will not meet the increasing and changing demands placed on the health system....The Ministry (of Health Services) and its partners across government and throughout the health system are also focusing efforts on innovative health promotion and disease prevention initiatives to keep the population healthy and mitigate some of the demand for health services." <sup>2</sup>

"Both provincially and federally we're committed to addressing the gap in health status between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, and one way we can do this is through better integration of health services."<sup>3</sup>

This paper proposes the establishment of a Centre for Aboriginal Health, Wellness, Sport, and Recreation Education (the Centre). Through the establishment of the Centre, existing and new health programs will be offered alongside programs in exercise and wellness, nutrition, sport and recreation. The programs will target Aboriginal students and engage all students in service learning courses which will require them to offer, under the supervision of professionally trained personnel, services to community members seeking information, support or consultation. As such the Centre will not only create a holistic environment for innovative and integrated programming, but also fill much needed gaps in the region – e.g. providing health, wellness and leisure personnel who approach their work holistically, and are educated in a northern Aboriginal rural context; personnel skilled in the area of exercise and wellness, mental health and addictions, recreation and leisure, and; a community resource centre where residents may access expertise and assistance to achieve a healthier lifestyle.

The Centre will be developed and operated in consultation with the Northern Health Authority, First Nation communities, community agency representatives and regional public and private health, wellness and recreation practitioners, among others.

The proposed location for the Centre is the Mountainview Elementary School in Terrace, BC. This school, built in 2001, has never been occupied and is situated a short walk from the Terrace campus of Northwest Community College.

Northwest Community College is requesting ownership (or use) of this publicly funded facility through the transfer of title from the Coast Mountain School District to the College. The College would open the doors to the Northwest Centre for Health, Wellness, Sport and Recreation in 2008.

<sup>2</sup> BC Ministry of Health and Wellness Service Plan, 2007.pp 8-9.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

### Student Identification Card

This project has experienced some delays, but is hoped to be up and running in January.

Newly purchased equipment and software will enable each campus to send student information and pictures electronically to the Terrace Campus Library where cards will be processed.