



WHAT'S NEXT IS WHAT'S HERE

## Okanagan College Aboriginal Access and Services

# Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

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### Welcome (Back) to Okanagan College

For those students who are new to Okanagan College (OC), welcome. For those returning students, welcome back!

This is the first issue of the Aboriginal Access and Services Newsletter. It is meant to be an informative newsletter for students, parents, education coordinators and all those involved with or interested in Aboriginal Education at OC. The mission of this newsletter is to update the reader on everything that is happening here at OC that deals with or may affect Aboriginal students and their education.

The newsletter will be published at least twice a semester.

### What is *Aboriginal Access and Services*?

Aboriginal Access and Services, or Aboriginal Services for short, is a branch of the Student Services department. Aboriginal Services seeks to enhance the participation and success of Aboriginal students at OC.

Aboriginal Services are available to Aboriginal students for support, advice and referral to career or personal counseling. In addition, Aboriginal Services will assist in the development of cultural and social activities and programs for Aboriginal students.

Aboriginal Services is under the direction of an Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator for all OC campuses. The Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator, James Coble, has an office located in Kelowna at the KLO Campus in the Student Services building, room S124A.

In order to ensure that OC is adequately meeting the needs of Aboriginal students, each of the four major campuses, Penticton, Kelowna, Vernon, and Salmon Arm has readily accessible Aboriginal student services.

In addition to counseling, financial awards, educational advising and disability services, these services include an Aboriginal



**Students in the Aboriginal Student Centre, KLO Campus**

Student Center in Penticton, Kelowna, and Vernon where students can come in and relax, use a computer, study, talk with other students or have a cup of coffee. It is hoped that a student center will be made available to students in Salmon Arm in the near future.

Each of the campuses also has an Aboriginal Mentor and/or Peer (Student) Mentors. Aboriginal Mentors at the Penticton, Vernon and Salmon Arm campuses assist Aboriginal students in accessing information about OC programs, courses and support services (i.e. Educational Advising, Financial Aid & Awards, Counseling, etc). They also inform Aboriginal students about the processes required to navigate the post-secondary education system as well as functioning as an advocate for individual Aboriginal students.

Peer Mentors provide similar support but on a more informal basis. At the moment, Peer Mentors are located on the Penticton, Kelowna and Vernon campuses.

If your new to OC or simply need some advice or information about OC's programs and services, please contact the (peer) mentor at your local campus. Also, please feel free to contact the Aboriginal Services Coordinator at any time.

## Students Elect Executive Council for Okanagan Aboriginal Student Association, KLO

OC has always encouraged and provided support for Aboriginal students to form an Aboriginal Student Association at each of the campuses. Such associations are important



**Okanagan Aboriginal Student Association V.P., Nelson Derickson, enjoying his breakfast**

informal clubs that organize events such as guest speakers, pow wows and Indian taco sales. These events provide opportunities to increase social awareness on campus.

Recently, the Aboriginal students at the KLO campus in Kelowna elected the executive council for the *Okanagan Aboriginal Student Association*. This association represents the interests of KLO Aboriginal students.

We encourage all Aboriginal students to get involved in improving campus life. This can be done by starting up an Aboriginal association at your local campus (if one does not already exist) volunteering to help with upcoming events, or seeking to become a member of your local Aboriginal Student executive council.

Give the Aboriginal students a voice and make your presence known at your local campus!

## Aboriginal Admission Policy for OC

Like many colleges and universities, OC has an Aboriginal Admission policy. The OC policy states that:

The College is committed to enhancing the participation rates of Aboriginal peoples to a level which is representative of the Aboriginal population of the region served by the College. The College, in collaboration with faculties and departments, will annually set aside a predetermined number of places specifically for Aboriginal students, the number being commensurate with student interest, available teaching, and learning support resources. While the number may vary from program to program, it will not normally exceed six percent of the intake capacity for any given program in a particular year.

Pursuant to College policy, Qualified Aboriginal applicants will have access to the predetermined number of reserved places specific to each program during the period from October (first allowable application submission date), to March 15 (or the last day applications are being accepted) each year for programs commencing the immediate following September and up to eight weeks before commencement of classes for multiple intake programs. Any remaining, unused reserved space will revert to the general application pool.

Qualified Aboriginal students who apply beyond the time limit or who apply within the time limit but after the predetermined number of reserved seats for a given program have been filled, will be admitted in accordance with the general admission policies of the College, subject to the availability of space.

So if you or any of your students are worried about availability of programs, know

that if you meet the admission requirements and apply early, there is a good chance we will have a seat for you!

If you have any further questions regarding OC's Aboriginal Admissions policy, please refer to the online OC calendar or contact the Admissions office at your local campus.

## Bursaries Made Available to Aboriginal Students at OC

In order to make education more accessible and affordable for its Aboriginal students, OC is pleased to offer bursaries specific to Aboriginal students. OC has allocated \$10,000 to provide

bursaries for Aboriginal students pursuing post-secondary study at OC. Awards of up to \$500 per academic year will be made to eligible students. Individual circumstances will be taken into



consideration in determining the amount of bursary funding students may be eligible for.

A bursary is an award usually based on financial need, whereas a scholarship is an award usually based on academic achievement.

Two categories of bursaries are available: Okanagan College – Okanagan Nation Students Bursary and the Okanagan College Aboriginal Students Bursary. For the Okanagan Nation Bursary, applicants must be members of an Okanagan band; and registered in a minimum 60% course load (40% course load for students with a permanent disability) in a university transfer, degree or diploma program; or registered in a minimum 60% course load in a full-time vocational, trades or health certificate program. For the Aboriginal Students Bursary Applicants must be Status/Non-Status Indian, Metis or Inuit; and registered in a minimum 60% course load (40% course load for students with a permanent disability) in a university transfer, degree or diploma program, or registered in a

minimum 60% course load in a full-time vocational, trades or health certificate program.

For both awards, applicants must be in good standing as per the Okanagan College Student Conduct Policy, not on academic probation and not have outstanding fees. However, extenuating circumstances may warrant financial assistance in exceptional circumstances.

The application deadline for these awards was Friday October 13, 2006. However, applications are still being accepted to ensure that all of the money is distributed. If too few applications are received, the money will be put back into the OC Foundation and re-administered next year. So if you or your students have not applied, make sure that an application is submitted to Financial Awards as soon as possible.

For more information on these and other awards visit the Financial Awards website at: <http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/page895.aspx>.

## Gateway to the Building Trades for Women

As was recently reported in the news, a new program designed to provide women with exposure to the building trades has just been approved.

It is a 12-week program offered to women. They will gain practical and theoretical knowledge from experienced instructors, industry experts and guest speakers in a number of building trades sectors.

Women will be provided the background information from which they can make informed decisions as to whether they would like to enter into a career in trades. They will receive a certificate of completion and be better prepared to enter a pre-apprenticeship trades program.

The program is set to be offered November 6, 2006 at the KLO campus in Kelowna as a full-time program. The cost of tuition is \$1800. For those women who cannot afford it, grant funding will be available.

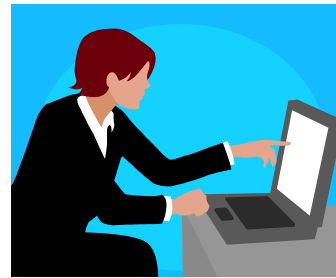


For more information about the program or to register contact Nancy Ankerstein, Trades and Apprenticeship at 762-5445 (ext. 4424). For more information about grant funding for this program, contact the OC Welcome Centre at 762-5445 (ext. 4654).

## Library Lends Out Laptops

Beginning in September, the College introduced a laptop-lending program at its four major campuses, allowing students to borrow one of 30 new computers.

The laptops are equipped with wireless Internet access and are housed at campus libraries and may be signed out for one day free of charge. Students requiring the computers for a longer period of time will pay a low, flat rate. The ability to borrow laptop computers will provide greater student access to the expanding collection of electronic and online resources available at the College.



Single-day usage of the computers will aid students in the preparation and delivery of in-class presentations and will also provide students access to computers during times when library workstations and labs are full. The ability to borrow the laptops for up to a week will benefit students who do not have a computer at home and require the technology for assignments, research and papers.

## Stay Healthy with the WFN

The association between regular physical activity and improved health and quality of life has been well documented in scholarly research. Here is the bottom line: the more physical activity you do, the lower your risk of disease.

The Westbank First Nation has a number of programs, some of them free, which



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cater to youth, students, parents and community members. Basically, just about anyone who is interested.

So if you would like to play pick up basketball, lift some weights, or participate in the youth sports drop-in program, contact the WFN Recreation Department at (250) 768-7337.

December 25-31: Christmas: Okanagan College closed

December 27: Last day for submission of final grades to the Registrar's Office for exams written on or after Dec. 19.

## OC Important Dates for Fall 2006

October 27: Last day for withdrawal, without penalty, from a fall semester course.

October 27: Last day to change from credit to audit for a fall semester course.

November 6: Start date for Distance Education.

November 11: No Saturday classes on this day.

November 13: Okanagan college closed for Remembrance Day.

November 14: Reading break: no classes for Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Business Administration, Commercial Aviation, Advanced Culinary Arts Diploma, Computer Information Systems, and Engineering Technology diplomas

December 8: Last day of regular classes

December 9: Last day of Saturday classes

December 11-21: Final Exams and evaluation period for ESL

December 13: Trades Commencement Ceremony

December 14: Practical Nursing Convocation Penticton

December 15: Practical Nursing Convocation, Kelowna

December 22: Last day for submission of final grades for exams written on or before December 18 to the Registrar's office – deadline 4:00pm

## Upcoming Events!!!

### Career Fair

The Adams Lake Band will be hosting a Career Fair on December 1, 2006.

Various employers, colleges and universities will be on hand at the Adams Lake Band Gymnasium to give out information and answer any question that you may have about possible career choices.



The youth fair will take place during the day while the adult fair will take place in the evening.

Come on out and see what your future has in store for you!

## Round Dance

Get your dancin' shoes on because a Round Dance will be held on November 11, 2006, 7:00pm at the Independent Centre, Thompson Rivers University. The Master of Ceremonies will be Ray Thunderchild.

The Round Dance is a great opportunity for everyone from anywhere to come on out, dance and have a good time. No regalia necessary!

It's an alcohol- and drug-free event with a feast to start. Free beverages available and a concession will be on site.

Everyone is welcome to attend!

## Education Conference

Make a point of attending the FNEC 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Education to be held in Vancouver at the Westin Bayshore, December 8-9<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

There will be several hundred educators, 20 different workshops, and guest authors. The theme of the conference is *Literacy & Literature*.

For conference enquiries call toll free 1-877-422-3672 or email [info@fnesc.ca](mailto:info@fnesc.ca)

## Footprints to Better Living

The Footprints Centre of the Penticton Indian Band is putting on a conference about how technology can lead to better living and add fun to your life.

It takes place October 26, 2006 at the Penticton Lakeside Resort.

The cost of the conference is \$15. However, the conference is free for elders and people with disabilities.

For more information contact Mindy Rollins or Sabrina Eneas at 250.492.5289

## Websites of Interest

### Okanagan College Student Services

#### Webpage:

<http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/page1243.aspx>

### Aboriginal Multi-Media Society's (AMMSA)

guide to scholarships and bursaries:

<http://www.ammsa.com/ammsabursary.html>

### Information Centre on Aboriginal Health

(ICAH) – Scholarships and bursary page:

<http://www.ica.hk/content/en/scholarships/browse/index.php?scol=ps>

### University of Victoria Aboriginal awards

webpage: <http://web.uvic.ca/ablo/awdbus.html>

### Student Awards.com:

<http://www.studentawards.com/>

### Okanagan Nation Alliance Website:

<http://www.syilx.org/>



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## Aboriginal Access and Services Contact Information

**James Coble**  
**Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator**  
Okanagan College, Kelowna  
Office: S124A  
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm  
Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4322  
Fax: 250.862.5496  
Email: [jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca)

**Barbara Bailey**  
**Educational Advisor, ABE Instructor**  
Okanagan College, Kelowna  
Office: S124  
Hours: Mondays, 11:00am – 3:00pm  
Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4682  
Fax: 250.862.5496  
Email: [blbailey@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:blbailey@okanagan.bc.ca)

**Ethan Baptiste**  
**Aboriginal Mentor**  
Okanagan College, Penticton  
Office: A1E Sunoka Building

Hours: Thursday 10:00am-6:00pm; Friday  
8:30am-4:30pm  
Tel: 250.492.4305 ext. 3261  
Email: [ebaptiste@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:ebaptiste@okanagan.bc.ca)

**Marilyn Alexis**  
**Educational Advisor, Aboriginal Mentor**  
Okanagan College, Vernon  
Office: A306 (Wed.), D220 (Tues. & Thurs.)  
Hours: Tuesday to Thursday, 8:30am – 4:30pm  
Tel: 250.545.7291 ext. 2209 (Wed.) ext. 2284  
(Tues. & Thurs.)  
Email: [malexis@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:malexis@okanagan.bc.ca)

**Caroline Chartier**  
**Aboriginal Mentor**  
Okanagan College, Salmon Arm  
Office: 121  
Hours: Thursday 8:30am – 4:00pm  
Tel: 250.832.2126 ext. 8237  
Email: [cchartier@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:cchartier@okanagan.bc.ca)



**If there are any events that you would like to advertise in the next issue, please contact James Coble using the contact information on page 7.**