

*WOW! Your new Okanagan College got off to an incredible start on September 6 by welcoming over 300 new students to the beginning of their post-secondary learning career here at our Kalamalka Campus.*

*A full day of workshops based on the Right Start To College Program we shared with you last time was well received by our new students. Exercises designed to help them feel good about their decision to attend College were mixed in with multiple opportunities to meet their new fellow students and professors. Throw in a free BBQ, live music, door prizes provided by over 50 local businesses and the chance to make yours truly wet in the 'dunk tank' helped round out their first full day of fun and learning at College.*

*I must also take this opportunity to thank all of you who came out the next morning – September 7 – to join with us at Kalamalka Campus for the official Public Launch of Okanagan College Breakfast here in the North Okanagan Region. We appreciate every chance we can to show off this great Okanagan College facility that your continuing support has helped create.*

*Okanagan College has a wide and diverse range of academic training opportunities. In this column, I'd like to introduce you to Jennifer Gorman; Program & Events coordinator for the Faculty of Business, who will tell you a little about our Okanagan School of Business.*

Welcome to the Okanagan School of Business (OSB) at the Kalamalka Campus of Okanagan College. Last week the students of the inaugural class of Okanagan College began their educational journey, many of whom took part in a 'Right Start to College' Orientation Day on Tuesday Sept. 6 (more about that later). The breadth and depth of education and experience these students will bring to the classroom is impressive. We wish all of these students great success as they pursue their dreams of higher education and the opportunity to enter a rewarding career, obtain professional development or foster the development of a personal interest in business.

Our first-year business students come from diverse backgrounds. Some have just graduated from high school, some have traveled significant distances to attend the College and others are mature students looking to further their education and expand their career opportunities. Regardless of their background, each student displayed enthusiasm that permeated the room. In fact, the energy from these students was so contagious it inspired me to register for a business class myself next semester.

The first week of classes can be intense: a new school, new teachers, and a different style of learning. There is so much information to digest it can be overwhelming. In order to alleviate some of the anxiety students may feel, the Kal Campus organized a one-day orientation session. During the lunch time barbecue, many of these students found it comforting to hear from the local alumni who have completed their education and are now working in a field that they love. For example, Kara Kazimer, who graduated from the inaugural Bachelor of Business Administration class, spoke about her experiences at OUC. She graduated with a BBA in 1998 and has since traveled to Russia and Indonesia to teach entrepreneurs and small business leaders in those countries. Kazimer credits the exceptional professors at the Okanagan School of Business for preparing her to work in both a domestic and international business setting.

This year, the following individuals will be teaching at the Okanagan School of Business at the Kalamalka Campus: David Burrell, Walt Burton, Paul Clark, and Megan Mills in the Business Administration program, and Madelaine Befus and Teresa Kisilevich in the Applied Business Technology program.

In addition, I am proud to introduce the following additions to our Business Administrative team. This fall, Heather Banham assumes the role of Associate Dean of Business, Barry McGillivray is the new Chair of the Business Administration department and Madelaine Befus is new Chair of the Office Administration department.

The year 2005 will be remembered at Okanagan College as one of celebrating new beginnings and even greater involvement with our communities. We are excited by the outpouring of support for the Kal Campus demonstrated by the number of local government, business and industry leaders that attended the community launch of Okanagan College on Wednesday Sept. 7. The Okanagan School of Business truly values the strong partnerships we have with businesses in the North Okanagan – it's our involvement with the people in all our communities that is at the heart of what we do. And it is this continued involvement that will help us ensure we are delivering education and training that is relevant to the people in our region as they prepare for a positive future full of promise.

*Thanks Jennifer ... see you again in two weeks when we share a little about another exciting area of learning choices at Kalamalka Campus, that of our Continuing Education arm of your new Okanagan College. Take care ... and enjoy getting back into that Fall routine in the Okanagan!*

*- Tony Sellar  
Regional Dean, North Okanagan Region, Okanagan College*