

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Campbell River Campus – January – June 2025

Prepared by Sandy Rose

Hospital Unit Clerk

Another successful year for the Hospital Unit Clerk program! Sixteen students began the program last fall, and 14 have completed and secured employment within Island Health facilities. One student from Vancouver has been hired by the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), and another will complete the program later this summer after welcoming a new baby in February.

Looking ahead, we're hopeful that funding through Future Skills Training Grants will be available for the Fall 2025 intake. This would offer essential financial support for students in a program that currently isn't eligible for student loans.

Activity Assistant Program – Spring / Summer / Fall Update The Activity Assistant program continues to experience strong demand across Vancouver Island and beyond, with applicants reaching from as far as Northern BC. The Winter term successfully graduated 20 students, and the Spring cohort is now underway with another 20 students enrolled. That brings 40 newly trained, employment-ready individuals into the healthcare sector—a timely contribution to support an increasingly stretched system. Looking ahead, Fall 2025 enrollment is expected to remain strong, and the program continues to receive positive feedback from industry partners.

Building Service Worker Fundamentals – NVIATS

In April, North Island College successfully delivered a 3-day Building Service Worker course in partnership with the North Vancouver Island Aboriginal Training Society. Two additional cohorts are confirmed for July in Port Hardy and September in the Comox Valley. Each session will provide up to 14 participants with foundational skills in building service work, including targeted training in infection control practices to prevent viral and bacterial outbreaks.

Participants who complete the training will earn industry-recognized certification, positioning them for employment in school districts, municipalities, and other sectors where qualified building service workers are in high demand. This initiative supports regional workforce development by creating accessible training pathways that meet both community needs and employer demands.

TRADES DISCOVERY – HOMALCO FIRST NATION – Spring/Summer 2025 (FUNDED)

After months of collaborative planning, we are excited to share that the 12-week *Trades Discovery* program—delivered in-community at Homalco First Nation—has been successfully funded. This initiative is made possible through a combination of support from the *Community Workforce Response Grant*, *SkilledTradesBC Indigenous Programs*, and a contribution from Homalco First Nation.

Candidate recruitment and selection are currently underway, with the program set to launch on **June 16th**. A welcome and orientation event is scheduled for **June 11th**, with invitations extended to the community and all project stakeholders. There is strong local enthusiasm for this opportunity to deliver hands-on, career-focused training close to home, and we are proud to support the Nation in advancing workforce development for its members.

Applied Human Resources Practitioner – Micro-credential The 12-week, fully online micro-credential recently concluded with a small but diverse cohort of nine students, representing sectors such as retail, healthcare, and hospitality. Participant feedback was positive, highlighting the relevance and applicability of the content. Revisions to the pilot offering are underway, with the next intake planned for Fall 2025. It is hoped that Future Skills Training grant funding will be available to help remove financial barriers and increase accessibility to this in-demand program.

Comox Valley Campus

Prepared by Lorraine Hagan

Metal Jewellery Studio – 3 NEW Micro-Credential Programs!

The Continuing Education & Training (CET) department is excited to announce the recent approval to offer 3 new 7-week Metal Jewellery Micro-Credential programs, starting in Fall 2025! Each program is 154 hours and can ladder into higher levels. There may be a 4th program in the future, offering more advanced skills training. Successful students will emerge with a Statement of Completion for each level they complete. Many of our past graduates and new students will be self-employed or work in retail establishments such as jewellery and gift stores.

Metal Jewellery 1: Foundations September 8 – October 23, 2025

Level 1 is for those just beginning jewellery making as a hobby or potential home-based business and anyone who has previous experience and would like a refresher.

Metal Jewellery 2: Fundamentals October 27 – December 11, 2025

Level 2 ideal for students with previous jewellery making experience or who have taken Foundations or weekend courses in our NIC studio and want to increase their abilities.

Metal Jewellery 3: Fusion January 5, 2026 – February 20, 2026

Level 3 is suitable for students who have taken Fundamentals or intermediate level courses at our NIC studio or have been making jewellery consistently and want to learn more progressive skills.

Mixalakwa Campus

Prepared by Donna Merry

Retail and Customer Service Confidence

The third cohort of Retail and Customer Service Confidence students celebrated completion of their program on June 5, 2025. This program is offered in partnership with the Port Hardy Chamber of Commerce, and funded through the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP). It is targeted towards community members who feel under-prepared to enter the workforce and who may experience barriers to employment. The seven students completed 8 weeks of classroom learning and 4 weeks of work experience in two different locations in the north island region (Port Hardy, Port Alice, Coal Harbour for this cohort) to prepare to enter employment. Speaking to the students at the program celebration, each of them had one or more employment offers as a result of their work experience placements, which is consistent with the previous cohorts. There is one more cohort planned in fall 2025 as part of the funding agreement. Congratulations everyone!



A few happy students, staff and Chamber representative at the program celebration June 5.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Accessible Education and Training Program Highlights

Submitted by Liz Girard, Department Chair & Faculty, Accessible Education and Training

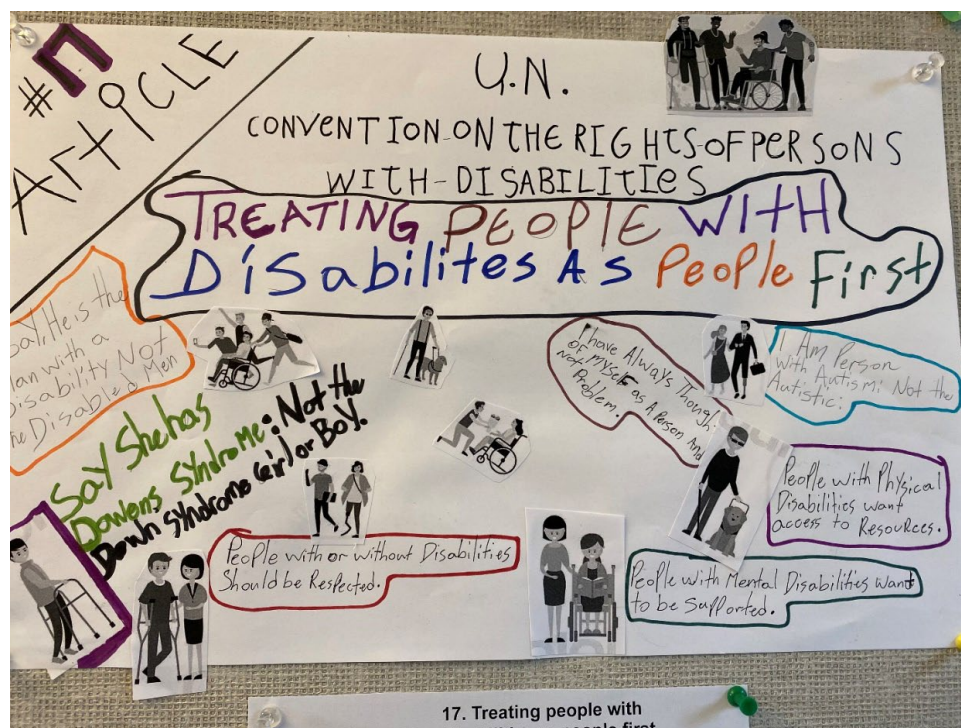
NIC Comox Valley hosted a learning event in November 2024 about the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Students in the Accessible Education and Training (AET) program studied the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Students created poster representations of the articles from the convention. Two 4TH year Bachelor of Science in Nursing students planned and participated in the event as part of a leadership project. Students, parents, support staff, the local accessibility committee, the school district and the NIC community attended the event. It was very fun and had a positive impact on the students and their community of people who support them.



Liz Girard, AET instructor, Liz McKay, BSN instructor, Kaitlyn and Makayla, 4th year BSN students.





Employment Transition Program Highlights, Campbell River and Port Alberni

Submitted by Liz Girard, Department Chair & Faculty, Accessible Education and Training and Tina Kennedy, Faculty, Accessible Education and Training

Students in the Employment Transition Program completed two terms of focused study and individualized work experience. Our Work Study Assistants did an amazing job finding work placements that matched our students' interests and supported them towards independence at each site.

With inclusion in the larger community as a goal for the department, our students also attended a Community Advisory Committee meeting and participated in field trips to different local businesses. Our visit to the airport gave students an opportunity to advocate for accessibility within the facility while also building awareness of their abilities.



Grace completed her work experience at the Campbell River Seniors' Centre as a greeter and in the kitchen as a dishwasher. Grace would love to be a server and dreams of one day opening her own cafe. She will continue at the Seniors' Center in a volunteer capacity after the completion of the Work Experience.



Devon completed his work experience at the Campbell River Great Canadian Superstore. He worked in the grocery department stocking shelves. His dedication and hard work led to a paid part-time position.



Ronald completed his work experience at the Port Alberni Salvation Army making hampers for clients. He has been practicing his communication, physical movements, being on his feet for 2 hours at a time and using the trolleys and elevators to safely deliver the hampers. He wants to continue a volunteer basis once he graduates.



Myles has been working at Rainbow Lanes beyond completing his work experience. He has developed skills in customer service, counting cash, selling concession items, ringing in league fees and providing rental bowling shoes to the patrons. He also has created a tradition of singing the national anthem before league play begins. He has a great and supportive team!

Early Childhood New Zealand Field School

Submitted by Laurie Tulloch, Faculty, Early Childhood Care & Education

On February 13th students representing the Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) Certificate and Infant & Toddler Diploma Programs joined a consortium of 4 colleges including Northern Lights College, Aurora College in Yellowknife, Coast Mountain College in Terrace, and North Island College.

Joined by Elders Dr. Evelyn Voyageur and husband Yvon Savoie, the field school began with a one-week immersive experience in early childhood and the contextual Maori history of New Zealand by our institutional partner, TeRitoMaioha – Early Childhood New Zealand in Wellington. We travelled next to their Hamilton campus for land-based learning on the marae, then to the National Kapa Haka Festival in New Plymouth, and across the island to Whakatene on the Bay of Plenty to explore the fully indigenous – early learning to doctorate institution and NIC partner Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarnagi.

Students are grateful for this once in a lifetime experience funded through the Global Skills Opportunity Study Abroad Scholarship and presented their personal and professional journeys to their peers and faculty at the Stan Hagen Theatre on our return.



Local artist Carla Duffey created a Graphic Recording to capture our group New Zealand ECCE Field School de-brief on our return.



Early to Rise! Ready at the Comox Valley airport for the first day of the journey. Roberta Wesley, Winona Erickson, Aleah Kohlen, Laurie Tulloch (ECCE faculty), Yvon Savoie (Elder), Robyn Yow, and Elder in Residence Dr. Evelyn Voyageur



A full field school welcome at our final destination Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi in Whakatane on the Bay of Plenty.

Health Care Assistant Program Update

Submitted by Donna Wedman, Department Chair & Faculty, Health Care Assistant

The Health Care Assistant (HCA) department welcomed our first international cohort with the Office of Global Engagement in September of 2024. These students have now all completed the HCA program. It has been an interesting experience working with students from 8 different countries and a variety of life experiences to nurture their knowledge and skill in assisting individuals with daily physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual needs in our local Canadian context. These students now qualify to be registered with the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry and to work as Health Care Assistants in our community. They will continue their education in the fall to complete the Community Mental Health Worker program.

Our department has welcomed 6 cohorts of students through 2024-2025. So far, 72 students have completed the program. Seventeen more are on track to complete in July and a further 24 students will be in their practice experience over the summer and finish in September. To support the increase of students in the HCA program, we have six regular faculty and hired 12 sessional instructors. I appreciate the time and commitment of the regular faculty to welcome and support the new instructors as well as to meet the needs of the students. I appreciate the new faculty that have joined us this year for their enthusiasm and fresh perspectives. We are striving to work as a collaborative team to provide consistent, high-quality education. We are also preparing for our NIC program review and our regular Compliance Review with the BC Care Aide Registry in the 2025-2026 year.

Human Services Program Review Update

Submitted by Sam Banton-Smith, Department Chair & Faculty, and Meredith McEvoy, Program Development Mentor & Faculty, Human Services

Over the past year, the Human Services Department has made significant strides toward implementing the key recommendations from our program review. Central to this work has been the formation of a dedicated working group made up of regularized faculty, which continues to meet bi-monthly to advance departmental goals. Major changes include the development of a

clear program mission and vision, work on course delivery models, enhancement of transferability, and the creation of program learning outcomes that integrate clear skill and theoretical development.

The overall impact of this process has been transformational. The department has seen improved cohesion as a team and we are eagerly working towards alignment of curriculum and vision, building stronger community partnerships, and creating a clearer path forward for program growth. Staff enthusiastically supported this process, making themselves available for sometimes challenging and deliberate work of aligning departmental values with the changes we were implementing.

One of the biggest advances in the development of this work came through the appointment of a Program Development Mentor position funded through Widening Our Doorways to lead curriculum mapping and program learning outcome development. The results are already being felt through enhanced delivery models, increased accessibility, and stronger student and community engagement.

The Program Development Mentor is currently working with faculty members and Centre for Teaching Learning Innovation (CTLI) to develop revised course learning outcomes and program changes to increase alignment and transferability. The department will be meeting with the Working Together Working Group from Indigenous Education to discuss the future of our Education Assistant/Community Support Worker-Indigenous Focus (Port Alberni) program and the possibility of integrating and revising this Indigenized curriculum for our Comox Valley Campus.

Overall, the program review process has helped us establish a framework for carrying forward the work of ongoing program evaluation and revision to ensure we continue to provide quality student learning in an ever-changing landscape of post-secondary education.

Practical Nursing and Access to Practical Nursing program Highlights

Submitted by Aimee Wheatley, Department Chair & Faculty, Practical Nursing, Access to Practical Nursing

I am excited to share some inspiring highlights from our Practical Nursing (PN) and Access to Practical Nursing (APN) Programs at North Island College. The time leading up to this spring has been a time of growth, learning, and deepened understanding for our students—truly a time of community-building and support.

Cultural Safety and Truth & Reconciliation: “Building Bridges through Understanding the Village”

In March 2025, our PN and APN students gathered at the Gathering Place on the Campbell River campus to participate in the transformative workshop, *Building Bridges through Understanding the Village*. This Truth and Reconciliation workshop emphasized the crucial role of cultural safety within First Nations, Inuit, and Métis contexts.

Students engaged in rich dialogue and interactive learning to develop the cultural competence needed to connect meaningfully with patients across social, political, linguistic, economic, and spiritual realms. One powerful message from the workshop summed it up perfectly:

“As future health care practitioners, your voice and actions matter.”

Our students embraced these teachings wholeheartedly, recognizing that culturally safe practice is the backbone of inclusive, patient-centered nursing care.



The workshop was very engaging and provided opportunities for students to be involved in the learning concepts.



Practical Nursing Level 2 and Level 4 cohorts from across 3 campuses.



Access to Practical Nursing cohort.

Highlighting Record Enrollment in the Access to Practical Nursing Program

We're thrilled to report that the APN Program has reached its highest enrollment ever for the 2024-2026 intake! Many of these students began their journey in our Health Care Assistant programs and have chosen to ladder up into the APN program. Their determination and dedication to advancing their skills reflect both their commitment to the profession and the welcoming, supportive environment fostered here at North Island College.

We're particularly excited to host these students at our Comox Valley campus—where they'll continue to grow as compassionate, skilled future nurses.

Student Support: The Heart of Our Programs

Throughout these milestones, our faculty and staff have stood beside our students every step of the way. We continue to nurture a learning environment that values curiosity, compassion, and respect for all cultures and lived experiences. It's truly inspiring to witness our students supporting one another, bridging gaps, and forging new pathways in nursing practice.

TRADES AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Report to the BOG

Dare we say it...It's beginning to look a lot like Summer! The trees have shed their blossoms to make way for budding fruit, the leaves are bright green, flowers are in bloom and the Cottonwoods are dusting us with snowstorms of fluffy white flakes. Did you know Cottonwoods are one of the most versatile and beneficial trees there is? Not only do they offer shade and are important for wildlife, but the buds and bark contain salicin, a compound that can reduce fever, pain, and inflammation. Cottonwood bud oil is used topically for arthritis and skin conditions. These are but a few of the uses these remarkable trees provide. The Cheyenne and Arapaho nations believed Cottonwoods were magical and helped light the night sky with the stars we see. (For curiosity's sake, look up: Cottonwood Trees and the Stars)

Daydreaming aside, Trades and Tech is still going strong with Automotive, Welding, Heavy Mechanical, Electrical and Carpentry Foundations continuing into the summer months. Upcoming SkilledTradesBC exams start June 13 and end July 2nd for the Plumbing level 4, Metal Fabricator level 2, Electrical level 3 and two Professional Cook level 2 apprenticeships.

The fall lineup will keep everybody hopping, but for now we will enjoy just a little bit of a breather as students and faculty make their exits for the summer and the convocation ceremonies celebrate the accomplishments of all NIC's hardworking graduates. We wish them all the very best as they set their sights on bigger and better things. Job well done!

Highlights for TNT

*Industry Donations, **Chris Manning**:* We are pleased to announce that Miller Electric has committed to sponsoring a Top Student Award for all our Welding Foundation programs over the next three years. In addition, Milwaukee Tools will be sponsoring a Top Student Award for one of our upcoming Heavy-Duty Equipment Technician classes this September.

We're also excited to welcome Jeremy Lake, District Manager at Miller Electric, and Ryan Page, Welding Superintendent at Seaspan, to our Welding Program Advisory Committee. Their industry experience and insight will be valuable assets to our program.

Trade Sampler: As we wrap up the Trade Sampler cohorts, we see how the re-vamped program is having more of a positive effect on the student experience. Key differences to previous years being longer durations spent in fewer areas and with more in-house instruction. In previous years we exhausted our budget with guest speakers and field trips that were not only costly, but time-consuming. This year we kept the Trade Sampler students on campus the entire time where they spent 1 week minimum in each trade area where an NIC instructor was delivering more fulsome content throughout.

The feedback we have received from the School District 72 has been very positive, the liaisons have mentioned multiple times that the students seem more engaged and feel more like they are taking a college level course with NIC.

*Japan, **Xavier Bauby**:* Two students from the Level 2 Culinary Arts program from North Island College (NIC), accompanied by Chef Bauby, are invited to embark on a transformative two-week learning experience in Fukuoka, Japan. This unique experiential learning opportunity brings together students from NIC (Canada), Kapi'olani Community College (Hawaii), and Nakamura Gakuen University (Japan) for a collaborative and immersive culinary journey.

This is an excellent opportunity for professional development. Students will be guided through two weeks of intensive culinary exploration alongside fellow students and professionals from Kapi'olani Community College and Nakamura Gakuen University. This program promises an unforgettable opportunity to refine culinary skills while engaging in a vibrant cultural exchange.

Extra! Extra! Marketing and Future Students have worked in conjunction with Mike Androschuk, Matt Neuwirth, and Paris Gaudet to co-host virtual information sessions for the following programs this month: Coastal Forestry, Furniture Design and Joinery Certificate, and Seaweed Production and Processing. These sessions are meant to showcase some of our unique programs and to offer potential students the opportunity to ask questions. A record **54** students attended the first of 3 seaweed information sessions; the next session is scheduled for June 11.

<https://www.nic.bc.ca/about/events-and-key-dates.html>

And we have Drones! Funded by the Future Skills Grant, Trades and Tech ran the Drone to Mapping Micro-credential with 10 students earning their Drone Pilot Certification under instructor Mike Morellato. Not only did students review Canadian Aviation Regulations, but instruction also included human factors, meteorology, navigation, flight operations and the theory of flight. All necessary skills for the safe operation of a remotely piloted drone.

Saying Goodbye

Trades and Technical Programs had to say goodbye to 3 amazing instructors.



From Welding, *Ivan Peterson* handed over the reins after 14 years to Jim Stratford for the 2024/2025 Foundation and apprenticeship programs. Ivan loves to golf and is also an avid reader and, in his retirement, has found plenty of time for both. However, he can still be found a couple days a week on campus as an Elder. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students have the benefit of Ivan's support and guidance as they navigate their way through the NIC community.

From Automotive, instructors Chris Posner from the Campbell River campus and Patrick Balfry from Port Alberni decided retired life is the way to go.



Born and raised in Campbell River, *Chris* is as much a part of the local community as he was at North Island College. He came full circle from beginning his automotive career as a pre-apprenticeship student at NIC in the early 90's, to joining the Automotive program as a part-time instructor in 1997 which evolved into a full-time position in 2000. Chris always maintained high standards throughout his program and was highly skilled at adapting to a variety of teaching methods tailored to his students. His patience and encouragement instilled confidence in his students and earned him their praise and appreciation.



One of the most loved and respected instructors in Trades and at the TEBO campus, *Patrick* took the lead for the Automotive Foundation program in 2012, and we are sad to see the end of an era. He was not just an instructor to his students, he was their mentor, counselor and friend. It was not unusual at all for past students to come by just to sit and have a say with one of their favorite instructors. More than one student has bestowed the highest of compliments on Patrick, saying their experience in his program was life-changing and set them on a path to success in their career.

Our Furniture Design and Joinery program wrapped up on May 15th but we wanted to show you the products of incredible instruction and talented students. These are amazing!



*From Trades and Technical Programs, we wish you all a fantastic summer!
See you in September.*

OFFICE OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Submitted by Mark Herringer, Executive Director, Office of Global Engagement

International Projects:



Romana Pasca, Manager Partnerships, Projects and Global Education, Mez Jiwaji, Associate Director Students Life and Mark Herringer, Executive Director OGE participated in The South Africa Skills Training Enhancement Program (SASTEP) Orientation from February 18-21 in Pretoria South Africa. The orientation included representatives from all 14 South African vocational institutions

from the Eastern Cape and Limpopo region as well as all of the Canadian partner colleges. NIC is responsible for SASTEP 2 which focusses on 'Gender equality and inclusion in the classroom'. This is the first major project that NIC is leading and will be delivered with all 14 South African Partners together with Canadian partners, Nova Scotia Community College and Suncrest College.

Forum for Education Abroad:

The Forum for Education Abroad is a large, US-based but internationally engaged study abroad association. Their annual conference in Toronto (March 18 – 21) was the first time it had been held outside of the USA. OGE and OIE were asked by the Forum and Education New Zealand together with representatives from UofT, Toronto Metropolitan University and others to help to establish a pre-conference day based on our experience in Indigenizing our international education work. Sara Child, Romana Pasca and Mark Herringer all presented sessions at 'Paving a Path Forward: Supporting Indigenous Students in Education Abroad' to Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders from Canada, US, Mexico and New Zealand. Further, Renae Leboe, Global Engagement Liaison, Romana and Sara all delivered sessions during the conference which greatly enhanced NIC's reputation for our work in Indigenization and international education.

Indigenous Speaker Series:

OGE and the Office of Indigenous Education collaborated for two Indigenous Speaker Series events held in Q̓ə pix ʔidaʔas (Campbell River campus) in Winter 2025. On January 23, VIU Elder-in-Residence Randy Fred spoke about the importance of Indigenization and Decolonization as steps in the healing journey. On March 13, Dr. Laura Cranmer, a VIU Honorary Research Associate, discussed how writing and collaborative creativity can uplift Indigenous individuals. Both events were attended by NIC staff, students, and members of the community.

Outbound Mobility:

Between January and March 2025, the Office of Global Engagement facilitated a range of international experiential learning opportunities. A total of 23 students, including 19 Indigenous students, along with 2 administrative staff, 5 faculty members, and 1 Elder, participated in programs such as semester exchanges at Kapi'olani Community College in Hawaii, faculty mobility programs with one NIC faculty working on a Prior Learning Recognition Project with an university in Mexico, and field schools in Maui and Oahu, Hawaii, Costa Rica, and New Zealand.

These initiatives were made possible through funding from Global Skills Opportunity (GSO), Canada's outbound student mobility program and Faculty Mobility Grant offered by the Government of Canada. Additionally, the Nuuchah-nulth Tribal Council provided financial support for the Rural Indigenous Teacher Pathway program in Maui.

Designed to be culturally responsive and meaningful, the short term opportunities were developed in collaboration with local Indigenous communities, including support and guidance from the Nuuchah-nulth, and Canadian post-secondary institutions such as Northern Lights College, Coast Mountain College, Aurora College, Vancouver Island University, and Nova Scotia Community College. International partnerships were also integral, involving institutions like Te Whare Wānanga and Te Rito Maioha in New Zealand; Kapi'olani Community College and Maui Community College in Hawaii; and Global Learning Opportunities in Costa Rica.

Inbound Exchange:

In Winter 2025, OGE hosted 3 exchange students from Mexico at Comox Valley campus studying Fine Arts, DGL and Psychology. In Campbell River, OGE hosted a research student from Belgium who worked with CARTI on seaweed aquaculture techniques.

Recruitment and Enrolment

In spring 2025, we welcomed 6 new students that deferred from winter 2025 intake due to delays in study permit processing. NIC's international enrolment for spring and fall 2025 is reflective of ongoing changes in federal immigration policy. The international enrolment for spring 2025 is at 184, down by 32% compared to spring 2024, and international applications received for fall 2025 so far at 368, down by 50% compared to the same time last year. The decline in application numbers is somewhat better than the 59% overall reduction among BC colleges and 62% among colleges across Canada (according to IDP applicant trends 2025). The decline is particularly visible in programs such as business and associate degrees that are ineligible for Post-Graduation Work Permit under the new federal policy. It is still too early to predict our new student fall numbers with all of the study permit uncertainty, but we should be close to our projected new student numbers.

STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Submitted by Michelle Badger, Office of the Registrar

With convocation just around the corner, North Island College is honoured to celebrate this milestone with the introduction of four handcrafted paddles, created by Indigenous artists representing the First Nations connected to each of NIC's campuses. Commissioned specifically for the 2025 Convocation ceremonies, the paddles will take their place in this year's celebrations, adding a profound connection to community, history, and learning.

For more details on the paddles and the artists who crafted them, please read full media release <https://www.nic.bc.ca/about/news/stories/ceremonial-paddles.html>.



Artist Karver Everson



Artist Mervyn Child



Artist William Henderson