



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 Ottawa, ON where she has served as vice-president Student Affairs since 2013. Prior to that appointment, she served as assistant vice-president, Student 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 adapting 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 employees 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 offerings.

"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 most helpful.

"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 Okanagan College's Vernon Campus, is now open to the community. Set on the picturesque backdrop of Kalamalka Lake, the garden is home to approximately 30 raised boxes with new ground plots all 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 midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The plots are an offering to residents who may not have gardening access, and provide a safe and physically distant opportunity to tend to home-grown produce to ensure the health and safety of all.

Over the past few seasons of operation, Patchwork Farms has focused primarily on providing garden services to Vernon's non-profit organizations. This marks the first spring the plots are available to the general public.

Buffy Rivard serves as the operations manager of community gardens for the Food Action Society of the North Okanagan. She says that, "we are witnessing and living many uncertain and unforeseen 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 energy to put towards other things. The addition of Patchwork Farms to the current community gardens is a valuable asset, a place to help community members gain some security."

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 safely with social distancing guidelines in place."

Regional Dean of the Vernon Campus Jane Lister adds that, "the opening of the farm to the community here 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."

Those interested in a plot can send a request [here](#). There is ample parking available at the College, and all COVID-19 protocols and requirements are in place regarding the use of the gardens to ensure the health and safety of all.

Day of mourning to remember fallen workers

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic comes April 28, a national Day of 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.

The Day of Mourning encompasses all employees in any scope of work, acknowledging that there can be hazards in any work environment. Canada became the first country to recognize the Day of Mourning in 1984, and ceremonies from coast to coast have followed every year since. The BC Federation of Labour, the Business 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 Korco, 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 Committee 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 to take a few minutes 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 help students access 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 been actively working with the Okanagan College Students' Union (OCSU) and Vernon Students' Association Okanagan College (VSAC) to get the word out. On April 6, the OCSU announced its commitment of \$15,000 for emergency relief for students in the area of housing, loans and employment, go to the College's Financial Aid and Awards page [here](#).

James Coble, Director of Student Services, notes, "Thankfully, Okanagan College, the Okanagan 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 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 across the College's Kelowna campus. This funding has been used 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 6 - [Changes in Income Support, Joba program to help businesses and young Canadians affected by COVID-19](#)
- April 3 - [BC brings in more emergency supports for Indigenous students](#)
- April 2 - [Province boosts emergency funding supports for students](#)

Province launches free counselling service for post-secondary students

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

The service offers confidential, free single-session services by app, phone or 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 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've 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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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 number of languages.

Read the full media release [here](#).

OC Business students provide admin support for not-for-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 a trial basis.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, students are offering their services for free to the not-for-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, please contact the Administrative Assistant Chair for more information, please contact [Brenda Ridgely-Ketchel](#), Department Chair.

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-