

# UPDATE

A Newsletter for UNBC Alumni and Friends

Fall 2007

## The Northern Sport Centre

Grand Opening Special Edition

**UNBC** UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA



# UpFront

## Continuing Studies Courses for Credit

Continuing Studies is now offering courses that count toward completing a degree. The courses are in such areas as visual arts, performing arts, music, languages, astronomy, health and wellness, and Christianity – topics not generally covered through UNBC's existing academic offerings. [www.unbc.ca/continuingstudies](http://www.unbc.ca/continuingstudies)

## Record Enrolment

UNBC achieved a record enrolment for the fall 2007 semester. 3750 students are registered in university-credit courses at UNBC, up nearly 4% over last year. The increase is due to a number of factors, including new programming in Nursing and Education, new university-credit courses in Continuing Studies, a 7.4% increase in student registrations at regional campuses, and 16% growth in the number of students pursuing master's and doctoral degrees.

## Student Career Centre

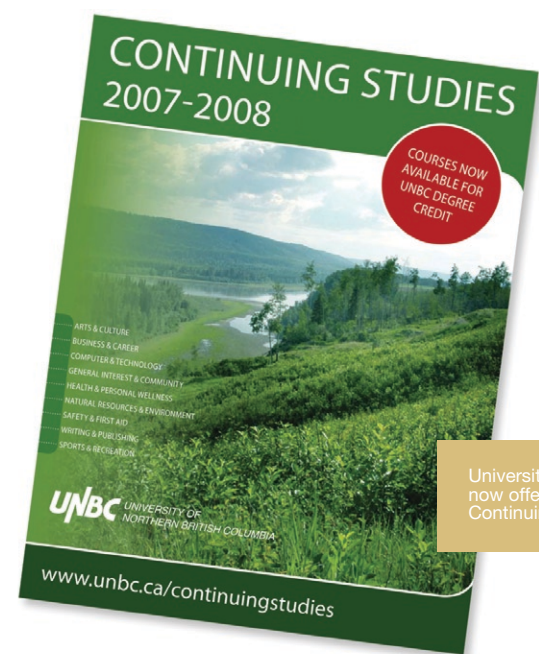
The Student Career Centre is a new service offered to students and alumni in partnership with UNBC and the Alumni Association. The Centre offers assistance in preparing for employment, arranges recruiting and information sessions, posts career opportunities, and coordinates Co-operative Education work term placements.

## Campus Developments

Students are now attending classes in the new 8,500 square metre Teaching & Learning Centre at the Prince George campus; the Northern Sport Centre is now open for public use; and renovations to the former Fitness Centre are set to start soon, transforming the space into the highly anticipated Northern University Student Centre.

## Office Relocations

Following the opening of the Teaching & Learning Centre, a number of programs and departments have relocated throughout the Prince George campus. A listing of all new office locations is available online: [www.unbc.ca/moves](http://www.unbc.ca/moves).



University-credit courses are now offered through UNBC Continuing Studies.

## Bachelor of Fine Arts

A new Bachelor of Fine Arts is being offered in partnership with the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design. The curriculum includes courses in studio, art history, English, and creative writing, as well as offerings in new media and digital technology. [www.unbc.ca/finearts](http://www.unbc.ca/finearts)

## New Nursing Certificate

UNBC, Northern Health, and the BC Government are delivering a new certificate program designed for BC nurses to gain additional skills and certification in rural nursing. The Rural Acute Care Nursing Certificate is comprised largely of distance education courses that can be applied towards completing a bachelor's degree in Nursing from UNBC.

## Yukon Partnership

UNBC and the Yukon College have signed a Memorandum of Understanding toward a partnership that will enhance educational and research opportunities in the North. The MOU will cover eleven areas, including programs and courses, research, Indigenous peoples, exchanges, and student awards.

## New Independent Minors

The Environmental Studies program now offers two new minors open to all students, including those studying in other disciplines. The minor in Environmental Studies focuses on social systems and policy as they affect environmental and natural resources issues. The minor in Global Environmental Change focuses on the realities of environmental change and the way policy intersects with science.

Check out the latest developments at UNBC online at [www.unbc.ca/releases](http://www.unbc.ca/releases)

# Converging Interests: The Value of an Ancient Forest

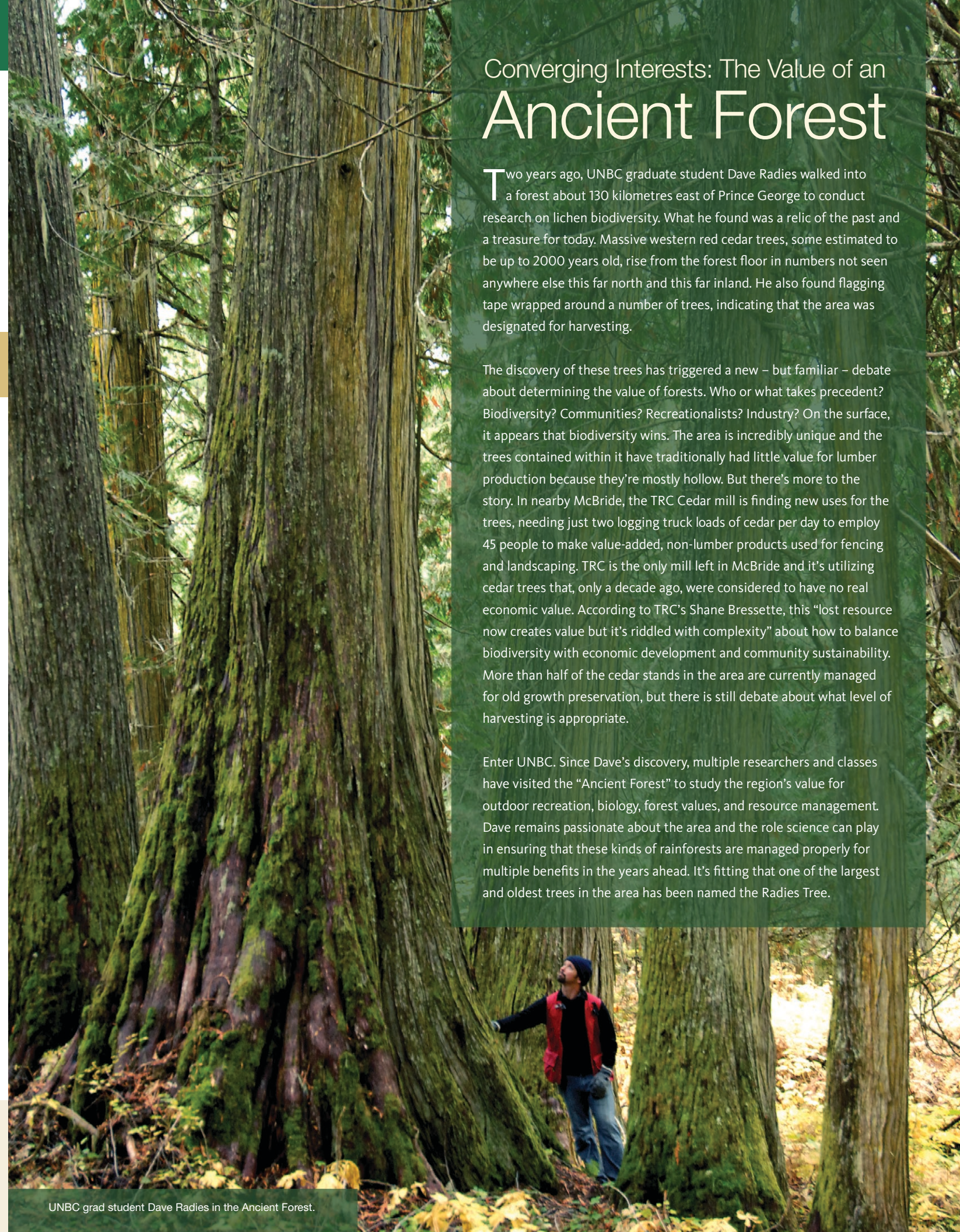
Two years ago, UNBC graduate student Dave Radies walked into a forest about 130 kilometres east of Prince George to conduct research on lichen biodiversity. What he found was a relic of the past and a treasure for today. Massive western red cedar trees, some estimated to be up to 2000 years old, rise from the forest floor in numbers not seen anywhere else this far north and this far inland. He also found flagging tape wrapped around a number of trees, indicating that the area was designated for harvesting.

The discovery of these trees has triggered a new – but familiar – debate about determining the value of forests. Who or what takes precedent? Biodiversity? Communities? Recreationalists? Industry? On the surface, it appears that biodiversity wins. The area is incredibly unique and the trees contained within it have traditionally had little value for lumber production because they're mostly hollow. But there's more to the story. In nearby McBride, the TRC Cedar mill is finding new uses for the trees, needing just two logging truck loads of cedar per day to employ 45 people to make value-added, non-lumber products used for fencing and landscaping. TRC is the only mill left in McBride and it's utilizing cedar trees that, only a decade ago, were considered to have no real economic value. According to TRC's Shane Bressette, this "lost resource now creates value but it's riddled with complexity" about how to balance biodiversity with economic development and community sustainability. More than half of the cedar stands in the area are currently managed for old growth preservation, but there is still debate about what level of harvesting is appropriate.

Enter UNBC. Since Dave's discovery, multiple researchers and classes have visited the "Ancient Forest" to study the region's value for outdoor recreation, biology, forest values, and resource management. Dave remains passionate about the area and the role science can play in ensuring that these kinds of rainforests are managed properly for multiple benefits in the years ahead. It's fitting that one of the largest and oldest trees in the area has been named the Radies Tree.



Teaching & Learning Centre (March 2007)



UNBC grad student Dave Radies in the Ancient Forest.

# CANADA'S GREEN UNIVERSITY™

## Call it opportunism or honesty.

Either way, there is no university in Canada better positioned to take advantage of the “green wave” than UNBC. Our location, campus operations, and academic strengths are all strongly influenced by the environment and being responsive to the communities that depend on the environment for their own sustainability.

The UNBC approach to being green recognizes that the environment sustains our communities, health, cultures, and economy. It extends from our academic activities and campus architecture to our outdoor activities and quality of life. When given the choice, why would anyone study the environment in a concrete jungle? It's in northern BC where climate change is already occurring, where fundamental land-use decisions are being made, where pollution is affecting health, and where resource extraction continues to power the provincial and national economies.



## Teaching

The environment is a big part of many of our degree programs, from Natural Resources Management and Environmental Engineering to English and Economics. Many courses include the opportunity to interact in the environment in addition to learning about concepts in the classroom. UNBC is a national leader when it comes to educating the environmental leaders of tomorrow. **The proportion of students taking environmental programs at UNBC is about 20-times the national average.**



### Profile: Community Sustainability

Fourth-year students from the Environmental Planning program spent three weeks travelling around BC this summer, exploring different approaches to community sustainability. The field school involved visiting ecovillages, co-housing developments, sustainable farms, and First Nations communities in northern BC, the Cariboo, and Vancouver Island.



## Research

Northern BC is the perfect living laboratory to study the environment, natural resources, and the communities that depend on those resources for their survival. In this context, applying research and innovation is vital to the sustainability of both the environment and northern communities. Research at UNBC is exploring such issues as climate change, land use, environmental contaminants, and the mountain pine beetle epidemic. **Eleven of our 13 research chairs focus on the environment, a proportion greater than any other Canadian university.**



### Profile: Green on Green

Green is more than a last name for UNBC professor Dr. Scott Green. He uses UNBC's research forests and labs to investigate forest responses to climate change. One project uses UNBC's Tree Ring Lab to determine how trees have responded to changing climates over the past 50 years in order to predict how they might react to continued change in the future.



## Campus

From its massive wood beams to the thousands of windows that let in the sun's heat, UNBC's campus has a distinctly natural feel. Beyond aesthetics, **the campus uses low-energy lights, efficient boilers, and BC-made wood products.** Key to its efficiency is the Agora, which connects the main campus buildings to a central power plant for energy, heat, and water. This connectivity positions UNBC to implement various green energy sources, such as wood, geothermal, solar, and wind throughout the campus. We are currently exploring the options.



### Profile: Quesnel Campus

UNBC's new campus in Quesnel is a model for sustainability, having been built to a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) gold standard. The building uses only 34% of the energy and 54% of the water of a similar-sized building built to regular specifications.



## Living It

As northerners, a strong connection to the environment is part of who we are. **Throughout campus there are recycling bins for bottles and cans, and we reuse and recycle paper throughout our departments.** We also refurbish used office furniture and even have asphalt recycled when it is removed from the campus. We're constantly finding new ways to be green.



### Profile: Students and Composting

The student-run composting program at UNBC processes eight tonnes of organic matter every year and the on-campus composting garden is unique among universities in western Canada. The program, operated by the Prince George Public Interest Research Group, is only one of many student-initiated conservation programs on campus.

## Green for Green

Strategic investments are key to fully realizing UNBC's ambition to be Canada's Green University. Universities can play a unique role in linking businesses, government, communities, and all citizens in achieving sustainability. Join us.

[www.unbc.ca/green](http://www.unbc.ca/green)

# The NEW Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre

“Today is about respecting and supporting northern athletes, all those who share in their victories, and every northerner who makes a commitment to active living.”

With those words, Premier Gordon Campbell officially declared the Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre open on September 21, 2007.

More than one-thousand people filled the bleachers to watch hundreds of student athletes, some of whom will be participating in the 2010 Winter Olympics, parade through the gymnasium as part of an Olympic-like opening ceremony. Throughout the weekend, thousands more tested out the indoor track, touched the world-class turf in the field house, and took guided tours to get a glimpse of the Centre's other impressive facilities.



### The Speakers

Among the speakers at the ceremony were Premier Gordon Campbell, Deputy Premier Shirley Bond, Mayor Colin Kinsley, UNBC President Don Cozzetto, and UNBC graduate and national wheelchair basketball athlete Bo Hedges.



### Leading Athletes

Student athletes Jay Gladish (basketball), Jacqui Benson (Nordic skiing), and Lucas Blanche (soccer) led the large procession of dignitaries, athletes, and community representatives that were key to the development of the Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre.



### A Surprise Finish

The ceremony ended when the gymnasium was filled with streamers, covering a dazzled and captivated audience and demonstrating a strong community spirit.



## Other Weekend Events

### Alumni Homecoming

The UNBC Alumni Association kicked off in grand style what will become an annual event. The Alumni Homecoming involved a pub night, a pre-game party, basketball games, and a brunch attended by UNBC grad and Member of Parliament James Moore (BA Political Science 2000). Next year's Alumni Homecoming will take place from September 19 to 21, 2008.



### Alumni Basketball

Alumni basketball stars are already practicing for next year following their first games against the current UNBC Timberwolves men's and women's basketball teams. Fans filled to capacity the 1,000-seat bleacher and wildly cheered on the teams.



### Breakfast of Champions

Described as inspirational and delicious, the Breakfast of Champions celebrated sport in northern BC. The speakers were Stacey Wakabayashi, a Canadian Intercollegiate Sport Champion in hockey, and Randy Wagner, a former Olympian in volleyball. The Breakfast of Champions will also be an annual event.



### Varsity Soccer Games

It was a historic weekend – the first-ever BCCAA home games for the Northern Timberwolves soccer teams took place at the North Cariboo fields in Prince George. Hundreds of fans turned out to cheer on UNBC as they took on Douglas College.

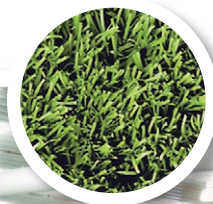


### Other Weekend Events

The weekend was packed with other activities including fitness testing and demonstrations by PacificSport, the BC Government's ActNow pavillion promoting healthy living, a donor appreciation evening, and a dinner recognizing the founders of the NSC.

# A World-Class Facility

## For Northern BC



### Field House

The multipurpose field house can accommodate two soccer pitches of up to 90x190 feet each. The ceiling is 40 feet high and the field features professional-quality Polytan artificial turf.

The field house has all of the advantages of an outdoor field that can be enjoyed year-round. The artificial turf looks and feels like real grass but can handle years of continuous use. It is installed on an earth base instead of concrete, just like an outdoor field.



### Gymnasium

The 22,000 square foot gymnasium contains three basketball courts and can accommodate seating for up to 2,000 spectators. The courts are also designed to handle volleyball, badminton, and gymnastics equipment.



### Other Facilities

#### Training & Exercise

- » Two squash courts
- » Weight and cardio equipment
- » Studio for aerobics, yoga, martial arts, etc.
- » Sport medicine and physiotherapy
- » Ventilated wax room and rifle storage
- » Connection to the Greenway trail system



#### Rooms, Offices & Space

- » Offices for coaches
- » Multi-purpose room for seminars and events
- » Public and team locker rooms
- » Concession and lobby
- » 250 parking stalls (plus overflow)

### Track & Straightaway

The three-lane, 280-metre track overlooks the gymnasium and the field house below. The track includes a five-lane, 80-metre straightaway for sprints and features a professional-quality Polytan surface. Athletes may wear indoor spikes while training.

## Northern Sport Centre

### What's Happening

#### Northern Timberwolves Basketball Games

**Don't miss the season home opener games!**

- Friday, November 2 vs. Kwantlen University College
- Saturday, November 3 vs. Langara College

#### Other regular season home games:

- Friday, November 9 vs. Columbia Bible College
- Saturday, January 12 vs. UBC Okanagan
- Friday, February 1 vs. Douglas College
- Saturday, February 2 vs. Capilano College
- Friday, February 8 vs. Camosun College
- Saturday, February 9 vs. Malaspina University College

[www.unbc.ca/athletics](http://www.unbc.ca/athletics)

### 07/08 BCCAA Basketball Provincials

UNBC is hosting this year's British Columbia Colleges Athletics Association provincials at the Northern Sport Centre! Cheer on the UNBC Northern Timberwolves at this exciting event.

Thursday, February 28 – Saturday, March 1, 2008

### Community Sports & Recreation Programs

The Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre offers a range of fitness and recreation programs to the general public and is designed for people of all ages. Gym memberships and facility rentals are also available. Access a current and complete listing of programs and rates online.

[www.northernsportcentre.ca](http://www.northernsportcentre.ca)



## Alumni News & Events

### Board of Directors

Ryan Schroeder	President
VACANT	Vice President
Trevor Stach	Treasurer
VACANT	Recorder
Gord Brownridge	Past-President
Tiina Watt	Director
Michael Keryluik	Director
Tyler Bowman	Director
Pinder Basi	Director
Timothy Carmack	Director
Aidan Kelly	Director
Sandra Earle	Ex-Officio Director
Cameron Ehl	Ex-Officio Director

### Golf Tournament Success

The 2007 Alumni Association Charity Golf Tournament raised more than \$18,000 to support UNBC's student athletes.

### Family Christmas Celebration

Reconnect with fellow Alumni! The Annual Family Christmas Party will be held on December 5th at Exploration Place in Prince George. Enjoy food, games, and activities for the whole family.

### Career Centre

UNBC and the Alumni Association have established the Student Career Centre, open to all UNBC students and recent graduates. Interested in mentoring? [www.unbc.ca/careercentre](http://www.unbc.ca/careercentre)

### Volunteers & Feedback

Get involved with the Association! Participate on the Board of Directors, be an Alumni Ambassador, or volunteer at a number of exciting events year round.

### Contact Us!

We'd love to hear from you. Phone us at (250) 960-5873 or email [alumni@unbc.ca](mailto:alumni@unbc.ca). [www.unbc.ca/alumni](http://www.unbc.ca/alumni)



Psychology grads Nick Nagy and Gavin Elder are "free at last" during convocation in May.



James Moore graduated from UNBC in 2000 with a BA Political Science. He is the youngest elected Member of Parliament in British Columbia's history and was voted "the best up-and-coming MP" four years in a row.

# UNBC Alumni

The UNBC Alumni Association is now at 6,224 members! 65% of the 745 students who graduated from UNBC in 2007 are from northern British Columbia.

Elizabeth Rennie (MA International Studies '06) is an international prosecutor with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

Elizabeth Van Gool (BSc Environmental Science '05) is an environmental scientist for SHARP Environmental Ltd. She works in the remediation and reclamation of contaminated oil and gas sites in northeastern BC.

Jodie Baker (BA English '97) is a teacher at Prince George Secondary School in Prince George, BC. Jodie and her husband Steve are both working toward a Master of Education in Multidisciplinary Leadership at UNBC.

Vanessa Podgurny (BA Political Science & International Studies '03) is a trade policy officer for Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada in Ottawa, ON.

Scott Palfreyman (BSc Biology '99) is a Hydrometric technologist for Environment Canada, Water Survey of Canada in Whitehorse, YT.

Tara Boswell (BSc Geography '99) is a GIS specialist for the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program in Westborough, MA.

Eric Beach (BSc Environmental Planning '02) is a city planner in Kamloops, BC. Previously, he worked for four years as the city planner in Williams Lake, BC.

Tamara Sweet (BComm General Business & International Business '04) is the community development coordinator for Canadian Blood Services in Prince George, BC.

Jennifer Paige (BA Geography '03) is a program coordinator for the Foundation for Sustainable Development in Jinja, Uganda, where she helps provide training, grants, and support for local organizations.

Brian Majore (BA General Arts '06) is a stand-up comedian. He performs in clubs such as YukYuks and Lafflines, travels in native comedy tours, and also appears on television.

# Media is the Message

By UNBC Grad Jessica Harcombe

Ever since Premier Gordon Campbell announced his goal to double tourism revenues in British Columbia by 2015, the industry has responded with exponential growth. Many are enthusiastic about the potential to expand the BC tourism industry, but a big question remains: how can we realize a greater return from tourism without simply adding more options for the visitors who already know about the province?

The answer is in making more people aware of our province and its incredible tourism opportunities. That's a big challenge for everyone, especially those regions outside of Vancouver. I am fortunate enough to be in the middle of this leading industry by managing media and public relations with Bellstar Hotels & Resorts, which has 8 resorts and is preparing to open 4 more. I see an opportunity to increase BC's tourism revenue substantially by taking a proactive approach to media coverage, which can include newspapers, magazines, online magazines, television, radio, and film in anything from local to international venues.

Not only is fostering strong ties with the media a cost effective and valuable method of building awareness or sharing information with the public, but it also adds a third-party endorsement in a way that advertising simply cannot. Travelers will view a multi-page article that includes details of first-hand experiences and impressions from an independent travel writer much differently than even the best advertisements. These feature articles create buzz and interest in your place, product, or experience.

Simply having a great tourism product does not make a story. There must be a unique hook that draws people in. For example, Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort & Spa, our condo-resort at NK'MIP in Osoyoos, includes luxury accommodations, Canada's first aboriginal owned and operated winery and vineyards, a cultural centre, and a golf course. From these, we were able to develop several story ideas: wine-country getaways, aboriginal spirituality in Canada's only desert, aboriginal tourism development, and cultural sustainability. Each time a story is published or broadcast, we receive considerable interest from the public; the phones ring more and web traffic increases.

Our tourism industry as a whole also deserves to have its phones ringing off the hook. While it will take time to double our current tourism revenue, increasing the public's awareness of BC's first-class destinations and opportunities through the media is an important start.

Jessica graduated from UNBC in 2004 with a BA in Resource-Based Tourism and First Nations Studies.

## UNBC Donations

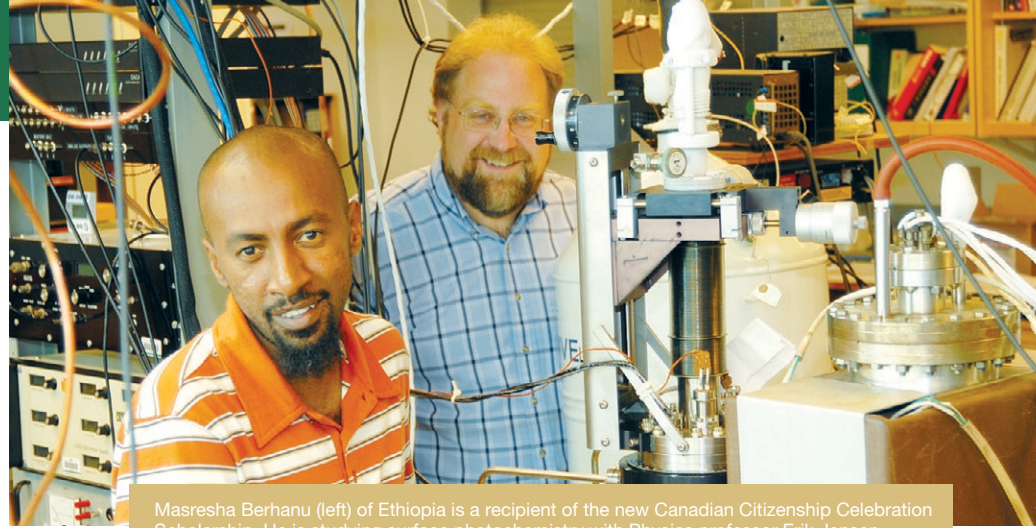
### Office of University Advancement

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Phone: (250) 960-5750  
Toll-free: 1-866-960-5750  
Email: [devoff@unbc.ca](mailto:devoff@unbc.ca)

### New Location

We are now located at UNBC's Prince George campus in room 1065 on the main floor of the Administration building.



Masresha Berhanu (left) of Ethiopia is a recipient of the new Canadian Citizenship Celebration Scholarship. He is studying surface photochemistry with Physics professor Erik Jensen.

# Giving to UNBC

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

## A Big Night Out: The Annual Ewert Lecture

The fourth annual Dr. Bob Ewert Memorial Lecture, Dinner, and Dance will take place on Saturday, January 19, 2008 at the Civic Centre in Prince George. This year's keynote speaker will be Ralph Klein, former Premier of Alberta. Phone (250) 960-5750 for ticket information.

## Lucky Number Seven

Seven of twelve northern BC communities have now fulfilled their pledges for the Northern Medical Programs Trust: Fraser Lake, Houston, Mackenzie, McBride, Valemount, Burns Lake, and Tumbler Ridge. With a goal of raising \$6 million, the NMPT supports the recruitment, training, and retention of health professionals in the North.

## Recognizing Donors

The annual Donor Appreciation event was held at the Prince George campus in September. Wally West, pictured below on right, was among 200 supporters who were recognized for their contributions to UNBC.



## New Awards for Students

### Irving K. Barber Awards

The Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society has established two new scholarships, both available to students participating in study or work abroad experiences. The Pacific Horizon Scholarship is worth \$1,000 and as many as 16 One World Scholarships are each worth \$1,000 to \$3,000.

### Canadian Citizenship Celebration

George C. Stevens has established the Canadian Citizenship Celebration Scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students who were born outside Canada and the United States. Each award is worth \$6,000.

### Brownridge Bursaries

Brian and Jackie Brownridge have established two new bursaries. The Brownridge Athletic Bursary is available to a member of the men's basketball team and is worth \$5,000. Four Brownridge & Company Annual Athletic Bursaries, worth \$2,000 each, are available to members of UNBC's basketball and soccer teams.

### Elly Johnsen Scholarships

The Eleanor (Elly) Alaska-Lee Johnsen Foundation Scholarships support members of the women's basketball team. 10 awards, worth \$2,500 each, will be available in 2008.

Making a Difference: Donors, UNBC, and communities working together.



UNBC Psychology Professor Cindy Hardy

# The Ties that Bind

The **Victoria Foundation** has contributed \$100,000 to develop an innovative new project for parents with **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder**.

An innovative new project between UNBC and the Gitksan Child and Family Services Society in Hazelton will support parents and families affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Until now, support programs have focused primarily on children with the disorder, but there is more to the story that makes this project unique.

"Everyone thinks of FASD as an issue for children, but this project is all about using Gitksan traditions to care for families," says Dr. Cindy Hardy, the project consultant, UNBC Psychology professor, and clinical psychologist. "Many parents affected by FASD require ongoing support but they're not currently getting it. This project is about justice for these families. We provide very little for people with FASD, who are often blamed for their disability."

In the traditional Gitksan family culture, every person is connected through an

intricate kinship network. Child-rearing and caretaking responsibilities are shared through multiple layers of family using their house and clan system. Ms. Merle Greene, GCFSS Executive Director, hopes that bringing families affected by FASD into a tradition-based support system will promote a sense of cultural identity and belonging that was disrupted by European colonization.

The Great Change, as it's known among First Nations groups, eroded the elaborately woven chains binding Gitksan families, language, and culture together. Resulting residential schools, racism, and abuse weakened the links and some snapped apart. While these complex kinship networks were greatly strained, the Gitksan people have worked through the years – and continue to work today – to repair and replace the pieces.

The \$100,000 grant from the Victoria Foundation will fund development of a program that includes building a house and

staffing it with local caregivers who will provide social support for families affected by FASD. Dr. Hardy anticipates they will be able to break ground on the housing project in a year. And she says the project has the potential to become a model for other First Nations communities. "It will strengthen communities, it will strengthen families, it will strengthen individuals."

*FASD is a lifelong, brain-based disability caused by exposure to alcohol during fetal development.*



Gitksan Child and Family Services Society Logo

## A \$4.2 Million Investment

The Northern Development Initiatives Trust has invested \$4.2 million in the Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre. \$3 million of the investment is an interest-free loan that will be repaid over five years by the City of Prince George and the Regional District of Fraser Fort George. The remaining \$1.2 million is a grant from the Northern Trust's cross-regional program that represents the collective support in the Northern Sport Centre from the 40 communities in the Northern Trust's region.

"I speak on behalf of my colleagues on the Board when I say – WOW – what an impressive asset [the Northern Sport Centre] will be for the whole region," says Bruce Sutherland, Chair of the Northern Trust Board.



Northern Trust Chair Bruce Sutherland announces the investment at the construction site of the Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre

# People in the News

Thanks to some major research developments, new buildings on campus, and a variety of new programs offered to students, 2007 has been exceptionally busy for UNBC. The Office of Communications alone issued more than 60 news releases in the first nine months of the year.

UNBC master's graduate Sorin Pasca

## A Concrete Solution

**BC** is facing a big question: what to do with the billions of trees killed by the mountain pine beetle? Sorin Pasca doesn't have the whole answer but he does have a concrete suggestion.

The UNBC master's graduate has created a concrete product using pine beetle wood chips instead of stones as the aggregate. The result is a sturdy material that can be cut with regular woodworking tools and nailed without pre-drilling.

"The original idea was to see if a wood-cement product could be a replacement for drywall, or gypsum board," says Pasca. "It's an excellent alternative but now that the research is complete, we're seeing all kinds of additional applications, from countertops to flooring. It's a beautiful product that combines all of the structural advantages of concrete with the aesthetic quality of wood."



Cement typically repels organic materials such as wood fibre, but it bonds to lodgepole pine. This compatibility is even stronger when the tree has been stained blue by the mountain pine beetle.



## Turning Wood into Fuel

UNBC is investigating various ways to convert mountain pine beetle wood (MPB) into ethanol, a gasoline additive in that reduces air pollution. Dr. Steve Helle, an Environmental Engineering professor, says compared to one acre of corn that

produces 1,135 litres of ethanol, an acre of pine could yield 10,000 litres of ethanol. His research found that using extraction methods, a medium-sized sawmill could convert 500 metric tonnes of woodchips into 70,000 litres of ethanol per year.

## Pine Beetle and Climate Change

The mountain pine beetle (MPB) outbreak in central BC could now be contributing to the climate change phenomenon. Ecosystem Science and Management professor Dr. Art Fredeen is measuring the amounts of carbon dioxide, over sites that transform from healthy pine trees to MPB infected ones and eventually to cut blocks to determine the impact the pine beetle epidemic is having on climate change.



## Corporate Governance

In the wake of several infamous scandals involving corporations such as ENRON and WorldCom, UNBC professors Saif Zahir and Han Donker have founded the *International Journal on Corporate Governance (IJCG)*, a refereed, specialized, and exclusive corporate

governance journal. The two are also founding members of the Raven Think Tank, a rapidly growing research group that focuses on ethics and public policy issues relating to the environment, post-secondary education, health, and human rights.

## Triple Helix of Funding

In addition to presenting to renowned genetic researchers at a western Canadian conference at UNBC this summer, UNBC students Daniel Chapman of Terrace, Brianne Burkinshaw of Prince George, and Bonnie Ollenberger of Prince George received prestigious awards. The trio received \$4,500 scholarships from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada to advance their research on ribonucleic acid (RNA) splicing. Their research looks specifically at the molecular factors that make splicing work.



## These Boots were Made for Hiking

Continuing Studies Coordinator Rob Bryce has published *Hiking North Central BC*, which features 73 regional hiking trails for climbers of all skill levels. The avid hiker and outdoor enthusiast has spent the last few years hiking,

mapping, and recording GPS coordinates for the trails included. In addition to trail descriptions, the book comes with an interactive CD containing more than 1400 photos, 3D images, hillshade maps, elevation profiles, and aerial photos.



## Honouring a Citizen

UNBC Social Work student Christal Capostinsky has been nominated for the 2007 Prince George Citizen of the Year. Not only does the single mom excel in her full-time studies, but she also volunteers with the Canadian AIDS Society, the Northern Women's

Wellness Information Centre, Positive Living North, the BC Coalition of Experiential Women, and the Centre on Aging. She also started the Prince George New Hope Society, a street-level organization working to reduce the barriers for sex workers and sexually exploited youth.

## Can You Dig It?

This summer, UNBC Anthropology professor Farid Rahemtulla and students conducted the first major archaeological dig in the north central Interior since the 1970s. The group found more than 100 stone artefacts during an excavation at the confluence of the Chilako and Nechako Rivers, west of Prince George. "Unlike the Coast and Southern Interior of BC, the Northern Interior remains virtually unknown to archaeologists," says Dr. Rahemtulla. "This is just the start."



## Face Language

Just by watching, babies can tell when people speak different languages. That's the surprising revelation from UNBC graduate Whitney Weikum's research. She has discovered that infants as young as four months can tell when a person changes

between languages, solely by studying the speaker's facial expressions. Weikum's research was published in *Science*, a very prestigious research publication. She is working on her PhD in Neuroscience at the University of British Columbia.



# The Prince Rupert Port: Hope or Hype?

By John Young, Assistant Professor, Political Science

While there are many reasons to be optimistic about the new port, politicians and business interests may have hyped it beyond what it can realistically achieve.

In September, the Fairview Container Port in Prince Rupert celebrated its grand opening. New opportunities for northern industries to export finished products together with a projected boost to the service sector offer a foundation for economic rejuvenation. While there are many reasons to be optimistic, the realities of the transportation industry, the global economy, and local factors should temper enthusiasm.

If measured only by enthusiasm, the port is already successful; however, politicians and business interests may have hyped it beyond what it can realistically achieve. Yes, it is positioned to benefit from congestion building at existing ports. Yes, it boasts the closest location to China, the main source of a projected tripling of imports by 2015. But the arrival of containers from Asia is no guarantee for economic development in northern British Columbia.

In addition, the new port has only the capacity to handle less than four percent of what the largest west coast ports currently process. While expansion plans exist, the port will need to find at least \$600 million in financing and hope that demand grows. In a recent UNBC symposium on port development in Prince Rupert, civil engineers, legal scholars, anthropologists, and political scientists pointed out a few legitimate reasons why demand may fail to fuel further expansion.

1. If west coast ports were run according to management principles common in Asian ports, they could double their current volume of throughput without any additional expansion, and thus absorb the projected growth.
2. The port's reliability remains to be tested. Given the frequency of CN derailments and the lack of alternative routes in the event of obstructions like mudslides and floods, questions remain on how dependable and competitive the northwest corridor will be.



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3. The Canadian regulatory framework for containers is outdated. Less restrictive regulations in the United States makes them more appealing.
4. Compared to Los Angeles, Prince Rupert is distant from consumer markets, which means that despite any congestion, Los Angeles will remain the port of first choice for most importers.
5. Further development of the new port may be constrained by environmental and land use concerns, including land settlements with First Nations.

None of these factors ought to paralyze port boosters, but they collectively highlight the need for balance to offset the hype currently connected to the Port. Back in September 1981, the Globe and Mail reported that Prince Rupert was about to become a major port. Market factors quickly changed, however, and some of the Rupert terminals soon faced bankruptcy. It would be naive to think that similar factors could not conspire again. While current development focuses on imports, the real fruits of port development will be northern BC's capacity to export goods and products – to use the new gateway to our advantage, rather than merely expect the port itself to fuel economic development.

## Dr. John Young

John Young teaches comparative politics at UNBC and has written numerous articles and chapters on Russian politics. He has worked or studied in Canada, the United States, Germany, Russia, and Japan.