



Okanagan College Aboriginal Access and Services

Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 1

Inside this Issue:	
Aboriginal Gathering Place Grand Opening Ceremony	1
KLO Aboriginal Student Gets a Facelift	2
Student Checklist for the New Semester	2
College to Host Traditional Pow Wow	3
Important Dates for Fall 2009	3
Upcoming Events	3
Websites of Interest	4
Aboriginal Access and Services Contact Information	4

Aboriginal Gathering Place Grand Opening Ceremony

The Salmon Arm Aboriginal community and Okanagan College came together to celebrate the Grand Opening of the Aboriginal Gathering Place in Salmon Arm. Amid sunny skies and warm weather, the ceremony took

place on Friday, September 4, 2009 at the Salmon Arm Campus.

In an effort to ensure that equitable services are provided on each campus for our students, Okanagan College identified the need for an Aboriginal Student Centre in Salmon Arm. Thanks to a Ministry grant, the Aboriginal Gathering Place became a reality and now each of the four major campuses has a student centre specifically for Aboriginal learners.

A sincere thank you is extended to Ethel and John Billy for honoring the ceremony with a prayer and to Mike Arnouse for undertaking a smudge ceremony to bless the Gathering Place.

Ceremony highlights included speeches from Salmon Arm Aboriginal community leaders and Okanagan College representatives and a ribbon cutting ceremony. It was noted several times that this signified both a new



beginning and an opportunity for all involved: for our Aboriginal learners, for the greater Aboriginal community and for Okanagan College.

First Nation Pow Wow Dancers and Métis Jiggers provided a wonderful exhibition of Aboriginal culture. Numerous vendors were on hand to showcase their considerable skill in the



traditions of our ancestors and in contemporary art.

A special thank you also goes out to Loleen MacDonald and the rest of the Public Affairs and Salmon Arm campus staff for a job well done. It was a great day for all in attendance!

KLO Aboriginal Student Centre Gets a Facelift

Okanagan College is pleased to announce that the KLO Aboriginal Student Centre in Kelowna has recently been renovated.

As a result of the opening of the new Centre for Learning Building on the KLO campus, two offices adjacent to the Aboriginal Student Centre had been vacated. Consequently, approval was given to expand the student centre into those vacant spaces.

The renovations have resulted in an increase of over 100 square feet of extra space. The result is the creation of a separate computer centre where students can concentrate on getting their assignments done in addition to a lounge area where students can relax and hang out with other students. The renovations included new flooring and a fresh coat of paint.

So, if you are ever on campus, stop by and check out our new space. We are located at S124 in the Student Services Building.

Student Checklist for the New Semester

The beginning of a new semester can often be a hectic time of year for new and continuing students. Students are adjusting or readjusting to their surroundings.

The following is a list of things to consider during your first few weeks of a new semester. Using this like a checklist may save you from a few headaches down the road.



1) Take advantage of any orientation events taking place at your campus. They are

always free and provide a lot of useful information for new students (one week prior to the start of classes or during the first three weeks of classes*).

2) Okanagan College has free Aboriginal support services on each of its four major campuses. You are not required to use these services, but at least make yourself aware of who you can contact and where you can find them if you have any questions or concerns. Please see below for the contact information (one week prior to the start of classes or during the first week of classes).

3) Locations and times for getting your card made will be posted at www.okanagan.bc.ca. Your card is useful for providing identification for a number of on-campus services. Your card can also be used at photocopying machines; the more money you add to your card, the more copies you can make (one week prior to the start of classes or during the first week of classes).

4) Students and visitors are required to pay for parking at Okanagan College. Student parking passes are available for purchase at each campus (one week prior to the start of classes or during the first week of classes).

5) All the prescribed books and supplies that you will need for your classes are available at your local campus bookstore. If you are being sponsored by your band, the campus bookstores should have copies of your sponsorship letters so that they can invoice your band (one week prior to the start of classes or during the first week of classes).

6) Make sure you are aware of the last day that you can pay your tuition. To avoid being de-registered from your classes, you should inform your sponsor so that they are aware of this deadline as well (The dates for this depends on when you start your program and what program you are in. Please refer to the Okanagan College website for more information on this: www.okanagan.bc.ca).

7) All Kelowna, Penticton and Salmon Arm students who are registered in a degree program or two year diploma program are automatically enrolled in the Students' Association Extended Health and Dental Plan. For vocational/trades programs, students must



be enrolled in a program of at least 16 weeks. The fees are added to the student's assessment at the time of registration. Arrangements to waive the fees may only be made through the Student Union office. Band sponsored students may be eligible to waive these fees. A waiver is only possible if a student can demonstrate equivalent coverage by another extended health and/or dental plan. Proof of such coverage must be provided before the stated deadline for the Fall and Winter semesters (one week prior to the start of classes or during the first week of classes).

8) There are deadlines for the last day that you can register in a course for each semester and deadlines for the last day that you can withdraw from a course with a full tuition rebate. Make sure you are aware of these deadlines by checking out the online calendar at www.okanagan.bc.ca/calendar (one week prior to the start of classes or during the first week of classes).

9) Get a list of relevant grants, bursaries and scholarships from your band office, the college aboriginal student centre in your area, the college financial aid office or online (Ongoing).

* Please note the suggested time frames are only meant to serve as guidelines. Several programs start at different times throughout the year and thus you may need to adjust the time frames accordingly.

For more information, please feel free to contact James Coble Aboriginal Access & Services Coordinator, Tel: (250)762-5445 local 4322.

College to Host Traditional Pow Wow

Okanagan College will be hosting a traditional pow wow at the Kelowna Campus on Thursday, September 24, 2009 from 10am to 2pm. Everyone is invited to attend. There will be traditional dancers and vendors on site.

Ernie Phillips will be the MC. So if you can make the time come on out and celebrate with us.

Important Dates For Fall 2009

September 1: Orientation Day

September 2: Classes begin for Business, CIS, Commercial Aviation, Arts/Science, Engineering Technology, and Advanced Culinary Arts Diploma

September 7: Labor Day (no classes)

September 8: AACP classes begin- all campuses

September 15: Last day to register in a course for the fall semester

September 15: Last day to receive a tuition rebate for withdrawal from a fall semester course

September 15: Last day to withdraw without record of course resignation entered on the student's transcript for a summer semester course

September 15: Last day to submit a waiver or an addition to the Medical and Dental Plan. Forms to be submitted to Student Association offices by 4:00pm

October 12: Closed for Thanksgiving

October 27: Last day to change from credit to audit

October 27: Last day to withdraw, without penalty, from a fall semester courses

November 11: Closed for Remembrance Day

December 10-21: Ten Day Final Exam Period

December 23: AACP classes and exams end

December 24: Last Day to submit final grades

December 24-January 3: Holiday Break

Upcoming Events

NAHO 2009 National Conference

November 24-26, 2009
Crown Plaza and Marriot Hotels
Ottawa, Ontario
More info at
www.naho.ca or
conference@naho.ca

NAHO's national conference will



bring together front-line health workers, community members, First nations, Inuit, and Métis organizations, government departments, professional and Para-professional associations, and academic institutions.

During the conference, we will explore recent innovations and existing or emerging trends in population health research as they relate to disparities among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.

**15th Annual Provincial Conference on
Aboriginal Education - Reconnecting
the Generations**

**November 5-7, 2009
The Westin Bayshore, Vancouver**

Websites of Interest

Okanagan College Aboriginal Programs and Services Webpage:

www.okanagan.bc.ca/aboriginal

Indigenous Bar Association:

www.indigenousbar.ca/main_e.html

Okanagan First Peoples:

www.okanaganfirstpeoples.ca/

Arctic Peoples: Indigenous Peoples at the Arctic Council:

www.arcticpeoples.org/

Ministry of Child and Family Development:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy_promo.htm

Aboriginal Access and Services Contact Information

James Coble

Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator

Okanagan College, Kelowna

Office: S124A

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 – 4:00

Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4322

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Ethan Baptiste

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Okanagan College, Kelowna

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Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4682

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Robert Searle

Aboriginal Mentor

Okanagan College, Penticton

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Tel: 250.492.4305 ext. 3261

Email: rsearle@okanagan.bc.ca

Marilyn Alexis

Educational Advisor, Aboriginal Mentor

Okanagan College, Vernon

Office: A306 (Wed.), D220 (Tues. & Thurs.)

Hours: Tuesday to Thursday, 8:30 – 4:30

Tel: 250.545.7291 ext. 2209 (Wed.) ext. 2284

(Tues. & Thurs.)

Email: 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