

**NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
 COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS REPORT
 MAY 2021**

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE)

Submitted by Laurie Tulloch, Co-Department Chair

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Although ECCE instructor Lesley Henderson is wrapping up her participation in the BC Early Childhood Pedagogy Network Project, she will continue to inspire the practice of students and mentor educators and faculty as she virtually ‘walks alongside’ the children and educators of the Beaufort Children’s Centre in the Comox Valley campus. The children are seen here engaged in rubbings of large stones as part of their project work with Lesley.

As Faculty Pedagogist, Lesley offers meaningful and professional learning opportunities that engage us all in thinking deeply in pedagogical dialogue while responding to the current and ongoing conditions of early learning and childhood.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



The first international cohort of ECCE students is celebrating their entry to practice and applying their skills and knowledge within early learning programs in the Port Alberni community.

Student Payal wore her *sari* and showed the children how to do a Bhangra dance as part of a larger exploration of Indian culture. Payal planned a curriculum that included songs and rhymes in Hindi, painting with spices, cooking roti and building houses with bricks as they do in India.

The department is actively planning to welcome the next international cohort arriving in September to the Campbell River campus.

Practical Nursing Diploma

Submitted by Barb McPherson, Department Chair

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

The Practical Nursing (PN) faculty have all worked extremely hard to provide creative and engaging education for our students. Although this year has been a challenging one, faculty members demonstrated their leadership and innovation to teach in this new virtual environment. The value of teamwork has never been more evident than in this last year as we all supported and learned from one another.

We are very happy to welcome Kaitlyn Rathbone to our team in Port Alberni. She is a member of the Health Care Assistant faculty and brings her knowledge and expertise of Community Nursing with a focus on mental health to the PN program.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

The PN faculty wants to extend an acknowledgement of the tremendous work of the PN students to make the shift to online learning. The students demonstrated their flexibility, compassion, and professionalism throughout this pandemic. Our first-year students completed their initial clinical experience in long-term care in January and are preparing to enter their second clinical experience in May. Our students were able to participate in the vaccination process of the long-term care residents by assisting with preparing and comforting the residents. The students were able to witness the incredible organizational effort it took to make this process successful. The second-year students are currently in their acute care clinical rotation. Island Health has been extremely supportive of our students and has been a very important collaborative partner.

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

2020 was the second year of our new delivery model of one-program/two campuses. As with all programs at NIC, instruction for the program was offered via BlueJeans for all theory courses. Students were able to attend face-to-face labs on a weekly basis which was highly valued by both faculty and students.

In the Fall, we added a third campus at the NIC at St. Joe's campus for students entering the first year of the program. With the addition of this campus, our program was able to offer additional seats and better serve the Comox Valley. Each campus now has eight students each.

We are also very excited about the prospect of offering the Health Care Assistant to the Practical Nursing Pathway program at NIC with an anticipated start date of 2021. We are waiting for final approval from the British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives. Once this pathway has been approved, Health Care Assistants will be able to complete an Access semester prior to completing the second year of the program. This program is scheduled to be offered at the Comox Valley campus with a maximum of 24 students.



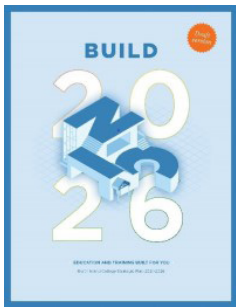
New NIC president, Lisa Domae, launches draft Strategic Plan

NIC's new president, Lisa Domae, PhD, is asking for feedback on NIC's new draft strategic plan.

Domae previously served as NIC's Executive Vice President, Academic and Chief Operating Officer and started her term as NIC President April 12.

She succeeds John Bowman, who retired in March after serving as NIC president for nearly eight years.

"I'm honoured to serve as NIC's sixth president at this crucial time for the people and communities we serve," said Domae.



"With students at the centre of our work, we can deliver education and training that creates a better quality of life for students and communities, facilitates lasting reconciliation with Indigenous people, and creates a more equitable world."

Her first priority is to hear from students and community members on BUILD 2026, a new draft strategic plan, available at engage.nic.bc.ca.

The draft plan builds on the community consultations that took place before the pandemic and the many changes taking place now.

Visitors to the site can learn more about the planned consultations and comment directly.

"We really want to hear from students, alumni and community members to understand the individual programs, services and supports they need to thrive now, during the pandemic, and beyond," said Domae.

"NIC alumni are forever members of the NIC family; their success is our success. Thank you for continually enriching NIC students' learning experiences through the co-op and internship programs and all of the other ways you remain connected to NIC. I'm looking forward to getting your feedback on our new strategic plan."

Expanded digital learning for NIC School of Business

NIC's business programs will continue with online delivery options through the next academic year.

Delivery for Fall 2021 will include a mix of face-to-face classes and digital options for students in almost all business programs.

"We're very excited to be able to continue to offer digital learning opportunities for our students, along with a return to face-to-face classes," said Ali Mayboudi, department chair, NIC School of Business. "We've heard from our students who started digitally last year that they would like to continue with that option, and many students have told us they've enjoyed the flexibility that digital learning affords them."

While the global pandemic prompted the transition to digital learning, the move to increased digital offerings has been something that has been on the school's radar for a while.

"Business learning lends itself well to an online environment and also reflects how the nature of work itself is changing," said Mayboudi. "The trend of increased remote work was starting before the pandemic forced many businesses to move in that direction. I expect we'll see a fair number of businesses re-evaluate the traditional office space. As well, more business is being conducted through online tools as businesses go global and work with others in other provinces or around the world."

The change also improves access to education and community resiliency.

"A BBA prepares students to become the next generation of community leaders," said Mayboudi. "Enabling students to learn through a delivery method that works for them and without having to leave their home communities is a huge step forward."

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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

As we settle into spring, we are also marking several new changes at NIC and in the School of Business.

This month we welcomed our new president, Lisa Domae. Lisa has worked at NIC since 2000, most recently as vice president, academic and COO and has launched a draft strategic plan for feedback.

We also announced plans for program delivery for Fall 2021 and Winter 2022. For the School of Business, that means a blend of digital and face-to-face delivery to provide maximum flexibility and learning opportunities for our students.

The NIC School of Business was proud to sponsor once again the #YouRock Youth Award for both the Comox Valley and Campbell River and District Chambers of Commerce annual awards. While we couldn't celebrate in person this year, it was still inspiring to see the incredible work of the young nominees in our communities. We are honoured to be able to recognize their hard work.

As we finish our winter term and head into summer, many of our students are heading into co-op and internship placements. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support of their education. We could not do the work we do without your support.

Thank you for taking the time to read our spring newsletter. 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](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ali-mayboudi).

Sincerely,

Ali Mayboudi, Chair,
NIC School of Business

NIC School of Business is honoured to acknowledge the traditional territories of the combined 35 First Nations of the Nuu-chah-nulth, Kwakwaka'wakw and Coast Salish traditions, on whose traditional and unceded territories the college's campuses are situated.

Alumni Spotlight: business degree gives alumna a new career and lifelong connections

NIC alumna Andrea Smith says her experience at NIC didn't just change her career – it changed her entire life.

Smith started the business program in 2009 as a mature student. She was looking to move from a job to a career, which would also support her family.

NIC was a great option because Smith didn't want to uproot her family to move somewhere else. She was able to fulfill her studies while still being close to home.

"I was 33 years old with a family and a home here, so it wasn't like I could pick up my life and go to Victoria for four years," said Smith. "NIC offered everything here, and the cost was significantly cheaper as well."

The structure of the BBA program also helped her transition to school because the laddering of the credentials made it less intimidating, said Smith.

"I wasn't starting a degree; I was going in to start the program, then the certificate built to the diploma, and the diploma built to the degree,"



said Smith. "It was really good to be able to have those stepping stones because I didn't go in saying I'm getting my four-year degree; I went in going this will give me hireable skills."

While finishing her final semester at NIC, Smith began her career in public practice as a part-time accounting clerk doing bookkeeping, reconciling clients' financial records, and preparing Notice to Reader files at Deborah A. Ewart Inc. in Campbell River.

Over the years, her success led to secure full-time position at the public accounting firm of Deborah A. Ewart Inc. In January 2019, Smith and Ewart formed a partnership and rebranded the firm as Pier CPA Group Inc.

Having found such success from her time at NIC, Smith is committed to paying that forward to the next generation of students through offering co-op and work experience opportunities.

"The support I received through NIC, both in class and through work experience, was invaluable to developing my skills and preparing me to go out into the workforce. I think it's great that I can help other students do the same," noted Smith.

Smith says she left NIC, not just with the hireable skills she was looking for, but with lifelong connections to her fellow students, faculty and the broader business community.

"I still keep in touch with several close friends that I met during college. We still support each other," said Smith. "NIC has given me lifelong friendships, as well as a lifelong career."

NIC expanding international projects & partnerships

NIC is expanding its work on international engagement and increasing support for students who want to go global with their learning.

NIC's new manager of international projects, partnerships and global education, Romana Pasca, joined the college in January with a focus on helping students gain international experiences in a new, changing landscape.

"International experiences are incredibly important for post-secondary students as a way to broaden their education, gain life skills and experience other cultures," said Mark Herringer, executive director, NIC Office of Global Engagement. "The last 12 months has led to great innovations and changes in how we, and other institutions can provide those experiences to our students, now and into the future."

Adaptation has been the main driver of NIC's international work over the last year. With travel shut down, institutions from across the globe have collaborated to offer unique opportunities to students through virtual events and tours and encouraging connections between students around the world.

"We hope to be able to work on some very interesting virtual events with our partner institutions to provide students with international experiences from home," said Pasca. "The flexibility and international connections available through virtual events has been a great opportunity that we hadn't explored before. There is amazing potential there that we hope to continue to tap into in the future."

There has also been a lot of work focused on preparing students for study abroad and exchange opportunities, once travel resumes. Increased federal financial support for the 2021/2022 year for study abroad will further increase access for NIC students.

"It's going to be a very exciting, busy year for us," said Pasca. "We're thrilled to be able to offer more opportunities for our students."

NIC Student Hope Campaign needs help to reach goal

The NIC Foundation needs the public's help to reach its \$50,000 goal for the COVID-19 Student Hope Campaign.

The campaign, which was started to help students reduce the financial barriers caused by the pandemic and give them hope for a brighter future, is only \$10,000 away from the finish line.

"We want to support 50 students with a \$1,000 bursary each to help pay for college so they can reach their educational, career and life goals," said Randall Heidt, Executive Director of the NIC Foundation. "COVID-19 has been difficult for everyone, but it has been especially challenging for some students who were unable to work or save for their education because of the pandemic."

One of the students featured in the campaign is Bachelor of Business Administration - Accounting student Derrick Barrie, who was a recipient of a foundation bursary.

"It's completely life changing," said Barrie. "The bursary I got paid for my whole fall tuition this year. It was an enormous financial relief."

"It's essentially like they're investing in me and I take that as a huge honour. Someone is willing to put their money towards me progressing in life and I can't think of a better compliment than that. It's hard to put into words how grateful I am for that. It's changed this year for me tremendously."

Every year the NIC Foundation helps about 500 local students, but up to 200 eligible students in need do not receive assistance due to lack of available funds. That number is rising because of COVID-19.

"In addition to the tragic loss of lives and the immediate financial strain the pandemic has caused, there is also a potential long-term impact to the economy," Heidt said. "Our communities cannot afford a gap in an educated and skilled workforce that COVID-19 threatens to create."

To learn more about the Student Hope Campaign and watch Derrick's video, visit <https://foundation.nic.bc.ca/what-can-i-do/covid-19-student-hope-campaign>.

Join us on social media:    

Update from the Office of Global Engagement May 2021

International Recruitment and Enrolment Update

We had some success in converting and enrolling our students from 2020 fall and 2021 winter terms. **The total new student number for 2021 spring intake is 37 and total student (new and continuing) number for 2021 spring term is 155** (with some movement in numbers). Again, enrollment headcount for 2021 spring is higher than our original mid-range target of 134. This is partly attributed to students taking less courses over the last two to three terms and needing to register for a few courses to make up for the loss, but it is a healthy number for OGE.

As International Recruitment AND Enrollment are inseparable at this time, we have decided to amalgamate two sections into one for this edition. So much has happened since the last issue of this newsletter in the way of travel restrictions and immigration.

In March, Canada implemented the three day quarantine requirement at government-authorized hotels at the port of entry (where students arrive first in Canada). In April, Canada suspended all flights from India and Pakistan. **These two changes have significantly impacted the experience for new and arriving students and unfortunately about 14 of our new students were held back home to study in their home country.**

It is unclear how long this situation will continue, especially after the World Health Organization's announcement on May 10th regarding the variant of COVID-19 in India. We simply hope that our students (and prospective students) are safe. In addition to this, IRCC has announced, with a two-week notice, that students submitting complete study permit applications by May 15th will receive the response by August 06, 2021 to start their programs in September 2021. Generally, international students require 5-10 weeks to apply to NIC and prepare to submit for their study permit, so you can imagine the panic. **This has placed additional pressure to our existing and prospective applicants, hence our admissions team is very busy in processing applications.**

These changes also hinder our international recruitment efforts. May and June are generally considered the active recruitment season (pre-pandemic) and NIC typically receives a large volume of applications. However, our recruitment season was cut short due to the IRCC announcement. Although, we will continue to recruit and much of our current recruitment efforts will be for January 2022 intake and beyond.

I am sure that many of you are wondering about student diversity, and so are we. Unfortunately, there are many parts of the world that currently do not have VACs (Visa Application Centres) open, meaning that students cannot complete biometrics, and/or medical clinics are closed therefore no medical examinations can be completed. Canadian institutions are seeing an unusual lower study permit approval rate at this time for many countries. **Our efforts are to focus on countries where we may continue to recruit**

and welcome students to Canada--while at the same time, being aware and sensitive of what may be taking place in each country.

There also exists competition between Canada and other English-speaking countries. With the United Kingdom processing study permits faster and the United States devising a new post graduation work permit opportunity, we are in a competitive market. **The current situation has also reduced the overall number of study permit applications in Canada to about 2/3 of what existed in the pre-pandemic period.**

- Junko



International Education Articles

Tuition discounting on the rise as educators work to rebuild international enrolments, April 14, 2021, ICEF Monitor

- *Some institutions and schools are making wider use of tuition discounts and other financial supports this year*
- *The trend is motivated by a desire to usher students into multi-year programmes that will continue after COVID and/or by students' hesitation to pay the same tuition for online courses as for in-person ones*

Agents report growing demand for study in the US, Canada, and the UK in 2021, May 05, 2021, ICEF Monitor

- *Over the course of a year, Navitas research among agents in over 70 countries has shown how quickly the attractiveness of study abroad destinations can change during COVID*
- *Agents and students are looking closely at government policies that directly affect students' ability to travel to a destination to be able to study there and work after graduation*
- *Demand for the US is rising quickly at the same time as demand for study in Australia and New Zealand is falling*

The Pandemic Put a Mental-Health Strain on International Students. Here's How Colleges Can Meet Their Needs, May 07, 2021, The Chronicle of Higher Education

- *Their challenges didn't begin with the pandemic, Koo said, although recent events have exacerbated them.*
- *First-year international students really struggle a lot with English proficiency. This has an impact to their self-esteem and self-confidence, and it can impact their anxiety, and it can impact their depression.*
- *There's definitely a deficit perspective when people observe international students. The conversation focus is on international students, that it's their fault.*

May 2021 Orientation

2021 Spring Orientation was held over two days on April 29th and 30th virtually. This is the 3rd time New International Student Orientation has been held exclusively online.

Approximately 35 – 40 students participated in each session held over the two days.



Sessions included:

- “Welcome to North Island College’ opening hosted by OGE with a warm welcome from new President Lisa Domae
- “Meet your Advisors” session covering all activities related to registration, working in Canada and course/program selection
- NIC student supports, how to access help, and navigating the world of studying online using the “Learn Anywhere” website



OGE Student Support Services

Peer Connector program:

North Island College has officially launched the Peer Connector program to coincide with the 2021 Spring intake of international students. All new students enrolled for the Spring 2021 semester will be matched with a Peer Connector for the duration of the semester.

The Peer Connector Program is designed to offer new international students an opportunity to connect with a current NIC student to receive support in areas ranging from: learning about NIC student supports, life and living in Canada, how and where to find support to get a job, how to sign up for a Peer Tutor, and as a general contact person for all inquiries.

The aim of this program is to give new students not only a chance to get to know a current student, but also other new students in the group as well. This is especially valuable for students who may be studying for their Spring 2021 semester offshore – so they can still feel connected to the NIC community from afar.

Coffee with OGE:

A new initiative for Spring 2021, “Coffee and Tea with OGE” will be held on a monthly basis as a virtual opportunity for students to get connected with both OGE and various NIC supports.

With a changing schedule of themes and guests, the aim is for students to join the drop-in session to meet staff and faculty they may not have the chance to during continued COVID-19 regulations in place at NIC. Students can also ask questions and meet other students.

The first session offered the chance for students to meet the staff of the OGE office. Session plans for the following months will include “Meet and Greet” with NIC’s Student Employment Services, Library and Learning Commons, International Student Advisors, and more!

Global Learning by Margaret Hearnden

While life currently might seem a little like we're caught in the middle of dystopian fiction novel, I know that eventually one chapter will end, and a new one will begin. Stories, as we all know, are not only entertaining, they are a powerful source for learning. If you're interested in reading inspirational stories, check out the events and resources below.



In the News

[Academic freedom in Canada: Arising issues from the shift to remote learning](#) – This CBIE blog explores the issues around supporting students in our classes tuning in from around the world in navigating course content that may be taboo or illegal in their home countries.

Resources

From, The Good Men Project, a look at the complexities of understanding privilege:

[Dominant group privilege-contextual, conditional, intersectional](#)

Reading about colleagues' experiences of teaching is such an enriching experience.

Going inward: The role of cultural introspection in college teaching, edited by Longerbeam and Chávez, is a fabulous resource to dip into when you don't have much time and want something accessible and inspiring to read. Each chapter is written by different instructors and covers multiple themes such as, *The tensions and contradictions of culture and its influence on teaching*.

Quote of the Month

"Story, as it turns out, was crucial to our evolution – more so than opposable thumbs. Opposable thumbs let us hang on; stories told us what to hang on to" (Lisa Cron, Wired for Story).

Study Abroad & Partnerships

Although there are travel restrictions still in place, OGE has continued to work with partners and collaborators around the world to identify opportunities for student and faculty mobility.

Student Mobility:

The three Outbound Mobility Projects funded by the Colleges and Institutes Canada to study new ways to increase the accessibility of study abroad experiences for under-represented groups of students were successfully completed. A survey went out to NIC students asking how interested they are in exploring study abroad opportunities. We collected information from 201 students, with over 92% of them reporting that they never participated in a study abroad experience but are interested to explore this opportunity post-pandemic. This indicates the interest and the need to continue to improve in providing this type of experiential learning for students. **We will continue to do so, please stay tuned for news and new study abroad initiatives!**

Faculty Mobility:

OGE is excited to report on the successful application to the [Faculty Mobility for Building Partnership Program](#). Laura Johnston, English Instructor, Aboriginal Education, has been selected as a successful recipient of a Faculty Mobility grant funded by the Government of Canada. This scholarship will provide an opportunity to collaborate with partners from Costa Rica on a project that will explore contemporary Indigenous approaches, methodologies, and philosophies regarding Indigenous research within the academic context. This is the first grant of this nature awarded at NIC! Congratulations Laura!

Spring Learning for OGE

Here is a list of events we attended which highlight hot topics for International Education

SEMM Forum: Strategic Enrolment Marketing & Management, May 05, 06

Learn best approaches to attract and engage students now. Create new connections through networking and collaboration. Discover how you can adapt your current expertise for the new environment.

CICAN Presenter: Romana Pasca presented in the session Two Innovative Approaches to Changing Attitudes to Study Abroad Mobility, April 28th

Through a joint British Columbia and Northwest Territories Study Abroad Peer Support pilot project, the partnering institutions addressed barriers to outbound mobility in a collaborative virtual space and will present the results of investigating ways to create a new, more inclusive, and socially-just model of study abroad in the emerging post-COVID-19 post secondary education landscape.

CICAN Attendance: Annual Conference Changing Narratives, April 26-28

The theme Changing Narratives reflects how the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced post-secondary institutions to dramatically change the way they operated – from the classroom to the boardroom. Not only has “how” we teach and learn changed, so too has “what” we teach. As the labour market re-invents itself, graduates must have the relevant skills and competencies to contribute to Canada’s prosperity and sustainability.

CBIE Risk Management Training, Campus Aleas - International Mobility Risk Management, March 29 - May 12

In order to fulfill their duty of care prescribed by the Canadian Criminal Code’s occupational health and safety legislation, and in order to ensure the safety of individuals engaged in international activity, organizations must carry out adequate risk management and have a security plan for their activities which, among other things, operationalizes risk management.

Webinar Attendance: Dialogues on Decolonization for International Education BCCIE, March 24th (three part series)

This three-part series focused on supporting international offices through deep intentional engagement, self-reflection, and learning of Indigenization practices.

APAIE March 23, 24

Virtual Global Dialogue panel session for global insights and discussion on international education during this unprecedented time. Institutions across the Asia Pacific shared lessons learnt from the post secondary response and supports offered to students.

International Students' Mental Health

Welcome to BCCIE's ([BC Council for International Education](#)) *Morning Coffee Series - Things We Should Be Talking About*

These **important series** take just **10 minutes** of your time.

Presenter: Karin Ficher, Correspondent, The Chronicle of Higher Education

Topic: International Students' Mental Health



We are thrilled to welcome back Jennifer Barth from her leave. Our OGE team has been missing her heaps and now we feel whole again.

For those who do not know Jen, she is our Manager, International Education Office of Global Engagement. Jen oversees student services functions relating to international students studying with NIC.

Sincerely,

The Office of Global Engagement Team

