



WHAT'S BEST IS WHAT'S HERE

## Okanagan College Aboriginal Access and Services

# Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 3

February 2007

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### Aboriginal Services Profile: Marilyn Alexis

Marilyn, a member of the Lower Similkameen Nation, was born in Vernon, BC. She was raised on both the Lower Similkameen and Okanagan reserves. After graduating from Vernon Senior Secondary she attended Trinity Western University and completed both her Bachelor of Science degree (majoring in Biochemistry) and her requirements for Naturopathic Medicine. She spent three additional years training with Wild Rose College in Vancouver and eventually completed her



preceptorship during the summer months at the Naturopathic Clinic in Penticton, B.C.

While raising her children, Willow and Sage, she decided to change career paths and work for Okanagan University College as

an Academic Advisor and First Nation Mentor. She has worked with OUC and OC for the past seven years.

She is energetic, supportive, and encourages students to persevere and to not quit. She always says your first year is the big challenge and when someone says you can't, she says you can.

All those prospective or current students attending the Kalamalka Campus in Vernon should make an effort to talk with her. It may be the one of the most helpful decisions you make during your time here at Okanagan College.

Marilyn can usually be found mentoring on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Kalamalka Aboriginal Student Centre D220 and advising on Wednesdays in the administration building in room A306. Please feel free to get in touch with Marilyn via email at [malexis@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:malexis@okanagan.bc.ca) or via phone at 250.545. 7291.

### Vernon Aboriginal Students Host Successful Potluck

The Okanagan College Aboriginal staff and students in Vernon hosted a potluck on January 25, 2007 at the Kalamalka Campus

cafeteria on behalf of the Okanagan College Aboriginal Access and Services department.

The focus of the event was to bring our people together and celebrate the meaning and value of education; to show how our elders, adults, children and school representatives are all working in unison contributing to the success of all Aboriginal learners.

Many were in attendance to support and acknowledge students from Okanagan College and surrounding high schools. Chief Fabian Alexis from the Okanagan Indian Band also presented encouraging comments to the students and indicated that the continuing education and work-related training offered at Okanagan College is central to the future growth and development of Okanagan band members.



**Vernon Potluck Group Photo**

The Potluck included an introductory song and prayer by Emery Robins, a Council Member of the Okanagan Indian Band. One of the highlights of the event was the drumming and singing by the Fulton Inter-tribal Drum Group from Clarence Fulton High School and Cathy Gottfriedson, an Aboriginal Advocate from the Vernon School District.

Students from Fulton, Salmon Arm, Mission Hill and our College gave a warm welcome to our guest elders by preparing and serving meals with coffee or tea. A special thank-you goes out to the Aboriginal students, Marilyn Alexis and several women from the community for organizing the potluck. They also graciously volunteered their time to prepare Indian Tacos with home made bannock and chili for the event.

The new Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator, James Coble, welcomed all those in attendance. James also included a 30 minute PowerPoint presentation outlining

current Aboriginal programs and services offered by Okanagan College.

To conclude our gathering, we had a gift give away and prizes. Our students had the privilege of offering gifts to our elders and guest speakers. James Coble also gave our new Regional Dean, John Lent, a gift and warm welcome to the Kalamalka campus.

Our photo is for you to remember that we care, and wish you the best. Many escaped the camera, but we are happy to announce that there were over 70 people who joined us that day. Yeehaw!!!!

## Counselling Services: Taking Care of Students

Personal, emotional and academic problems are a normal part of student life. Professionally trained staff are available to assist students in coping with problem areas in their life that interfere with maximizing their academic and social potential.

One of the most helpful ways of dealing with problematic situations and feelings is to talk them through with an experienced counsellor. Whether you seek personal, academic or career counselling, Counselling Services is there to help.

They offer short-term counselling to students regarding personal problems that are interfering with their ability to meet their educational goals.

If you are experiencing depression, loneliness, anxiety, anger, substance use or any other type of personal issue, you are encouraged to access Counselling Services. If your needs require services that counselling does not provide, they will assist with a referral to an appropriate resource.

Counselling Services can also help with academic counselling. They assist students with:

- general study skills
- learning styles
- time management
- note-taking
- reading from texts
- exam preparation and writing



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- stress management and other aspects of academic success

This assistance is most often facilitated through individual appointments.

Choosing a career can be one of the most important decisions you make. The staff can provide a number of services that can assist you in this decision. If you are a currently enrolled student or alumni of Okanagan College you can access any of the career counselling services. If you are not an Okanagan College student, some of the services may not be available to you depending on counsellor availability.

Counselling staff are available to take individual appointments to talk one on one about your career goals and the career planning process and they can facilitate Group Workshops, depending on student need and counsellor availability, on various topics related to career planning.

They also have a number of testing materials including the Strong Interest Inventory and the Career Decision Making System. Some fees may apply.

**Mission Statement:** Okanagan College Counselling Services supports the educational success of students in their experiences at Okanagan College. Counselling Services assists adult learners to achieve clarity, direction and efficacy in their personal, academic and career paths so that they may fully participate in and benefit from their educational experience. Services are designed to further students' development as self-sufficient, interdependent and independent learners.

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality is the cornerstone of the counselling relationship. All communication between you and your counsellor will be held in confidence and will not, except under special circumstances be disclosed to anyone outside of the Counselling Services department unless you give written authorization to release the information (please refer to the confidentiality form on our website for more information at: <http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?id=3217>).

Counselling services are offered in Penticton, Kelowna, Vernon and Salmon Arm. For more information on Counselling Services

and contact information for the campus near you please refer to their webpage at: <http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/PageFactory.aspx?PageID=1160>.

## Upcoming Events!!!

### Congratulations Toni !!!

Congratulations goes out to Toni Gallicano. She received the Okanagan College Tuition Bursary! Don't spend it all in one place!

### Aboriginal Career Fair 2007

Okanagan College, UBC Okanagan and the Ki Low Na Friendship Society will be co-hosting an Aboriginal Career Fair May 3, 2007.

Come on out and see what your future may have in store for you. Whether you're thinking about attending school or wanting to check out employers from the Okanagan, this is a chance for you to explore those options!

For more information contact James Coble, Okanagan College, at 250.762.5445 ext. 4322, [jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca); Lyle Mueller, UBC Okanagan, 250.807.9195, [lyle.mueller@ubc.ca](mailto:lyle.mueller@ubc.ca); Edna Terbasket, Ki Low Na Friendship Society, 250.763.4905, [executivedirector@kfs.bc.ca](mailto:executivedirector@kfs.bc.ca).

### Research Methods Workshop

For all those students who need to gain some useful insight on how best to research for a school paper or project, this workshop is for you. It will be held March 8, 2007 at the Kalamalka Campus beginning at 10am. For more information on the location, please contact Marilyn Alexis at 250.545.7291 ext. 2284 or at [malexis@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:malexis@okanagan.bc.ca).



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## Multicultural Day

Come on out and enjoy the celebration of diversity at the Kalamalka Campus. Join us for Multicultural Day, March 22, 2007! It will be an affair to remember. For more information contact Marilyn Alexis at 250.545.7291 or at [malexis@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:malexis@okanagan.bc.ca).

## Gathering Our Voices 2007: Aboriginal Youth Conference

This year's theme is **Education and Life-long Learning**. A Call for Presenters is available on-line at [www.bcaafc.com](http://www.bcaafc.com).

The event will be held at the Prince George Civic Centre, Prince George, British Columbia, March 18-20, 2007.

For more information on registration please contact Dianne Biin, Youth Conference Coordinator, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, at [dbiin@bcaafc.com](mailto:dbiin@bcaafc.com) or 1.888.383.1342.

## Aboriginal Student Potlucks, Kalamalka Campus

Come on out and share in the food, friendship and conversation with the Aboriginal students from the Kalamalka campus. Every Thursday in the Aboriginal Student Centre, D220, the students host a potluck lunch and everyone is invited. Make sure you bring something to contribute; after all, it is a potluck! For more information contact Marilyn Alexis at 250.545.7291 ext. 2284 or at [malexis@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:malexis@okanagan.bc.ca).

## Websites of Interest

### Ministry of Advanced Education, Aboriginal Education:

<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/>

### RedWAY BC News:

<http://www.imakenews.com/spiritlink/index000042493.cfm>

## Aboriginal Access and Services Contact Information

### James Coble

#### Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator

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)

### Ethan Baptiste

#### Aboriginal Mentor

Penticton, Office: A1E Sunoka Building

Hours: Tuesday 9:00am-4:30pm; Thursday 9:00am-4:30pm

Tel: 250.492.4305 ext. 3261

Email: [ebaptiste@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:ebaptiste@okanagan.bc.ca)

### Marilyn Alexis

#### Educational Advisor, Aboriginal Mentor

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)