



news

Okanagan College welcomes new Vice President **Students**



Okanagan College will welcome a new member to its executive leadership team when Meri Kim Oliver assumes the role of Vice President Students this summer. Oliver comes to the College from Durham College in Oshawa, ON where she has 2013. Prior to that appointment, she served as assistant vice-president, Student

served as vice-president Student Affairs since Academic Success Services at Dalhousie University in Halifax, N.S. "As someone passionate about student development, I could not be more excited to

be part of an institution with four campuses

and other learning centres across the region, each with a distinct identity but all focused on providing a supportive student experience. "When you add in the fact that the College also has one of the highest populations of Indigenous students of any college or university in the province, and that each of its campuses is home to international students from a growing number of countries, I am really looking forward to playing a role in supporting such a diverse

student population." She is expected to assume her role at the College on Aug. 1 or as soon thereafter as COVID-19 conditions and travel advisories will allow.

"It's clear from speaking with a few members of the OC community already just how much people care about students here. That aligns with who I am and I am eager to be a part of that community and contribute to that culture," adds Oliver.

"Meri Kim's depth and breadth of experience, her knowledge of the Canadian post-secondary landscape, and her proven dedication to fostering exceptional student experience all gave us tremendous confidence that she would be a great fit for the role and an asset to the College," said Okanagan College President Jim Hamilton.

Read the full release here.

College responds with free professional development offerings during COVID-19

With organizations of all sizes in our communities facing uncertainty and disruption or adaptating to the way they conduct business in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, Okanagan College is stepping up with resources to help individuals and employers tap into professional development. The College's Continuing Studies



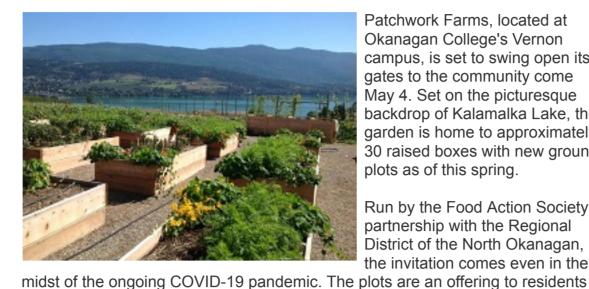
and Corporate Training department has published a new online Professional Development Resource page on its website to help people tap into free OC courses, webinars and panels. It will also point them in the direction of educational content, resources and helpful links to online education offered by others.

"It's our aim at all times to provide relevant professional development and to be a source of positive transformation in our communities," explains Dennis Silvestrone, Director of Continuing Studies and Corporate Training for the College Continuing Studies will continue to add to the resource page in the coming weeks

and is inviting feedback from individuals and employers in the region on the types of offerings and formats that would be beneficial. "It's our intention to continue to enhance and diversify what we're able to offer the community, and we hope it will be a helpful and well-utilized resource to employers during an uncertain time," adds Silvestrone.

To find the full array of courses offered, and to register, click here. An invitation to find your green thumb at Vernon's **Patchwork Farms**

Patchwork Farms, located at



community members gain some security."

safely with social distancing guidelines in place."

Okanagan College's Vernon campus, is set to swing open its gates to the community come May 4. Set on the picturesque backdrop of Kalamalka Lake, the garden is home to approximately 30 raised boxes with new ground plots as of this spring. Run by the Food Action Society in partnership with the Regional District of the North Okanagan, the invitation comes even in the

Over the past few seasons of operation, Patchwork Farms has focused primarily on providing garden services to Vernon's non-profit organizations. This May marks the first spring the plots are available to the general public. Buffy Rivard serves as the operations manager of community gardens for the

who may not have gardening access, and provide a safe and physically distant

opportunity to tend to home-grown vegetation or blossoms

Food Action Society of the North Okanagan. She says that, "we are witnessing and living many uncomfortable and stressful consequences due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, it is forcing our entire global society to slow down. "Social distancing is providing us with the gift of time, and a slower pace and maybe some more energy to put towards other things. The addition of Patchwork Farms to the current community gardens is a valuable asset, a place to help

Regional Dean of the Vernon Campus Jane Lister adds that, "the opening of the farm to the community comes at an opportune time, offering a connection point with nature, and a chance to try something new. I have no doubt these garden plots will be popular and beneficial for those who get involved."

She goes on to say that, "the benefits of gardening and being in nature are

immense, showing us constant growth and renewal, providing something to care

for and pour energy into and look forward to each day. And, it can all be done

Those interested in a plot can send a request <u>here</u>. There is ample parking available at the College, and all COVID-19 protocols and requirements are in place and will be reviewed with gardeners to ensure the health and safety of all.

Day of mourning to remember fallen workers

Mourning, honouring those who have lost their lives to, or suffer from, workplace injury or occupational disease. In 2019 alone, 140 workers in British Columbia lost their lives to events like these.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic

comes April 28, a national Day of



Federation of Labour, the Business of Council of British Columbia along with WorkSafeBC co-host a public ceremony each year, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ceremony has been cancelled. Locally, the North Okanagan Labour Council and Kelowna Joint Occupational Health and Safety (JOHS) Committee typically organize Day of Mourning events. "Holding an event this year was not possible," says Jasmine Korcok, Kelowna JOHS Committee Co-Chair alongside Jordan Perrey. "Everybody needs to be provided with a safe workplace so that they can come home at the end of the day without injury. April 28 is a day to reflect on why the efforts of the Health and Safety team and JOHS Committees at Okanagan College are so important for

keeping staff and students safe and healthy." Each of Okanagan College's four campuses is home to a JOHS Committee, which meets regularly and works to champion health and safety for the College community.

Despite the alterations made due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a moment of silence was observed at 10:30 a.m. this morning. Workplace health and safety personnel across the province encourage fellow employees from all industries to observe a moment for those who have been injured or lost their lives. To learn more about the Day of Mourning, go here.

Collaboration and communication: students tapping into financial support during COVID-19

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, departments across the College have worked together to keep students up to date on the financial supports available to them through OC, the Okanagan College Foundation and the provincial and

federal governments. Recognizing that financial pressure is widespread and affects every student differently, OC has also worked closely with the Okanagan College Students' Union (OCSU) and Vernon Students' Association Okanagan College (VSAOC) to

emergency relief for students in addition to the current funding available through the College (see link to full story below). James Coble, Director of Student Services, notes, "Thankfully, Okanagan College, the Okanagan College Foundation and the Province have risen to the challenge and increased the amount of emergency funding available to students. "Service is what we are about, and the Financial Aid and Awards department has

get the word out. On April 6, the OCSU announced its commitment of \$15,000 for

done an amazing job, working tirelessly to administer these funds as quickly as possible to students in need." Since Jan. 1, the Financial Aid and Awards department at the College and the Okanagan College Foundation have given out approximately \$133,000 in emergency funding to 150 students. This aid comes in the form of bursaries and grants, helping students fund their education and external areas of need. For more

information on available resources to students during this time, including additional financial aid information in the area of housing, loans and employment, go to the College's Financial Aid and Awards page here. **Related links:** April 27 – Info about International Student access to the CERB April 22 - More federal support for students and grads affected by COVID-19 April 6 - OCSU contributes emergency aid for students

April 8 - Changes to Canada Summer Jobs program to help businesses and

April 3 - BC brings in more emergency supports for Indigenous students

April 2 - Province boosts emergency funding supports for students

young Canadians affected by COVID-19

number of languages.

a trial basis.

Province launches free counselling service for postsecondary students The Government of British Columbia has launched Here2Talk, a new mental health counselling and referral service for post-secondary students.

online chat, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. "Until now, post-secondary students have never had access to 24/7 province wide mental health support services," said Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. "Students advocated for years to fill the gap in

available mental-health counselling services in British Columbia. Over the past

The service offers confidential, free single-session services by app, phone or

several months, we've been working together to develop this new free service. With the advent of COVID-19 and the increased stress it puts on students, we doubled down to get students the supports they so desperately need. I'm very excited to say that Here2Talk is now available for all 555,000 post-secondary students registered across B.C." Chat sessions with a trained counsellor can be accessed by downloading the Here2Talk app or visiting: here2talk.ca. Students can speak to a counsellor by phone, toll-free at 1-877-857-3397 or direct 604-642-5212. Students calling from outside Canada can dial 1-604-642-5212

(international calling charges may apply). Translation services are available in a

Read the full media release here. OC Business students provide admin support for notfor-profits

Okanagan College School of Business Administrative Assistant students across the region have a practicum requirement in June whereby they work for a business to complete their program. This is an unpaid placement that helps the students acclimatize themselves with an office environment, and it is an opportunity for employers to see what these potential employees have to offer on

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the notfor-profit sector for the first three weeks of June. Students are proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access and Publisher. They are trained in all facets of office organization as well as having accounting and payroll skills. If you would like to have administrative support

virtually from the students in the Administrative Assistant program or would like

more information, please contact <u>Brenda Ridgeley-Ketchell</u>, Department Chair.

people **Haircuts for Health Care launches**

community's beloved salons. open up their own self-isolation salon, and hand the scissors to their spouse or children. Every chop, snip and buzz will help raise vital funds to open the doors to a state-of-the-art new Health Sciences Centre currently under construction at the College's Kelowna campus. The foundation is encouraging people to either donate what they would typically pay for a cut, or set a fundraising goal for their network if they go for a more creative

new do.

Read the full story <u>here</u>.

the world can learn from."

and Rempel, go here.

A new initiative from an

mail

However, as people take the necessary steps to flatten the curve, many will be tempted (required!) to take their unkempt hair into their own hands. A new community fundraiser launched by the Okanagan College Foundation is encouraging those who want to take matters into their own hands, to do so for a good cause. Haircuts for Health Care is inviting people to

College president steps up with 5k incentive

Shaggy beards and untamed locks are an inevitable consequence of almost six weeks of physical distancing and the closure of all non-essential businesses, including our

the first people to get involved. Preferring his hair very short, he's set a \$1,000 goal and will let his six year-old son Ross use clippers when he hits the milestone He's already raised more than \$800. "It feels great to see the support," says Millard, adding many of his colleagues at IG have been contributing to the fundraiser. "My wife is a nurse, and knowing that we're going to have more quality trained nurses in the valley is a good thing."

Scott Millard, Senior Executive Consultant at IG Wealth Management, was one of

"During this difficult time, it's great to see the community pulling together in support of education for the next generation of health care heroes." says OC President Jim Hamilton. "I'm not blessed with much hair these days so I doubt a cut would inspire

significant support. So, I'm challenging the community to get involved. When the

campaign reaches \$10,000, I will personally donate \$5,000."

OC Business profs take Best Case Award at national conference Addressing homelessness in Kelowna is no small task, and Okanagan College

School of Business professors Kyleen Myrah, Dean Warner and Kerry Rempel continue to prove they're up for the task. Their case, titled "Addressing" homelessness in Kelowna: How a new agency will govern" recently won the Best Case Award for the Case Division at the 2020 Administrative Sciences Association of Canada Conference.

The case – which addresses the governance of a start-up organization, Journey

homelessness – highlights research done by the trio, which Myrah says she hopes

Home, tasked with implementing Kelowna's five-year strategy to end

stirs something in the local and national community.

"The win highlights innovative organizations in our region who are wrestling with issues that we believe students and professors will find interesting," says Myrah. Myrah, Warner and Rempel won Best Paper in the Case Track Division at the same conference in 2017, and Honourable Mention in 2016. Both cases have been published in the International Journal of Case Studies in Management (2019) and Case Research Journal (2017), respectively.

Rempel adds that the award "validates the long hours of interviews, writing and analysis and goes to show that not only our students excel, but so do our professors." She goes on to say, "it's incredibly rewarding that the work we do within the

communities we serve can be translated into something that individuals all over

The conference, originally set to run in-person in St. John's, Nfld., has shifted to a virtual experience, taking place over the June 12 -15 weekend. The annual event sees researchers from Canada and numerous other countries present competitive papers and symposia within 19 divisions and a case track. Awards and social functions also offer an opportunity for attendees to connect and collaborate.

On the chance to present the case online, Warner adds, "the case track for the conference is well suited to be delivered online. "With the goal of improving each case that is presented, the authors are able to glean suggestions and ideas for the final edits to the case.

To read more about other collaborative research work on homelessness by Myrah

Postcard Project raises funds and connects others by

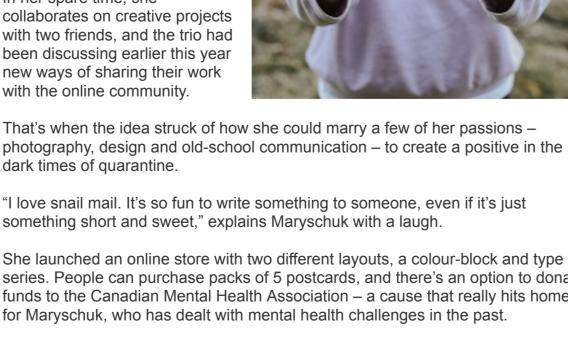
Okanagan College staff member is not only stamping out quarantine blues, but raising funds for much-needed mental health resources.

events happening at the College. In her spare time, she collaborates on creative projects with two friends, and the trio had been discussing earlier this year new ways of sharing their work

Read the full story here.

Katie Maryschuk works in the Public Affairs department, tasked with updating the Okanagan community about news and

with the online community. dark times of quarantine. something short and sweet," explains Maryschuk with a laugh.



She launched an online store with two different layouts, a colour-block and type series. People can purchase packs of 5 postcards, and there's an option to donate funds to the Canadian Mental Health Association – a cause that really hits home for Maryschuk, who has dealt with mental health challenges in the past.

OC alumnus honoured as a Top 40 Under 40 OC alumnus Adam Relvas was recently announced as an honouree by the Kelowna



Culinary Arts program at the College, grew up in the South Okanagan and gained a passion for food through many foodfocused family events. After graduating, Relvas worked as a line cook for Waterfront Wines in Kelowna, Sous Chef at Ricardo's Mediterranean Kitchen in Lake Country, Sous Chef at the Hotel Eldorado in Kelowna, and later Executive Chef at Monashee's Bar and Grill

Top 40 Under 40.

Relvas, a graduate of the

Chamber of Commerce as a BDO

The Sandwich Company by Relvas Catering in Kelowna, which was voted as one of the top three caterers in the Central Okanagan by Okanagan Life Magazine's Best Restaurant Edition in 2017. Relvas is passionate about lending a hand and has had the privilege of being a part of many different charity events across the city from the Dream Rally raising

Now, the certified Red Seal Chef is the Chef and Owner of Relvas Catering and

money for Ronald McDonald House, Food Bank fundraising dinners, events for Kelowna Hospice, JoeAnna's House, as well as Christmas Day Dinner at Parkinson Recreation Centre, Back to School Bash and Easter Pancake Breakfast events with Victory Life. This year marks the sixth annual BDO Top 40 Under 40 with Relvas being one of six who were honoured this year. Ross Derrick, OC Culinary Arts instructor, was

valley and is the owner/operator of The Table Cafe and Broken Anchor Food Truck and general manager of Codfathers Seafood. For more on Adam Relvas, Ross Derrick and the Top 40 Under 40, visit https://bit.ly/3afvbPU.

also recognized in this category. Derrick has extensive experience throughout the

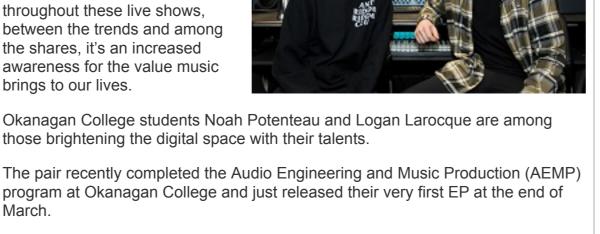
OC Audio Engineering and Music Production alums send new music and gratitude out into the world From local creators to international headliners.

rallying to provide sweet sounds of hope amid troubled times during the COVID-19 pandemic. And if a common thread runs throughout these live shows, between the trends and among the shares, it's an increased awareness for the value music brings to our lives. those brightening the digital space with their talents.

March.

"Pizza Time".

musicians around the world are



As they began working more closely with each other this past November, they found that their fusions of sound worked well together and Logan commented that their music "is beyond what we thought we would create." Cementing their partnership, they combined their love of space exploration, calling themselves the Sykonauts. "We want our music to take you on an out-of world journey," says Larocque.

Their first EP was released on March 27, named Syko EP, and now their sights are set on what comes next: sending their EP to music festivals and shows, with the goal of performing. And although summer festivals and music events have been cancelled for the time being, listeners can still jam to the Sykonauts' beats on Spotify and Apple Music, with songs titled, "Wombo Combo", What It Do" and

Read the full story on Noah and Logan here.

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notices

April 28, 2020, Vol. 14, Issue 2

COVID-19 Recent Updates and News

Find the latest COVID-19 updates here, along with links and resources for online learning, teaching and working, what to do if you are feeling ill, answers to frequently

asked questions, available services and more. View the archive of COVID-19 updates here, including important recent messages.

Federal and provincial news updates pertinent to students: Federal government removes the restriction that allows international students to work a maximum

of 20 hours per week while classes are in session.

 Federal government announces further support for students and new grads, including the

Canada Emergency Student Benefit and the Canada Student Service Grant Province of British Columbia launches free counselling services for post-secondary

students. Add your voice to the 2020 OC

Help us share positive messages for the graduating Students, alumni, employees and friends of Okanagan

Convocation video

College, we need your help! Like other colleges and universities, OC has had to make the difficult decision to postpone convocation and commencement ceremonies

until later in the year. However, we don't want to miss out on this important opportunity to recognize and celebrate our graduates. This spring, we're inviting you to submit:

 A short selfie video (cellphone quality is fine) message about your experience as a student:

what are you most proud of, or a message of congratulations to graduates. Please keep the video short, about 20 seconds. Photos of your time on campus/in your program.

 Name your video/photo file as First Name Last Name (i.e. Jane Smith) We will be compiling all the videos and photos we receive into a video to share with graduates this summer, and also plan to play it at the ceremonies this

If your file is too large to email, you can use free WeTransfer to send any videos/photos to Michelle: mlowry@okanagan.bc.ca. Subject: Convocation 2020.

Let's take this opportunity to celebrate and shout out the grad class of 2020. We can't wait to see your messages. Please send your videos and photos by May 15, 2020.

College Pension Plan - new option for

buying service for a leave of absence

Effective May 1, 2020, the College Pension Plan rules have been amended to allow members to continue making contributions during an Employment Standards Act–approved leave of absence. This decision gives members who want to buy service the flexibility to

choose the option that fits them best: Continue making contributions during a leave (by direct payment to the BC Pension Corp) - Buy back service after the leave (current process)

Please read the communique from the College Pension Board of Trustees regarding the new option for buying service for an Employment Standards Act-approved leave of absence. It can be found on the plan website at <u>college.pensionsbc.ca</u> under About Us > News > Plan News.

Access to OC facilities and services During the COVID-19 pandemic, Okanagan College continues to operate and provide services remotely. Physical access to facilities is restricted in order to

ensure social (physical) distancing and for the health and safety of all. If you need to access facilities at any of our campuses, or have questions about how to access any services, please contact the Regional Dean office at your

campus: Central Okanagan (Kelowna): 250-762-5445, South Okanagan-Similkameen (Penticton): 250-492-4305, ext. 3216

 North Okanagan (Vernon): 250-545-7291 Shuswap-Revelstoke (Salmon Arm): 250-832-2126, ext. 8239 You can also click here to find out how to access all available services, including hours and contact

Working from home guidelines and employee health and wellness

Okanagan College's Human Resources has prepared

some information for employees working from home or

remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Click here for

some important and helpful guidelines and reminders

information.

around everything from safety to IT support and security. During this evolving situation, Okanagan College strives to take care of our employees in the best way we can, and this includes their health and well-being. Working remotely and feeling disconnected with social

connections can result in emotional strain on employees' mental health. Prevention and taking proactive steps to minimize this risk for employees and employers is important. Click here for some resources around employee health and wellness. events

Public health announcement

Ongoing – Please refer to the College's <u>coronavirus</u> page for more information on events, updated regularly. Online Wellness Wednesday

Workshops for all OC students & employees

The Flourish Wellness Project is offering weekly Wellness Wednesday online workshops this spring, with a special focus on strategies to help you cope during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sarah Lefebure, Counsellor on the Penticton campus, will lead the one-hour drop-in online workshops.

Workshop Schedule - Wednesdays 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

May 27 – Making room for emotions in

challenging times

 May 6 – Taking care of your mental health during the pandemic May 13 – Time management in the time of May 20 – Self-compassion in the time of COVID-

To attend any of these workshops, OC students and employees can self register for the Flourish Wellness Workshop Moodle. To do so, log into Moodle, click Site home on the left and search for Flourish. If you have any problems, email Sarah here. Workshops are free for all Okanagan College students

and employees on any campus. They are also drop-in, so attend as many or as few as you'd like, and please ensure you have paper and pen or marker with you for the workshop. Try to choose a quiet place in your home where you are less likely to be interrupted.

media BC Achievement announced the BC Community

College student and mental health advocate Myles Mattila, founder of MindRight. Mattila is among 25 outstanding British Columbians who are "strengthening communities and inspiring others to community action. As the Haircuts for Health Care fundraiser launches, Okanagan College President Jim Hamilton was

Achievers awards, which included current Okanagan

mentioned on Castanet, Global News and AM 1150, with his \$5,000 incentive when the campaign reaches \$10,000. The Kelowna Capital News also featured Scott Millard,

Senior Executive Consultant at IG Wealth Management,

and one of the first people to get involved, having raised

over \$800 already. Castanet showcased Okanagan College healthcare students who have stepped up to fight COVID-19.

the Canadian Mental Health Association, was featured on Castanet and AM 1150. Global News, Castanet, KelownaNow and the Daily Courier noted the collaborative effort from Okanagan

College alongside UBC Okanagan, the Regional Library

and other private individuals, to use 3D printers to make

face shields.

The Postcard Project, a fundraiser selling postcards for

The Penticton Herald reshared Okanagan College's seven essential strategies for wellness, from the Counselling Services team based on the Penticton campus.

The Okanagan Weekend, Castanet, INFOTel and

learning and interdisciplinary studies.

Lake Country Calendar.

as the creative drive behind the Stay at Home Gala. The Vernon Morning Star showcased Community Champion and Okanagan College staff member Laura Hockman, and her work in the areas of diversity, critical reflection and care within the realm of Indigenous

the <u>Daily Courier</u> highlighted Drew Vincent, graduate of

Okanagan College's School of Business and his efforts

The Lake Country Calendar, Kelowna Capital News, AM1150 and the Daily Courier highlighted the free professional development courses currently being offered at Okanagan College. The Okanagan School of Business remains as a

feedback Do you have comments, questions or a submission for INSIDE OKANAGAN COLLEGE? Please email Public Affairs c/o Katie Maryschuk.

sponsor for ongoing virtual events put on by the

Kelowna Chamber of Commerce, as mentioned in the

included, please send all details at least one day in advance of the newsletter's publication. The next edition of INSIDE OKANAGAN COLLEGE will be issued on May 12, 2020.

To ensure the best chance for your submission to be