

**NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS REPORT
MAY 2020**

TRADES AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

There has been a great deal of upheaval in our world since our last report in February. While the whispers of a mysterious pneumonia-like illness began circulating in January, it seemed to be far removed from our front door. So, while we were aware of a possible problematic situation, it was still business as usual.

Our winter term was well underway with several sections in progress and the launch of winter 2020 programming to include, two cohorts of Carpentry Foundation, and three cohorts of Carpentry Apprenticeships. These were joined by Electrical Foundation and two Apprenticeship programs, Professional Cook Level 1 in Port Alberni and Plumbing Level 4 at the Comox Valley campus.

The winter semester also included the delivery of two specialized cohorts of our Trade Sampler program with School District 72: the traditional Construction cohort and the new Culinary addition. The Construction Sampler students were enthusiastic and took part in two Electrical modules, Welding, Heavy Mechanical and they had just started to dabble in Carpentry where they completed three projects. They built a herb garden planter for our Culinary program and followed up with four benches and four tables which will be added to the courtyard outside our Campbell River Student Commons area for students and staff to enjoy fresh air when the weather permits. Our Culinary Sampler was led by our newest Culinary Instructor, Sunshine Layton. Sunshine had this to say:

“The Culinary Trade Sampler Program started at the end of January at the Campbell River campus. The program included commercial kitchen safety and sanitation, professionalism, communication, introduction to the culinary arts trade along with foundation skills training. I based the curriculum on the apprenticeship curriculum for the trade of cook, focusing on the introductory and foundation skills.

Though the class was small, the students were eager to learn and excited to take on any challenge. We moved along the curriculum at an accelerated pace and I keep adding on additional learning outcomes and practical testing. The students developed menu items for the cafeteria which were well received by the customers and we took on events like "Pizza Day" or an Asian themed menu or catered luncheons.

The Culinary Trade Sampler students were good keen learners with a solid set of foundation culinary skills and last I spoke with them they were all considering signing up for Professional Cook One starting in the fall of 2020.

It was a pleasure stepping into such a well-structured, organized pilot program.”

With only a few weeks remaining of the Sampler programs, COVID-19 was no longer something we were only reading about. In a matter of days, the faculty of Trades and Technical programs pivoted to remote program delivery.

Program instructors and students quickly shifted to alternate means of instruction. In order to comply with the Provincial Health Officer's recommendations, the Industry Training Authority cancelled many of the Vtandard Oevel exams with 'in-school' marks being the overall determinant of student final grades. Automotive Service Technician, Professional Cook, Electrical Apprenticeship and Heavy Mechanical are

a few such programs that will not be required to write the standard level exams (SLE). Of the programs that did write their Level 4 Interprovincial exams, Electrical and Plumbing, strict social distancing rules were in place and adhered to. Classes were divided into groups of eight students and two ITA invigilators were present.

Trades and Technical programs also pushed back the start dates for two programs. Heavy Mechanical Level 2 is due to run from June 29th through August 21st and Carpentry Apprentice Level 4 is scheduled for July 13th – August 28th.

While the restrictions are beginning to ease in the province, trades training will continue to be delivered as blended programming, until further notice. Specific to the trades, faculty have informed modified schedules for lab/shop/kitchen-based learning, while ensuring to honour social distancing protocols.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our phenomenal faculty for their continuous commitment to instructional excellence and students. Trades programs are largely dependent on face-to-face course delivery and interaction between instructors and students alike. The practical hands-on components are what largely determine a student's ability to understand and apply the concepts of the theory. With the help of Liesel Knaack (Director, Teaching & Learning Innovation) and the Teaching & Learning team, faculty have had access to informative and timely workshops and webinars specific to transitioning to a distributed learning platform. Spanning the trades, the opportunity to access timely and direct support has been very much appreciated.

Nick Charette, Plumbing Programming was in week one of a two-month long *fourth year* class when instruction shifted to remote learning. Faculty member Nick Charette moved to remote learning by preparing lessons via video capture which he continuously posted through a group channel. Nick's innovation informed an average of three videos per day as he delivered lessons and provided virtual demonstrations. The video instruction was supplemented with email which he managed daily. During the shift, some students experienced challenges due to limited computer access and internet connectivity. With a system of email and video lessons in place, Nick was able to switch over in literally one day which is beyond outstanding.

Faculty member Nick Charette notes, *"In reflection, I see the benefits of having a course set up on a platform like Blackboard where documents can be found at a common location, tests can be administered and forums set up to build online community and questions answered. I do not want to repeat what I went through but I have learned a great deal and will adapt to offer a better learning experience next round."*

Terry Waters, Welding Terry noted that the transition was initially challenging as some students had limited access to compute/s and internet. The support provided by DLT as stated by Terry has been "incredible". Terry has engaged in the training sessions as led by Liesel, Brent, Mike and Terri's workshops and states, *"Wow are we lucky to have them. I have learned many really incredible tools for teaching from colleagues."*

Robin Greig, Electrical Robin noted that with moving to virtual teaching, there were many new developments. Several students have part-time work and with the revised format, they were able to manage their commitments to both. This allows flexibility in their studies that would not normally be available to them in a face-to-face 8:30 – 4:00 schedule. As Robin noted, *"The ability to break up study time is also beneficial. Work for an hour or so and then take a short walk break to clear their thoughts before coming back to their studies, rather than spending 2 – 4 hours in a classroom with a 10-minute break. This applies to both students and instructors."* Robin also articulated that *"Utilizing the online realm to expand the research opportunities for assignments and group activities works well provided students have the technology and internet connectivity at home to take advantage of this. The IT department at NIC has been very responsive in providing training for Blackboard Learn and Bluejeans video conferencing. As well they've accelerated the rollout of Kaltura for video development, storage, and delivery."*

Robin also shared that he looks forward to returning to degrees of face-to-face instruction as in-person instruction is so valuable as *“spontaneous learning takes place in the interactions between students as they verbally share their thought processes with each other. Often a struggling student can benefit from the perspective of their classmate who may explain a concept in a way that can clarify it. I am also unable to read a student’s non-verbal expression. Unless they interrupt me as I am conducting an online class, I am not able to see if something is puzzling. Modifying daily lesson plans, weekly logs, exams & assignments to fit and function in the online learning environment has been challenging and time consuming, yet we are doing our best.”*

David Nilson, Aircraft David noted that *“The difference between being online and in-class is quite extreme. The Aircraft Structures course is about 50% theoretical content, which gives us an opportunity to develop this course. Clearly, course development is a time-consuming job unto itself. It has been a reactive time, with adequate supports. I’m proud of our faculty for making this profound adjustment with little preparation time. The end result is that we have realized a profound change in the way Aircraft’s theoretical component can be taught. Online instruction has proven more thorough and mixing theoretical time with the practical experiences is good but focusing online for entire days gave us much improved instruction.”* David and his students have embraced the shift to remote learning and have collectively informed new ways of learning while developing resources and tools of value for present-day learning. *“There is a potential for a good percentage of this course to be taught online and deepen comprehension of subjects prior to entering the ‘shop’ also known as the lab.”*

Rob Laird, Carpentry Rob was, and continues to be, in the midst of a Foundation cohort when all trades programming shifted to remote delivery. Rob has produced multiple PowerPoint presentations through *BlueJeans* which have been issued to students via emails. Throughout delivery, there have been some challenges to include lag, both during PowerPoint presentations and in online discussions. Rob also created new assignments within Microsoft Word. Rob has identified that given the distance learning structure there is ongoing need and value to learn of and inform suitable assessment options specific to the trades. Rob submitted, *“I found students were able to use their open text to complete assignments and therefore it is not a true assessment of knowledge and understanding of the topic. The practical portion and face to face delivery that includes anecdotes and experiences of the Carpentry Trade are irreplaceable in this new format of delivery.”*

Erik Hardin, Carpentry Erik has developed an array of online materials for apprenticeship programming. Erik outlines that, *“One area of concern was the math portion. Our trade is very interactive, particularly in regard to theoretical concepts and how they relate to actual objects in construction. I have a great method for teaching these concepts in the traditional class setting and I do not think that that would be really improved upon in an online format. I was able, however, to create some high-quality online math presentations that do explain the learning tasks required. These presentations take a long time to create, I use AutoCAD to draw the drawings that I would usually do on the white board. For level 2 gable roofs for example, I needed to draw 30 different drawings on AutoCAD, convert to PDF and then create a power point. The end result is very good and the feedback from students supports this statement. The students did say, for the most part, that face to face instruction was still a much better method of instruction but the precise and clear presentations certainly helped.”*

Erik has shared that he is in the process of developing some Blackboard course materials. *“There are quite a few things that I foresee as being very beneficial to my program. Online quizzes, assignments, discussion boards, video demonstrations, and links to a variety of supplementary materials will be easy to access for the students.”* Erik articulated that remote teaching will never replace applied programming yet there is an opportunity to integrate distance learning technologies and resources.

The faculty and staff of Trades and Technical programs will continue to be here for our students. In the face of COVID-19, we have pivoted very quickly. We're evolving and adapting to our new reality and we're working hard to ensure that we will deliver the same if not higher level of instruction across all of our programs. We are making use of every available resource in the best interest of programming and students.

In addition to Spring/Summer 2020, the Faculty of Trades and Technical programs is in the process of finalizing training plans for Fall 2020, while respecting the ongoing need for blending program.

Thank you to faculty, students and our NIC community for supporting programming shifts and advancements.

Stay well everyone.

*Cheryl O'Connell and Agnes Sharkie
Faculty of Trades and Technical Programs*

STUDENT SERVICES AND REGISTRAR

Student Services

Submitted by Felicity Blaiklock, Director, Student Affairs & Port Alberni Campus Administrator

The updated Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response policy 3-34 has been approved by the GHR committee and is ready for final approval by the Board of Governors at the end of May.

A critical part of the policy is the provision of education to prevent sexualized violence at NIC. A new Sexualized Violence Education Team (SVET) has been created with representatives from HR, faculty, staff and students from across campuses. The first meeting took place in April 2020.

Student Life @ Home activities are ongoing and include:

- weekly newsletters to support and engage our students throughout the past 2 months (continuing into the spring/summer);
- interactive sessions from counsellors on self-care;
- proactive counselling check-ins: Counsellors have been reaching out to students they have seen over the past 3-4 months to check-in and offer support;
- reach-outs to students previously identified through Early Assist; and
- a variety of asynchronous and synchronous sessions to engage students, answer questions, and support students during their online learning.

Orientation planning is underway with a transition to an online format for the upcoming Fall semester. Work is being done by the Orientation Working Group to create and deliver online modules, sessions and recordings to assist new students in their transition to NIC.

The Assessment Services team, led by Natalie Deveaux, has been instrumental in developing an interim assessment process for prospective students. In the absence of face-to-face options, Natalie and her team have developed remote proctoring services from NIC. This ensures the smooth continuation of assessment services and intake for the spring and fall 2020.

The Mental Health and Well-being committee is continuing to develop a campus wide action plan. NIC is moving to formally adopt the Okanagan Charter and its Calls to Action as a further commitment to the health and well-being of our campus community. Now, more than ever, we recognize the importance of mental health to the success of our students and employees.

LLC Highlights

Submitted by Mary Anne Guenther, Coordinator, Library Services

The Library and Learning Commons' (LLC) response to online instruction and support services for spring/summer was immediate and during the last seven weeks with energies shifted to creating virtual options for students and faculty. Website content was updated, information guides for faculty and students were built (found here <https://library.nic.bc.ca/springsummer> and <https://library.nic.bc.ca/faculty>), and outreach to faculty was made to describe ways we could support them (collaborate in *Blackboard* courses, advise on copyright regarding scanning and uploading documents, build course-specific resource guides, etc.).

Collection initiatives include plans to purchase individual e-books, which will help ease the need for print, which is currently unavailable for loan. Unable to source two feature films needed for the health sciences, the LLC licensed *Criterion on Demand*, with over 2,000 streamed feature films, including classics, new releases, foreign films, literary adaptations, documentaries, animated titles, and independent films.

Research support during the next few months will be provided by email and *AskAway*, the provincial chat reference service. A project which was given immediate and high priority was the creation of a research tutorial, found here <https://library.nic.bc.ca/researchtutorial>. The tutorial introduces and explains the research process, from articulating the research question/topic to finding and evaluating resources, culminating in an essay and properly citing sources.

The LLC staff are utilizing *BlueJeans* webconferencing for weekly meetings. The LLC held its first information session on *BlueJeans* for new international students on May 2nd. Presenters were Mary Anne Guenther, Erin McConomy, Geoff Marr and Tyler Dean, who together described the range of academic supports available.

Advising in the Digital World

Submitted by Sarah Deagle, Assistant Registrar, Enrollment Services & Advising

The last two months have brought unprecedented changes around the world and educational advising at NIC is no exception. Students have booked appointments online for one and a half years, which became even more valuable in March, once the campuses were closed. Then additionally, educational advisors moved quickly to holding all of their appointments with students over the phone or via *Bluejeans*. Since March 16 until May 8, the domestic and international advisors including recruiters and financial aid have held 994 remote meetings with current students and prospects. Thanks so much to all who have made that possible, including IT who have made working remotely possible with the systems that we would have used in the campus.

Update from the Office of Global Engagement May 01, 2020

Enrolment Update

OGE is welcoming three new international students to NIC for this Spring 2020 intake. These students were already living in Canada prior to the border closure. OGE made the recommendation to close Spring international intake due to the border closures, and another 38 offshore students were deferred to Fall 2020 intake.

For Fall 2020, the total application number currently sits at 329. We are down by about 250 applications compared to the same time last year. With recent adjustments in the admissions process to adapt to COVID-19 we may remain quite competitive in the market to draw interests.

Although we are slowly seeing some tuition deposit payment trickling in, this year's final conversion rate will inevitably be at the mercy of immigration and the world's COVID-19 situation. Even the most well-established international educators in the sector refer to needing a crystal ball to predict what student numbers will look like in the near and far future. Globally, Canada's response to assisting international students is considered strong and supportive further reinforcing Canada as a welcoming and safe study destination.

ICEF: Country briefing: Canada confirms travel exemption and emergency assistance for eligible international students - April 8, 2020

- *Canada's previously announced travel exemption for international students officially came into force on 26 March*
- *The Canadian government has confirmed that international students who have had to transition to online study as a result of the COVID-19 crisis may still count those courses toward a Post-Study Work Permit application*
- *Canada has also determined that international students whose employment has been interrupted by the crisis may also be eligible for emergency funding assistance*

ICEF: COVID-19 restrictions "unprecedented" in history of international travel - April 27, 2020

- *Nearly all countries in the world have introduced some type of restriction on international travel*
- *As of the first week of April, there has been no easing of any restrictions on international arrivals introduced during the pandemic*

International Student Life

Meet Raghav Verma, Business Admin Global Business Management student in Campbell River.

I am from Ludhiana, Punjab. I was born and from

up all through my life in Ludhiana. I moved to Chandigarh in 2012 for my Graduation. I graduated in Hotel Management and then I moved to Mumbai when I got my placements. I was working with the Oberoi Hotels and Resorts in the Front Office department before I moved to Canada to pursue my Post Graduation.



Moving to Canada was initially challenging as I was accustomed to staying in a joint family. I am the eldest sibling and have a younger brother. **I missed my loved ones around me when I moved to Canada but soon I made some great friends in the city and in college.** My courses at NIC started in Sep'19 and I was hesitating about Campbell River at first as I did not know much about the place. My friends in other parts of British Columbia barely had any idea about the place.

The first week of college was about induction to the city and college resources. It was packed with interactive activities which enforced all the students to start bonding immediately. The college organized weekly activities for entertainment such as movie screenings with pizza night. They took lots of efforts to also arrange to host our festivities such as Diwali and Holi parties which were again very enjoyable. **The college staff has been tremendously supportive. Right from the instructors to the Dean, we received every bit of assistance.**

Another very enthusiastic part about NIC is the organizing of the networking events. These were the initiatives that the student employment services and OGE departments took to help International Students to understand the kinds of industries in Canada.

I have explored around and my last trip was to the Mt Washington where I went with a group of my batchmates. We visited because of the snow and the scenery was so surreal as it was all white. I love snow and it's a very nice feeling to see snowfall as it is very rare in India to see snowfall.

After graduation, I wish to continue working in Campbell River because I am comfortable in the town now. I really enjoy putting up on Vancouver Island and it's a really peaceful place. Also, Campbell River is a nature-centric place. It is surrounded with hiking and kayaking adventures in the same peripheral. People in this town are very helpful and thanks to NIC for making me live at Campbell River. I am grateful for the people I met and the friends I made.

This has been a refreshing, unique and wonderful experience for me.

Study Abroad

We are very grateful Lisa Deroy from France was able to study and experience NIC for a short time until she returned home due to COVID-19.

Meet Lisa Déroy, France

Q: Why did you choose NIC for your exchange program?

A: I wanted to improve my English skills so an English speaking country was the best option for me. I had the choice between different countries and universities but I finally decided to go to Canada as I had never been there



before. **In Canada, I had the choice between 2 different destinations: McGill University (Montreal) and NIC. As Canadians speak French in Montreal, I decided to go to NIC.**

Q: What program are you studying?

A: Bachelor of Business administration, general management major, 3rd year

Q: What have you enjoyed most about studying at NIC?

A: I made amazing international friends! Teachers were very open minded and their classes were really interesting. The staff, especially from the OGE, was very nice with me and often available.

Q: What have you enjoyed most about living in the Comox Valley?

A: I enjoyed the nature! Mountains,

ocean, forests... It is very diverse and beautiful.

Q: If you could rate your experience at NIC between 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate your time at NIC?

A: 4,5/5 The coronavirus ruined the end of my exchange student. But obviously it wasn't your fault.

NIC graduate Isoken Asemota on cover page of Portfolio Magazine

Nigerian student Isoken graduated from NIC in 2013 from our PDD International Management one year program. We are thrilled to witness her success in international modeling!



"WHAT'SUP" from OGE!!

Like all of you we continue to be committed to our work and service to new and current students and our education partners during this difficult time.

Oh Canada - We are proud of you

Check out this cheerful video of some of the finest in International Education singing Oh Canada - watch until the end as you may see one of our very own!

#Nationalanthemchallenge
#CanadianIntlEd



#strongertogether
#COVID-19



OGE Student Support Services

- **Phone-a-thon:** In collaboration with Student Service, NIC advisors connected with every student registered for May 2020 intake to ensure students have access to supports that will help them succeed in the Spring/Summer semesters.
- **International Student Advising and Student Employment Services hold virtual Q&A sessions** to answer any questions about post-grad work permit, study permit extensions, internship, co-op work term, job searching during COVID-19 and absolutely anything else students want to ask.
- **Weekly Challenges:** With the new virtual way of life, we are getting our students involved in weekly social media challenges. The below collage highlights some of the photos from our students and their culinary skills!
- **Student Orientation:** Three new students for Spring 2020 intake are participating in an online orientation through BlueJeans on April 30 and May 1. These students are introduced to key NIC staff and faculty to help them settle into the Spring semester. The virtual orientation covers topics such as advising, student employment, counselling, library and writing/technology supports, academic integrity, and adjusting to the Canadian Classroom



International Recruitment

During January 2020, our recruitment consultant Illume attended recruitment fairs in Cameroon, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Bangladesh.

During January & February Junko Leclair, Manager for Enrolment & Recruitment and Latin American consultant Ewerton Da Silva attended the popular Vente a Canada recruitment fairs in Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico.

In February we welcomed our new Recruitment Representative Linh Mai who is based in Vietnam and recruits for the South East Asia region. Junko and Linh traveled to Indonesia for fair events in Surabaya, Jakarta, and Medan in addition to meeting with many NIC education agents. Junko also attended the Bangladesh event with Illume.

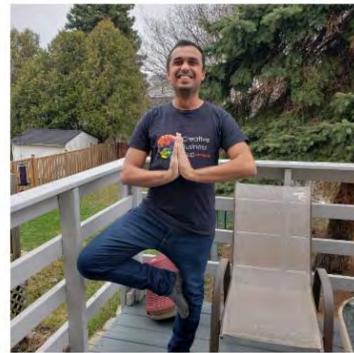
NIC Recruitment Representative Agnel Worth based in India attended events in nine cities across India during February. He also participated in a fair in Sri Lanka.

International recruitment now looks very different from what it was just four months ago. Fair cancellations began in January 2020 for China. By late February into early March most countries initiated lockdown measures and all fairs were being cancelled. All recruitment is now virtual through various platforms. You can see an example of an EduCanada virtual fair booth below. Prospective students "shop around" at institutional booths and then request a live meeting to talk with us.



Here is our Office of Global Engagement recruitment staff working hard from home on finding our inner and outer balance in today's new normal!

Linh Mai, our new NIC Recruitment Representative for South East Asia is in the tree pose balancing the NIC international orca mascot (top left). Ewerton Da Silva, our new Latin American consultant is also in tree pose in freezing Ontario (bottom right).



We wish you and your families good health. We miss you all and look forward to connecting with you all in the near future.

Sincerely,

The Office of Global Engagement Team



Board of Governors Report - May 2020

CET Regional Highlights – Lynne MacFadgen

As we enter week nine of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is heartening to see what CET staff across all three regions have been able to accomplish amidst these challenging conditions. We have maintained our commitment to student access, flexible learning pathways, and in-demand skills training by converting existing programs to blended delivery, partnering with business and industry to launch new programs, and mounting targeted promotions to boost enrolment in core CET Programs. With the support of various College departments, we have been able to champion these changes and innovations to offer a range of continuous learning opportunities. This Report provides an overview of current personal enrichment courses, industry-recognized certification, and career-oriented credentials. CET acknowledges the following internal and external relationships that have helped us create our online, on-campus, and in-community offerings, through modified program delivery:

- *Centre for Teaching & Learning Innovation* – for exposing our CET instructors to new teaching tools, and course design and Blackboard Learn workshops and consultations;
- *Marketing & Communications* – for helping to arrange CBC interviews and website postings to widely publicize new programs and ‘first’ developments;
- *Student Services and Information Technology* – for enabling our CET instructors and students to access and use available education technology to fully participate in our modified core programs;
- *Health and Safety & Facilities Management* – for ensuring that our campus classrooms, studios, and in-community farming programs meet PHO safety guidelines and industry safety standards; and
- *Community & Industry Partners* – for being the catalyst for us to launch new Ministry-funded programs to promote community access, local business development, regional food security, and workforce training in rapidly changing fields.

Comox Valley Campus – Susan Murray

Small-Scale Sustainable Farming Program:

- The exciting launch of the Small-Scale Sustainable Farming Program started with the online theory portion on May 4th with a full class of 12 students (selected from over 25 applications). CET is collaborating with relevant departments, agencies, and the Lentelus Farm in the Comox Valley to engage students in the practical portion of the course, as soon as possible. This Ministry-funded program is an excellent example of community collaboration between the CV Economic Development Society, CET, and our local instructors and entrepreneurs.

First Aid Training:

- Unfortunately, all in-class First Aid training had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we have been able to offer some Red Cross online courses, such as Psychological First Aid – Caring for Yourself and the Caring for Others, Fire Safety, and Blood borne Pathogens. We have developed First Aid Health and Safety protocols to enable us to offer small-group, face-to-face blended Red Cross courses starting in June. These courses will service the PA Market Gardener and CV Small-Scale Sustainable Farming programs.

Comox Valley Campus – Julian Benedict

Comox Valley ElderCollege:

- Comox Valley ElderCollege (CVEC) successfully transitioned to an online format for the first time ever. This Fall, CVEC will be offering 25 virtual courses, as well as its ever-popular Saturday Lecture Series. The group will also host three 'make-up' lectures online, given that several were cancelled because of COVID-19. The shift to online programming comes after CVEC conducted a comprehensive survey of its 1200 members last month, showing that 63% have used web-based conferencing software, 81% have access to a functioning computer with audio and a camera, and 94% said they were "very" or "somewhat" interested in seeing courses continue this Fall.

Animal Care Aide Program:

- The popular Animal Care Aide program has received over 55 applications for its 20 seats in the Fall intake. The application rate has increased despite the current challenges presented by the pandemic. Programming will be shifted to primarily 'live' online courses this Fall.

Activity Assistant Program:

- The Activity Assistant program is now full for its Fall placements (20 applicants) – a number far exceeding expectations for the first run of the program at the Port Alberni campus. The program will be shifting its content to primarily 'live' online courses this Fall.

Craft Beer and Malting Program:

- The new Craft Beer and Malting Program is already creating a buzz across the North Island and beyond, receiving media attention in the popular *What's Brewing Magazine* in May. The curriculum will be separated into two parts: the first component will be delivered digitally this Fall; with Part two delivered in 2021 in modified classroom and beer-making facilities.

Campbell River Campus – Suzanne Jolly

Marine Training:

- Marine safety courses transitioned into digital formats very quickly, with NIC being one of the first post-secondary institutions across Canada to offer the three, main marine courses that are required to work in entry-level positions on coastal commercial vessels. Extensive conversations were held with Transport Canada to gain approvals and this included developing new equipment and textbook shipments for students (e.g. nautical charts, parallel rules and textbooks). Three new versions of the final exam had to be developed, and marine instructors received a special

orientation for their use. In May, we launched two offerings of the Small Vessel Operators Proficiency (SVOP) course online, and with Marketing support, we conducted a CBC radio interview and posted an online article – this has led to sold-out classes and has expanded our reach (e.g. attracting students from Tlell, BC and Yellowknife, NWT). Marine course offerings may continue into the summer to meet demand.

Metal Jewellery Design Certificate:

- Students were completing their Certificate when COVID-19 hit, so they still require additional studio time to finish their major projects. We are thrilled to have six of the eight students returning to campus (June 1-12) to acquire their remaining studio skills. The Annual Open House (Graduation Show) had to be cancelled, but we are planning to invite 2020 students to join the 2021 class next June. Instead of starting this Fall, we have compressed program delivery to run from January to June 2021, in hopes of delivering the majority of coursework hands-on in the studio.

Campbell River Campus – Sandy Rose

Campbell River ElderCollege:

- CR ElderCollege (CREC) will host their 2020 AGM as a 'live' virtual meeting for the first time. CREC will be offering a scaled-down program this Fall with approximately 11 digitally-delivered courses to keep the membership engaged and inspired.

Hospital Unit Clerk Program:

- Efforts are underway to arrange Hospital Unit practicums for the existing cohort of students, to enable them to complete their Certificate. It is hoped that they will be permitted to enter acute care facilities soon. The HUC program has received over 33 applications for its 12 available seats in the Fall intake, despite the current challenges we are facing with COVID-19. Programming will be shifted to primarily 'live' online course delivery this Fall.

Wildfire Training:

- Unfortunately, the Ministry-approved funding was cancelled for the proposed delivery of Wildfire training in three North Island Communities this Spring. We are planning to reapply for the next intake of Community Workforce Response Grant funding, pursuing a modified format for the hands-on technical training, as needed.

Coastal Log Scaling:

- Plans are underway to offer the 12-week Coastal Log Scaling Program in the Winter 2021 term, so that students can gain hands-on experience on dryland log sorts to learn the practical skills needed to prepare for the Ministry of Forests Coastal Log Scaling Exam. To date, there have been well over 50 inquiries, and we anticipate accepting applications to the program soon.

Port Alberni Campus – Leanne Moore

Market Gardener Program:

- Funding has been secured for the Port Alberni Market Gardener program through a BC Employer Training Grant, in partnership with the Port Alberni Shelter Society. We have converted the Market Gardener Program, so that the theory portion is delivered digitally and students will receive their farm skills training at the Shelter Farm adhering to PHO guidelines for physical distancing. The Program is scheduled to start on June 1st, and its duration has been adjusted so that students in receipt of Income Assistance can meet eligibility requirements to participate in the experiential program.

Several additional courses are under development for digital delivery in Fall and Winter terms, as a way to create additional access for community members in the Alberni-Clayoquot Region.

ElderCollege:

- ElderCollege courses at the PA Campus will be postponed until Winter 2021, and will be dependent on the status of COVID-19 safety directives.

Ed2Go:

- Ed2Go online courses have been expanded, so that students can continue to access these popular courses in the convenience of their own home, and at their own pace.



First Global Business Management grads in Campbell River

NIC is celebrating the graduation of its first Global Business Management students in Campbell River.

Student Nilakshi Kundu was working as a software engineer in India to become a business analyst when she decided to come to NIC.

"I wanted to be on the west coast of Canada, and the program was a great starting point for me," she said. "The program touches on many subject areas like marketing, management and accounting. It gave me a strong understanding of the business world in Canada."

Classmate Agalya Kathirvelu was drawn to NIC because of the well-designed curriculum and the small class sizes to compliment her experience in international education.

"The uniqueness of NIC is its very friendly environment with highly supportive staff," she said. "Experienced instructors from the industry gave me great insight about the business course in an international perspective. The classroom discussions and group projects helped me to

work closely with people from different parts of the world and analyze the course from multicultural dimensions."

Both say being among the first class of international students at the Campbell River campus was a wonderful experience. They greatly appreciated the warm welcome they received from the community.

"I grew up in big cities in India, so when I first came to Campbell River I was surprised how small it is, but I was blown away by the generosity of the people in this city, was mesmerized by its picturesque scenery and fell in love with its gorgeous summers," said Kundu. "I feel proud of my decision to come here."

"Being the first international class for the Campbell River campus and to the community, it was a privilege for us connect with the community and participate in the job market very easily," said Agalya. "Overall, it was a wonderful journey."

New NIC employment engagement facilitator working with local businesses

The School of Business welcomes Dayna Kneeland to her new role as NIC's new Employment Engagement Facilitator. Her role works with NIC's Student Employment Services team, specifically focusing on developing relationships with local businesses that can be beneficial to both NIC students and companies.

"I'm very excited to connect with local businesses, learn more about their needs and see where we can develop opportunities to connect them with NIC students for work-integrated learning opportunities," she said.

Before her new role, Kneeland supported student learning in both the School of Business and the Tourism & Hospitality department. She saw first-hand the benefit of work-integrated education for both her students and the employers with whom they worked.

"Internships and co-ops are hugely beneficial for both students and employers," said Kneeland.

"For our students, it gives them a chance to take their learning outside the classroom, apply it in a business environment and gain confidence in their skills. For employers, it's a great opportunity to fill short and long term hiring needs while also bringing fresh ideas and energy into their organization. It's really a win-win."

NIC students participate in co-op work terms, which include 420 hours of full-time work and internships, which range from 180 – 360 hours and can be full or part-time, paid or unpaid.

For more information on how work-integrated learning can help your business or organization, please contact Dayna Kneeland at dayna.kneeland@nic.bc.ca.

MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIR

Coming together

Hello to all our NIC School of Business students, alumni and supporters in the community.

The last few months have been a challenging time for all of us. We at NIC have been working hard to ensure our students have access to the resources and receive the supports they need to continue their studies. We are thankful for the support of our co-op and internship employers, mentors and all those in the business community who have stepped forward with offers of assistance at this time.

Work continues expanding opportunities for our students. As always, our focus is on being responsive and providing access. It continues with our switch to alternate delivery methods to finish out the winter term. Those delivery methods will extend to our spring/summer course offerings, which include a range of business courses.

We also continue to work to expand global opportunities, including a new Double Degree offering with Université Savoie Mont Blanc. We have seen how interconnected our world is today and how crucial it is for our students to gain international experience.

We know this has also been a challenging time for businesses in our community, perhaps the most challenging time we have ever seen, but there are still good news and stories out there. Our Alumni Feature is an opportunity to celebrate the hard work and incredible achievements of our alumni.

If you have a story you'd like to share, please reach out to me at ali.mayboudi@nic.bc.ca or connect with me on [LinkedIn](#).

Sincerely,

Ali Mayboudi, Chair,
NIC School of Business

Alumni feature: Two journeys, one destination

NIC joins two grads in celebrating a significant milestone in their careers – passing their Common Final Examination (CFE) on their path to becoming chartered professional accountants.

Bachelor of Business Administration, Accounting major degree graduate Laurel Koorn and Post-Degree Diploma, Pre-Professional Accounting graduate Mania Qumarsy passed the exam earlier this year. The two work together at MNP Courtenay.

“I’m excited for this next step,” said Koorn. “But right now, mostly just glad it’s over. It was incredibly stressful to go through.”

Spanning three days, the examination requires students to demonstrate their depth and breadth of knowledge and prove they meet the competency requirements to become Chartered Professional Accountants.

While their destination was the same, their journeys to get here could not have been more different.

Koorn was born and raised in the Comox Valley. She decided to go to NIC because she could stay at home and save financial resources.

“I really didn’t know what I wanted to do, but I knew I needed to go to school to figure it out,” she said. “Being able to live at home and work while going to school helped to take some of the pressure off.”

She decided to study business because of its flexibility and versatility.

“The program gives you skills and knowledge you’ll use no matter what you end up doing, whether you’re working at a non-profit or running your own business, or at an accounting firm,” she said. “Plus, being able to do my full BBA in my hometown was great.”

Koorn said she never intended to become an accountant but instead fell into it.

“We had to start specializing in the second year,” she said. “I met someone who worked as an accountant and learned more about what they did on a daily basis. It seemed interesting and that it would be a good fit, so that’s where I went with it.”

“That’s one of the reasons I’d recommend the BBA to anyone – you can really do anything with it,” she added. “Plus, the ability to put your skills to the test with co-ops and internships really helps with the transition into the workforce when you’re done school.”

While Koorn stayed close to home to pursue her career, Qumarsy came to NIC from half-way around the world. She moved to Canada from Iran and ended up in the Comox Valley after her spouse found a job in the region.

While she has a Bachelor’s degree in Mining Engineering, job opportunities on the North Island were limited. She began looking for a career change to an industry less prone to ups and downs.

“I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do,” she said. “I heard about this program, and I liked the idea of working with numbers, which is something I knew I’d enjoy.”

For Qumarsy, the focus of the post-degree diploma appealed to her.

“I liked that the courses were all focused on accounting,” she said. “Holding a bachelor’s degree, I didn’t want to do another 4-year program and take many elective courses that wouldn’t be relevant to what I wanted to do.”

Qumarsy also found the transition to the workforce an easy one. She landed a job during



Alumni Laurel Koorn and Mania Qumarsy are celebrating the next step in their careers - passing the Common Final Exam and becoming Chartered Professional Accountants.

her second semester and then connected with MNP at NIC’s Career Fair.

“I was interviewed and offered a job when I was finished my program. So, I was able to transition seamlessly.”

For both students, passing the Common Final Examination marks the final step in their journey, for now.

“It’s a life-changing accomplishment for me,” said Qumarsy. “It looms over you for a long time. Now that it’s done, I can focus on work and enjoy my life without school.”

Koorn agreed. “I’m not sure what I want to do eventually, but for now, I want to enjoy this milestone. After spending so much time and energy working towards it, I think it’s important to take time and celebrate.”

School of Business sponsors #YouRock award

NIC School of Business is proud to be the sponsor of the #YouRock Youth Award at the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards.

Congratulations to this year’s winner, Montana Pistell, who was presented the award by Ali Mayboudi and Diane Naugler, Dean, Business and Applied Studies.



Annual Spring Social postponed

Due to the risks of the current pandemic, and following the Provincial Health Officer’s order of no gatherings greater than 50 people, we have decided to postpone our annual Spring Social event.

While we cannot gather in person, we know how important it is to stay socially connected while physically distancing. Please connect with us on social media, share stories, memories of NIC or the latest news and updates from your business. We look forward to hearing from you.

Join us on social media: [f](#) [You Tube](#) [in](#) [t](#)